

WINTER DRIVING

Applied 
driving techniques

AVOIDING TRAVEL

Whether you like winter or long for the summer, these cold months bring unique problems and inconveniences which we should all be mindful of when driving. From dark afternoons, heavy rain, snow and winds the risks associated with travelling in winter can have severe consequences.

The best way to protect yourself is to not travel in adverse conditions or where they are predicted. Staying out of the incident-prone weather is the only sure fire way to protect you and those around you this winter.

We understand that avoidance isn't always possible and even the most prepared travellers can be caught out. When driving cannot be avoided, take note of the following tips to help keep you safe on the road.

TIPS FOR WINTER DRIVING

When driving in winter cannot be avoided, remind yourself of the following tips to help keep you safe on your journey



EMERGENCY KIT

You should always have an emergency kit in your vehicle. Winter-specific items you should consider adding are: a can of de-icer and an ice scraper; a torch in your glove box; warm clothes and blanket to hand; and a snow shovel.

Always avoid putting yourself into a situation where extreme weather items, like a shovel, may be necessary.



CHECK YOUR VEHICLE BEFORE LEAVING

Essential winter vehicle checks include:

- Keep your vehicle serviced.
- Check/replace the anti-freeze in the radiator.
- De-mist and de-ice your vehicle before setting off.
- Check tyre pressure and tread.
- Keep your windscreen clean.
- Replace damaged or worn wiper blades.



CHANGE YOUR STYLE

In winter, adapting your driving style is necessary to keep yourself and other road users safe.

Brake gently, avoid locking wheels, make use of any vehicle winter settings and allow extra distance at all times.



FOG & LOW SUN

Avoid driving in fog unless your journey is absolutely necessary. Consider alternative methods to travel.

Winter sun may be too low for your visor to help. Keep your windscreen clean inside and outside to reduce glare. If affected, reduce your speed. Remember to remove sunglasses whenever the sun goes in.



CHECK YOUR ROUTE

Checking your route should be commonplace throughout the year but is vital during winter.

Look at weather forecasts and check local travel news to plan your journey with potentially changing weather conditions.

If an alternative route looks less problematic, take it.



PICK YOUR TIME

If you're unable to avoid driving in bad weather, always consider your journey time.

Where possible, travel at off-peak times.

Statistically, the most dangerous time to drive is between 3-6pm with a quarter of all winter accidents occurring during these hours.

DRIVING IN SNOW

Snow can be one of the most frustrating and dangerous weather types. You may be scraping snow off your windscreen or, worst case scenario, spending a night in your vehicle. It is imperative to be prepared for all eventualities. Check out our tips to get you started:

- Clear any snow off your vehicle (including the roof) before you drive away.
- Look for signs of icy conditions before you set off (i.e. ice on nearby pavements or your windscreen).
- Drive as smoothly as possible.
- Avoid sudden braking as it may lock your wheels causing you to skid even further. Remember, distances are 10 times longer in snowy and icy conditions.