

## Stay safe on the roads this winter!



Ice and hail are two of the main hazards to look out for. However, preparing adequately and driving appropriately will help you stay safer

- ♦ Tyres – most UK cars come fitted with summer tyres, consider changing to winter or all weather tyres. no less than 3mm is recommended for safer driving. Check tyre pressures regularly as they can change once the temperature drops.
- ♦ Antifreeze – check coolant level, top up if it's low or take it to your local garage.
- ♦ Battery – a flat battery is the most common cause of winter breakdowns. Check yours is OK, your local garage or battery dealer can help.
- ♦ Fuel – keep at least a quarter of a tank in case of unexpected hold ups or delays.
- ♦ Lights – carry spare bulbs and make sure all lights are clean and working correctly.
- ♦ Windscreen – renew worn wiper blades and clean windscreen inside and out. Don't try and clear a frozen windscreen with wipers as it can damage the rubber. Don't defrost your windscreen by pouring boiling or hot water over it, as it could crack.
- ♦ Screenwash – use a 50% mix of good quality screenwash to stop it from freezing. Top up regularly – you'll use a lot more in the winter months.
- ♦ Locks and seals – stop doors freezing shut by using Vaseline or a similar product on rubber door seals.

**Our top tip is to take it slow. stopping distances can be 10 times longer when it's icy. Gentle manoeuvres and slow speeds are the key to safe driving in ice and snow.**

## Be ready for winter driving

Weather conditions will always affect the way we drive, and this is especially true in winter. Not only do cold temperatures mean it can take more time for your vehicle to get started, The weather in the UK is unpredictable at the best of times, so preparation is essential. 45% of drivers don't do any checks on their vehicle before winter starts, but knowing what to do and what you need could save your life.

Make sure you know how to look after your vehicle and adapt your driving, and you're more likely to have a safe journey.

The average winter temperature in the UK normally sits between 2°C and 7°C and often drops to just below 0°C. There is little temperature variation between different regions, but the north of England, Scotland, and Wales are more likely to experience heavy rain or snow. There is also the possibility of rain, hail, sleet, fog and winter sun.

### Things to check

- Is your MOT up to date?
- Are your lights clean and working Is your battery fully charged?
- Are your wiper blades in good condition? Is the screen wash bottle full?
- Is the antifreeze and oil at the correct level?
- Are your tyres in good condition?
- Are your windows fully de-misted? demisting your windscreen is an absolute necessity, and it's also important that any ice or snow is cleared from all windows, too. The Highway Code, rule 229 states that drivers must: Clean all lights. Demist all mirrors. Ensure number plates are visible. Remove any snow which may fall and obstruct the path of other drivers.



### It's a good idea to have an emergency kit, you should include:

- Tow rope, Hazard warning triangle, de-icing equipment.
- A shovel, a working torch, a first aid kit, boots and a high visibility jacket.
- Warm clothing, a blanket and hot drinks, some energy giving snacks and a fully charged phone.



## The last word



Dark days combined with foggy and misty weather all have an impact on visibility. To stay safe when walking, cycling or scooting to school remember about the importance of fluorescent and reflective materials on clothing.

Fluorescent fabrics work well during daylight and the hours of dusk but won't show up in the dark so it's important to also use reflective fabrics and consider adding reflective tape to bags and clothes to ensure you can be seen in the dark by car headlights.

Anyone cycling during winter months should ensure bike lights are clean and in good working order. It is against the law to cycle at night without a white front light, a red back light and a red reflector at the back of your bike.

Winter months mean fewer daylight hours but people still need to go out and about so it makes sense to do what you can to stay safe. Just a few simple changes can make all the difference, not just for children going to and from school but for everyone.



The be bright be seen game on the [Think website](#) is very useful for schools [Be bright be seen game – THINK!](#)