

# Your Free Guide to Driving Safely This Autumn



**the fuelcard people**

# Road hazards in autumn

## The colours of autumn...

As the nights start to draw in, drivers are faced with low autumn sunrises and sunsets on their daily commutes. These might create some spectacular views in the autumn sky, but the associated glare creates a big hazard.

On top of this, the leaves start to turn a beautiful mix of colours, lining the roadside with oranges and reds. But as autumn continues these leaves will begin to fall and cover the roads, leaving potential hazards. Piles of leaves cover potholes from view, and wet leaves make stopping difficult.

**Read on to find out our top tips to prevent these autumn hazards from involving you in an accident.**



## Falling temperatures...

As the temperatures start to fall in autumn, your car's engine and battery get put under more load. You're using the fans and heaters more, and the engine has to work harder as the fluids and lubricants are sluggish in the cold.

Plus, your battery is less efficient when it's cold. It loses power output and recharges less quickly, meaning starting is harder.

## Nights are closing in...

During the summer, the long daylight hours mean that you use your car's headlights much less. With days shortening throughout autumn, you'll soon be facing a regular dark commute, relying on your car's lights functioning properly. Drivers often forget to check their bulbs during the summer, and only discover a blown bulb when they face a dark commute in autumn. Cars with broken lights create a huge hazard on the road.



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# Our top autumn driving tips

## 1 Keep your windscreen clean inside and out

Sun glare is bad enough in autumn as the sun appears lower in the sky. But it is made even worse by smears on your windscreen. Make sure your glass is clean, on both the outside and inside, and that your washer fluid is topped up.

### **Make sure you clean your wipers -**

When you clean your windscreen, lift your wipers off the glass and give them a wipe over with hot, soapy water. If they are dry, cracked or still smearing after cleaning, consider replacing them. Wiper blades last two to three years on average.



## 2 Get your car battery checked over

Batteries that are showing signs of struggling, such as if your engine is taking longer start, need to be checked to make sure they don't fail during the colder months, especially if they are over five years old . Take it to your garage and get it tested.

**Check the voltage** - An old 12v car battery will output less volts. A mechanic will check the voltage output of the battery and can tell you if it needs replacing.



## 3 Check your tyre tread and pressure

Bald or defective tyres are dangerous at all times of year, but especially so in autumn and winter. With leaves falling on the road resulting in slippery conditions, and the lingering prospect of rain, snow and ice, you need all the grip you can get. Check your tyres.

**Minimum of 1.6mm tread** - The more tread you have on your tyre the shorter your stopping distance.



# 4

## Watch out for deer

The rutting season in October to November is one of the peak times for road accidents involving deer.

If you see a deer on the road in front of your car, turn off your full beams, otherwise it may freeze in front of you. Slow down and try to continue on the same path rather than swerve to avoid it. Sudden manoeuvres can mean you lose control and you could risk hitting a tree or another vehicle.

**40,000 to 75,000 deer are killed in road accidents every year** - Those accidents kill and injure car occupants too, and cause millions of pounds worth of damage to vehicles.



# 5

## Make sure you are lit up...

**...and the road ahead is lit up too.** A simple, regular check around your car's lights to make sure they are all working, and the replacement of any blown bulbs will make your autumn and winter commutes safer.

Not only is it dangerous for other road users if you have a blown bulb, as you are less visible, a faulty headlight impairs your ability to see the road ahead.

With the added hazards on the road at this time of year, such as leaves and deer, you need to be able to rely on properly functioning headlights to see as far down the road as possible to reduce the risk of an accident.



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