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UK-WIDE
COVERAGE

WINTER DRIVING

Prepare for winter with these simple checks

GET A GRIP ON YOUR TYRES

Tyres are critically important. If your tyres don't have much tread left, they aren't going to perform well and hold the road during winter road conditions. The minimum legal tread depth in the UK is 1.6mm, however realistically this isn't enough tread to cope with the rain, ice and snow of winter.

The wall of the tyres should also be checked for bulges, cracks or foreign objects. Make sure that they are correctly inflated to manufacturer guidelines which can be found in the vehicle handbook.

WINDSCREEN WIPERS AND FLUID

These see a lot of action in the winter. Make sure that the window wipers on your car remove water from your windscreen screen efficiently. They may need replacing if they are cracked or if they do not remove water in one wipe. You will be using your window washer fluid more regularly during the winter so make sure you keep it topped up with a quality, degreasing window wash solution.

CHECK ANTIFREEZE

Checking your car's antifreeze level is very important; cooling system failure is the leading cause of engine related breakdowns during the winter months. The easiest way to test that your engine has enough antifreeze content to survive the winter is to get an antifreeze tester. These check the ratio of water to antifreeze in your cooling system and you simply top up with more water or antifreeze depending on what the test results are.

BATTERY

Batteries can sometime find winter weather hard going, especially an ageing battery. Make sure that all battery connections are attached tightly and ensure that the wires are in good repair. If you do experience problems, you can get your battery tested to determine if this is the source of the problem.

BRAKES

Check your brakes and your brake fluid levels. When visibility is reduced and the road surface is slippery you need to know that you can count on your brakes - they could save your life.

REAR HEATED WINDOW

You probably haven't used your heated rear window all summer long, so switch it on and just make sure that it is still working correctly. It will be invaluable for helping to clear the screen quickly in winter.

HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

It is important that the driver and passengers of the car are comfortable, so make sure that the heating system in the car is working correctly. Properly functioning heating systems are also important to help keep the windows clear and free of mist. If your vehicle takes a while to produce warm air the thermostat may need looking at.

LOOK AFTER YOUR BODY

Treat your car to a nice wash and wax. This isn't just so that it will look pristine, but it will protect the bodywork from the cold weather conditions and salt used to keep the roads ice-free, and will also make snow and ice slip off the car more easily.

LIGHTS

Check regularly that all lights are all in full working order and that bulbs don't need replacing.

WINTER EMERGENCY PACK

It's a good idea to keep a 'Winter emergency pack' in your vehicle in case you do breakdown. This should include the following: ice scraper and de-icer, first aid kit, torch, warm clothes/blankets, some chocolate!, jump leads, a road atlas and sunglasses (to avoid road glare from snow during the day).

DON'T LEAVE IT TO CHANCE

If you're concerned about any of the above and you aren't confident in carrying out these tasks, there is always the option to take your car to a garage to be looked at by a professional. Some offer free winter checks and it is advisable to take advantage of these for your peace of mind and safety.

Talk to our team
for more expert advice

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