

Safe Winter Driving

Play your Part

The British weather is unpredictable. Bad weather can strike suddenly, if you must drive, make sure you are prepared for the conditions. Ask yourself – is your journey absolutely essential? The best thing to do in extremely bad weather is to stay off the road. Take heed of warnings not to go out, this leaves the emergency services free to deal with real emergencies instead of rounding up stranded motorists.

Please Note

- It takes time for the salt to become effective.
- Rain can wash salt off roads.
- In extremely low temperatures salting will not always prevent ice forming.

Winter Checks

In winter it is even more important to check that your vehicle is well maintained and serviced. Motorists should:

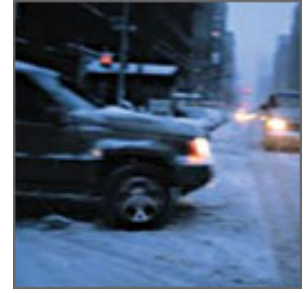
- Keep the lights, windows and mirrors clean and free from ice and snow.
- Add anti-freeze to the radiator and winter additive to the windscreen washer bottles.
- Make sure wipers and lights are in good working order.
- Check that tyres have plenty of tread depth and are maintained at the correct pressure.

Plan Ahead

- Ask yourself – is your journey absolutely essential?
- Check the weather forecast and road conditions.
- Consider alternative routes.
- Consider alternative modes of transport.
- Allow extra time for your journey.
- Ensure that your vehicle is prepared for the journey.
- Carry warm clothing, blankets, hot drinks, a torch, a shovel, and suitable footwear.
- Tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive.
- Visit the Scottish Executive website www.trafficscotland.org to identify any problems on the trunk roads.

During your Journey

- Reduce speed in bad weather.
- Increase stopping distances.
- Avoid sudden acceleration and braking.
- Use dipped headlights in poor conditions.
- Take breaks every two or three hours.
- Do not pass closed snow gates.
- Listen to travel bulletins.
- Observe information on Variable Message Signs.



If you get into Trouble

- Do not use a mobile phone when driving. Stop somewhere safe or ask the passenger to make the call.
- On a motorway, it is best to use a roadside emergency telephone, because the breakdown/emergency services will be able to locate you easily. If you have to use a mobile phone, make sure you know your location from the numbers on the marker posts on the side of the hard shoulder.
- Abandoned vehicles can hold up rescue vehicles and snowploughs. To ensure that the road is cleared as quickly as possible, stay with your vehicle until help arrives.
- If you leave your vehicle to get help, make sure other drivers can see you.
- Use engine to keep warm unless exhaust cannot vent.
- Keep an airway open if snowed over.

Other Types of Adverse Winter Conditions

Watch out for Fog

- It drifts rapidly and is often patchy.
- In foggy conditions, drive very slowly using dipped headlights.
- Use fog-lights if visibility is seriously reduced, but remember to switch them off when visibility improves.
- Don't hang on to the tail-lights of the vehicle in front.
- This gives you a false sense of security and means you may be driving too close.
- Don't speed up suddenly, even if it seems to be clearing. You can suddenly find yourself back in thick fog.

Winter Sun

- Dazzle from winter sun can be dangerous. If it is below the visor use sunglasses.

Flooded Roads

- Don't attempt to cross if the water seems too deep.
- Drive slowly in first gear but keep the engine speed high by slipping the clutch - this will stop you from stalling.
- Avoid the deepest water, usually near the kerb.
- Remember - test your brakes when you are through the flood before you drive at normal speed.

