

## **Driving tips - in extreme weather**

If it is essential to use your vehicle in adverse weather conditions here are some tips to help keep you safe.

Always drive safely according to the weather conditions

## **Driving in Extreme Weather**

Extreme weather conditions and icy roads can make driving more difficult. There are lots of simple things that you can do to make your journey safer and less stressful during severe weather.

## **Travel and Transport - Safety in Extreme Weather**

By following the advice below you can help to make your journey safer and reduce delays for everyone.

## **Check and Service Your Vehicle**

Before winter check and service your vehicle, it is important to check that your vehicle is well maintained and serviced - you can reduce your chances of breaking down by servicing your car regularly.

## **Before your Journey**

- Check / Top up or add anti-freeze.
- Check / Top up windscreen washer bottle also add winter additive.
- Check for wear and tear on wiper blades / Replace them as soon as they start to smear rather than clean windows.
- Check your battery is fully charged if the battery is not reliable, replace it. (batteries last between 2 - 4 years)
- Check tyre pressures and that your tyres have plenty of tread, at least 3 millimetres of depth.
- Consider the use of winter tyres.
- Check lights are clear of dirt and spray, keep them clean and make sure all bulbs are working.
- Before driving off, make sure your windows, lights and mirrors are clear of mist, ice and snow, inside and out.

Consider whether you really need to travel - or can you delay your journey until conditions improve. If you do need to travel ensure you plan your journey.

## **Planning your Journey**

- Check the weather forecast and road conditions.
- Ensure your vehicle is ready for a journey in poor weather.
- Consider alternative routes and change your route if necessary.

## **Emergency Kits are Essential**

Carry an emergency kit in the car, an emergency kit should include:

- Ice scraper and de-icer.
- Torch and spare batteries.
- Battery jump leads.
- Warm clothes.
- Warning triangle.
- First aid kit.
- Map

For longer trips you may want to add:

- Snow shovel.
- A pair of boots and a blanket.
- Food and a thermos with a hot drink.

Because of the glare in snowy conditions sunglasses are also useful to help you see in the winter sun, finally make sure your mobile phone is fully charged.

## **During your Journey**

Be aware of changing road and weather conditions and listen to police warnings and to travel bulletins on local radio.

You may need to change the way you drive:

- Reduce speed.
- Increase stopping distance. (It can take up to 10 times longer to stop when driving in snow and ice)
- Use dipped headlights.
- Brake gently.

Even after roads have been treated in winter, driving conditions, can still remain challenging, especially if the road location and layout mean there is a high risk of ice.

Some common examples are:

- Hilly or exposed roads.
- Roads that pass under or over a bridge.
- Roads shaded by trees, buildings or other structures.
- Where there is less traffic use.
- Bends in the road where there is a greater risk of loss of control.

If you start to skid - press the clutch, steer into the skid and as you straighten, steer back along the road.

## **Don't let winter turn you into a Bad Driver**

Check the Highway Code information on 'Driving in adverse weather conditions'.  
This section covers driving in:

- Wet weather.
- Icy and snowy weather.
- Windy weather.
- Fog.
- Hot weather.