

Winter Driving.

Act NOW, before bad weather arrives.

Use **POWER** to remember some basic vehicle checks:

[Many garages will carry out free winter checks - its worth asking]

- P Petrol (fuel):** Is there more than enough for the journey (in case of delays or diversions)?
- O Oil:** Check levels and top up as necessary
- W Water:** Check radiator level, add anti-freeze and top up as necessary
TIP: Top your washer bottle up with cleaning solution (it acts as antifreeze!)
- E Electrics:** Do all lights and bulbs work; have you spares?
Is your battery reliable? (TIP: a typical battery lasts for 5 years)
- R Rubber:** Tyres; is there plenty of tread? (TIP: at least 3mm for bad weather; but 5mm is ideal)
Are they correctly inflated? (TIP: check your handbook) Are the wiper blades efficient?

Are YOU, the driver, ready?

First things first, is your journey really necessary? Only travel if you absolutely have to. Impairments make your job harder – e.g. drink or drugs affect reaction times and ability to concentrate, as do mobile phones and fatigue. Allow more than enough time for your journey – it takes longer to travel in bad weather.

TIP: If you have to clear ice from the windows, this indicates that the road is freezing too, even if the inside of the car feels warm!

If the weather is really bad, here's a checklist of items you may need to take with you:

- Mobile phone
- Warm clothing
- Waterproof boots / shoes
- Hi-vis jacket or vest
- Sunglasses in case of low sun
- Flask of hot drink
- Bottle of water
- Food or snacks
- Torch
- Shovel
- A mat, some cardboard, a piece of old carpet or sacking – in case you get stuck in snow!

Find out more at
www.kentroadsafety.com



Driving in bad weather.

Rain • Fog • Snow • Ice

A third of all crashes happen on roads that are wet or frozen. Many crashes in bad weather happen because of 'bad driving'; if it were the weather's fault, wouldn't everyone who travels crash? 'Good driving' is planning ahead: spot the hazards early, avoid harsh *braking*, harsh *steering* and harsh *acceleration*.

What are the main problems?

Stopping

- Skids are caused by sudden, harsh movements or late decisions
- Assume the road is always slippery
- Use gentle gear changes in good time to lessen the need to brake

Steering

- Don't steer whilst braking, it can induce a skid
- Gently brake before cornering, it helps you get your speed right

Seeing and Being Seen

- Reduced visibility is likely; use lights and slow down
- Fog lights can dazzle others, only use when visibility is less than 100m
- Expect to meet stationary traffic somewhere

Space and Time

- If you have these you can avoid most bad situations
- A 2 second gap is OK in good weather, on a wet road try to double it and on ice make it 10 times longer.

Speed

- The faster you go, the more space and time you need to stop
- Preserve space and time by managing your speed

Skids

- If the worst happens and you start to skid, take your feet off all of the pedals, until the wheels grip once more
- A skid means a vehicle is out of control and generally it will skid in the direction that the heaviest part (the engine) is moving. The best way of dealing with a skid is not to get into one in the first place!

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