Police travel advice

Transport Scotland and Police Scotland have developed a severe weather information strategy to warn and inform road users when significant disruption to the road network is expected during extreme weather.

The travel advice and information service will kick in when significant disruption to the road network is forecast, and information will be provided in advance of, and during, any severe weather event.

Advice will be detailed in four stages depending on the severity of the weather:

- **Normal operations** – No severe weather
- **Travel with caution** – Police are advising drivers to expect some delays during normal operations and to drive with extra caution. Advice is provided through Transport Scotland’s network of Variable Message Signs, the Traffic Scotland website (including the internet radio service), Twitter, smartphone applications, radio travel information broadcasts and the Traffic Scotland Customer Careline.

**Emergency kits**

Keep an emergency kit in the car:

- Ice scraper and de-icer
- Torch and spare batteries
- Warm clothes and a blanket
- A pair of boots
- First-aid kit
- Battery jump leads
- A shovel for snow
- A tow rope
- Food and a warm drink in a flask
- Sunglasses to help you see in low sun
- Make sure your mobile phone is fully-charged

These and other similar items you can do to make your journey safer and less stressful during severe weather:

**Before your journey**

- **Travel with caution** – Police are advising drivers to expect some delays during normal operations and to drive with extra caution. Advice is provided through Transport Scotland’s network of Variable Message Signs, the Traffic Scotland website (including the internet radio service), Twitter, smartphone applications, radio travel information broadcasts and the Traffic Scotland Customer Careline.

- **High risk of disruption for road journeys** – Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads. Drivers who choose to drive should expect severe delays of several hours or more.

- **Avoid travelling on the roads** – Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads. Drivers who choose to drive should expect severe delays of several hours or more.

**During your journey**

Be aware of changing road and weather conditions, even if it is a route you use regularly. Remember it is dangerous and illegal to use a handheld mobile phone or device while driving.

You may need to change the way you drive in bad weather:

- **Reduce speed**
- **Increase stopping distances**
- **Avoid sudden acceleration and braking**
- **Use dipped headlights**
- **Take a break every two or three hours**
- **Do not pass closed snow gates or ‘Road Closed’ signs, as it may be dangerous and an offence to do so**

**During your journey remember this critical question:**

If I had to brake suddenly in an emergency, could I stop safely within the distance I can clearly see ahead of me?

**A safer, less stressful journey**

Drive in Bad Weather

When freezing temperatures are forecast, you’ll see our winter maintenance teams out and about treating the roads with salt. Despite the risk of some roads becoming slippery, there’s still a high level of service provided, sudden weather changes occur. For up-to-the-minute traffic information visit the Traffic Customer Care Line on 0800 028 1414. You can also listen to Traffic Scotland Radio or call the Traffic Scotland mobile apps. The Met Office issue warnings for rain, snow, wind, fog and ice based on the likelihood and potential impact of conditions. Each warning has a colour:

- Red (take action)
- Amber (be prepared)
- Yellow (be aware)

Keep a close eye on weather information specific to your route if you need to, taking an emergency kit and adapting your driving style to the conditions.

Avoid distracting yourself from driving by using a mobile phone or device while driving.

**Before your journey**

- **Pay extra attention to planning your journey**
- **Check the weather forecast and road conditions**
- **Consider whether you need to travel right**
- **Check that wiper blades are not worn and are capable of clearing the windscreen correctly**
- **Check your tyres**

**During your journey**

- **Observe information on Variable Message Signs**
- **Listen to radio travel bulletin**
- **Observe information on Variable Message Signs**

Watch out for locations where you may need to drive more carefully. Some common examples are:

- Changes in road elevation or exposure
- Where there is less traffic use (e.g. slip roads)
- Where the road passes under or over a bridge
- Where there may be bends in the road where there is a greater risk of loss of control. Reduce your speed when approaching
Winter treatments are a mixture of salt and brine.

The Progress of gritting operations across the trunk road.

Traveline Scotland

Provides up to date public transport timetable information to get you to your destination by the quickest route.

