

## Winter driving tips for employees

Comment	Check/Comments
<p>Prepare your vehicle. It's a good idea to do a number of checks before winter really begins. Make sure all the lights are working, your wiper blades are in good condition, the vehicle is topped up with screen wash and anti-freeze, test your brakes and make sure your tyres have plenty of tread.</p>	
<p>Lights, heaters and wipers which put high demands on the car battery. If your driving is mainly dark rush-hour trips turn the heater fan down and switch the heated rear window off once windows are clear.</p>	
<p>Do you turn off non-essential electrical loads like lights, rear screen heater and wipers before trying to start the engine?</p>	
<p>If you hear a continuous squealing noise as soon as the engine is started, it may mean the water pump is frozen. Stop the engine immediately and allow it to thaw out. This may take several days unless the car can be moved to a heated garage.</p>	
<p>If the car begins to overheat a few miles from home it's likely that the radiator has frozen. Stop immediately and allow the radiator to thaw to avoid serious damage.</p>	
<p>Make sure that wipers are left in the off position when leaving the car because if the blades freeze to the screen, you could damage the blades or wiper motor when you turn the ignition on.</p>	
<p>If you have to clear snow from the car it's important to clear it from the lights - front and back to maintain visibility. In bad weather always use dipped headlights to increase visibility.</p>	
<p>Don't forget to clear snow from the roof of your vehicle – large lumps falling off as you drive can be a hazard to following vehicles.</p>	
<p>Consider changing to winter or all season tyres as they have special additives to prevent the tread hardening at lower temperatures and therefore gives better grip in cold and wet conditions.</p>	

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Clear all windows using a scraper and de-icer before you depart. Remember to stop frequently to clear off any snow that has accumulated during your journey.	
Plan routes to favour major roads which are more likely to have been cleared and gritted. Always listen closely to the weather forecasts and if the weather is going to be bad ask yourself if you really need to make the journey.	
If you have to go out in bad weather, go prepared, make sure someone knows where you're going and what time you are due to arrive.	
Allow extra time for winter journeys and be prepared to cancel appointments if necessary.	
Gentle manoeuvres are the key to safe driving in snow and ice – stopping distances are 10 times longer in ice and snow. Reduce your speed and increase the gap you leave to the vehicle in front of you.	
If you have to use brakes in ice or snow, apply them gently. Release the brake and de-clutch if the car skids.	
Take care when driving on exposed routes such as bridges or high open roads, delay your journey or find alternative routes if possible.	
Slow down and be aware of side winds, particular care should be taken if you are towing or are a high sided vehicle.	
Know what to do in snow and ice if your car is automatic – some automatic cars have special features to help you cope. Do you know what they are for your vehicle?	
Consider carrying an emergency kit in your vehicle in case you get caught in bad weather. This should consist of a shovel, towrope, torch, fully charged mobile phone, extra de-icing equipment, warm clothing or a car blanket and some emergency rations such as chocolate.	