

Our British winter is unpredictable. The adverse weather can strike suddenly, so the best option when severe weather hits is to stay off the road.

A few tips to help you stay safe:

- Plan your journey
- Check the local and national weather forecasts
- Tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive
- Make sure you have warm clothes, food, boots and a torch and if possible in snowy conditions you have a spade
- Always clear and de-mist your windows and mirrors before you set off and carry a windscreen scraper and de-icer.

Keep your vehicle in good condition, especially in the winter months.

You will need to adjust your driving to the conditions. When in low visibility use your dipped headlights and reduce speed.

If you do get into trouble do not use your mobile phone while driving, instead stop somewhere safe or ask a passenger to make the call.

On the motorway, it's best to use a roadside emergency telephone because it will help the breakdown/emergency services to locate you easily.

Try not to abandon your vehicle because it can restrict access to rescue vehicles and even snowploughs, so try to ensure the road stays clear.

If you have to leave your vehicle then make sure other drivers can see you; if possible wear a hi-vis jacket.

When driving in icy or slushy conditions it can take a lot longer to stop your vehicle, so drive slowly, allowing extra room to stop.

When accelerating, use the highest gear possible to prevent your wheels from spinning, and always manoeuvre gently avoiding harsh braking and acceleration.

Lastly, if you start to skid, ease off the accelerator but do not brake suddenly.