

Winter Driving Tips for Motorists in Sheffield

Winter is coming, and it is essential to be prepared for the ever-changing driving conditions. With limited visibility and sub-zero temperatures, this guide will help to prepare for the unexpected this winter.

Our personal injury specialists in Sheffield have compiled this list of useful tips, to keep you safe this winter.

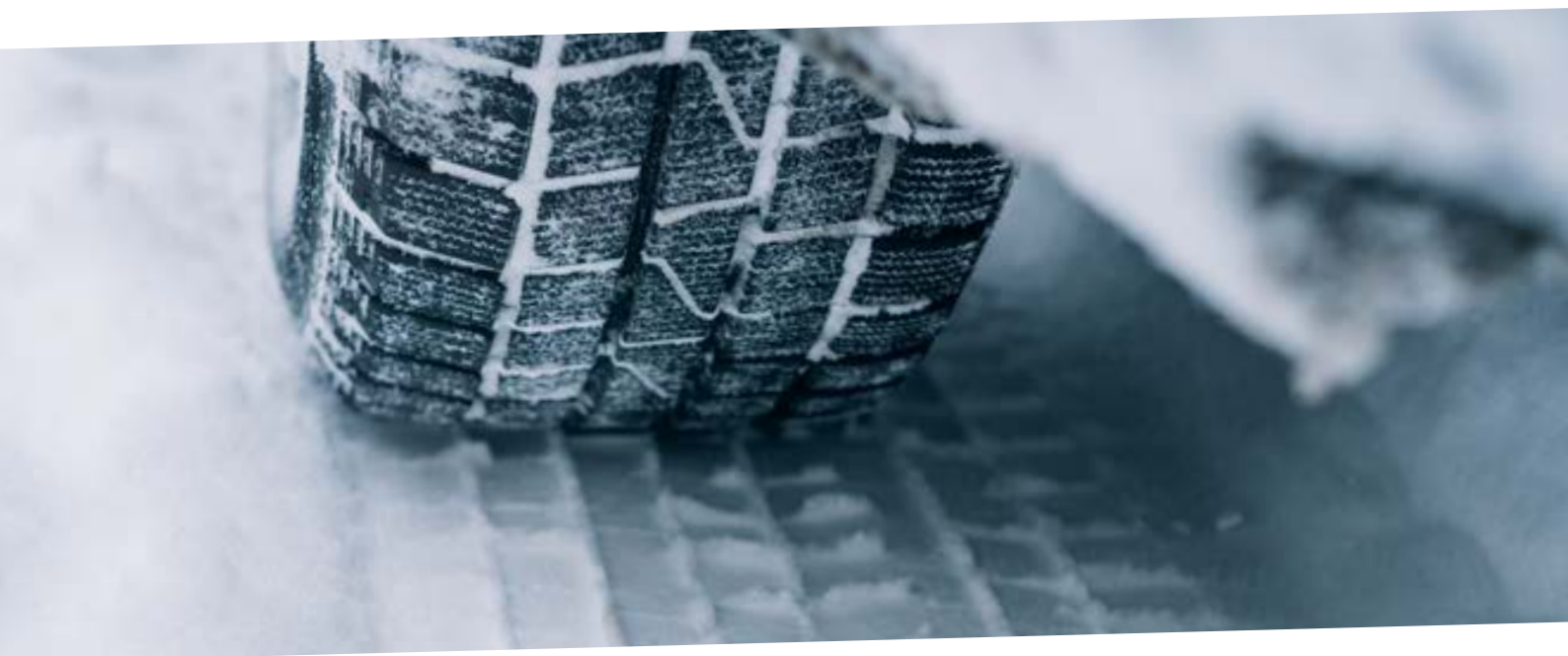


1) Keep an eye on the weather and listen to traffic updates

Pay close attention to the local weather forecasts and the traffic updates.

For traffic updates around Sheffield tune in to:

- BBC Radio Sheffield on 88.6 FM and 104.1 FM
- Hallam FM on 102.9 FM
- Capital FM on 105.8 FM



2) Are your tyre treads within the legal limit?