Driving through ice and snow

- Your stopping distance is increased 10 times when driving in snow and ice.
- Select second gear when pulling away, easing your foot off the clutch gently to avoid wheel spin.
- It is not always obvious that the road is icy. Look for clues such as ice on the pavement or your windscreen. If your tyres are making virtually no noise on the road, it could be a sign that you are driving on ice.
- Do not brake heavily - it will just lock your wheels and you will skid further, consider changing to a lower gear.
- Clear any snow on the roof of the vehicle before you drive off. It can slip down over the windscreen and obscure your view.
- In severe cold or snowy conditions, look out for winter service vehicles spreading salt or using snow ploughs. They will have flashing amber beacons and will be traveling at slower speeds – around 40mph. Stay well back because salt or spray is thrown across the road.
- Do not overtake unless it is safe to do so as there may be other vehicles or gaps in trees.
- Be particularly vigilant for pedestrians and cyclists during winter weather. They may be more difficult to see and have difficulty with their visibility.
- In urban areas use dipped headlights. Use full beam on other roads at night but dip them when there is someone in front or coming towards you.
- Be aware that pedestrians are harder to spot in the dark and may not be visible until they are very close. In particular, watch for children walking on pavements or crossing at pedestrian crossings.

Driving in the rain

- When the road is wet, it can take twice as long to stop, so it makes sense to slow down and maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front.
- If your vehicle loses its grip, or “aquaplanes” on surface water, take your foot off the accelerator to slow down. Do not brake or steer suddenly because you have no control of the steering or brakes.
- Floods
  - Try to avoid driving through surface water as you might flood your engine. Avoid the deepest water which is usually nearest the kerb.
  - If you have to drive through floods, drive slowly using first gear and try to keep the engine revving at a high rate. Move forward continuously to avoid stalling the engine. If driving an automatic vehicle, engage and hold in a low gear.
  - Check your mirror and test your brakes after driving through water, to make sure they are still working properly.
- Be aware that other vehicles and debris could unexpectedly block your pathway.
- In bright sunshine, especially if the sun is low or reflecting off highly polished surfaces, dazzle from sun can be dangerous. Keep a pair of sunglasses (prescription if needed) in your vehicle for use in bright sunshine.

Driving with a low sun

- Dazzle from sun can be dangerous. Always keep a pair of sunglasses (prescription if needed) in your vehicle for use in bright sunshine, especially if the sun is low or reflecting off highly polished surfaces.
- Flood your engine. Avoid the deepest water which is usually nearest the kerb.
- If your vehicle loses its grip, or “aquaplanes” on surface water, take your foot off the accelerator to slow down. Do not brake or steer suddenly because you have no control of the steering or brakes.
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Driving in fog

- Driving in fog
  - In severe cold or snowy conditions, look out for winter service vehicles spreading salt or using snow ploughs. They will have flashing amber beacons and will be traveling at slower speeds – around 40mph. Stay well back because salt or spray is thrown across the road.
  - Do not overtake unless it is safe to do so as there may be other vehicles or gaps in trees.
  - Be particularly vigilant for pedestrians and cyclists during winter weather. They may be more difficult to see and have difficulty with their visibility.
  - In urban areas use dipped headlights. Use full beam on other roads at night but dip them when there is someone in front or coming towards you.
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Darker evenings and mornings

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Useful Links

- During winter our gritters can cover the same distance as twice around the world weekly.
- The tallest snowman in the world is over 37 metres tall.
- Transportscotland.gov.uk for more information follow @transcotland | @trafficscotland | #winterinfo.
Driving through ice and snow
- Your stopping distance is increased 10 times when driving in snow and ice.
- Select second gear when pulling away, easing your foot off the clutch gently to avoid wheel-spin.
- It is not always obvious that the road is icy. Look for clues such as ice on the pavement or on your windscreen. If your tyres are making virtually no noise on the road, it could be a sign that you are driving on ice.
- Do not brake heavily – it will just lock your wheels and you will skid further, consider changing to a lower gear.
- Clear any snow on the roof of the vehicle before you drive off. It can slip down over the windscreen and obscure your view.

