



A Tech Emergency Kit for Your Car

An Extended Guide · No. 1939

————— An Extended Guide · No. 1939 —————

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

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What's Inside

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START HERE

3. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

1. The 60-Second Version If you only read one page, read this one. A car emergency kit is not complicated, and it is not just for long trips. Most trouble happens close to home, on an ordinary errand. The whole idea is simple: keep a few small, reliable things in the car, keep them charged, and know where they are. Then a dead battery, a low tire, or a dead phone becomes something you can handle while you wait for help, instead of a crisis. A car phone charger and a spare charging cable. A charged portable power bank for your phone. A lithium jump pack to start the car yourself. A small tire inflator that plugs into the car. A flashlight or headlamp with good batteries. Paper copies of your insurance, roadside number, and contacts. WATCH OUT Set up and test every piece of this at home, parked in the driveway. Never fiddle with gear or your phone while you are driving. THE IDEA 2. Why Keep a Tech Kit at All Peace of mind for the price of a shoebox. Here in Portage County we have plenty of rural roads, long stretches between towns, and winters that do not forgive a dead battery. You do not need to turn your trunk into a hardware store. You need a handful of things that solve the problems that actually happen: a phone that won't turn on, a car that won't start, a soft tire, and no good light when it's dark. Everything in this guide fits in a single small bag or bin. The goal is not to prepare for every disaster. The goal is to never be stuck and helpless over something small and fixable. I've seen it time and again: the folks who handle a breakdown calmly are almost always the ones who took twenty minutes some afternoon to put a kit together and tuck it in the trunk. They weren't lucky; they were ready. And readiness here is genuinely modest. We're talking about a handful of items, most of which you can buy for the cost of a nice dinner out, that sit quietly in the car and ask nothing of you until the day they save your afternoon.

GOOD TO KNOW

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You don't need to be handy or technical to use any of it, and you don't need to understand how it all works. You just need it there, charged, and within reach. A kit you actually keep charged beats a fancy kit that sits dead in the trunk. Simple and ready wins every time.

POWER 3. A Car Phone Charger Your phone is your lifeline, so keep it fed. Your phone is the single most important tool in an emergency, so the first job is making sure it never runs flat. A charger that plugs into the car does this whenever the engine is running. Many newer cars have a USB port built in; if yours doesn't, a small adapter that plugs into the cigarette-lighter socket works fine. Get one with two ports so you can charge a phone and something else at the same time. Leave it in the car permanently. Do not borrow it for the house, because the day you need it is the day it will be missing. If your car is older and has only the cigarette-lighter socket, don't worry at all; a small adapter that plugs into it turns that socket into one or two modern USB ports, and it costs just a few dollars. One word of caution on quality: a cheap, no-name charger can run hot or charge slowly, so a decent one from a known brand is worth the small extra. And if you drive an older phone with the flat Lightning plug, or a newer one with the oval USB-C plug, just make sure the charger and cable match it. If any of that sounds confusing, it's exactly the sort of thing I can sort out in two minutes so you never have to think about it again. **TIP** A charger that shows a little light when it's working saves guessing. If the light's on, power is flowing.

POWER**5. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

4. A Spare Charging Cable The cheapest part, and the one most likely to fail. Charging cables lead a hard life in a car. They get yanked, coiled, and baked in summer heat, and the thin wires inside break long before the outside looks worn. A cable that has gone bad will often still show a charging symbol for a second, then quit. That's why a spare matters. Keep one good cable that matches your phone, and keep it just for the car. Make sure it's the right kind: most newer iPhones and nearly all Android phones use the oval USB-C plug, while older iPhones use Apple's flat Lightning plug. If you're not sure which you have, I can check in a minute. Match the cable to your phone's plug before you buy. Keep it in the car and don't use it for anything else. Skip the cheapest gas-station cables; many are charge-only. A short, sturdy cable lasts longer than a long thin one.

