

SAFE DRIVING IN HEAVY RAIN, FLOODS AND HIGH WINDS



ARVAL
BNP PARIBAS GROUP

We care about cars.
We care about you.

Heavy rain and floods

Driving in wet conditions can be hazardous and even drivers with local knowledge can be caught out during heavy downpours. Consider whether your journey is really necessary. Check weather forecasts and traffic news. In bad weather conditions, the safest journey is the one that you don't make.



Most vehicles will start to float in just 60cm of water and 30cm of flowing water is enough to move your vehicle.



Beware! 32% of flood-related deaths are by drowning in a vehicle.



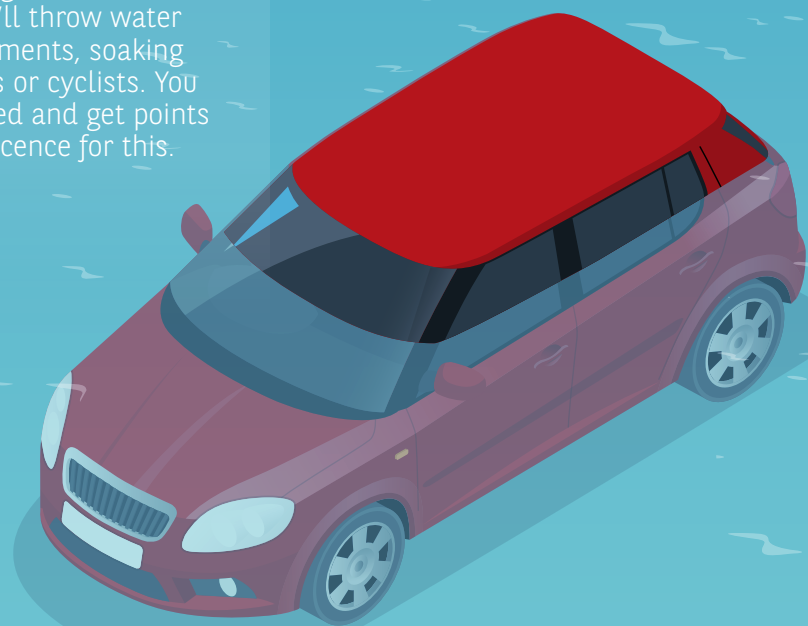
The engine's air intake is low down at the front of many cars and it can take just an egg cup of water in the combustion chamber to wreck an engine.



In wet weather, stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry surfaces.



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.





If you really have to travel, bear these points in mind...



Set off earlier to avoid rushing.

Give yourself time to take the care and attention the weather demands.



Check your tyres.

Greater demands are made on them in poor driving conditions, so make sure they are correctly inflated and in good condition.



Ensure that your windscreen wiper blades are fully functional.

If both front and back blades are not up to scratch, get them replaced.



Slow down.

If visibility is poor or the road is wet or icy, it will take you longer to react to hazards and your speed should be reduced accordingly.



Maintain a safe gap behind the vehicle in front.

Leave extra space between you and the car in front - it takes longer to stop in the wet.



Look out for vulnerable road users.

Be aware that people on foot, bicycles, motorbikes and horses are harder to spot in adverse weather or in the dark.



Be aware of warning and speed restriction signs.

These will help you to negotiate routes more safely.



Stay in control.

Avoid harsh braking and acceleration and carry out manoeuvres slowly and with extra care.



Use headlights and fog lights when necessary.

The Highway Code says you must use your headlights when visibility is seriously reduced (less than 100m), and should also consider using front or rear fog lights, but you must switch them off when visibility improves.

In the event you hit heavy rain or flood water

Many rain-related breakdowns are easily avoidable as they are often caused by driving through deep standing water. So don't. Cars aren't waterproof and will break down if they are driven through deep water. 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.

You may be able to drive through shallower water but bear these points in mind 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 accelerator 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.



Breaking down in torrential rain.

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



Test your brakes immediately after driving through floodwater.

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.

Driving in high winds

Driving in windy weather can be extremely hazardous. Here is some advice to help you stay as safe as possible in extreme conditions.



Keep an eye on how the wind is affecting other vehicles.

Be very careful when overtaking high-sided vehicles.

In very windy weather your vehicle may be affected by turbulence created by large vehicles. Motorcyclists are particularly affected, so keep well back from them when they are overtaking a high-sided vehicle.



Keep extra distance between you and the car in front.

Consider increasing the two-second braking rule to three seconds or more and slow down.



Make sure that you park your car in a safe place.

Avoid parking under trees and consider how close you park to buildings.

If conditions are too hard to cope with, pull over and stop.

Sources:

- Highway code rule 226 - www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code/driving-in-adverse-weather-conditions-226-to-237
- AA.com - www.theaa.com/driving-advice/seasonal/driving-through-flood-water

 ArvalUnitedKingdom  @Arval_UK  ArvalUKLtd  Arval United Kingdom

Arval UK Limited (Whitehill House, Windmill Hill, Swindon, SN5 6PE. Registration number 1073098. VAT Registration GB 202 1441 76) is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority | Email: info@arval.co.uk | Telephone: 01793 887000



ARVAL
BNP PARIBAS GROUP

**We care about cars.
We care about you.**