Driving in the rain
- When the road is wet, it can take twice as long to stop, so it makes sense to slow down and maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front.
- If your vehicle loses its grip, or “aquaplanes” on surface water, take your foot off the accelerator to slow down. Do not brake or steer suddenly because you have no control of the steering or brakes.

Floods
- Try to avoid driving through surface water as you might flood your engine. Avoid the deepest water which is usually nearest the kerb.
- If you have to drive through floods, drive slowly using first gear and try to keep the engine revving at a high rate. Move forward continuously to avoid stalling the engine. If driving an automatic vehicle, engage and hold in a low gear.
- Check your mirror and test your brakes after driving through water, to make sure they are still working properly.

Driving in windy weather
- In severe cold or snowy conditions, look out for winter service vehicles spreading salt or using snow ploughs. They will have flashing amber beacons and will be travelling at slower speeds – around 40mph. Stay well back because salt or spray is thrown across the road.
- Don’t overtake unless it is safe to do so as there may be uncleared snow on the road ahead.
- Through the Traffic Scotland website it is possible to monitor the progress of gritting operations across the trunk road network. All the information you need on trunk road gritting can be found using the link below: http://trafficscotland.org/winterTreatment/

Traveline Scotland
Provides up to date public transport timetable information to get you to your destination by the quickest route.

The Traveline Scotland app (in association with Traffic Scotland) includes:
- A journey planner showing public transport options between any two locations in Scotland, featuring all bus, coach, rail, Glasgow Subway and ferry routes.
- Departure boards for buses and departure times for Scottish ferry terminals and Glasgow Subway stations.
- News and notices affecting public transport services.
- Contact details for all Scottish public transport operators.

Useful Links
- www.scotland.police.uk
- www.trafficscotland.org
- www.transport.gov.uk
- www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code
- www.transportscotland.gov.uk
- www.readyscotland.org
- www.metoffice.gov.uk
- www.travelinescotland.com

During winter our gritters can cover the same distance as twice the world weekly
- The tallest snowman in the world is over 37 metres tall
- The coldest temperature ever recorded in Scotland was -27.2°C
- Ice forms on untreated wet roads at 0°C
- Of salt on average are used each year on our trunk roads
- 42 depots manage the gritters and spreading
- 800+ cameras monitor road conditions
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- Check your mirror and test your brakes after driving through water, to make sure they are still working properly.

Driving in fog
- Be particularly vigilant for pedestrians and cyclists during winter weather. They may be more difficult to see and have trouble seeing you. When driving through puddles or wet areas, be prepared to slow down or stop to avoid splashing and causing distress.
- Use your high beams to help you see further ahead, but do not use them for long periods as it can dazzle other drivers.

Driving with a low sun
- Dazzle from sun can be dangerous. Always keep a pair of sunglasses (prescription if needed) in your vehicle for use in bright sunshine, especially if the sun is low or reflecting off a wet road.
- Make sure you keep your windscreen clean.

Driving in windy weather
- High-sided vehicles and caravans are particularly affected by windy weather but strong gusts can also blow a smaller vehicle, cyclist, motorcyclist or horse rider off course.
- This can happen on open stretches of road exposed to strong crosswinds, or when passing bridges, high-sided vehicles or gaps in trees.
- If towing an empty curtain-sided trailer, leave the curtains open to make your vehicle less vulnerable to crosswinds.
- Be aware that other vehicles and debris could unexpectedly be blown into your pathway.
- In severe cold or snowy conditions, look out for winter service vehicles spreading salt or using snow ploughs. They will have flashing amber beacons and will be travelling at slower speeds – around 40mph. Stay well back because salt or spray is thrown across the road.
- Don’t overtake unless it is safe to do so as there may be uncleared snow on the road ahead.

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We spread salt on the road to stop ice forming

42 depots manage the gritters and spreading

800+ cameras monitor road conditions

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37 metres tall
The tallest snowman in the world is over 37 metres tall

During winter our gritters can cover the same distance as twice around the world weekly.