POWER 5. A Charged Portable Power Bank Backup power when the engine isn't running. A power bank is a battery in a box, about the size of a deck of cards or a small paperback. You charge it at home, then it sits in the car ready to refill your phone even when the engine is off. That matters, because if you're waiting for a tow with the car shut off, you don't want to drain the car battery through the charger. A power bank marked around 10,000 milliamp-hours, often shortened to mAh, will fully recharge most phones two or three times. Keep its own charging cable with it, and top it up every couple of months so it's full when you need it.

GOOD TO KNOW A power bank slowly loses charge just sitting there. That's normal. A quick top-up when the seasons change keeps it ready.

POWER**6. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

6. A Lithium Jump Pack Start the car yourself, no second driver needed. A dead battery used to mean flagging down a stranger with jumper cables. A lithium jump pack ends that. It's a small battery pack, not much bigger than a power bank, with two clamps that attach to your car battery. It holds enough punch to crank the engine over on its own. You clip the clamps to the matching posts, follow the lights or beeps on the pack, and start the car. Many jump packs double as a power bank for your phone and have a built-in flashlight, so one device covers several jobs. Buy one sized for your engine, keep it charged, and read its little instruction card once at home. Clip red to the plus post, black to the minus post or bare metal. Follow the pack's lights before you turn the key. Recharge it after every use, and a few times a year regardless. Don't let the clamps touch each other while it's switched on. **WATCH OUT** If you've never used one, let me show you the clamps once in the driveway. It's easy, but a calm practice run beats learning it on a dark shoulder. **TIRES** 7. A Portable Tire Inflator Turn a soft tire into a drive-home tire. A slow leak doesn't have to strand you. A portable tire inflator is a small air pump that plugs into the car's power socket or runs off its own battery. You screw the hose onto the tire valve, set the pressure you want, and it fills the tire while you wait a few minutes. Your correct pressure is printed on a sticker inside the driver's door. A pump won't fix a big blowout, but it will top up a slow leak enough to get you to a garage instead of sitting on the shoulder. The newer battery-powered ones are the size of a water bottle and very easy to handle. Many of these little pumps have a built-in gauge and will stop automatically when the tire reaches the pressure you set, so you don't have to stand there guessing. That's a real blessing in cold or rain, when you just want to fill the tire and get moving. Some even double as a small light or a power bank for your phone, like the jump pack does, which is handy if you're buying one anyway. Keep it with its hose and adapter in the kit, and top up

WATCH OUT

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its battery when you check everything else, since a dead pump is no help at all when you find a soft tire on a frosty morning. Write your door-sticker tire pressure on a slip of paper and tuck it in with the inflator, so you don't have to hunt for it in the dark. **LIGHT 8. A Flashlight or Headlamp** You can't fix what you can't see. Trouble loves to happen at night or in the rain. A good flashlight lets you read a gauge, find the tire valve, or wave down help. A headlamp, the kind that straps to your forehead, is even better because it keeps both hands free while you work. Your phone has a light, but using it drains the battery you may badly need for calling. Keep a real light in the kit with fresh batteries, or a rechargeable one you top up when you charge everything else. Test it when you pack the kit and again each time you check it, because the one certainty with flashlights is that they go dead in storage when nobody's looking. A headlamp frees both hands for the job. Keep a spare set of batteries taped to the flashlight. Choose one with a bright steady mode and a blinking mode. Don't rely on your phone's light; save that battery for calls. **RECORD 9. A Dashcam** A quiet witness that's always watching. A dashcam is a small camera that mounts to the windshield and records the road while you drive. It isn't for emergencies exactly, but if you're ever in a fender-bender or someone cuts you off, the footage shows exactly what happened. That can settle an insurance dispute in your favor without a word of argument. Most dashcams loop, meaning they record over the oldest footage so they never fill up, and save a clip automatically if they feel a bump. They run off the car's power. It's a set-and-forget piece of gear: mount it once, and it does its job quietly from then on.

