

# WINTER DRIVING TIPS

- Do not 'hang on' to the rear lights of the car in front as you will be too close to be able to brake safely
- Switch off distracting noises and open the window slightly so that you can listen for other traffic, especially at crossroads and junctions
- Beware of speeding up immediately visibility improves slightly. In patchy fog you could find yourself 'driving blind' again only moments later
- If you break down, inform the police and get the vehicle off the road as soon as possible. Never park on the road in fog and never leave it without warning lights of some kind if it is on the wrong side of the road

## f) Driving in windy conditions

- Keep both hands on the wheel
- Keep your speed down; this will reduce how far you can be blown off course
- Avoid driving high sided vehicles
- Be aware of debris on the road; in particular trees and tree branches. Keep your speed down and drive with care particularly early morning and after dark
- Keep your distance from other vehicles — they may be blown into your path; take especial care around high sided vehicles, caravans, cyclists and motorcyclists

## g) Low sunshine

- Reduce your speed
- Keep the inside and outside of the windscreen clean and grease free; this will reduce the effect of glare
- If you wear sunglasses ensure that you remove them whenever the sun goes in. They should not be worn in duller weather or at night as they will reduce your ability to see

## IF THE WORST HAPPENS

- Don't panic
- Stay with your vehicle and call the Emergency Service on your mobile
- Advise your manager of the situation

## EMERGENCY KITS

Headland provide the following emergency kit in each vehicle. Please check that all items are present before starting a journey:

- Tow rope
- A shovel
- A hazard warning triangle
- De-icing equipment
- First aid kit
- Working torch
- Emergency blanket

In addition you should ensure that you bring the following with you:

- Emergency rations
- Warm clothes
- Wellington boots/safety boots
- Mobile phone (fully charged)



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# SAFE WINTER DRIVING

### 1. Prepare your vehicle, check

- Lights are clean and working
- Battery is fully charged
- Windscreen, wiper blades and other windows are clean and clear of snow and the washer bottle is filled with screen wash
- Roof, bonnet and boot are clear of snow
- Tyre condition, tread depth and pressure
- Brakes are working well
- Fluids are kept topped up, especially windscreen wash, anti-freeze and oil

### 2. Prepare your journey

- Check the weather forecast
- Make sure your manager knows where you going and when you plan to arrive
- plan your route
- plan alternative routes in case you're planned route is impassable/diverted
- check your emergency kit
- keep your fuel tank filled so you don't run out
- check that your mobile phone is fully charged
- avoid the journey if advised by the emergency services; if necessary postpone your trip, use public transport (if running) or avoid the journey by using the phone, skype or email

### 3. Prepare yourself

- Before setting off consider the conditions and how they may affect your driving — do not just drive as normal
- If you have a cold or flu your driving might be affected, particularly if you are taking medication — in which case do not drive

## 4. Tips for driving in winter

### a) Snow and ice

- Reduce your speed; snow and ice increase your chances of skidding
- Always drive to the conditions as legal speed limits may be too fast to safely drive at
- Avoid harsh braking and acceleration, or sharp steering
- Reduce your speed smoothly and in plenty of time
- Allow plenty of time to slow down before bends and corners
- Braking on an icy or snow covered bend is extremely dangerous. The centrifugal force will continue to pull you outwards and the wheels will not grip very well. This could cause your vehicle to spin
- To avoid locking your wheels, change down to a lower gear early and allow your speed to fall braking gently
- You may need up to ten times the normal braking distance so allow a larger gap than normal between you and the vehicle in front
- Keep your vehicle well ventilated. The car heater turned up to full can make you drowsy quickly
- In snow, stop frequently to clean the windows, wheel arches, lights and number plates
- Visibility will likely be reduced so use dipped headlights
- Be aware that road surfaces are often wet and covered by frost, ice and snow, which will not uniformly cover the road

### b) If you get stuck

- Revving your engine to try and power out of the rut will just make the rut worse. Instead, move your vehicle slowly backwards and forwards out of the rut using the highest gear you can
- If this doesn't work you may have to ask a friendly passerby for a push or get your shovel out

### c) If you get caught in a snow drift

- Do not leave your vehicle
- Call your breakdown service or the emergency services and let them come help you
- Don't run the engine to keep warm

### d) Driving in rain/wet conditions

- Reduces your ability to see and increases the distance required to slow down and stop. You will need at least twice your normal braking distance to brake safely
- Use windscreen wipers, washers and dipped headlights, drive smoothly and plan your moves in plenty of time
- Beware of aquaplaning. This is caused by driving too fast into surface water. When your tyre tread cannot channel away enough water, the tyre(s) lose contact with the road surface and your car will float on a wedge of water. Reduce your speed in wet conditions to avoid this
- On flooded roads avoid the deepest water — usually near the kerb
- Do not attempt to cross flooded roads if it seems too deep
- If unsure of depth look for an alternative route
- Drive slowly and carefully through flooded areas and test your brakes when you are through the flood

### e) Driving in fog

- Follow weather forecasts and general advice to drivers in the local and national media
- Allow plenty of time for your journey
- Check your car before you set off. Make sure everything, particularly the lights, is in good working order
- Reduce your speed
- Switch on headlights and foglights if visibility is reduced
- If you can see the vehicles to your rear the drivers behind can see you — switch off your rear fog lamps to avoid dazzling them
- Use the demister and windscreen wipers