

Safety Margins

Tyre grip is significantly reduced in icy conditions, requiring up to ten times the normal stopping distance compared to dry roads. Extra caution is essential to avoid loss of control. Maintain a low speed and use the highest gear possible to reduce the risk of tyre slip. When travelling on ice, tyres make little noise and steering feels light and unresponsive, demanding extreme care. Be gentle when braking, accelerating, and steering, and constantly assess the road ahead to take timely action.

Cyclists and Wind Conditions

Always give cyclists plenty of room when overtaking, and allow extra space in windy conditions. A sudden gust can easily blow them off course. In strong winds, riders of two-wheeled vehicles are particularly vulnerable. Check left as you pass to ensure they remain safe.

Approaching Bends and Steep Hills

Keep to the left when approaching right-hand bends to gain an earlier view and spot hazards sooner. This reduces the risk of collision with oncoming vehicles.

On steep hills, gravity increases vehicle speed, making it harder to stop. Select a lower gear for engine braking, and apply brakes carefully to prevent overheating and brake fade.

When parking downhill, turn the wheels toward the kerb and leave the car in gear (or 'Park' for automatics) to prevent movement.

Brakes and Road Contact

Water on the brakes acts as a lubricant, reducing braking efficiency. Lightly apply the brakes while moving to dry them out. Always check mirrors before doing so. Loss of grip is more likely on slippery, loose, or uneven surfaces, especially when braking in poor weather.

Hot Roads and Windy Conditions

In very hot weather, road surfaces can soften, reducing tyre grip. Take extra care when cornering or braking.

In windy conditions, exercise caution on exposed roads where gusts can blow vehicles off course. Be alert for cyclists, motorcyclists, high-sided vehicles, and trailers—they are most at risk.

Driving in Wet Conditions

Wet weather doubles stopping distances. Adjust your speed so you can stop safely. If another vehicle cuts into your gap, ease back to maintain distance.

At high speeds in heavy rain, aquaplaning may occur—steering feels light as tyres lift off

the road. Reduce speed gradually without braking until normal steering returns. Use **dipped headlights** when **surface spray** reduces visibility to help others see you.

Following Distances and Busy Roads

Do not follow too closely. If another driver tailgates, gently slow down to increase space from the car ahead.

Apply the **two-second rule**: when the vehicle ahead passes a fixed object, say “*Only a fool breaks the two-second rule.*” If you reach the object before finishing, you are **too close**.

Fog and Reduced Visibility

Use **dipped headlights in foggy conditions** and **front and rear fog lights** when visibility is seriously reduced.

Maintain a sensible speed and allow double stopping distance on wet or slippery roads.

Contraflow Systems

In contraflow systems, you travel **close to oncoming traffic** and often in **narrow lanes**. Get into the **correct lane early**, observe speed limits, and keep a safe separation distance.

Skidding and Slippery Surfaces

Skidding is usually caused by **driver error**, harsh acceleration, braking, or steering, which increases the risk.

Adapt your driving to road and weather conditions, and avoid **braking and steering simultaneously**.

In snowy conditions, use gentle controls; sharp braking may cause skidding.

While **four-wheel drive** provides **maximum grip** on slippery or uneven surfaces, it **does not replace careful driving**.

Torque and Wheel Grip

Using a **low gear** provides **more torque**, which can cause **wheel spin** and **loss of grip** on slippery roads. Use **higher gears** where possible to maintain traction.

Emergency Stops and ABS

If your vehicle has **Anti-lock Braking System (ABS)**, apply brakes firmly and keep pressure steady until the car stops.

When **ABS activates**, you may hear a **grating sound** or feel **vibration through the brake pedal**—this is **normal**.

Traffic-Calming Measures

Road humps are designed to **reduce speed**. Approach them **slowly** to prevent **loss of control** or **vehicle damage**. Stay alert for **pedestrians and cyclists** in these areas.

Coasting

Coasting is when **holding the clutch down** or **selecting neutral**, reduces **vehicle control**. The **engine cannot assist with braking** or **stabilise** the vehicle through corners.

Driving in Bad Weather

Driving in **bad weather** increases the **risk of collisions**. Travel only if **necessary**. Clear all **snow and ice** from **lights, mirrors, number plates, and windows** to ensure visibility. Inform someone of your **expected travel time** to reduce **pressure** and avoid **rushing**.

Electronic Stability Control (ESC)

ESC is a computer-assisted safety system that detects **loss of traction** and makes **automatic corrections** to prevent **loss of control**.

The **ESC indicator light** briefly illuminates when the system activates. While **highly effective**, ESC **cannot correct a vehicle once traction limits are exceeded**.