GOOD TO KNOW

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A dashcam records onto a little memory card. If you ever need a clip, stop driving so the camera doesn't record over it, and save it that day. PAPER 10. Your Insurance Card on Paper Because your phone may be the thing that's dead. So much of our information lives on our phones now, and that's fine until the phone is dead, smashed, or out of signal on a back road. That's exactly when you need your insurance details the most. So keep a printed copy of your current insurance card in the glovebox. If you're in an accident, you can hand it over or read from it even with no phone at all. Check the date on it when you check the kit, because insurance cards expire and renew, and an out-of-date card in the glovebox does you no good. Keep it somewhere a helper could find it too, in case you can't reach it yourself. WATCH OUT Ohio lets you show proof of insurance on your phone, but a dead phone shows nothing. Paper never runs out of battery. PAPER 11. Your Roadside-Assistance Number The number you'll want and won't remember. If you have roadside assistance, through an auto club, your insurance, or the carmaker, keep that phone number and your membership number written on paper in the car. In the moment, nobody remembers these, and digging through a phone app with cold hands and a dying battery is the last thing you want. A simple index card does the trick. Write the name of the service, the phone number, and your member number. Tuck it with the insurance card. If you don't have roadside coverage, it's worth asking me about, because many people already have it through their insurer or credit card and don't realize it. Write the service name, phone number, and member number. Keep it with your paper insurance card. Note whether towing is included and how far. Check that the membership is still active once a year.

PAPER**9. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

12. Emergency Contacts on Paper The people you'd call, where a helper can see them. If you were hurt or shaken up, could a bystander or a first responder tell who to call for you? If all your numbers live in a locked phone, the answer is no. So write a short list on paper: two or three family members, their names, and their phone numbers. Add your doctor and any important medical notes, like an allergy or a medication. Keep it in the glovebox with the other papers. This costs nothing and takes five minutes, and it's one of the most useful things in the whole kit. I'll gladly help you type and print a neat little card you can keep. TIP Also set up the Medical ID and emergency contacts on your phone, so help can reach your people from the lock screen. Paper and phone back each other up. KEYS 13. A Physical Spare Key or Fob The oldest trick still saves the day. Locking yourself out, or having a key fob battery die, is one of the most common calls of all. A spare key solves it. Keep a physical spare with a trusted neighbor or family member nearby, not in the car, since a spare locked inside the car helps nobody. If your car uses a fob with a battery, know that a dying fob battery can leave you standing at the door. Most fobs hide a small metal key inside for exactly this, and most cars have a hidden keyhole to use it. Let me show you where yours is, and keep a spare fob battery in the glovebox, because they're cheap and easy to swap. GOOD TO KNOW A fob that suddenly won't unlock the car is usually just a dead coin battery inside the fob. A fresh one costs a couple of dollars.

MAPS**10. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

14. Offline Maps for Dead Zones Finding your way when the bars disappear. Phone maps are wonderful until you hit a stretch of road with no signal, and then they go blank right when you're lost. The fix is to download the map for your area ahead of time, while you're on home Wi-Fi. Both Google Maps and Apple Maps let you save a region to the phone so it works with no signal at all. Do this for the areas you drive and any trip route before you leave. A paper road atlas in the trunk is a fine old-fashioned backup too. You can also keep important documents on a small USB stick, though you'd need a laptop to read it, so paper copies in the glovebox are the surer bet for the things that matter in a hurry.

- 1 Open Google Maps or Apple Maps on home Wi-Fi.
 - 2 Search for your town or trip area.
 - 3 Choose the option to download or save the map area.
 - 4 Confirm it saved, then it works with no signal in the car.
- SAFETY 15. A Basic First-Aid Kit**
- Small cuts and scrapes, handled on the spot. A simple first-aid kit covers the small stuff: a cut finger, a scraped knee, a headache on a long drive. You can buy a ready-made one for a car, or put together a zip bag with bandages, gauze, tape, antiseptic wipes, pain relievers, and any personal medicine you might need. Keep it where you can reach it from the front seat. Check the contents when you check the kit, because bandages dry out and medicines expire. This isn't about being a paramedic. It's about handling the minor things calmly so they don't become a bigger worry while you wait. Bandages, gauze, medical tape, and antiseptic wipes. Pain relievers and any personal medications. A small pair of scissors and tweezers. Check expiration dates when you check the kit.