General safety advice is available at:
http://trafficscotland.org/wintertreatment/

Individual gritters can cover the same distance as twice around the world weekly. The tallest snowman in the world is over 37 metres tall.

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Drive very slowly using dipped headlights so other drivers can see you.

If it is really foggy (less than 100m visibility), then switch your fog lights and rear high-intensity lights on. Remember to switch them off when visibility improves.

Do not hang on the tail-lights of the vehicle in front. This gives you a false sense of security and means you may be driving too close.

Fog is often patchy so try not to speed up as visibility improves. You could suddenly find yourself back in thick fog further up the road.

Darker evenings and mornings
- Switch on lights as soon as it starts to get dark.
- In urban areas use dipped headlights. Use full beam on other roads at night but dip them when there is someone in front or coming towards you.
- Be aware that pedestrians are harder to spot in the dark and may act unpredictably.
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Slow right down to 20mph. If you hit someone at this speed you have more than a 50% chance of survival, compared with about a 50/50 chance at 30mph.

200+
Gritters clear Scotland’s trunk roads during the winter.

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A safer, less stressful journey

There are lots of simple things you can do to make your journey safer and less stressful during severe weather, such as checking your route for delays before you set out, taking an alternative route if you need to, taking an emergency kit and adapting your driving style to the conditions. When freezing temperatures are forecast, you’ll see our winter fleet out and about treating the roads with salt. Despite the high level of service provided, sudden weather changes occur and motorists should be aware that access to the road network may not always be possible.

For up-to-the-minute traffic information visit www.trafficscotland.org or download the Traffic Scotland mobile apps. You can also listen to Traffic Scotland Radio or call the Traffic Customer Care Line on 0800 028 1414.

Keep a close eye on weather information specific to your journey by using the Met Office website: www.metoffice.gov.uk. The Met Office issue warnings for rain, snow, wind, fog and ice based on the likelihood and potential impact of conditions. Each warning has a colour:

Red (take action)  Amber (be prepared)  Yellow (be aware)

Before your journey

Pay extra attention to planning your journey in bad weather. Before travelling you should:

• Check the weather forecast and road conditions
• Consider whether you need to travel right now or if you can wait until the weather improves
• Consider alternative routes
• Consider alternative modes of transport
• Allow extra time for your journey
• Ensure that your vehicle is ready for a journey in poor weather
• Carry an emergency kit
• Consider what changes you need to make to your driving style to suit the weather or conditions
• Tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive
• Visit the Traffic Scotland website to identify any problems on trunk roads

Before you set off

• It is vitally important to make sure your vehicle is adequately maintained and that brakes, tyres, lights, batteries, windscreen wipers and wiper blades are in good condition
• Tyres are the only point of contact with the road and if they are worn or incorrectly inflated then they have less grip and can significantly increase stopping distances in the event of an emergency
• The minimum legal tread depth is 1.6mm, but you should consider changing tyres before they get near to 1.6mm as tyres with a greater tread depth perform better in poor conditions
• All windows should be demisted and fully cleared of any frost, snow or ice
• Check that wiper blades are not worn and are capable of clearing the windscreen correctly
• Keep fuel tanks high, ensuring you have more than enough fuel to complete your journey, allowing for unexpected delays and greater fuel use than usual
• Check breaks, lights, oil and washer fluid levels (add winter screen wash to your washer bottle to stop the water from freezing)
Bad weather

Driving in bad weather

A safer, less stressful journey

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- Check that wiper blades are not worn and are capable of clearing the windscreen correctly.
- Keep fuel tank levels high, ensuring you have more than enough fuel to complete your journey, allowing for unexpected delays and greater fuel use than usual.
- Check brokens, lights, oil and washer fluid levels (add winter screenwash to your washer bottle to stop the water from freezing).

If you get stuck:

- Do not try to move your vehicle, as you could damage it and/ or yourself.
- Call Traffic Scotland on 0800 028 1414 or the Traffic Customer Care Line on 0800 028 1414.
- See www.trafficscotland.org for more information.

