

Snowfall

**Staying
Warm**

Yonezawa Winter Living Guide

**Clearing
Snow**

Transportation

**Yonezawa City International
Relations Association**

Snowfall

Temperatures and Snowfall in Yonezawa

The first light snow falls each year as early as the middle of November to the beginning of December. Towards the end of December, heavy snowfall begins accumulating, marking the true start of snow season in Yonezawa.

Year	Month	Avg. Temp.	Total Snowfall	Highest One-day Snowfall	Deepest Snow
2010	Dec.	2.9°C	87 cm	30 cm	40 cm
2011	Jan.	-2.7°C	333 cm	28 cm	114 cm
2011	Feb.	-0.9°C	182 cm	21 cm	126 cm
2011	Mar.	0.4°C	236 cm	27 cm	98 cm

Prepare for Winter Before the First Snow

● Protect Your Windows and Gardens

Heavy snow can damage fragile glass windows as well as garden plants and small trees. Make sure to reinforce vulnerable glass windows. Protect garden plants, shrubs, and small trees with supports so they aren't damaged by heavy snow.

Did You Know? Snow Country Facts

- Traffic lights in Yonezawa are aligned vertically in order to be visible even in heavy snowfall.
- Home entryways and entrances to stores that have two sets of doors are specially built so that cold air and snow stuck to clothes won't enter into buildings!

Life During Winter

Heating Appliances

Electric heaters, oil heaters, kerosene heaters and stoves, heat blankets, electric carpets, and more – there are plenty of ways to stay warm during winter. Be sure to choose a heating solution appropriate for your home. During the coldest months of winter, the most powerful and efficient heating device is a kerosene heater. You can even use a specially designed hose to funnel heat from a heater into a *kotatsu*, a small table with an electric heater underneath, further saving on energy bills. Make sure to switch off all heating appliances

before sleeping to Warm your feet with a *kotatsu* hose → prevent accidents.



- If your kerosene heater is not a “forced flue” type with a sealed combustion burner, be sure to ventilate the room frequently.
- Handle kerosene extremely carefully, especially when refueling.
- Do not dry laundry on top of a kerosene stove.

Condensation and Mold

Condensation occurs when indoor moisture makes contact with cool walls, ceilings, or windows. Left unchecked, it can lead to mold damage on walls, ceilings, and furniture. To prevent moisture and condensation, periodically ventilate rooms and keep your house thoroughly heated. To increase ventilation, make space between articles of furniture.



Preventing Pipes from Freezing

As temperatures drop below zero, water in pipes can freeze, rendering them unusable or even leading to burst pipes. Before sleeping or leaving for an extended period, drain water from pipes by closing the shut-off valve and opening the faucet to remove excess water. You can protect pipes without a shut-off valve, such as those leading to a toilet or boiler, by wrapping them with insulation.

Walking on Snowy and Icy Roads

Recently plowed roads are extremely slippery! Walk steadily while keeping your center of gravity forward. Snow can make roads and sidewalks narrow. Walking on roads is dangerous – stay on cleared sidewalks. Be aware that using an umbrella may further impair sight on snowy days. Snow falling from high places can be very dangerous, take care around snow hanging from roofs and buildings.



Be careful of uncovered drainage ditches on the sides of roads!
Metal manholes may also be slippery in winter time.

Dressing for Cold Weather

Once snow begins falling, prepare a warm hat, gloves, boots, and a cold-weather coat. Clothing should be both warm and waterproof. Additionally, ear muffs and a scarf or neck-warmer are highly recommended. Tall boots are another essential winter item, especially when shoveling snow. Non-waterproofed boots can be protected by using special waterproofing sprays.

※Wear warm clothing before heading outside. Put comfort and function above fashion!

What's “*yuki-kaki*”?

“*Yuki-kaki*” is a phrase you'll hear often throughout the winter – it means clearing and shoveling snow.

Clearing Snow

About City Snow Removal

When overnight snowfall is predicted to be over 10cm, city snow plows begin clearing streets early in the morning. Snow plows may leave small snow banks in front of houses and on the side of roads – help out by clearing the area around your home.

Don't Park or Shovel Snow Onto Streets

Cars parked on streets or blocking road entrances interferes with snow removal – park your car in a designated parking spot during winter months. Additionally, do not shovel snow from your roof or property onto streets or other public areas.

Household Snow Removal

● Tools

Shovels

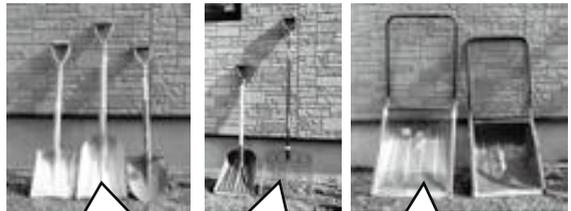
Shovels made from iron, aluminum, plastic, and other materials

can remove everything from freshly fallen snow to hardy packed ice.

Snow Scoop

Metal snow scoops are useful for heavy snow, while lightweight plastic snow scoops can clear freshly fallen snow or be carried onto rooftops.

※When shoveling snow, be sure to stay warm by wearing winter boots, gloves, and a hat.



Shovels

Snow Scoops

● Snow Blower

A snow blower both clears and disposes of snow in one easy step. Many sizes are available, from small family units to large industrial models. Snow blowers are especially useful for clearing large yards and driveways.

● Snow Drainageways

Snow drainageways are waterways beneath roads for melting fallen snow. Access grates to these drainageways are located throughout Yonezawa City. Take care not to fully block drainageways with large amounts of snow. Make note of nearby drainageways before the first snowfall.

