

Energy UK Guide to: Driving

A guide to staying safe on the roads



Planning

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Introduction

The aim of these slides is to give you a better understanding of the risks we all face everyday on our roads, as well as suggesting some steps you can take to help avoid those risks.



1,784 lives were lost on UK roads, and more than 25,511 people were seriously injured in 2018.

One in three fatal crashes and one in four serious injury crashes in Britain involve someone driving for work.

Work-related pressures have their part to play. As a result, at-work drivers are more susceptible to certain driving behaviours, with speeding, distracted driving, and fatigue being the biggest killers on our roads.

Planning



There are lots of good reasons for planning your journey; making it safer, less stressful and therefore less likely to result in an incident. You should always consider whether you really need to make the journey.

Fact 1

It's good practice to notify someone where you are going and your estimated time of arrival

Fact 2

Local road gritting information can be requested via the Directgov website

Fact 3

In the UK, 67% of commuting trips are made by car. 46% of these are less than two miles long

Route

- Check your route before you travel, using a route planner such as RAC
- Plan extra time and regular breaks for your journey – see slide 8

Checks

- Check the forecast before you go; if extreme weather is forecast **is it necessary to travel?**
- Familiarise yourself with your company's policy on travelling in extreme weather conditions
- Ensure you have sufficient fuel before commencing your journey, especially if petrol stations are limited or your route includes a lot of motorway or country roads
- Ensure your mobile phone is fully charged and consider having an emergency charger with you

Sustainable driving

- Accelerating and braking gently will improve fuel consumption. Anticipate the road ahead and take your foot off the accelerator earlier giving your brakes less work to do
- Minimise your impact on the environment by driving smoothly, reducing the emissions created

D

Do you really need to make the journey?

R

Route: have you planned ahead? Are weather and conditions okay?

I

Individual: are you fit to drive? Are you managing your driving hours?

V

Vehicle: have you checked tyres, fluid levels, fuel, lights?

E

Emergency: are you and your vehicle prepared?

Fit for driving



Being fit for work is ensuring you are physically and mentally able to undertake work tasks safely, without putting yourself or others at risk

Fact 1

1 in 5 accidents on major roads are caused by tiredness

Source: AA

Fact 2

The only safe advice is to avoid any alcohol if you are driving

Source: drinkaware

Fact 3

Any condition that affects a persons ability to drive safely should be reported to their employer, and if necessary to the DVLA

Tiredness

- Take regular breaks; the Government recommends that you take a break at least every two hours for at least 15 minutes
- Get enough sleep; too little sleep radically affects our ability to drive safely

Drugs and Alcohol

- It's illegal to drive if you are unfit to do so because of legal or illegal drugs in your system or you have certain levels of specified drugs in your blood (even if they haven't affected your driving)
- You risk a large fine, a minimum 12-month driving ban and a criminal record. A conviction for drink driving also means your car insurance costs will increase significantly.
- If you drive for work, your employer will see your conviction on your licence for up to 11 years after the event

Eyesight

- You must wear glasses or contact lenses every time you drive if you need them to meet the 'standards of vision for driving'
- You must tell DVLA if you've got any problem with your eyesight that affects both of your eyes, or the remaining eye if you only have one eye
- You don't need to say if you're short/ long sighted, colour blind, had surgery to correct short sightedness & can meet the eyesight standards

Fitness

- Employees must be fit to drive, it is important to consider issues ranging from long term illness to short term temporary impairments, such as stress, emotional state, fatigue and colds/flu. Drivers must meet legal medical fitness rules for driving and that they are not impaired

Highway code

- Keep up to date on the highway code and know your responsibilities to adhere to the law. If you disobey these rules you are committing a criminal offence. You may be fined, given penalty points on your licence or be disqualified from driving.

Vehicle

Carrying out a simple check of your vehicle before each journey and keeping it maintained regularly is really important



Fact 1

One in three fatal crashes and one in four serious injury crashes in Britain involve someone driving for work

Source: Brake

Fact 2

In 2015 there were 5 deaths and more than 60 serious injuries every day over the course of the year

Source: Department of Transport

Fact 3

The fine for having an illegal tyre is currently a maximum of £2,500 and 3 penalty points per tyre!

Fuel

- Don't wait until your fuel light comes on, especially if you're driving in an unfamiliar area. If you're running low on fuel and you see a petrol station, take the opportunity to top up your tank.

