

Drive safely this Easter Holidays



Easter is fast approaching and it is a time of year when we take to the roads to see relatives, go on holiday or organise day trips to make the most of the school holidays.

Whatever you are planning this Easter, please remember to take extra care on the roads over the long Easter weekend and during the school holiday period.

Julie Welch has kindly prepared the attached sheet (see the end of this document or the download section) with reminders on what to do before you leave home....

SAFE EASTER DRIVING....



Going away this easter?? Remember to make sure you and your vehicle are safe before you set out...

Journey management

- Plan your route including rest stops and overnight stays, if needed.
- Allow realistic travel times to suit the weather conditions.
- Drive during daylight hours if possible.
- Avoid alcohol the night before setting off and get a good night's sleep.

Vehicle maintenance

- Ensure your vehicle has been maintained/serviced and you have a good battery.
- Check tyres have a good tread depth and are inflated correctly (including the spare).
- Are windscreen wipers and washers working properly?
- Make sure lights are clean and working.

Carrying loads

- Pack all luggage safely and securely – in the boot if possible. Avoid piling luggage in a way that it obscures the driver's vision or could be projected forward in the event of a collision.
- Consider using a roof-rack or roof-box if you are carrying a lot of luggage – check your vehicle handbook for the maximum load and don't forget the extra height when driving.
- Restrain pets.

- You may need to adjust tyre pressures if you are carrying a heavier load than usual. Never exceed the Maximum Authorised Mass (MAM) for your vehicle – check your handbook.

Driving safely

- Make sure all vehicle occupants wear seatbelts and all children are secured correctly in appropriate seats.
- Maintain a safe following distance – at least two seconds between vehicles in good conditions and six seconds in wet conditions. It can take ten times as long to stop on an icy road.
- Remember that extra weight in your vehicle is likely to affect its handling. It will also take longer to stop.
- Watch out for other road users including motorbikes, cyclists, pedestrians and children. Remember that more people will take to the roads over the holidays and more drivers than usual will be in motorhomes or towing caravans – some of whom will be unfamiliar with the vehicle they are driving. With lots of vehicles full of families there is the potential for many drivers on the road to be distracted by in-vehicle noise. Be on guard and drive defensively.
- Take a break at least every two hours. If tired pull over when safe and take a break.
- If you plan to drive overseas research the rules of the road in the country you are visiting.

Avoid distractions

- Stow away your mobile phone.
- Programme your satnav before you set off.
- Leave things like tuning the radio, choosing tunes on the iPod and dealing with the demands of children to your front seat passenger.
- Pack a selection of toys, books and video games to keep children entertained during your journey. If your children plan on using entertainment such as TVs or video games ask them to use headphones to reduce the possibility of you becoming distracted by the noise.

Towing a caravan/trailer

- Make sure the caravan/trailer is roadworthy, registered and does not exceed any weight/towing limits.
- Familiarise yourself with the handling – practice with a short journey first at low speed.
- Be aware that towing affects braking ability and decreases acceleration. Take extra care on corners.
- Increase following distance and allow extra space when turning into traffic or changing lanes.

- Remember, if towing a caravan or trailer the maximum speed of 50mph on single carriageway roads, and 60mph on dual carriageways and motorways applies and you are not allowed in the outside lane of a motorway
- Consider fitting extended door mirrors. These will help visibility along both sides of your vehicle and trailer.

Driving a motorhome

- Because of its size a motorhome handles differently to a car. Increase following distance and take extra care on corners.
- Familiarise yourself with controls before setting off.
- Stow away all loose items.
- Make sure all vehicle occupants wear a seatbelt and that children are safely secured in appropriate car seats.

Brush Up Your Knowledge

Why not test your skills on this free App. Using the app you can brush up on your knowledge of UK road signs and see how much you really know – search for **'Traffic Signs UK Free' on the App Store**



Please take extra care on the roads to make sure we all have the safest Easter possible.