



Driving in all seasons

The effects of climate change have made driving on UK roads more difficult and unpredictable. Extra care may therefore be needed to deal with unexpected driving hazards, such as storms and bursts of heavy rain in summer. There are some useful tips on driving and vehicle preparation in the ‘Safer driving’ factsheet on our website (www.daimlerchryslerfleetmanagement.co.uk) and the following advice should be helpful to meet particular seasonal demands on driving skills.

Winter – cold, wet, fog, wind

Driving

In hazardous weather conditions like snow, ice or fog, consider if the journey is essential. If it is, then check the following:

- Ensure you have enough fuel to cope with heavy traffic and stop/start conditions.
- Remove all snow and ice from vehicle windows, mirrors, lights, wheel arches and number plates.
- Pull away slowly on ice or snow to avoid wheel-spins and maintain a moderate speed in as high a gear as possible.
- Switch on dipped headlights when visibility is reduced.
- Allow more time to brake and accelerate on dangerous road surfaces. Control speed and extend the distance with the driver in front.
- If the car starts to skid while braking, release the brake immediately. If the back wheels start to slide, steer into the direction of the skid and ease off the brake and the accelerator. If the front or all four wheels are sliding, release the brakes and don't attempt to steer until the wheels have retained some of their grip.
- Invisible to the eye, black ice is a major hazard to drivers. Check for signs like frozen puddles and frost on trees and take extra care.
- Winter means more driving in darkness, which can be tiring. Keep the vehicle well ventilated and take frequent breaks to stay alert.
- If you break down in an isolated area in bad weather, it is normally best to stay with the vehicle and wait for help.

Extra preparation for winter

- Leave additional time for the journey to take bad weather conditions into account.
- Ensure that all the standard checks on the vehicle have been carried out.
- In severe conditions, before departure, consider telling someone your route and estimated time of arrival.
- Take a fully charged mobile phone.
- Take some food and something to drink in the car.
- Bring additional equipment for bad weather:
 - Windscreen de-icer
 - Ice scraper
 - Waterproof or warm clothing in case of leaving the vehicle
 - If snow is forecast, a small spade and matting/old carpet to put under the wheels if necessary.

Met Office forecasts, both immediate and long range, are available in a number of ways, including Weathercall (customer services at 0871 200 3985) or by texting wthr4 for a postcode-based weather snapshot. More information is available on www.metoffice.com

For more information please email: general.enquiries@daimler.com



Summer – heat, glare, sudden rain

Severe summer heat can cause problems such as dehydration, tiredness, irritability and headaches. Hot sunshine can also soften the road surface and make it slippery. Additionally, after a long dry period, rain can mix with dust, oil and tyre rubber to produce greasy road surfaces, so extra care is needed.

Extra tips for summer driving

- Plan the route, leaving plenty of time for the journey and to take regular breaks.
- Take something to eat and drink in case of traffic congestion.
- Keep tuned to radio reports for traffic congestion and road works.
- Do not fill the fuel tank to the brim on very hot days. Fuel, like most liquids, expands and overfilling can lead to fuel leaking out of the filter neck of the fuel tank or breather.
- If planning to tow a caravan or trailer, check your vehicle's brakes and tyres very carefully. Also, examine the caravan tyres for signs of splitting or cracks in the wall or tread.
- Never overload a vehicle (or caravan) beyond carrying capacity – consult the owner's manual.
- If a vehicle is loaded, its braking distance will be increased, so extra room will be needed between yourself and the vehicle in front.

UK climate notes

- *The heaviest rainfall in one year in the UK is 6528 mm recorded at Sprinkling Tarn, Cumbria, in 1954.*
- *The longest drought in the UK occurred in Sussex and lasted 60 days between 17th March and 15th May 1893.*
- *In terms of annual average rainfall, the driest recorded place in the UK is St Osyth, Essex, with just 513 mm per year.*
- *In terms of annual average temperature, the warmest place in the UK is Scilly, Cornwall with a mean temperature of 11.5°C.*
- *Braemar, Aberdeenshire is the coldest low-level place in the UK, in terms of annual average temperature, with a mean temperature of 6.5°C.*
- *At Heathrow Airport there were 14 consecutive days between 23rd June and 8th July 1976 when the temperature was above 31°C.*

See www.metoffice.com

This factsheet was produced by Daimler Fleet Management in association with RAC.

www.rac.co.uk

NOTE: While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information at the time of producing this factsheet, Daimler Fleet Management can take no responsibility for any errors in the content or consequences arising from such errors or misinterpretation of the content.

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Daimler Fleet Management UK Limited

Tongwell, Milton Keynes, MK15 8BA

A company of the Daimler Financial Services Group
Registered in England and Wales No. 3534682
Registered office: Tongwell, Milton Keynes, MK15 8BA