Icy screens (and other winter woes) are now on the agenda

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With the clocks now having gone back and autumn turning

inexorably into winter, the weather gets colder and drivers can expect frosty windscreens and icy windows, writes Robin Roberts and WheelsWithinWales.

(Photograph by, and copyright, Kim Henson).

Car specialist Gold Label Car Care https://www.goldlabelcarcare.co.uk

has provided expert advice with 5 ways to de-ice a windscreen for free.

They tell us:

Ice can be not only inconvenient, but also hazardous when driving – and an icy windscreen can impede vision when on the road. It's illegal to leave ice or snow on windows so you cannot see out.

If you have the luxury of heated rear and front windscreens make sure you put them on for a few minutes before driving away so the ice slips off, but if it's very thick you can speed up the process with these useful tips to de–ice your windscreen for free:

Windscreen wiper fluid:

If you have some leftover windscreen wiper fluid, you can use it to melt the ice. De-icing fluid is designed to melt ice and frost, and is particularly effective in minus temperatures.

Warm water:

Use warm water and a soft cloth or squeegee to gently remove ice from your windscreen. Although it may be tempting to boil a kettle and pour it directly onto your windscreen, do not use hot water. In particular, if you have a small crack on your windscreen and pour warm water onto it, it can cause the crack to expand and get much worse – so be careful to only use warm water.

Salt:

Similar to grit that is on roads and pavements, salt is an effective option for de-icing. Sprinkle a small amount of salt on the ice. The salt will lower the freezing point and help melt the ice. Do this in the morning and leave it a few minutes so it has time to work.

Vinegar:

Mix equal parts vinegar and water and spray it on the ice with a spray bottle. Vinegar is great at deicing windscreens because it helps lower the freezing point of water. It is also cheap and can be bought for as little as 60p!

Plastic bag:

Cover your windscreen with a plastic bag overnight to prevent ice from forming. A bin bag is often big enough to cover a whole windscreen and helps your windscreen from falling victim to freezing temperatures.

There's more…

You'll use more washer fluid in the autumn and winter so ensure the reservoir is regularly topped up with a ready-mixed solution or add a few capfuls of methylated spirit to freshly drawn water.

If you have air conditioning, ensure the filter cartridge is clean inside the car and turn it on to dry and warm the air to reduce condensation, and keep the heating at a comfortable level but not too warm so you dose off.

Seeing is half the battle, you need to be seen and it's a good time now to check side lights, dipped and main beams, indicators and brake lights are all working and your wipers are not worn and leaving big streaks over the glass front or back. Many fast fit centres and garages will do a winter essentials check if you cannot and it's an investment you don't want to

overlook.