WARMTH

11. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

16. A Blanket and Staying Warm In an Ohio winter, warmth is safety. If you break down in cold weather and can't run the engine for heat, staying warm becomes the real emergency. A warm blanket kept in the trunk costs almost nothing and makes an enormous difference. The thin foil emergency blankets fold up tiny and hold in a surprising amount of heat, so one of those plus a regular fleece blanket is a good pair. Add a stocking cap and a pair of gloves. The rule of thumb for a winter breakdown is to stay with the car, keep warm, and wait for help, rather than walking off into the cold. Your kit is what makes that wait safe and even comfortable.

WATCH OUT If you run the engine for heat while stopped in snow, make sure the tailpipe is clear of snow first. A blocked tailpipe can send fumes into the car.

EXTRAS 17. A Few Non-Tech Basics Little things that make a long wait easier. A few plain items round out the kit nicely. A bottle or two of water and some sealed snacks keep you comfortable during a long wait, especially with grandkids in the car. A little cash, including some change, helps if you end up somewhere that doesn't take cards or your phone is dead. A roll of paper towels and a pack of wipes clean up the inevitable mess. None of this is high-tech, but it's the kind of ordinary comfort that turns a stressful couple of hours on the shoulder into a manageable one. Keep it all in the same bag so you're not hunting through the car. Water and a few sealed snacks. A small amount of cash and some coins. Paper towels and wet wipes. A pen and a notepad for writing down details.

VISIBILITY

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18. Reflective Triangles or Flares Help others see you before they reach you. If you're stopped on a roadside, your biggest risk is traffic that doesn't see you in time. A set of reflective warning triangles or battery-powered LED flares, set out behind the car, give drivers plenty of warning to move over. They fold flat and store easily in the trunk. Along with your car's hazard flashers, they make you far more visible, especially at night or in rain or snow. Set them out only when it's safe to step out of the car, and always stand well away from traffic. This is cheap insurance against the most serious danger of a breakdown, which is not the car itself but the cars going past. TIP The battery LED flares are safer than the old road flares that burn. No flame, no smoke, and you can reuse them for years.

WINTER 19. What to Add for Winter Our winters ask a little more of the kit. When the cold sets in, add a few things to the kit. Warm gloves and a hat, because you can't work a jump pack or change a tire with frozen hands. Chemical hand-warmers, the kind you shake to activate, give off heat for hours and are a comfort during a cold wait. A small folding shovel and a bag of sand or cat litter help if you're stuck on ice, since a little grit under the tires gives them something to grip. An ice scraper, of course. These live in the kit from the first frost until spring, then you can set them aside. It's a five-minute swap with the seasons. Warm gloves, a hat, and hand-warmer packets. A folding shovel and a bag of sand or cat litter. An ice scraper and a snow brush. Extra blanket and a change of warm socks.

WINTER

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20. Why Cold Drains Batteries The reason your gear needs a winter check. Cold weather is hard on every battery you own. A battery that reads full in a warm house will show much less once it's chilled through in the trunk overnight. This is true of your phone, your power bank, and your jump pack. It's also why cars are far more likely to not start on a bitter morning. The lesson for your kit is simple: in winter, check and top up your batteries more often, and don't leave the power bank or jump pack to sit in a freezing car for weeks untouched. A device that's kept topped up handles the cold far better than one that was only half-charged to begin with. **GOOD TO KNOW** On very cold days, keeping your power bank and jump pack inside and bringing them to the car can keep them stronger than letting them freeze overnight. **SUMMER** 21. Summer Heat and Your Gear A baking car is rough on batteries too. Heat is just as hard on batteries as cold, in a different way. A car parked in the summer sun can get well over 120 degrees inside, and that heat shortens the life of power banks, jump packs, and the little battery inside a dashcam. Over a hot summer, a power bank left on the dash can swell or simply wear out early. The fix is to store your battery gear out of direct sun, in the glovebox, a door pocket, or a trunk bin, rather than baking on the dashboard or seat. It's the same reason we don't leave medicines or sunglasses to cook on the dash all day. **WATCH OUT** If a power bank or jump pack ever looks puffy or swollen, stop using it and replace it. A swollen battery is worn out and should go.