Emergency kit

To keep you safe and mobile in poor weather, Transport Scotland and Police Scotland recommend that you carry an emergency kit in your vehicle. The contents of the kit should include:

- a torch and spare batteries
- a shovel for snow
- a pair of boots
- a car jack and a quick jack tool
- a tow rope
- a car battery jump lead
- a set of keys
- a map for any unplanned diversions
- food and a warm drink in a flask
- a pair of gloves
- a blanket
- a first aid kit
- a fire extinguisher
- a car radio
- ice scraper and de-icer
- a pair of scissors
- a pen
- a penknife
- a pair of (large) pliers
- a fuel canister
- a car lighter
- a road flaring kit (if your car has one)
- a folding saw
- a windscreen wiper blade
- a pair of sunglasses (and case)
- a mallet
- a wheel wrench
- a (small) axe
- a car mirror
- a pair of 3mm thick glasses
- a camera
- a collection of pens
- a set of despair
- a book
- a set of instructions on how to use your kit

Take care on the roads:

- Take care on the roads. If you’re not sure if you should continue driving, it’s better to turn back or change your travel plans.
- If you do need to continue driving in poor weather, travel with caution.
- Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads.
- Avoid sudden acceleration and braking.
- Increase stopping distances.
- Avoid sudden or unnecessary steering.
- Reduce speed.
- Observe information on Variable Message Signs.
- Listen to radio travel bulletins.
- Do not pass closed snow gates or ‘Road Closed’ signs, as it may be dangerous and an offence to do so.
- Take a break every two or three hours.
- Avoid driving at night. If you need to, take an early start.
- Be aware of changing road and weather conditions, even if it is just a change in the weather.
- If you are driving in poor weather, keep a close eye on weather information specific to your journey by using the Met Office website: www.metoffice.gov.uk.

A safer, less stressful journey

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- All windows should be demisted and fully cleared of any frost, snow or ice.
- Check that wiper blades are not worn and are capable of clearing the windscreen correctly.
- Keep fuel tank levels high, ensuring you have more than enough fuel to complete your journey, allowing for unexpected delays and greater fuel use than usual.
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- food and a warm drink in a flask
- a pair of gloves
- a blanket
- a first aid kit
- a car radio
- ice scraper and de-icer
- a pair of scissors
- a pen
- a penknife
- a pair of 3mm thick glasses
- a camera
- a collection of pens
- a set of despair
- a book
- a set of instructions on how to use your kit

Take care on the roads:

- Take care on the roads. If you’re not sure if you should continue driving, it’s better to turn back or change your travel plans.
- If you do need to continue driving in poor weather, travel with caution.
- Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads.
- Avoid sudden acceleration and braking.
- Increase stopping distances.
- Avoid sudden or unnecessary steering.
- Reduce speed.
- Observe information on Variable Message Signs.
- Listen to radio travel bulletins.
- Do not pass closed snow gates or ‘Road Closed’ signs, as it may be dangerous and an offence to do so.
- Take a break every two or three hours.
- Avoid driving at night. If you need to, take an early start.
- Be aware of changing road and weather conditions, even if it is just a change in the weather.
- If you are driving in poor weather, keep a close eye on weather information specific to your journey by using the Met Office website: www.metoffice.gov.uk.
Before your journey
Pay extra attention to planning your journey in bad weather. Before travelling you should:

- check the weather forecast and road conditions
- consider whether you need to travel right now or if you can wait until the weather improves
- consider alternative routes
- consider alternative modes of transport
- allow extra time for your journey
- ensure that your vehicle is ready for a journey in poor weather
- carry an emergency kit
- consider what changes you need to make to your driving style to suit the weather or conditions
- tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive
- visit the Traffic Scotland website to identify any problems on trunk roads

Before you set off
- It is vitally important to make sure your vehicle is adequately maintained and that brakes, tyres, lights, batteries, windscreen and wiper blades are in good condition.
- Tyres are the only point of contact with the road and if they are worn or incorrectly inflated then they have less grip and can significantly increase stopping distances in the event of an emergency.
- The minimum legal tread depth is 1.6mm, but you should consider changing tyres before they fall near to 1.6mm as tyres with a greater tread depth perform better in poor conditions.
- All windows should be demisted and fully cleared of any frost, snow or ice.
- Check that wiper blades are not worn and are capable of clearing the windscreen correctly.
- Keep fuel tank levels high, ensuring you have more than enough fuel to complete your journey, allowing for unexpected delays and greater fuel use than usual.
- Check brakes, lights, oil and washer fluid levels.

