

Press Release: **Tips that could keep you safe: Driving in snow and ice**

Most of us have very little experience of driving in extreme conditions, such as snow, so we need to take some time to consider how it affects our driving. That's why, Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service is advising drivers to take extra care this winter.

Andy Ford, Road Safety Manager, Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Plan ahead, monitor the weather forecasts and weather warning in your area. Take into account potentially longer travel times and be prepared for delays and disruption.

"Ensure your car has enough oil and water, check your windscreen wipers and washer bottle, clear all your windows so you can see and make sure that your battery is in good condition. And it's also very important to check your tyres are in good condition and have more than the minimum tread depth. Remember to drive to the conditions; stopping distances can be more than ten times longer on snow and ice."

A single journey may go through a range of very different weather, road and traffic conditions, so drivers need to be prepared for each one. This means adapting the way we drive. Drivers need to be prepared for the possibility that they may get stuck in the snow.

Do you have a shovel in the boot? Have you got a blanket or extra coat with you in the vehicle? Got a drink with you, preferably a hot one? Don't forget to make sure your phone is charged up before you leave, in case you get stranded and need to contact loved ones or the emergency services.

Before you go out ask yourself, **do you absolutely *have to* make the journey and is driving the only option?**

If you have to travel, keep the following items in your car in case you get stuck.

- ice scraper
- de-icer
- blanket
- jump leads

- shovel
- decent footwear
- first aid kit
- hazard warning triangle
- torch
- high visibility jacket

These are our top tips to stay safe if you face ‘snowmagedon’:

- Check the **weather** before setting off. Remember road surfaces are a couple of degrees colder than air temperature and untreated roads could still be icy even if your car isn’t
- Completely **clear all your windows** and mirrors of ice and make sure all of your windows are demisted and not just a small area
- Leave plenty of **space** between you and the car in front. It can take twice as long to stop on wet roads and ten times longer to stop in icy ones
- [Check your tyres](#) – **ACT** - **A**ir pressure, **C**ondition and **T**read depth at least once a month. In rain, ice and heavy snow, the more grip you have the better
- Ensure your **lights** are clean and working
- Ensure your front and rear **wipers** are in good condition and the washer bottle is full with water and screen wash
- Check that your **battery** is fully charged
- If the weather is really **bad** you may want to keep an extra blanket, water, shovel and wellington boots in your car
- Don’t forget your **kit**: ice scraper, de-icer, hazard warning triangle, torch, high visibility jacket and blanket

Have a safe journey

Here's more advice on [Winter safety](#), [safe journeys](#) and how to [keep safe and warm](#)