



Winter Motoring

Keep yourself safe when the cold begins to bite. Winter exposes your car to particularly harsh conditions and places unique demands on drivers, making it more important than ever that you keep your car in the best possible condition and prepare yourself for every eventuality.

- Do regular checks on tyre pressures and condition, brakes and brake lights, and ensure the battery is fully charged. Top up your radiator with anti-freeze to prevent the coolant freezing.
- In particular, check your fog lights, but be sure to use them only when visibility is poor, because they can dazzle other road users and make your brake lights hard to see.
- Check your windscreen wipers – it's important they don't smear dirt on the screen. If the wipers are leaving streaks on the screen or are perished or split then replace them immediately.
- You'll use far more screen wash than normal because of the spray thrown up by damp, salty roads, so make sure you keep it topped up.
- Check engine oil levels, and if topping it up ensure you use the correct grade for your car.
- Tune your radio to the latest traffic information – there are more accidents and hold-ups in winter.
- Carry de-icer and a windscreen scraper. Ensure you can see through all the windows before driving off.
- Always leave enough time to thoroughly demist the inside of the car. Don't drive off until you have good all-round visibility and the car's blower is blowing hot air to prevent re-misting.
- Keep sunglasses in the car – they can help you cope with glare from a low sun, especially if it is being reflected off snow or rain.
- Carry a phone charger with you, because cold temperatures may make the battery discharge faster. Store relevant breakdown service contact numbers into your phone just in case.
- Always carry a waterproof jacket, a high-visibility vest, warm clothing, gloves, boots and a torch in the car in case you get stuck in treacherous conditions.
- Carry a bottle of sealed water and some chocolate in the car in case of emergencies. If you should ever get caught in a long queue in winter, or a snowdrift, these will be important in keeping you hydrated and your blood sugar levels up – very important if you're stranded and cold.
- Carry a warning triangle so that you can warn oncoming traffic of your vehicle's presence.
- Don't abandon your car at the roadside unless you must – it could hinder emergency vehicles.
- Don't wait in your car unless conditions demand it – you are far safer outside the vehicle and away from the road. If you need to wear your high-visibility vest so other motorists can see you.