The UK law requires car tyres to have a minimum tread depth of 1.6mm. This 1.6 mm should be in a continuous band throughout the central three-quarters of the tread width, throughout the whole of the circumference. Most manufacturers recommend that you have a minimum of 3mm tyre depth.

Drivers who do not meet the legal requirement face a £2,500 fine and three points on their licence for each bald tyre. It is also essential to have the correct tyre pressure.

If in doubt, visit [Graham's Tyres & Exhausts](#), with three garages in Sheffield they will gladly check if your vehicle is road-worthy.

3) Winter Car Health Check

Batteries

The cold weather has an impact on your car battery. During the winter months, most breakdown call-outs are a result of a flat battery. If your battery is over three years old, it is highly recommended to get it tested.

Lights

It is essential to check that all your lights are working. If you get caught with a faulty light, you could be fined £50.

Brakes

Bad weather means longer breaking distances and therefore it is highly recommended to check your brakes before your journey. It is also essential to drive defensively when conditions are poor, allowing more space between you and the car in front.



Antifreeze and Coolant

It's important to keep the engine cool without freezing during winter. Make sure you have good quality anti-freeze within the car's cooling system. Without anti-freeze, it's possible to cause damage to the engine.

Oil

Avoid damage to your engine by topping up your oil. Check the car's owner's manual for the correct type of motor oil for your vehicle. It is advisable to check your oil level before your journey.

Wiper blades

With regular gritting being done by the local councils, this means there's more salt on the roads. Having decent wiper blades and plenty of screen wash will help to improve visibility. These tasks can be done by yourself. However, if in doubt visit [The Garage Sheffield](#) to get your car checked over.

4) Have a fully charged phone

Having a mobile phone that's fully charged can be a lifesaver. You never know when you'll need to make an emergency call.

Tips

- Keep a car charger in the glove compartment
- Have emergency numbers such as the breakdown company and your policy number stored in your phone.

The law

It is illegal to drive to use a handheld mobile when driving. If caught it is a £200 fine and six penalty points.

To get a car charging device visit your local mobile phone accessory shop, they'll have everything you need for your phone charging needs.



5) Car Safety Essentials - Checklist

These are essentials for any winter journey:

- Ice scraper and de-icer
- Screen wash
- Jumpstart cables
- Torch and some spare batteries
- A warm jacket and comfortable shoes
- In-car phone charger
- Sunglasses
- A reflective warning traffic sign. By [law](#), all cars first registered from the 1st of July 2006, must carry an emergency warning triangle. In the event, of a breakdown, the warning triangle will be placed 45 meters behind your vehicle.

For all your car accessories visit [Bullseye Motor Stores](#), with stores across Sheffield, Doncaster and Rotherham, you can't go wrong.

6) Keep your windscreen covered overnight.

De-icing your car in the morning can add time to your journey, so we would advise putting your car in a garage, or using a windscreen cover to help save time. If you do need to de-ice your car, do not use hot water as this can crack the windscreen.

7) Don't forget the windows and roof.

You'll be surprised how many drivers don't remove snow or ice from their windscreens and windows. If caught, you could face a **£50 fine**. We would also advise clearing snow from the roof of your car if possible, as this can cause problems for other drivers when it comes off at speed.

8) It may be the festive season, but drink driving is still illegal!

With the festive season ahead of us, it is tempting to have a drink. If you're driving it is best to avoid drinking altogether, even if you're under the limit. Stay safe and book a taxi. Call Sheffield Taxi Services on 0114 272 0000.

9) Make sure you have breakdown cover

Having breakdown cover buys you peace of mind. If your car breaks down, it's important to know that help is only a call away. It is recommended to shop around and review your policy every year.



10) Reduce your speed

An overnight frost can mean dangerous driving conditions. Black ice on roads is one of the biggest problems at this time of the year. The ice patches are difficult to see, so if you're driving at speed it can make it very difficult to maintain control of your vehicle. Please drive with caution when there has been a heavy frost and/or snow.

11) If your journey can be avoided, don't drive in icy conditions

Sometimes it's best to avoid driving until the threat passes. If you live in a more remote area, the roads will take longer to clear. Keep an eye out for freezing fog, black ice, heavy frost and snow. If you're not confident driving in winter conditions, you can use local transport such as the bus or train.



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