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## Drive safely and legally this winter

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A cold winter's morning... Photograph © Kim Henson.

Winter pushes our vehicles to the limit, and to help you stay safe and legal when driving at this time of year, here are some handy



tips from Marc Russell, CCO at car maintenance marketplace FixMyCar (<https://www.whocanfixmycar.com/>)...

*He tells us:*

(All words from FixMyCar:).

“Winter has a reputation for pushing vehicles to their limit and transforming roads into chaos. Many drivers are unaware of the unique road rules during this colder season and risk fines or accidents if ignored. The Highway Code rules change when the days are shorter and temperatures drop. Here’s how drivers can avoid penalties or dangerous driving:

- If visibility is reduced, headlights are mandatory between sunset and sunrise.
- Windows and number plates must be clear of snow and ice before setting off on your journey. Avoid using hot water, as this can crack glass, and use warm salt water instead.
- Rain and spilt fuel make road conditions worse. In extreme weather, adjust your speed, and increase your following distance to four to six seconds from the vehicle ahead.
- Check your tyres have sufficient tread depth every two weeks. Anytime the temperature drops below 7°C, it’s time to swap your wheels. Look for tyres with symbols of the three-peak mountain snowflake (3PMSF) and M & S symbols for industry-standard winter tyres.
- A smartphone isn’t all a driver needs when preparing for potential breakdowns on the road. Pack an emergency kit with essentials like a blanket, jump cables, and a torch (flashlight).
- Drivers often complain about blinding lights at night, particularly with modern vehicles. 89% of drivers believe that at least some car headlights on the road today are too bright, says the RAC. In winter, fog lights should only be used when visibility is severely reduced, as they can dazzle other drivers.”