



You are heading to a hotel near a ski resort. The photograph here was taken from the driver's seat. You are driving through cottage country, and are about to pass a pedestrian walking along the side of the road. The road curves off to the left ahead.



Your Position



Weather



Time of Day

You are about to pass a pedestrian on a snow-covered road.

What should you be looking at right now?

ANSWER

You should be watching the car coming around the curve using the road mirror.



Your car understeers into the corner and you move into the other lane, almost colliding with the oncoming vehicle. It is very easy to understeer around corners in the winter if you don't account for the reduced tire grip on snowy roads by reducing your speed even more than usual. In this case in particular, in which you are

passing a pedestrian as you enter a curve, your car can end up even deeper into the opposing lane. Also, the accumulated snow on the sides of the road makes the road narrower, thereby making it more difficult for vehicles to pass each other. Near curves and other areas with poor visibility, drivers must constantly check for oncoming traffic using the road mirrors, and if they cannot see if a car is coming or not, they should enter the curve at a speed that will allow them to stop quickly and safely.

Dangerous Characteristics of Snow-covered Roads

The slipperiness of snowy roads is not constant, and even on a single curve, parts in shade could be frozen and slippery, while parts out of the shade are fine. On straight sections of road, wheels can get caught in ruts which can jar and shake the steering wheel, and when the road surface has a gradient, a vehicle can behave erratically. Drivers must always take care to pay attention to the conditions of the road, and drive at speeds appropriate to the situation.

Photography: Norihiro Ochiai