STORAGE**14. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

22. Where to Store Everything Together, reachable, and out of the baking sun. The best kit in the world is useless if it's scattered across the car or buried under groceries. Keep it together in one small bag or bin so you can grab the whole thing at once. Store the things you'd need from the driver's seat, like the flashlight and paper documents, up front in the glovebox or a door pocket. The bigger items, like the jump pack, inflator, blanket, and triangles, ride in the trunk. Keep batteries out of direct sunlight. A soft bag with a few pockets works beautifully and tucks neatly into a corner of the trunk, leaving room for everything else. Item Where it lives Flashlight, paper docs Glovebox, within reach Phone charger, cable Front, plugged in or in a pocket Power bank Glovebox, out of the sun Jump pack, inflator, blanket Trunk, in the kit bag UPKEEP 23. Check and Recharge Every Few Months A ready kit is a kit you actually tend to. Batteries slowly lose their charge sitting in the car, documents expire, and flashlights go dead in storage. So the one habit that keeps the whole kit worthwhile is a quick check every few months. The easiest way to remember is to tie it to something you already do, like changing the clocks in spring and fall, or the change of seasons. Pull the bag out, recharge the power bank and jump pack, test the flashlight, glance at the dates on your insurance card and first-aid supplies, and put it all back. Fifteen minutes, four times a year, and you'll never be caught with a dead kit when you need it most. Recharge the power bank and jump pack to full. Test the flashlight and swap tired batteries. Check dates on insurance card and medicines. Make sure the inflator and its hose still work.

UPKEEP

15. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech

24. Test Everything Once, Before You Need It The driveway is the place to learn, not the shoulder. Here's the step most people skip, and it's the most important one. Before you trust the kit, use each piece once, at home, with the car safely parked. Clip the jump pack on and start the car with it. Run the inflator on a tire and watch it climb to the right pressure. Turn on the flashlight. Charge your phone from the power bank. Doing this once, calmly, in your own driveway, means that if you ever have to use this gear for real, your hands already know what to do. There's a world of difference between reading about a jump pack and having actually used one. Call me and I'll happily walk through the whole kit with you. Think of it like a fire drill. Nobody waits for a real fire to learn where the exits are, and the same good sense applies here. Spending half an hour on a pleasant afternoon getting comfortable with each piece turns panic into routine if the real moment ever comes. It also lets you catch any item that doesn't work or that you bought the wrong size of, while you've still got time to fix it. Do it once, do it unhurried, and you'll carry a quiet confidence on every drive afterward, knowing that the gear in your trunk isn't just sitting there, but is something you actually know how to use. TIP Keep each item's little instruction card in the kit bag. Even gear you've used once is easier the second time with the card right there.

CHECKLIST 25. The Packing Checklist Everything in one simple list. Here's the whole kit in one place. You don't need every single item on day one. Start with the power and paper items, since those cover the most common troubles, and add the rest over time. Print this list and keep a copy in the kit bag so you can tick things off when you do your seasonal check. Car phone charger and a spare charging cable. Charged portable power bank and its cable. Lithium jump pack, charged. Portable tire inflator and your tire pressure noted. Flashlight or headlamp with spare batteries.

