

Is your vehicle ready for winter?

Information from the Highways Agency

Breaking down is never a pleasant experience – especially if you have to wait for recovery in the cold. You'll also want your vehicle to be in the best condition to handle difficult driving conditions in severe weather.

This handy reminder for pre-journey checks is called the **POWDERY** checklist:

- **PETROL** (or diesel). Don't run out of fuel
- **OIL** - check levels once a month
- **WATER** - check radiator and screenwash once a month
- **DAMAGE** - check wipers, lights etc for signs of wear and tear or damage
- **ELECTRICS** - check lights, indicators and controls are working properly
- **RUBBER** - are your tyres well inflated, legal, with good tread and free from damage?
- **YOURSELF** - are you fit to drive? Have you slept well? Are you taking any medication(s) that could make it unsafe for you to drive?

Carry an emergency kit

Keep these items in your vehicle from the start of winter, you never know when you might need them!

- ♣ Ice scraper and de-icer ♣ Torch and spare batteries - or a wind-up torch
- ♣ Warm clothes and blankets - for you and all passengers ♣ Boots ♣ First aid kit
- ♣ Jump leads ♣ A shovel ♣ Road atlas ♣ Sunglasses (the low winter sun and glare off snow can be dazzling)

Be informed – check the latest traffic and weather

• Before you set off

In severe and wintry weather it's even more important to plan your journey. The Highways Agency for example provides the latest traffic situation for England's motorways and major A roads.

• Road and weather conditions may change, drive with care

When you're on the road, pay attention to the changing road, traffic and weather conditions. Be ready to slow down and take more care if you need to, particularly on bends and exposed roads. Don't be lulled into a false sense of security - even if you drive every day on the same stretch of road.

Additional information and advice on driving in adverse weather conditions is available in the Highway Code or by visiting the [gov.uk website](http://gov.uk/website).

• Updates on the move

Keep listening to the radio for traffic and weather updates. On motorways, look out for overhead message signs where the Highways Agency will flash up important travel messages, including warning you of delays and advising of alternative routes.

• When you take a break

On long journeys, consider taking a break at regular intervals - and that's an ideal time to check the traffic conditions on the road ahead.

For example, the Highways Agency has information screens displaying live traffic updates at most motorway service areas.

For more information visit: www.highways.gov.uk/winter