

DRIVING INTO WINTER

As the mornings and evenings darken, and the weather takes a turn for the worse, we've some handy tips to help keep you safe and keep you moving.



The bare essentials

These should be checked at least once a month all year round, but are even more important as we transition into Autumn and Winter.



Tyres

It's vital to regularly check tread depth and tyre pressures - you should change your tyres as soon as the tread reaches 2mm. Always check your tyre pressures when they're cold.

Tyre replacements can be booked quickly and easily online, or via our Arval DriverLine, with ATS.

Our preference is to fit Michelin Cross Climate tyres as they're market leading for longevity, durability and safety. They're the first standard tyre to achieve "3 Peaks" accreditation as a winter tyre, so their year round performance is particularly suited to UK weather - and you don't have to change them seasonally.

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Arval DriverLine (0370 600 4499 - available 24/7)



Fluid levels

Check your oil level and keep it topped up, but don't overfill it. You should also check coolant and brake fluid levels and arrange for a top-up through your local garage.



Windscreen

Keep the washer fluid topped up and check the wiper blades, replacing if necessary.



Lights

Make sure your front, rear and fog lights and indicators are clean and working properly.

Come rain or shine

It's really important to adjust your driving to suit the weather conditions. Here are some ways you can combat the winter weather, but always remember to slow down when driving in snow, ice and rain.



Snow or ice

- It can take up to **ten times longer to stop** when the roads are icy
- Avoid sudden braking, sharp turns, or sudden increases in speed
- If you encounter black ice, don't brake quickly or make any sudden steering movements, but do ease off the accelerator and go slowly.



Rain

- It can take up to **twice as long to stop** when the roads are wet compared to when they are dry
- If you begin to lose traction or 'aquaplane', take your foot off the accelerator and slow down - don't brake hard
- Spray can make it hard to see; slow down and keep your distance from other vehicles.



Floods

- Don't try to drive through flooded areas if the water seems deep. If you have to go through a flood, drive slowly in first gear to avoid stalling the engine
- Avoid the deepest water, which is usually near the kerb
- If you have driven through a flood, test your brakes afterwards. Only drive on at your usual speed if the brakes are working well.



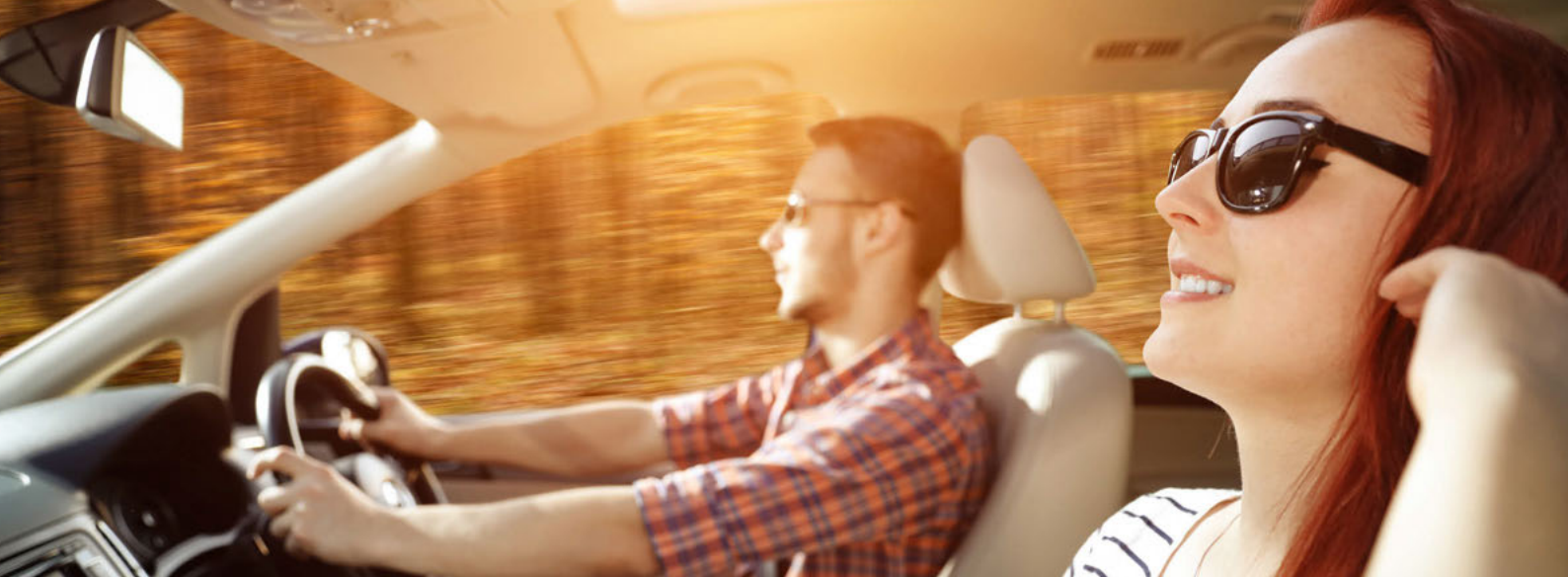
Fog

- Drive slowly and use dipped headlights / fog lights so that other vehicles can see you
- Don't drive too close behind another vehicle.



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And don't forget...



Run it

Car batteries are under extra pressure in the colder months due to the extra demands of running heating fans and lights. Short journeys can put extra strain on the battery so try to plan a longer run occasionally.



Clean it

Keep your lights, windows and windscreen clean and clear - see and be seen!



Service it

Make sure your car is regularly serviced in-line with the manufacturer's recommended service intervals. This can be found in your vehicle handbook.



Extra care

Take extra care when the clocks have changed, as you may not be used to driving in the dark. Look out for vulnerable road users, particularly at the most risky times of the day.



Telephone numbers

Add useful telephone numbers to your mobile phone. For example, your breakdown provider or emergency contacts.



Distractions

Minimise distractions and never use your mobile phone whilst driving.



Don't drink and drive

Make sure you're fit to drive. Never drink and drive or take medication that impacts your driving. Get your eyes checked and don't drive if you are tired.



Extra space

Leave extra space around you: thinking space, braking space and manoeuvring space.



Pack it

Carry an emergency kit with you. We recommend:

- Hi-vis vests for all occupants, not just the driver
- Mobile phone (charged)
- De-icer spray and ice scraper
- Torch and fully charged batteries
- Warm clothes and blanket
- Food and water
- Boots or suitable footwear
- First-aid kit
- Battery jump leads
- Warning triangle
- Spade (to dig your car out of snow)



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