

## **Road Safety video links and information**

### **Vehicle Safety Checks**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h85dm5Znalw>

### **Advice for getting back on the road**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cazYDKPdLXY>

### **Blue Light Aware**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=btRHvQEIkcu>

### **Driving on Country Roads**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mDk-Bin3luc>

### **Notify DVLA regarding Health Conditions**

<https://www.gov.uk/driving-medical-conditions>

## Standards of vision for driving

You must be able to read (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after 1 September 2001 from 20 metres.

You must also meet the minimum eyesight standard for driving by having a visual acuity of at least decimal 0.5 (6/12) measured on the [Snellen scale](#) (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) using both eyes together or, if you have sight in one eye only, in that eye.

You must also have an adequate field of vision - your optician can tell you about this and do a test.

## Advice for towns and built up areas

It's really important to consider other road users when you're travelling in built-up areas. Here are five ways we can all keep safe on the roads in town:

- 1. Stop speeding before speeding stops you**

You are seven times as likely to kill a pedestrian if you hit them at 30mph rather than 20mph.<sup>1</sup>

- 2. Pay extra attention at junctions**

Research shows almost half (49%) of pedestrian casualties happen at junctions and less than half of drivers (47%) look out for pedestrians at junctions. Therefore, it's important to take your time and an extra look before crossing or turning at a junction.<sup>2</sup>

- 3. Read the road**

Is the road busy? What's the weather like? Figures show 95% of accidents involving pedestrians happen in built-up areas, with most casualties occurring during the evening commute or after lunch at weekends. It's definitely worth checking in with what's going on around you and adjusting your speed and route appropriately.<sup>3</sup>

- 4. Try not to rush**

More than half admit to taking risks – jumping amber lights or travelling over the speed limit – just to get somewhere seconds earlier. Accidents can happen when people are in a rush, so always leave enough time for your journey. And when it's busy, the best approach is to take a breath, and keep your speed in check.<sup>4</sup>

- 5. Watch out for unexpected hazards**

One in twenty admit to travelling on 'autopilot' every day and not paying full attention, so keep your eyes peeled. Unexpected hazards, such as roadworks or a speeding vehicle may be just around the corner.<sup>4</sup>

## Things to consider

Before you set off, think through these key points:

- Is your journey necessary? If so, what's the best route to take?
- When is the best time to travel? Don't forget to check the weather conditions.
- Is your vehicle ready for the road? How are the tyres? The lights? Does everything work properly?
- How are you? Are you fit to drive? Could health problems, tiredness, medicines, alcohol or drugs impair your driving?

## Your Passengers

As a driver of a vehicle you should make sure that your passengers are safe.

- All occupants must wear a seatbelt (if fitted).
- Passengers should always try and enter and exit the car on the pavement side of the vehicle.

Children should be properly restrained in an appropriate car seat, or adult belt if they are over 135 cm or the age of 12. There are very few exemptions to seatbelt and child restraint legislation. The full legal requirements can be found [here](#). The law covering child car seats can be found [here](#).

For more information and advice on child restraints, visit: [Child Car Seats](#) or [Good Egg Car Safety](#).

## Driving in adverse weather conditions

Weather conditions in the UK have become so changeable over the last few years from blistering heat to biblical downpours to thick snow, we've had it all! As we adapt to these extreme weather conditions so should our driving styles to navigate the roads as safely as possible. Here is a quick guide to help you adapt you're driving to suit the circumstances:

### Wet weather

When braking in wet weather your car's [stopping distances](#) can be double what they would be on dry roads as the tyres will have less grip with all the surface water between the tyre and the road. If the tyres aren't gripping the road properly you may notice that the steering is unresponsive, this is known as [aquaplaning](#). If this happens you need to gradually slow down easing off the accelerator as you go.

To keep yourself and other motorists safe you should keep plenty of distance between you and the vehicle in front. Often visibility is reduced from the surface spray from the road

even if the rain has stopped, so extra precautions should be taken when driving in wet weather.

### **Icy and snowy weather**

It is advisable where possible to avoid driving in ice and snow unless it is for essential travel. Should you need to, make sure you allow extra time for the journey. Before setting off ensure you have good visibility, clear any snow or ice from your windows and de-mist all the mirrors and windows thoroughly. It is vital that you are visible to other motorists too so ensure the lights are working, they've been cleaned and cleared of snow and ice and the number plates are clearly visible. Clean off any snow from your car roof that could fall into the road when you are driving. Before setting off, ensure you [check the pressure of your tyres](#) and the [tyre tread depths](#) to help improve grip on wet roads. If possible, consider replacing your tyres with [All-season tyres](#) which adapt to the varying weather conditions.