● Removing Snow From Roofs

Be extremely careful when removing snow from rooftops. Wear a safety tether and never go onto a roof alone. If you are unsure of your ability to clear your roof, many local companies provide snow removal services.

Inquiries Regarding Snow Plows	Route 13: Nat'l Highway Branch Office.....☎0238-37-5300 Routes 121, 287, and Prefectural Roads: Okitama Prefectural Branch Office.....☎0238-26-6080 City Roads: Yonezawa City Hall.....☎0238-22-5111
Inquiries Regarding Snow Drainageways	Yonezawa City Hall.....☎0238-22-5111
Inquiries for Other Concerns	Snow removal help for elderly persons: Yonezawa City Hall.....☎0238-22-5111 Water overflow and flooding: Yonezawa City Hall (Weekdays, 8:30 – 17:00)☎0238-22-5111 Fire Dept. (Nights and Weekends).....☎0238-23-3107 Water service: Yonezawa City Water.....☎0238-22-4511

Transportation

Preparing Your Vehicle

Winter tires are absolutely necessary for driving during wintertime in Yonezawa. Change your tires before it begins to snow! In addition to winter tires, winter windshield wipers are



↑ Snow brush

highly recommended. Winter wipers have a thick rubber boot to push heavy snow off of the windshield of the car and prevent the wipers from freezing. A snow brush with a rubber ice-scraper is another must-have item for winter. Carry it in your car to be prepared for unexpected flurries of snow! Get ready for winter by performing inspection and maintenance on tires, radiators, engine oil, and windshield washer fluid. Don't forget to top up on gas early during the winter months – a full tank will leave you better prepared for unexpected situations!



↑ Winter wipers (above), are thicker and wider than regular wipers (below)

Before You Drive

Snow on top of a car can slide onto your front windshield while driving, often completely obstructing your view of the road. Even winter wipers are ineffective to remove a windshield full of snow – clear the roof of your car before driving. Use window defrosters to make sure you always have a clear view of the road. Before stepping into car, clear the soles of your shoes, as slippery feet can cause serious traffic accidents.

Useful Tools

- **Lock De-Icer Spray**

A simple spray you can use when car locks freeze shut.

- **Tools for Helping a Stuck Car**

A car stuck in a snow drift can be pulled out by another car using a tow rope. Shoveling snow out from under the tires and putting in a grip board, blanket, or sandbags can also give a car the necessary traction to escape from a snow drift.

Driving

Roads may be slippery even after they have been cleared. Drive slowly and keep plenty of space between yourself and the car in front of you. Traffic is especially slow at night when roads freeze and during both morning and afternoon commute hours. Allow plenty of time to reach your destination.

Start-up: Accelerate slowly and carefully.

Driving: Keep the steering wheel straight, maintain a steady speed and heading.

Stopping: Prepare to brake slowly and well ahead of your stopping point. Braking suddenly can cause you to lose control of your vehicle on slippery winter roads.

Winter Driving Precautions

- Bridges, tunnel entrances, intersections, downward slopes, and shaded areas are icy and slippers during winter. Slow down and be prepared to brake early.
- Water from snow-melting sprinklers found throughout the city can freeze after the sprinklers have been turned off, creating slippery areas on and



beside roads.

- Snow plows may create walls of snow after clearing streets, obscuring vision around corners and on intersections. Use caution when entering traffic, and check carefully for unseen cars.
- Heavy snowfall and high winds can obscure vision of the road and traffic. Drive slowly and be ready to stop at any time. Snowdrifts often form on roads exposed to high winds – steer clear of deep snow.

Be Careful of Tire Ruts!

On unplowed roads, steady traffic will carve snow ruts into roads. When driving through deep ruts, keep track of where your front wheels are pointing as steering feel can be dramatically reduced. When encountering traffic moving the opposite direction, slow down and leave plenty of room for the other car to pass.

Winter Road Hazards

● Icy Roads

Ice on roads is slippery and dangerous. As temperatures rise, snow can melt and refreeze, leading to icy conditions even when asphalt is visible. Keep space between the vehicle in front of you and brake lightly.

● Black Ice

Black ice is seemingly transparent, allowing black asphalt roadways to be seen through it, hence the term “black ice.” Be especially careful in shaded areas and as temperatures drop before sunrise and in the evening.

● Ice and Slush

As temperatures begin to rise, snowy, frozen roads will begin to melt into ice and slush. Under these road conditions, vehicles may drift or become difficult to control. Be careful not to splash

pedestrians with slush!

Did You Know? Snow Country Facts

- When parking your car overnight or for a long period of time, lift your wipers up off the windshield in order to prevent them from freezing or becoming damaged by heavy snow.
- Do not use your parking brake during cold winter months as it may freeze in place. Instead, put an automatic car in park or a manual car in low gear.

If you are unsure of your winter driving ability, use public transportation such as buses, trains, or taxis!

Taxis

Azuma Kanko Taxi	Yonezawa Jōnan 2-1-7	☎0238-22-1317
Imamura Taxi	Yonezawa Chuo 4-1-9	☎0238-22-2360
Tsuji Taxi	Yonezawa Ōmachi 4-1-67	☎0238-23-3200
Tsubame Taxi	Yonezawa Ōmachi 5-4-39	☎0238-21-1301
Yonezawa Taxi	Yonezawa Bansei-cho Katako 4382-13	☎0238-22-1225

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