



IAM's Tips for Driving in Winter Weather

As the winter weather approaches, the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) has warned of the increased danger for road users.

If the weather is bad, drive only if it is necessary. If the journey is necessary, ensure that your car is properly prepared and that you know how to cope with changing road conditions.

IAM advice for motorists driving in bad winter weather conditions is:

- Take it slow and allow extra time for the journey, even if it is the usual work or school run. Other traffic on the road will be driving more slowly than normal.
- In snow or ice, slow down and keep well back from the vehicle in front. When roads are slippery it could take ten times longer to stop, so you need to look a long way ahead and plan to change lanes as necessary.
- Use low gears to help keep traction, especially on hills, and use gears to restrain speed on downhill sections to avoid the need to brake.
- The road in front of vehicles clearing snow is likely to be worse than the road behind. Don't pass these vehicles.
- Clear snow, ice and mist so that you have a clear view out of all windows – not just the windscreen. Check the windscreen washer is topped up with windscreen washer fluid for the appropriate outside temperature and that the wiper blades are clean.
- Clear snow and ice from lights, and turn on headlights to see and be seen. Bad weather causes poor visibility for all motorists.
- Pack an emergency kit, such as warm outdoor clothes, a reflective jacket, a torch, a spade, a flask of hot tea or coffee, and a fully-charged mobile phone.

Remember to be cautious at all times, check the weather forecast before starting your journey, and prepare for familiar, short journeys as well as long ones.

If you want to know more, visit the Newbury Group of Advanced Motorists website at www.niam.org.uk, or contact the Group Secretary, Dick Bird, by e-mail on secretary@niam.org.uk or by telephone on 07717 366500. An IAM Skill for Life voucher makes an ideal gift.