

Be Prepared...

Preparing to go out in a vehicle



Driving in the cold

The best advice is to avoid driving in freezing road **conditions unless you really have to**. If you do have to travel you should spend some time planning your route and checking if there are any problems with it in terms of traffic or weather before you travel.

- Ensure your vehicle is well maintained.
 - Make sure exterior lights are working
 - Windscreen wiper blades should be in good condition
 - Check oil, coolant and washer fluid levels
 - Check condition of tyres and ensure they are at the correct pressure
 - Make sure you have enough screen wash and the concentration is right for cold conditions
- Make sure you've got everything you need in the vehicle before you set out, in case the unexpected happens:
 - Ice Scraper
 - Torch and spare batteries
 - Warm clothes and blankets
 - Boots
 - First aid kit
 - Jump leads
 - Shovel and reflective warning sign
 - Road Maps
 - Sunglasses
 - Mobile phone charger
- Check the RAC Traffic Information and Highway Agency Traffic Information for regular updates

What to do if your vehicle breaks down

- Ensure you have breakdown cover and keep the number of your provider stored in your mobile phone. Call then as soon as you can



- It's useful to have a reflective jacket, torch and warm waterproof clothes in the vehicle
- It's useful to have a mobile phone with GPS capability in case you don't know exactly where you are
- Always exit the vehicle through the doors on the left hand side and if there is a safety barrier stand behind it – it's important to stay well away from moving traffic
- Don't try to make repairs yourself, wait for a rescue vehicle
- Be patient but if you feel threatened sit in the passenger seat, lock the door and phone 999



Useful links from
the RAC

Before you travel...

www.rac.co.uk/advice/winter-driving/

If you break down...

www.rac.co.uk/advice/motoring-news/how-to-handle-a-vehicle-breakdown



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Snow & Ice

- Tyres should have adequate tread - poor tyres will not grip. You may wish to consider changing to winter tyres with deeper tread
- After snowfall, more time should be spent in the morning to clear vehicle windows, mirrors and roof
- A screenwash should protect down to temperatures of -35 to prevent water from freezing
- Never use hot or boiling water to defrost the outside of a vehicle. De-icer, a scraper and allowing enough time is recommended
- Be prepared for every eventuality by ensuring that your car is equipped with the following: demisting pad, torch (wind-up so you don't run out of battery), spare screenwash, de-icer, ice scraper, blanket, shovel, phone charger, map and a square of carpet that you can use to put under your drive wheels should you get stuck in the snow
- Leaving up to 10 times the recommended gap between you and the vehicle in front is advised during icy conditions
- When moving off consider using a higher gear or any winter driving assisted controls the vehicle may have
- During snow and ice, vehicle controls should be used slowly and smoothly
- Steer gently into a skid. Do not apply brakes sharply and keep control of the vehicle by keeping both hands on the steering wheel

Fog

- Visibility during fog is reduced significantly therefore drivers must reduce their speed
- Switch on fog lights
- Before setting off drivers should ensure all exterior lights are in good working order, in particular fog lights
- Lighting and heating use a lot more fuel than normal therefore drivers should make sure their fuel tank is full
- Headlights must be used when visibility is less than 100 metres

Wind

- Particular care should be taken during high winds when:
 - Crossing high exposed bridges
 - Approaching vehicles towing caravans or trailers
 - Passing long and heavy load vehicles including lorries or trucks
 - Using top or roof boxes
 - Debris on the road

Rain

- Using dipped headlights will ensure other drivers can see you more easily
- Spray from other vehicles reduce visibility therefore extra care should be taken when approaching or passing other vehicles
- The stopping distance during rain is increased. Reduce speed and increase the gap between other vehicles
- Plan your route and check the news for road closures, flooding and forecasts
- Fog lights should not be used during rain as they can mask your brake lights and blur the vision of other drivers
- If you break down keep the bonnet closed while waiting for recovery to avoid the electrical system getting wet
- Road surface water and speed can result in the tyres losing contact with the road which could lead to aquaplaning. To regain control of the vehicle, reduce your speed by easing off the accelerator - do not brake
- Driving fast through flooding can cause serious and expensive damage
- Be considerate to other road users and try not to spray pedestrians and cyclists as you drive through water