Lights

- Give all your exterior lights a thorough clean every few weeks, making sure to check for blown bulbs and cracks in the lenses

Oil

- Check your oil level regularly and don't wait for the warning light to come on – your engine might already be damaged by then

Water

- Check your coolant level every couple of weeks, and remember it's a legal requirement to keep your windscreen washer fluid topped up

Electrics

- Check your vehicle for battery problems as these are the number one cause of breakdowns, especially in the winter

Rubber

- The legal limit in the UK is 1.6mm and it's vital to regularly check tread depth and tyre pressures. Change your tyres as soon as the tread reaches the replacement standard in your organisation



Secure



Reduce the risk of injury by following the guidance below, helping ensure little contact is made between you, the vehicle interior and loose items

Fact 1

In a collision you're twice as likely to die if you don't wear a seatbelt

Source: think.gov

Fact 2

An emergency vehicle hammer is a tool which can break windows and cut seat belts in the event of a serious incident

Fact 3

Good housekeeping practices in the car will help prevent injuries in the event of an accident

Seatbelts

- Drivers and passengers caught without a seat belt face an on-the-spot fine of £100. If prosecuted, the maximum fine is £500
- Make sure you and any of your passengers are belted up, in the back and front, and stay belted up! An unrestrained back seat passenger can kill someone else in the vehicle, and themselves.
- When travelling in a taxi, remember to use your seatbelt

Head restraints

- Head restraints should be properly adjusted to reduce the risk of neck and spine injuries in the event of a collision
- The top of the head restraint should be as high as the top of your head and it should be as near to the rear of your head as possible

Loose items

- Secure any heavy or sharp objects safely. If there is a collision, they might hit someone inside the vehicle and cause serious injury
- Even small items such as bottles and tools can pick up lots of speed and force and become airborne within your vehicle, potentially to causing severe injuries
- Don't overload the vehicle, ensure any load is stored correctly and ensure laden weight is inline with manufacturers guidance



Speed



To stay safe, manage your speed. As well as the cost to you, excessive and inappropriate speed is the number one killer on our roads

Fact 1

Speeding is a primary factor in a third of road deaths

Source: think.gov

Fact 2

Drivers on business related journeys are prone to speeding (Brake survey)

Fact 3

Driving at lower speeds reduces carbon emissions and saves up to 30% on fuel

Be aware of stopping distances

- Small increases in speed result in much bigger increases in stopping distance. If you increase your speed by 50% from 20mph to 30mph, for example, your total stopping distance almost doubles.

Slow down

- **In communities** – to 20mph. It gives you a better chance of stopping in time in an emergency
- **On rural roads** – they are full of hazards including blind corners and potholes and require slower speeds
- **In varying conditions** – such as wet and icy conditions and night driving

Keep your distance

- On all roads in good conditions, count two seconds between you and the vehicle in front
- Increase this gap to four seconds if the road is wet or ten seconds if the road is icy

Keep below the speed limits

- Don't drive faster than the speed limit for the type of road and your type of vehicle.
- Remember, the speed LIMIT is a maximum speed you should be driving if perfect weather conditions – not a target



Distraction



We're more distracted than ever, and safety should always be our top concern when we're on the road

Fact 1

Putting your phone out of sight, earshot and reach when driving will avoid temptation of using it

Fact 2

25% of motorists admit to making or receiving handheld calls while driving

Source: RAC

Fact 3

Songs with more than 120 beats per minute cause faster driving speeds and more dangerous manoeuvres

Source: RAC

Mobile phones

- Penalties for driving when using a hand-held phone or driving carelessly/ dangerously can include disqualification, a large fine and up to two years imprisonment
- Drivers using a hands-free phone are 30% slower to react than those slightly over the UK drink drive limit
- Text messaging requires visual, manual and cognitive attention from the driver; therefore it is by far the most alarming distraction

Eating and drinking

- Drivers who eat and drink at the wheel are twice as likely to be involved in a collision
- Eating and drinking whilst driving diverts attention away from the driving task **and** causes physical distraction because at least one hand is off the wheel while holding food or drink.

Smoking

- It is illegal to smoke in a company car or van and a vehicle containing passengers under the age of 18.