ORGANIZE

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Paper insurance card, roadside number, emergency contacts. Spare key or fob with a trusted person, spare fob battery in the car. Offline maps saved to your phone. Basic first-aid kit and a warm blanket. Reflective triangles or LED flares. Winter: gloves, hat, hand-warmers, shovel, sand or cat litter, ice scraper. 26. A Bag That Holds It All One grab-and-go home for the kit. A dedicated bag turns a pile of odds and ends into a real kit. A soft zippered duffel, a canvas tote, or even a plastic bin with a lid all work. Look for a few pockets or dividers so the small things don't rattle around loose and the heavy jump pack doesn't crush the first-aid supplies. Label it clearly on the outside so anyone in the family knows what it is. The whole point is that in a stressful moment, you or a loved one can grab one thing and have everything. Keep it packed the same way each time, so you always know where each item is by feel. GOOD TO KNOW A bright-colored bag is easier to find in a dark or cluttered trunk than a black one that blends into everything. PREP 27. Keep the Numbers You'd Actually Call A short, honest list beats a crowded phone. When something goes wrong, you'll reach for only a handful of numbers, so make those easy to find. Alongside the paper card, it helps to have these saved clearly in your phone too, and to know where they are. Your roadside service, your insurance company's claims line, a family member, your usual mechanic, and a tow company you trust. That's really the whole list. Put them together, on paper and on the phone, so you're not searching through a cluttered contact list with shaking hands. If you'd like, I can set up a short Favorites list on your phone and print a matching card for the glovebox, so both always agree. Roadside assistance and your member number.

CALM**17. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

Insurance claims line and policy number.

A trusted family member or two. Your mechanic and a tow company you trust. 28. What to Do in a Real Breakdown Slow, safe steps when it actually happens. If the day comes, the kit does its job best when you stay calm and work in order. First, get the car as far off the road as you safely can and turn on your hazard flashers. Second, call for help, using your phone or your paper numbers if the phone's dead. Third, deal with power, clipping in the charger or the power bank so your phone stays alive. Fourth, make yourself safe and visible: set out your triangles if it's safe to step out, and in cold weather, get the blanket. Then wait with the car. You don't have to fix everything yourself. You just have to be safe and reachable until help arrives.

- 1 Pull off the road and turn on hazard flashers.
- 2 Call for help, by phone or from your paper numbers.
- 3 Keep your phone charged with the charger or power bank.
- 4 Make yourself visible, set out triangles if safe, and stay warm.
- 5 Wait with the car until help arrives. FAMILY 29. Show Your Family Where It Is A kit only helps if someone can find it. Make sure your spouse, and anyone else who drives the car, knows the kit exists and where everything lives. Walk them through it once, the same way I'd walk you through it. Show them the jump pack, the paper documents, and where the spare fob key hides. If you share the car with a grandchild who's just started driving, this is a wonderful thing to teach them early. A kit that only you understand is only half a kit. The more people who know it's there and how it works, the more likely it is to help on the day it's needed, even if you're not the one in the driver's seat. TIP Keep a copy of this guide or the checklist in the glovebox. Anyone who opens it then knows exactly what's in the kit and how to use it.

ROUTINE

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30. A Simple Seasonal Routine Four quick check-ins a year, and you're set. Let me leave you with the whole upkeep plan in a nutshell, because the kit is only as good as the habit behind it. Four times a year, when the season turns, spend fifteen minutes with the kit. Recharge the batteries, test the light, swap in or pull out the winter gear, and glance at the dates on your papers and supplies. That's it. Do that, and you'll have a kit that's genuinely ready every single time, not a trunk full of dead gear you hope might work. It's a small, calm routine that buys you real peace of mind on every drive, near home or far.

Season What to do Spring Recharge all, pull winter gear, check dates Summer Move batteries out of the sun, top up charge Fall Recharge all, add winter gear back in Winter Keep batteries topped up more often SAFETY 31. A Phone Mount Up Front Keep the phone where you can see it, hands off. A good phone mount isn't an emergency item exactly, but it belongs in the car for safety's sake, and it supports everything else in this kit. A mount holds your phone up near the dashboard, at a glance-able height, so you can follow directions, take a call hands-free, and see who's calling without ever picking the phone up or looking down into your lap. That keeps your eyes on the road, which is where they belong, and it means that if trouble strikes, your phone is right there, visible and reachable, rather than lost in a cup holder or sliding around the seat. Look for a sturdy one that clips to a vent or sticks firmly to the dash, and that holds the phone securely over bumps. The vent-clip kind is easy to move between cars. Set the phone in it every time you get in, out of habit, and plug it into your charger at the same time, so it's always charged and always in sight. It's a small thing that makes every drive a little safer. Holds the phone at a glance-able height, hands free. Keeps your eyes up and on the road for maps and calls.

