Winter Driving Guide

Here is our guide to help prepare you, your customers and employees prepare for winter driving conditions and ensure you drive safely on the roads.

Every year, more than 1700 people die on UK roads.

Another 30,000 receive serious, life-changing injuries.
The numbers are shocking, and there has been no significant reduction for more than a decade. - **Break, The Road Safety Charity**

Give yourself extra time to prepare your vehicle and complete your journey safely.

Handy Checklist Before You Set Off

- [ ] Fully defrost your vehicle and clear all snow, including from the roof.
- [ ] Clean lights, mirrors, and number plates; check wipers and replace if needed.
- [ ] Dry your shoes to prevent slipping on pedals.
- [ ] Carry warm clothes, snacks, and water in case of breakdown.
- [ ] Charge your phone before setting off and plan your route, sticking to treated roads.
- [ ] In rain, snow, or fog, manually switch on headlights if automatic lights don't activate.

Additional Vehicle Care

- Turn off auto wipers to avoid damage if they freeze.
- Switch off lights and heaters before starting the engine to protect the battery.
- Pre-condition electric cars while charging to save battery power.
- Drive occasionally to keep the battery charged.
- Wait 30 seconds between starting attempts if the car doesn't start.
- Top up anti-freeze and keep essentials like an ice scraper, de-icer, torch, and first aid kit in the car

REMINDER: Always allow other vehicles more room to allow for you or them skidding or aquaplaning.

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Driving in poor visibility or on icy and wet roads demands a cautious approach. Follow these key tips to stay safe in hazardous conditions:

Low Visibility:
- In heavy rain, snow, or hail, use dipped headlights and slow down to stay in control.

Winter Sun:
- Low sun can cause glare and impair vision. Use your sun visor and keep sunglasses handy.

Icy or Slippery Roads:
- Stopping distances can be up to ten times longer, so reduce speed and leave plenty of space to stop.
- Accelerate gently, using higher gears to avoid wheel spin.
- Steer and brake smoothly, avoiding sudden movements. Downshift early to slow down, and brake lightly.
- If you skid, ease off the accelerator and avoid slamming the brakes.

Foggy Conditions:
- Visibility can worsen quickly in fog. Drive slowly with dipped headlights on.
- Use fog lights in severely reduced visibility, but switch them off when conditions improve.
- Avoid following the vehicle ahead too closely and don't speed up if the fog clears briefly — it may return quickly.

Wet Roads:
- Stopping takes longer on wet surfaces. Leave extra space between vehicles to improve visibility and reaction time.
- If steering feels unresponsive, you may be hydroplaning. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually.
- Spray from other vehicles can reduce visibility, so keep a safe distance and use dipped headlights.

Flooded Roads:
- Avoid deep water if possible, and take an alternate route to prevent getting stranded.
- After crossing water, test your brakes to ensure they're working properly before resuming normal speed.