

DRIVING IN WINTER CONDITIONS



Driving in winter can be challenging due to various different factors including snow, ice and poor visibility. It is important to take extra precautions to ensure the safety of yourself and others on the road.

This guide outlines four important steps for driving in winter, with additional detailed information available from the RAC.

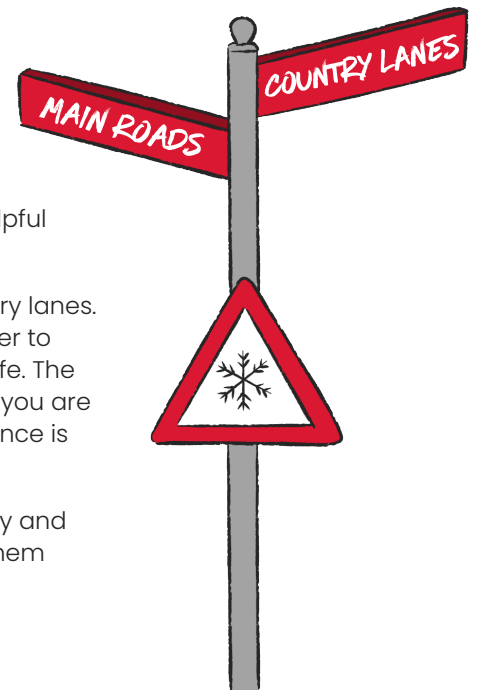
1

PLAN YOUR ROUTE

Before setting out on your journey, plan your route and check if the roads are clear. Using road maintenance websites can provide helpful information on road conditions and closures.

If possible, choose a route to stick to main roads rather than country lanes. Main roads are more likely to be cleared and well lit, making it easier to spot potential hazards ahead like icy patches, pedestrians or wildlife. The signage is more likely to be maintained, which can be important if you are in an unfamiliar area in low visibility conditions. Additionally, assistance is more accessible, if you encounter any trouble.

Country lanes on the other hand are less likely to be cleared quickly and regularly. Their narrow lanes and limited street lighting can make them difficult to navigate, especially in winter conditions.



2

TAKE YOUR TIME

Roads tend to get congested, especially during peak commuting hours, and winter weather can exacerbate delays. Allocating ample time for your journey is important to avoid rushing, which can be dangerous in winter conditions.

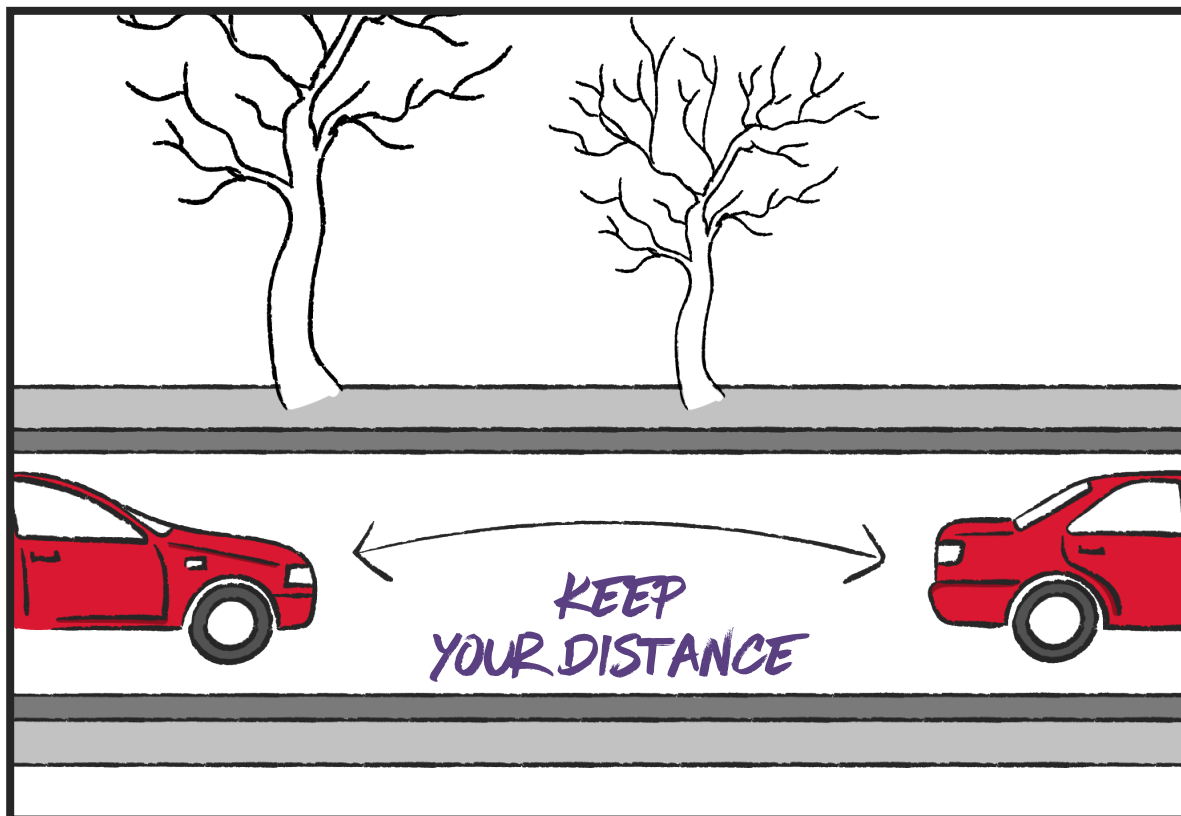
Try to only travel if absolutely necessary, and inform someone about your plans. Sharing your route and estimated arrival time ensures that someone is aware in case you encounter any challenges during your trip.



3 DOUBLE YOUR DISTANCE

In wet, icy and snowy conditions it can make it harder to stop, especially in an emergency! Increasing the distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you can minimise the risk of accidents. It's advised to extend the two-second rule to at least a four-second gap or more while driving. Leaving this extra space allows ample room for you to safely stop if necessary, while also providing other road users with enough space to maneuver and brake.

Additionally, it is important to be mindful of the type of road you are on. If stuck in traffic on a hill in icy conditions, there is a chance your car can slide. Therefore, even in standstill traffic, it's recommended to leave plenty of space between vehicles as a precaution.



4 USE YOUR LIGHTS

If weather conditions are poor, it's advisable to use your lights during both daytime and nighttime. This will help improve your visibility and ensure that other drivers can see you as well.

Make sure your front and back lights, signalling lights and fog lights are working to ensure your safety and allowing other road users to see what you are doing easily to avoid risk of accidents.

Following these 4 steps will help to ensure your safety on the roads in winter conditions. Please see our 'Preparing your car for Winter' guide to check you have all the essentials you might need with you and that your car is safe and ready for the winter months.

There are further tips on how to drive safely in winter from the RAC that you can [read here](#).