During your journey

A safer, less stressful journey
There are lots of simple things you can do to make your journey safer and less stressful during severe weather, such as checking your route for delays before you set out, taking an alternative route if you need to, taking an emergency kit and adapting your driving style to the conditions.

When freezing temperatures are forecast, you’ll see our winter fleet out and about treating the roads with salt. Despite the high level of service provided, sudden weather changes occur and motorists should be aware that access to the road network may not always be possible.

For up-to-the-minute traffic information visit www.trafficscotland.org or download the Traffic Scotland mobile apps.
You can also listen to Traffic Scotland Radio or call the Traffic Customer Care Line on 0800 028 1414.

Keep a close eye on weather information specific to your journey by using the Met Office website: www.metoffice.gov.uk. The Met Office issue warnings for rain, snow, wind, fog and ice based on the likelihood and potential impact of conditions.

Each warning has a colour:
Red (take action)  Amber (be prepared)  Yellow (be aware)
Advice will be classed in four stages depending on the severity of the weather event:

- **Normal operations** – No severe weather
- **Travel with caution** – Police are advising drivers to reduce speed and exercise extra caution
- **High risk of disruption for road journeys** – Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads. Drivers who choose to do so should expect severe delays of several hours or more
- **No severe weather** – No severe weather

Advice is provided through Transport Scotland’s network of Variable Message Signs, the Traffic Scotland website (including the internet radio service), Twitter, smartphone applications, radio travel information broadcasts and the Traffic Scotland Customer Careline.

During your journey

Be aware of changing road and weather conditions, even if it is a road you use regularly. Remember it is dangerous and illegal to use a handheld mobile phone or device while driving.

You may need to change the way you drive in bad weather:

- **Avoid travelling on the roads** – Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads. Drivers who choose to do so should expect severe delays of several hours or more
- **Emergency kits**
  - Keep an emergency kit in the car:
    - Ice scraper and de-icer
    - Torch and spare batteries
    - Warm clothes and a blanket
    - A pair of boots
    - First-aid kit
    - Battery jump leads
    - A shovel for snow
    - Food and a warm drink in a flask
    - Sunglasses to help you see in low sun
    - Food and a warm drink in a flask
    - First-aid kit
- **During your journey**

  If you had to brake suddenly in an emergency, could I stop safely within the distance I can clearly see ahead of me?

  If I had to brake suddenly in an emergency, could I stop safely within the distance I can clearly see ahead of me?

  - **Before you set off**
    - Make sure your vehicle is fully maintained and that brakes, lights, batteries, windscreens and wiper blades are in good condition.
    - Check the tread depth of your tyres. They should be at least 1.6mm. Replace them if they are worn or below this level.
    - Check that your vehicle’s fuel levels are sufficient for your journey.
    - Check your vehicle’s oil levels and that all fluids are topped up.
    - Check the air pressure in your tyres and that they are at the recommended level.
    - Check your vehicle’s lights to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s brakes to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s windscreen and wiper blades to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s exhaust system to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s suspension to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s steering to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s tyres to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s brakes to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s fuel levels to ensure they are sufficient for your journey.
    - Check your vehicle’s oil levels to ensure they are sufficient for your journey.
    - Check your vehicle’s air conditioning to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s cooling system to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s heating system to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s lighting system to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s battery to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s steering wheel to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s chassis to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s body to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s doors to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s windows to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s sunroof to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s mirrors to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s seat belts to ensure they are working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s steering wheel to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s airbag to ensure it is working correctly.
    - Check your vehicle’s electronic stability control to ensure it is working correctly.
Before Your Journey

Police travel advice
Transport Scotland and Police Scotland have developed a severe weather information strategy to warn and inform road users when significant disruption to the road network is expected during extreme weather.

