

**Olympic National Park
Tire Chain Requirement on Hurricane Ridge Road
Frequently Asked Questions/December 2010**

Where and when do I need to carry tire chains?

Between November 20 and May 1, all vehicles traveling on the Hurricane Ridge Road above Heart O' the Hills entrance station are required to carry tire chains. This requirement applies to all weather and road conditions.

What about sunny days?

The chain requirement applies to all vehicles and all days between November 1 and May 1, regardless of weather or road conditions. Weather at Hurricane Ridge is notoriously quick to change, and sudden storms can appear with little or no warning.

Why do I need to carry tire chains?

A set of chains in every vehicle means that every vehicle is prepared and equipped for changing winter weather conditions. As its name implies, Hurricane Ridge is prone to high winds, which in winter, brings drifting snow and whiteout conditions. Having chains available in the event of a storm will give each driver an extra margin of safety, allowing the road to remain open longer even when conditions are changing.

What if my owner's manual tells me not to install tire chains?

The requirement to carry tire chains applies to all vehicles, regardless of make or model. Vehicle manufacturers that caution against traditional metal tire chains (e.g. Subaru) do market cable chains that are specifically made for their vehicles. Cable chains can be a good option for vehicles with limited tire clearance.

What if I have a rental car?

Tire chains are required on all vehicles traveling to the Hurricane Ridge. However, several stores in Port Angeles may accept returns of unused chains. See the listing of local retailers on the Olympic Peninsula Visitors Bureau website at www.OlympicPeninsula.org.

I have a 4-wheel or all-drive car – do I still need to have chains?

Yes. Four-wheel drive and all-wheel drive vehicles must carry chains. While vehicles with all-wheel-drive capability and approved traction tires do have enhanced traction, during the most extreme conditions this is not sufficient for safe vehicle operations. Chains provide optimal traction in the most challenging road conditions.

This Olympic National Park regulation is similar to Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 204-24-050, which states that, for vehicles under 10,000 gross vehicle weight:

When "chains required" signs are posted, all-wheel drive vehicles shall be exempt from the chain requirement when all wheels are in gear and are equipped with approved traction devices as specified in WAC 204-24-020 provided that tire chains for at least one set of drive tires are carried in the vehicle.

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Washington State law does not require motorists to carry tire chains over the major mountain passes – why is it different here?

During extreme weather conditions, Washington state does require chains, even on all-wheel and four-wheel drive vehicles, as noted above. In addition, Hurricane Ridge is unlike Washington's mountain passes in a variety of ways. At 5,242 feet above sea level Hurricane Ridge is significantly higher in elevation than most of Washington's road-accessible passes and is located on a mountain summit, rather than in a more sheltered pass. Further, the Hurricane Ridge Road is a park access road and not intended to be as wide or have as many safety pullouts as a state highway.

Is there anywhere I can rent chains in Port Angeles?

Rentals are not available, but several businesses do allow unused chains to be returned. The Olympic Peninsula Visitor Bureau (www.OlympicPeninsula.org) has a listing of local retailers who sell tire chains.

Is there anything I can use instead of chains?

Cable chains are typically thinner and lighter than traditional tire chains and may be more easily installed. We recommend checking with your local mechanic or tire store.

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Tire Chain Availability**

Tire chains are usually available at the following Olympic Peninsula locations. We recommend calling ahead, as store stock, hours or return policy may change. Chains are required in all vehicles while traveling to Hurricane Ridge this winter.

Les Schwab Tire Center

2527 East Highway 101, Port Angeles
360-452-7691

2355 Sims Way, Port Townsend
360-385-0124

802 E. Washington Street, Sequim
360-683-7261

Mon-Fri: 8am – 6pm
Sat: 8am – 5pm; Sunday: Closed

Return Policy: After the purchase, customer must wait until after April 1 to return unused chains to any Les Schwab Tire Center. Chains must be unopened and in their original packaging.

Baxter Auto Parts

221 W. First Street, Port Angeles
360-457-3318

Mon – Fri: 8am – 6pm
Sat – Sun: 9am – 5pm

Return Policy: Unused chains in their original packaging may be returned for a refund any time throughout the winter with receipt.

Discount Tire

981 W. Washington Street, Sequim
360-681-8670

Mon – Fri: 8am – 6pm
Sat: 8am – 5pm

Return Policy: Purchase with return if not used and in original packaging.

Schuck's O'Reilly Auto Supply

1911 E. First Street, Port Angeles
360-452-0883

1130 W. Washington Street, Sequim
360-681-0180

Mon – Sat: 8am - 8pm
Sun: 9am – 7pm

Return Policy: Unused chains in their original packaging may be returned. Other returns may be returned for store credit.

Wal-Mart

3411 Kolonels Way, Port Angeles
360-452-1244

1110 W. Washington Street, Sequim
360-683-9346

Daily: 6am – 10pm

Return Policy: Unused chains in their original packaging may be returned with receipt within 90 days for a full refund.

NOTE: All returns are dependent up on the individual possessing a receipt of purchase.