Stay Safe! Timely Winter Driving Tyre Sense, from Bridgestone

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Bridgestone hopes flurry of winter driving messages will stick with drivers...

Report by Kim Henson.

With the temperatures plummeting across the UK in recent days and Jack Frost making an appearance, Bridgestone is urging motorists to take heed of some simple driving tips to stay as safe as possible.

With a marked drop in temperatures now being felt, Bridgestone's managing director Robin Shaw is once again urging motorists to think about the changing conditions and adapting

their driving style accordingly, as well as ensuring that their tyres are up to the challenge….

He said, “Driving in winter conditions is something everyone must prepare for. It is not only about having the right tyres; the driver’s behaviour is also essential in these conditions as he or she needs to understand and adapt to different winter hazards.”

He continued, “It is therefore crucial to not only prepare our vehicles, but also ourselves when the weather gets cold.”

Some of Robin’s tips include checking (regularly and often) the tyre pressures and tread depth, after surveys carried out by Tyresafe revealed that more than 27% of tyres were already illegal when they were eventually replaced by motorists.

That equates to more than one-in-four of the 37 million cars and light commercial vehicles (LCVs) on the UK’s roads being driven with a tyre that could be dagerous and cost its driver a £2,500 fine (PER TYRE!) and three penalty points, an MoT failure – or worse…

Robin’s Tips (in no particular order; all are important!):

1. Periodically check traction, or available grip, when driving in challenging conditions. Road conditions can change drastically in a short period of time or distance in winter. Apply the brakes with moderate pressure to determine the available grip and adapt your driving, if needed, to respond to ever-changing road conditions.
2. Under-inflated tyres not only compromise motorists’ ability to brake and manoeuvre safely, but they also consume more fuel and wear out faster. Information on the recommended tyre pressure can be found in the operating manual, on the inside of the door pillars or under your fuel cap lid/flap.
3. The legal minimum tread depth is 1.6mm. Insert a 20p coin in the tread; if you can see the border, it’s time to change the tyres *(Kim adds: Even with more than the legal minimum of 1.6mm tread depth, as the tread nears this level tyres become less effective in terms of braking distance, cornering ability and traction; consider renewing the tyres in advance of this point being reached, especially when planning very long journeys during which the*

treads could become illegal…).

4. Maximise available grip by separating driving manoeuvres when negotiating a curve. Brake to an appropriate speed while travelling in a straight line prior to a curve. This allows you to use all the available grip for negotiating the curve. Accelerate gradually when you are able to straighten the steering wheel at the exit of the turn.
5. Avoid cruise control in wet, icy or snowy conditions. Maintain control of acceleration and deceleration at all times.
6. Unless absolutely necessary, avoid driving in bad weather conditions. (Kim adds: Before setting out in adverse conditions, pause to consider whether you really need to use your vehicle at that time, or whether it would be better to delay your journey). Your safety comes first.

Bridgestone/Firestone all-weather tyres…

Meanwhile, both Bridgestone and Firestone boast an all-weather tyre option which could be the most appropriate for the unpredictable UK climate.

Both the Firestone Multiseason and Bridgestone A001 are made for drivers who live in mild weather areas which may face variable weather conditions.

Robin added: “Where summer tyres fail to perform, the Multiseason and A001 take motorists safely into cold and more challenging winter conditions. Both products also boast tuned tread patterns for low noise and optimum road contact in all surface conditions.”

For more general information about road journeys this winter, www.bridgestone.co.uk