The travel advice and information service will kick in when... (add winter screen wash to your washer bottle)

Advice will be detailed in four stages depending on the severity of the weather:

• Normal operations — No severe weather

• Travel with caution — Police are advising conditions for road travel may be hazardous and drivers should exercise extra caution

• High risk of disruption for road journeys — Police are advising there is a high risk of disruption for road journeys and drivers are likely experience significant delays

• Avoid travelling on the roads — Police are advising drivers to avoid travelling on the roads. Drivers who choose to drive should expect severe delays of several hours or more

Advice is provided through Transport Scotland’s network of Variable Message Signs, the Traffic Scotland website (including the internet radio service), Twitter, smartphone applications, radio travel information broadcasts and the Traffic Scotland Customer Careline.

During your journey
Be aware of changing road and weather conditions, even if it is a road you use regularly.

Remember it is dangerous and illegal to use a handheld mobile phone or device while driving.

You may need to change the way you drive in bad weather:

• reduce speed
• increase stopping distances
• avoid sudden acceleration and braking
• use dipped headlights
• take a break every two or three hours
• do not pass closed snow gates or ‘Road Closed’ signs, as it may be dangerous and an offence to do so
• listen to radio travel bulletin
• observe information on Variable Message Signs

Watch out for locations where you may need to drive more carefully. Some common examples are:

• changes in road elevation or exposure
• where the road passes under or over a bridge
• where the road passes under or over a bridge
• bends in the road where there is a greater risk of loss of control. Reduce your speed when approaching

Emergency kits
Keep an emergency kit in the car:

• Ice scraper and de-icer
• Torch and spare batteries
• Warm clothes and a blanket
• A pair of boots
• First-aid kit
• Battery jump leads
• A shovel for snow
• A tow rope
• Food and a warm drink in a flask
• Sunglasses to help you see in low sun
• Make sure your mobile phone is fully-charged

A safer, less stressful journey
A safer, less stressful journey

Traffic Scotland Customer Careline.

You can also listen to Traffic Scotland Radio or call 0800 020 1414.

Keep a close eye on weather information specific to your journey by using the Met Office website: www.metoffice.gov.uk. The Met Office issue warnings for rain, snow, wind, fog and ice based on the current conditions at any time of day or night.

Each warning has a colour:

• Red (take action)
• Amber (be prepared)
• Yellow (be aware)

You can also use the Traffic Scotland website to identify problems on trunk roads.

Before your journey
Pay extra attention to planning your journey in bad weather. Before travelling you should:

• Check the weather forecast and road conditions
• Consider whether you need to travel right now or if you can wait until the weather improves
• Consider alternative routes
• Consider alternative modes of transport
• Allow extra time for your journey
• Ensure that your vehicle is ready for a journey in poor weather
• Carry an emergency kit
• Tell someone at your destination what time you expect to arrive
• Visit the Traffic Scotland website to identify any problems on trunk roads

When you are driving:

• Observe information on Variable Message Signs
• Listen to radio travel bulletin
• Avoid sudden acceleration and braking
• Take a break every two or three hours
• Reduce your speed when approaching

During your journey
Remember it is dangerous and illegal to use a handheld mobile phone or device while driving.

You may need to change the way you drive in bad weather:

• Reduce speed
• Increase stopping distances
• Avoid sudden acceleration and braking
• Use dipped headlights
• Take a break every two or three hours
• Do not pass closed snow gates or ‘Road Closed’ signs, as it may be dangerous and an offence to do so
• Listen to radio travel bulletin
• Observe information on Variable Message Signs

Watch out for locations where you may need to drive more carefully. Some common examples are:

• Changes in road elevation or exposure
• Where the road passes under or over a bridge
• Things at the side of the road that shade the carriageway (e.g. trees, bridges or other structures)
• Where there is less traffic use (e.g. slip roads)
• Bends in the road where there is a greater risk of loss of control. Reduce your speed when approaching

During your journey remember this critical question:
If I had to brake suddenly in an emergency, could I stop safely within the distance I can clearly see ahead of me?
Traveline Scotland

Provides up to date public transport timetable information to get you to your destination by the quickest route.

