

APRIL SHOWERS

We're heading towards April, the month known for rain, and based on the downpours already this year we should probably expect a wet month. Cars aren't waterproof and will break down if they are driven through deep water, so avoid this wherever possible. Apart from the obvious safety risks, this can lead to catastrophic engine failure and massive damage to electrical systems that will be extremely expensive to put right.

What's more likely for most drivers is that you will need to drive through shallower water at some point which your vehicle should be able to cope with. Bear these points in mind though, and if you are in any doubt find an alternative route or simply stay put.



Driving fast through standing water is dangerous

Tyres lose contact with the road and you lose steering control – something known as 'aquaplaning'. If this happens, hold the steering wheel lightly and lift off the throttle until the tyres regain grip.



If steering becomes unresponsive, stay calm

This probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually.



Test your brakes immediately after driving through flood water

Drive slowly over a flat surface and press the brakes gently until you are sure they are working.



Don't drive through flood water

There may be hidden dangers like open manhole covers and sections of road or pavement that have been swept away. Even if you know the local area well, lots of water on the roads can change their appearance and mask hidden hazards. If you have to go through water, try to drive as slowly and steadily as possible on the highest section of the road.



If your engine cuts out after driving through deep water, do not attempt to restart it

This may cause engine damage. Instead, call for assistance and have the vehicle professionally examined.



Breaking down in torrential rain

Keep the bonnet closed while waiting for help to arrive to avoid the electrical system getting soaked.



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