In case you get stranded or your car breaks down it is recommended that motorists carry a torch, de-icer and an ice scraper, a first aid kit, some warm clothing and boots, a shovel and a set of jump leads. You may also consider packing a warm drink and some food.

Once you have set off, it is vital you drive with care keeping a good distance back from the car in front. Drive at low speeds, braking very gently. If the road is icy try driving slowly in a high gear. Avoid making any sudden manoeuvres, even roads that have been treated with salt or de-icing products can be treacherous.

### **Windy weather**

Strong gusts of wind can blow even the most experienced drivers off course. Care must be taken when travelling in high winds especially if you are driving at high speeds near high-sided vehicles and motorcycles.

### **Fog**

Fog seemingly just appears from nowhere and suddenly visibility is very poor. When driving through the fog ensure you slow down, use your lights and stay well back from the vehicle in front. If necessary, use your de-misters and windscreen wipers to clear your vision. Be aware of your surroundings and other road users, especially those who are not using their lights. Always check your mirrors and be alert. If visibility is particularly poor then put your fog lights on, be mindful though that these can dazzle oncoming drivers so only use them when necessary.

### **Hot weather**

Steering and braking are the main areas that can be affected by hot weather conditions as the road surface softens in the heat. Rain following a hot spell can lead to slippery surfaces. Bright sunshine can cause visibility issues, so slow down and take care when driving.

## Flooding

Flooding can happen any time thanks to rain, blocked drains, burst water mains, tides and burst river banks.

You'll probably hear warnings of sea or river-related flooding from the Environment Agency, or on the news, but surface water flooding from heavy rain or drains that can't cope is harder to predict and can be very localised.

If you hear there's flooding on the way, move your car to higher ground to stop it getting damaged. Water plays havoc with electrics and can even cause airbags to go off suddenly some time later.



### Heavy rain

- Turn your headlights on – the Highway Code says you must use them when visibility is seriously reduced (less than 100m).
- Use fog lights if you like, but switch them off when visibility improves.
- Leave twice as much space between you and the car in front – it takes longer to stop in the wet.
- If your steering feels light due to [aquaplaning](#), ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually.

- If you break down don't prop the bonnet open while you wait. Rain-soaked electrics can make it harder to start the engine.

#### Floods and standing water

- Try to avoid standing water if you can.
- Don't drive into flood water that's moving or more than 10cm (4 inches) deep. Let approaching cars pass first.
- Drive slowly and steadily so you don't make a bow wave.
- Test your brakes as soon as you can afterwards.
- Fast-moving water is very powerful – take care or your car could be swept away.

If you do get stuck in flood water, it's usually best to wait in the car and call for help rather than try to get out.

#### Why slow down?

Driving fast through water is dangerous, inconsiderate and can end up being very expensive.

Your tyres can lose contact with the road, causing you to lose steering control – called aquaplaning. If you feel it happening, hold the steering lightly and lift off to slow down gently until your tyres grip again.

At anything above a slow crawl you'll throw water onto pavements, soaking pedestrians or cyclists. You could be fined and get points on your licence for this.

It only takes an egg cupful of water to be sucked into your engine to wreck it, and on many cars the engine's air intake is low down at the front.

#### What to watch out for

- Look out for slip and trip hazards like kerbs under the water.
- Manhole covers can get lifted and moved.
- Water levels can change quickly.
- Assume that flood water is contaminated:
  1. Urban flood water can carry dangerous bacteria from drains and sewers that could cause disease.
  2. Rural flood water is more likely to be contaminated by agricultural chemicals and animal waste.

#### Fords

Just because the road goes into the river on one side and comes out on the other, that doesn't mean a ford is safe to cross. The depth and speed of the water changes with the weather.

[More on safely fording a river.](#)

## Floodwater facts

- Most drowning deaths happen within only 3m of a safe point.
- Two thirds of those who die in flood-related accidents are good swimmers.
- A third (32%) of flood-related deaths are in vehicles.
- Cold water reduces your muscle strength – 20 minutes in water at 12C lowers muscle temperature from 37°C to 27°C, reducing strength by 30%.
- Just 15cm of fast-flowing water can knock you off your feet and be enough for you not to be able to regain your footing.
- It's a challenge to stand in waist-deep water flowing at only 1m/s. By 1.8m/s (4mph) everyone is washed off their feet.
- If the speed of the flood water doubles, the force it exerts on you or your car goes up four times.
- Just 60cm of standing water will float your car.
- Just 30cm of flowing water could be enough to move your car.
- A mere egg cupful of water could be enough to wreck an engine.
- Flood water can be contaminated and carry diseases.
- Culverts (tunnels carrying water under a road) are dangerous when flooded – the siphon effect can drag in pets, children and even fully grown adults.