TIP**19. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

Puts the phone in easy reach if trouble strikes.

Vent-clip mounts move easily between cars. Make it a habit: phone into the mount and onto the charger every time you start a drive. Then it's always charged and always in sight.

POWER 32. Jumper Cables as a Backup The old standby still earns its spot. Even with a lithium jump pack in the kit, a set of traditional jumper cables is worth keeping too, as a backup. If your jump pack is ever flat when you need it, a passing good Samaritan with a running car can give you a jump the old-fashioned way, but only if you have cables, since few people carry them anymore. Jumper cables never run out of charge themselves, so they're a fine companion to the pack. Buy a decent heavy-gauge set, not the thin bargain kind, which struggle to carry enough power. Keep them coiled in the trunk with the kit. The one thing to know is the right order for connecting them, because doing it wrong can cause sparks, and I'm glad to show you the safe sequence once in the driveway, the same as with the jump pack. Between a charged jump pack and a set of cables, you've got two independent ways out of a dead battery, which is real peace of mind on a cold morning far from home. A backup if the jump pack is flat when you need it. Let a passing driver give you a jump the old way. Buy a heavy-gauge set, not the thin bargain kind. Learn the safe connection order before you need it. **WATCH OUT** Connecting jumper cables in the wrong order can cause sparks near the battery. Let me show you the safe sequence once, so you know it for sure.

INFO

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33. Weather and Road-Condition Apps Know before you go, especially in winter. Some of the most useful emergency gear isn't gear at all; it's a couple of free apps on your phone that help you avoid trouble in the first place. A good weather app warns you of storms, ice, and snow before you set out, so you can delay a trip or pick a safer route. Here in Ohio, where a winter drive can turn treacherous fast, that's genuinely valuable. The Ohio Department of Transportation offers road-condition information too, showing which roads are snow-covered or closed, which is wonderful for planning a safe way home. Map apps like Google Maps also flag heavy traffic, closures, and accidents along your route and can steer you around them. The habit is simple: before a longer drive, especially in bad weather, take a minute to check the forecast and the roads. Avoiding a dangerous stretch of road beats handling a breakdown on it. Let me help you put these apps on your phone and show you how to glance at them before you head out, so you're never caught off guard by weather you could have seen coming. A weather app warns of storms, ice, and snow ahead. Ohio's road-condition service shows snowy or closed roads. Map apps flag traffic, closures, and accidents on your route. Check the forecast and roads before a longer winter drive. GOOD TO KNOW The best breakdown is the one you avoid. A two-minute weather and road check before a drive is some of the cheapest insurance there is. GET HELP 34. When to Call Bill I'll help you build it and show you how it all works. If putting all this together feels like a lot, don't worry, that's exactly what I'm here for. I can help you pick the right power bank, jump pack, and inflator for your car, get them all charged, and print you a neat set of paper documents for the glovebox. Best of all, I'll walk you through using each piece once, in your own driveway, so your hands know what to do if you ever need them for real. With more than thirty years of doing this, I promise to keep it plain and patient, and I stand behind my work with a friendly guarantee. Give me a call at (330) 200-8042, and my assistant Sophie or I will set up a visit. No rush, and no pressure.

CHEAT SHEET**21. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

Everyday Cheat Sheet Keep this page handy. It points you straight to what to do for each task. I want to... Do this My phone died on the road Keep a car charger plus a charged power bank in the glovebox The car won't start A lithium jump pack starts most cars without another driver A tire is low or flat A small plug-in tire inflator tops it up enough to get home It's dark and I can't see A flashlight or headlamp with fresh batteries My phone has no signal Paper copies of insurance, roadside, and contacts I'm locked out A physical spare key or fob kept with a trusted person It's winter Add gloves, hand-warmers, and a warm blanket I never check the kit Pick a season-change habit and recharge everything Get help Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

HOW I CAN HELP**22. For electrical, gas, water, or ladder work, please call a licensed professional. — Bill's Home Tech**

Your Visit — and My Promise In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included. Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo). GOOD TO KNOW My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated. Call or text (330) 200-8042 · Book a visit: billshometech.com/book · bill@billshometech.com This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.