In vehicle technology

- Modern vehicles come equipped with technology aimed at making the driver safer or more comfortable, however, some in-vehicle technology can provide a dangerous distraction and engaging with the devices poses a significant danger e.g. programming satnavs whilst driving

Winter driving



*If you **MUST** drive, then the best, and easiest, way to avoid a crash when driving in rain, fog, snow or ice, is to slow down.*

Fact 1

Glare from low sun can make driving dangerous, especially in the mornings & evenings

Fact 2

Most vehicles will start to float in just 60cm of water and 30cm of flowing water is enough to move your vehicle

Source: AA

Fact 3

When visibility is significantly reduced (< 100m) you must use your headlights

Rain

- It can take up to **twice as long to stop** when the roads are wet compared to when they are dry
- If you begin to lose traction or 'aquaplane', take your foot off the accelerator and slow down – don't brake hard!
- Spray can make it hard to see; slow down and keep your distance from other vehicles

Snow or ice

- It can take up to **ten times as long to stop** when the roads are icy – avoid sudden braking or sudden increases in speed
- If you encounter black ice, ease off the accelerator and go slowly

Floods

- Never attempt to cross a flooded road if you are unsure how deep it is (many vehicles require only 60cm of water to float)
- If driving on a flooded road, stay in first gear with the engine speed high and drive very slowly

Fog

- Drive slowly and use dipped headlights/ fog lights so that other vehicles can see you
- Don't drive too close behind another vehicle

Employer responsibilities

*Health and Safety law applies to on-the-road work activities.
The risks should be effectively managed within a H&S system*



Fact 1

The employer must ensure that employees are provided with any health surveillance appropriate for identifying health risks

Fact 2

Employers have a legal requirement to check driving licences of those driving for work

Fact 3

The legal consequences of failing to manage occupational road risk can be extremely serious

Employers as well as employees have legal responsibilities;

- As an employee, you need to ensure your vehicle is road worthy, taxed, with a valid MOT certificate.
- As an employer you need to ensure you understand the risks to your employees and others, the consequences of these risks and the measures needed to manage and reduce these risks and consequences.

Employers must conduct suitable risk assessments and put in place all ‘reasonably practicable’ measures to ensure that work related journeys are safe, staff are fit and are competent to drive safely and the vehicles used are fit for purpose and in a safe condition.

The [RoSPA guide](#) (full link on page 12) provides simple advice with additional links, based on the HSE’s approach of ‘Plan, Do, Check, Act’ and is designed for organisations that may not have considered this previously and are unsure where to start.

Information and advice covers:

- Gathering data and reviewing for company risk assessments
- How to conduct regular (at least once a year) checks on drivers
- Prioritise higher risk employees (i.e. higher mileage drivers/ poor driving record)
- Set expectations via training relevant to (i.e. classroom, in vehicle or online)
- Consider installing telematics device to assess driving styles and indicate areas for improvement
- Arrange driver education programmes to reduce risk



External references and other useful links

Topics	Website	Website addresses
Vehicle	Department for Transport	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/448037/road-fatalities-2013-data.pdf
Vehicle	AA	https://www.theaa.com/breakdown-cover/advice/basic-car-checks
Winter driving	Brake	http://www.brake.org.uk/facts-resources/21-resources/946-weather
Winter driving – driving in severe weather	Met office	https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/seasonal-advice/travel/driving-in-severe-weather
Route planning – safer driving	Telegraph	https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cars/road-safety/plan-a-route-for-safer-driving/
Route planning – sustainable travel	Brake	https://www.brake.org.uk/facts-resources/15-facts/1282-sustainable-and-active-travel
Speed	Brake	https://www.brake.org.uk/facts-resources/15-facts/1292-work-related-road-safety
Distraction – mobile phones	THINK!	http://think.direct.gov.uk/mobile-phones.html/
Distraction – Music	RAC	https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/news/motoring-news/what-kind-of-music-makes-you-a-worse-driver/

External references and other useful links

Topics	Website	Website addresses
Fit for work – tiredness	AA	https://www.theaa.com/driving-advice/safety/tired-drivers
Fit for work – eyesight	Brake	http://www.brake.org.uk/sharpen-up/15-facts-a-resources/facts/491-eyesight
Fit for work – drink & drug related issues	RoSPA	https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/work-drink-drugs.pdf
Fit for work – Highway code	Gov.uk	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code
Secure – seatbelt law	RAC	https://www.rac.co.uk/drive/advice/legal/seat-belt-law/
Secure – driver distraction	RoSPA	https://www.rospa.com/Road-Safety/Advice/Drivers/Distractio
Employer responsibilities – Occupational road risk	RoSPA	https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/introduction-to-morr.pdf
Employer responsibilities – telematics	RoSPA	https://www.rospa.com/rospaweb/docs/advice-services/road-safety/employers/work-telematics.pdf