



Winter driving

If you have to drive, here's the advice

The Facts

- The performance of standard tyres deteriorates when the temperature drops below 7°C [1]
- Frost and wet patches can linger in some areas after they have disappeared elsewhere - under trees, crossing bridges, areas exposed to winds, areas shadowed by buildings [2]
- ABS systems will be less effective on ice and snow, increasing stopping distances [2]
- Black ice is hard to spot and is caused by rain falling on an already frozen surface [2]

The Advice

- Re-fuel the night before the journey; check radio/TV for traffic and weather updates
- Keep breakdown recovery contact numbers in the vehicle
- Do a **POWDER** check: **P**etrol or diesel for the journey; sufficient **O**il and other fluids? **W**ater for washers, radiator, drinking; **D**amage to lights, windows, mirrors, number plates; **E**lectrics - bulbs, wipers, horn and warning lights, **R**ubber; tyres, wiper blades
- Remove ice and snow from all windows before moving off; keep windows clear thereafter
- Set dashboard air outlets towards door windows to improve wing mirror visibility
- Use dipped headlights so that others can see you
- Only travel at a speed at which you will be able to stop within the distance you can see to be clear
- Avoid harsh braking and acceleration or aggressive steering, as these actions can lead to skids; reduce your speed smoothly and use brakes gently
- Drive in the highest gear as soon as possible but ensure it offers engine braking when the accelerator is released, crucial when descending slopes or hills
- When in snow and ice, use engine braking through the gears; just touch the brake pedal lightly to show brake lights to others behind
- A lack of road noise could indicate the presence of ice. Increase your following distance by ten times when driving on ice
- Fresh snow can provide better grip at low speeds than compacted snow, which is effectively ice
- On a journey, take: high visibility jacket, torch, mobile phone & charger, warning triangle, spare bulbs, serviceable spare tyre and first aid kit
- Other essential equipment: de-icer & screen wash, shovel, non-slip carpet to place under driving wheels if stuck, warm clothes, drinking water, high grip boots/shoes, snow chains/tyre socks, jump leads and tow rope

Sources [1] Michelin Tyres 2013 [2] AA DriveTech 2010