

First winter in the cab.

The one-page survival guide: the math, the kit, the checklist. Everything a first-time driver needs before the first -30° night — with real prices.

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FREE TO DISTRIBUTE — PRINT IT, PIN IT, HAND IT TO EVERY STUDENT BEFORE NOVEMBER.

THE MATH THAT MATTERS

Heat the bunk, not the engine.

A diesel bunk heater sips fuel while you sleep. Idling burns money all night. Same 10-hour night, two very different bills:

COST PER 10-HOUR NIGHT	
Engine idling	\$70.80
Bunk heater (1.5 L diesel)	\$3.54
Save \$1,345 / month	
20 NIGHTS × \$67.26 SAVED PER NIGHT	

Espar D2 0.10–0.28 L/h · Webasto AT2000 0.12–0.24 L/h (manufacturer specs) · working avg 0.15 L/h × 10 h × \$2.36/L (est. Oct 2026, AB fuel-tax change). Installed ~\$2,000–\$3,000 CAD (driver-reported) — pays for itself in about a month of winter nights. Even at -30 °C full blast (~\$7/night), it's 10× cheaper than idling.

ROOKIE MISTAKES

3 mistakes that cost real money

1. Idling all night "to stay warm"

\$70.80 a night — over \$1,340 a month — for heat a \$3.54/night bunk heater does better. The single most expensive habit in trucking.

2. Buying a block heater to heat the sleeper

A block heater warms the **engine block**, not the bunk. It won't keep you warm at 2 AM. Different job, different device.

3. Running the 12V cooler all night, unchecked

Cooler + blanket can pull a battery bank below crank voltage by morning. **Do the drain math first** — one no-start costs more than everything on this page.

\$70.80

BURNED EVERY NIGHT YOU IDLE
INSTEAD OF RUNNING A HEATER

THE KIT — WHAT TO BUY

Outfit the cab for winter.

Value-ranked for Canadian winter driving. Prices move — check the live price before buying.

SLEEP WARM	
Lucid 3" gel memory foam topper Truck-bunk friendly · best value	\$102.62
Zinus 6" green tea memory foam Thickest pick · max comfort	\$125.00
Linenspa 2" gel topper Budget entry	\$45–65
Akozon 12V heated fleece Cheapest way to stay warm	\$35.31
Camco 12V heated blanket Truck-stop classic	\$50.69
Buachois 59" 12V blanket Full-body coverage	\$64.49

HOT FOOD & COFFEE	
Rauwseul 12V electric kettle Boils water off the 12V socket	\$42.99
RoadPro 12V slow cooker Dinner cooks while you drive	\$75.45
AeroPress Go Real coffee, no power needed	\$69.95

BOOTS · -40° MORNINGS	
Kamik Canuck -40 °C rated · best value	\$124.99
Muck Arctic Sport Mid Driver favorite · easy on/off	\$152.99
Baffin Eiger Expedition-grade warmth	\$259.95

TOTAL STARTER KIT	
Budget build ≈ \$260 (Linenspa + Akozon + kettle + Kamik). Comfort build ≈ \$405 (Zinus + Camco + slow cooker + Muck). Either beats one month of idling.	

BEFORE THE FIRST COLD SNAP

Battery survival checklist.

Winter kills batteries. Run this list **before** the first cold snap — not after the first no-start.

- ☐ **Know your overnight draw.**
Cooler + blanket + phone on 12V all night adds up. Run the battery-drain calculator on thedrivergear.com before you trust it.
- ☐ **Blanket or wrap the batteries.**
Cheap insurance against a -30 °C no-start and a service call.
- ☐ **Load-test before November.**
A weak battery that starts the truck in October strands you in January. Replace in pairs.
- ☐ **Carry a lithium jump pack — charged.**
Top it up monthly; cold drains stored packs too.
- ☐ **Kill the "idle to recharge" myth.**
Idling barely charges at low RPM and burns about \$71 a night. Fix the draw or add capacity instead.

FIRST-WEEK WINS

Do these on day one.

1. Price your bunk heater install *now* — shops book out by November.
2. Buy boots before you need them; -40 °C mornings don't wait for shipping.
3. Pack the cab like you live there: kettle, blanket, and a real coffee setup beat every truck stop.
4. Learn your battery bank's amp-hours — it's the number that decides whether you start in the morning.

-30 °C is the night that separates prepared drivers from stranded ones. One no-start costs more than every item on this page combined. Preparation is cheaper than rescue.