AT A GLANCE

A Picture to Follow Along

If you break down

The calm order of things.

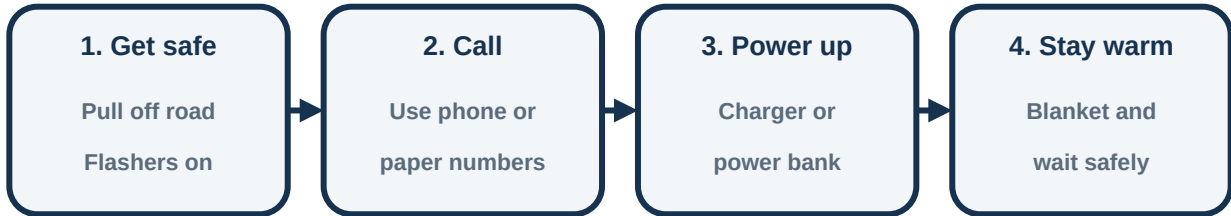


Illustration — a schematic. The order is a suggestion; do one box at a time.

A schematic of the plan — company steps vary; the order does not have to.

AT A GLANCE

A Second Look

What lives in the kit

A few small things, kept together.

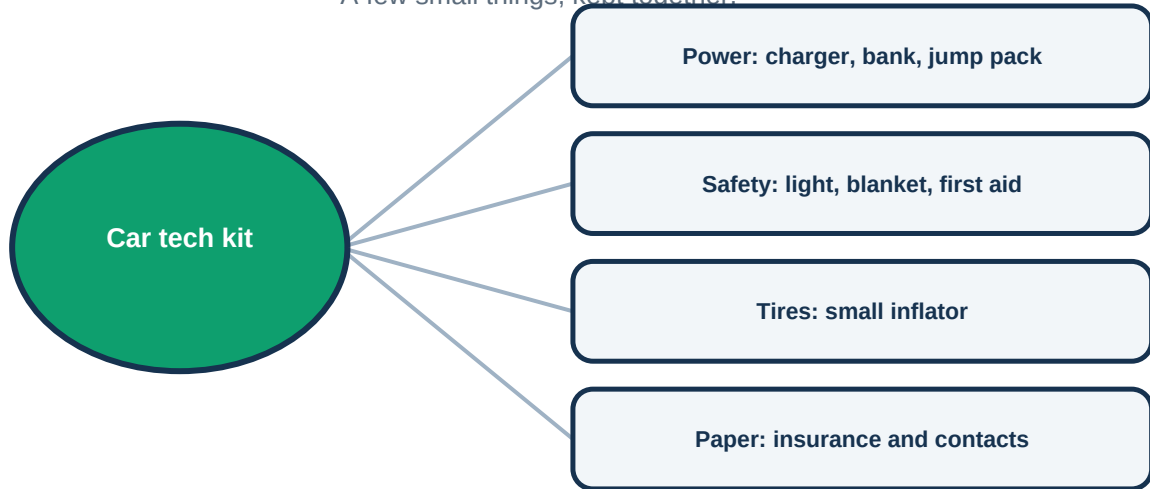


Illustration — a schematic. Set-up screens differ; each takes only a few minutes.

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.



HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

In-home visit — \$99 flat for your first visit. No contracts and no surprise charges, and a 30-day follow-up is included.

Remote Support — \$49 for a screen-share session. I only connect with your permission, you watch the whole time, and you can end anytime. If I can't fix it over the screen-share, I refund the \$49 — and if it turns out you need me in person, that \$49 goes toward your visit. It's included free for Support Plan members (\$39/mo).

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full \$99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Call or text **(330) 200-8042** · Book a visit: **billshometech.com/book** · **bill@billshometech.com**

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