The Traveline Scotland app (in association with Traffic Scotland) includes:

- A journey planner showing public transport options between any two locations in Scotland, featuring all bus, coach, rail, Glasgow Subway and ferry routes
- Departure boards for buses and departure times for Scottish ferry terminals and Glasgow Subway stations
- News and notices affecting public transport services
- Contact details for all Scottish public transport operators

Useful Links

www.scotland.police.uk
www.trafficscotland.org
www.transport.gov.uk
www.readyscotland.org
www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code

Driving through ice and snow

- Your stopping distance increases 10 times when driving in snow and ice
- Select second gear when pulling away, easing your foot off the clutch gently to avoid wheel-spin
- It is not always obvious that the road is icy. Look for clues such as ice on the pavement or on your windscreen. If your tyres are making virtually no noise on the road, it could be a sign that you are driving on ice
- Do not brake heavily – it will just lock your wheels and you will skid further, consider changing to a lower gear
- Clear any snow on the roof of the vehicle before you drive off. It can slip down over the windscreen and obscure your view
- In severe cold or snowy conditions, look out for winter service vehicles spreading salt or using snow ploughs. They will have flashing amber beacons and will be traveling at slower speeds – around 40mph. Stay well back because salt or spray is thrown across the road
- Don’t overtake unless it is safe to do so as there may be uncleared snow on the road ahead

Drifting through windy weather

- High-sided vehicles and caravans are particularly affected by windy weather but strong gusts can also bow a smaller vehicle, cyclist, motorcyclist or horse rider off course
- This can happen on open stretches of road exposed to strong crosswinds, or when passing bridges, high-sided vehicles or gaps in trees
- If towing an empty curtain-sided trailer, leave the curtains open to make your vehicle less vulnerable to crosswinds
- Be aware that other vehicles and debris could unexpectedly be blown into your pathway

Driving in the rain

- When the road is wet, it can take twice as long to stop, so it makes sense to slow down and maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front
- If your vehicle loses grip, or “aquaplanes” on surface water, take your foot off the accelerator to slow down. Do not brake or steer suddenly because you have no control of the steering or brakes

Floods

- Try to avoid driving through surface water as you might flood your engine. Avoid the deepest water which is usually nearest the kerb
- If you have to drive through floods, drive slowly using first gear and try to keep the engine revving at a high rate. Move forward continuously to avoid stalling the engine. If driving an automatic vehicle, engage and hold in a low gear
- Check your mirror and test your brakes after driving through water, to make sure they are still working properly

Driving in fog

- Be particularly vigilant for pedestrians and cyclists during winter weather. They may be more difficult to see and havetransit seeing you. When driving through puddles or wet areas, be prepared to slow down or stop to avoid splashing and causing distress

Driving with a low sun

- Drive very slowly using dipped headlights so other drivers can see you
- If it is really foggy (less than 100m visibility), then switch your fog lights on. There is a 90% chance of survival, compared with about a 50/50 chance at 30mph
- Make sure you keep your windscreen clean

Darker evenings and mornings

- Switch on lights as soon as it starts to get dark
- In urban areas use dipped headlights. Use full beam on other roads at night but dip them when there is someone in front or coming towards you
- Be aware that pedestrians are harder to spot in the dark and may not be visible until they are very close. In particular, take care when driving near schools and in residential areas, where children may be walking and cycling. These road users are very vulnerable as they are both hard to spot in the dark and may act unpredictably
- Do not hang on the tail-lights of the vehicle in front. This gives you a false sense of security and means you may be driving too close
- Dazzle from sun can be dangerous. Always keep a pair of sunglasses (prescription if needed) in your vehicle for use in bright sunshine, especially if the sun is low or reflecting off a wet road

Driving with a low sun