

# SUMMER DRIVING GUIDE

OUR EXPERT INSTRUCTORS HAVE LOTS OF ADVICE ON DRIVING THIS SUMMER, WHETHER FOR WORK OR LEISURE, IN THE UK OR ABROAD



## Keep an eye on traffic conditions

The summer can throw up all sorts of unusual traffic conditions as events, holiday getaways and tourism affect typical driving conditions.

So always plan ahead by checking sat nav and a quick Google of locations on your route before you leave. Even if the driving you're doing is routine, it might not be for thousands of others heading for festivals or shows, going to the coast on a nice day or driving to holiday destinations (Fridays and Saturdays are often very busy 'changeover' days).



## How to drive in heavy traffic

In heavy traffic, don't just lock your focus on to the vehicle in front and only react to what it does.

As traffic speeds up and slows down (the 'concertina effect'), keep moving more smoothly by watching as far ahead as possible, and as everyone comes to a halt, slow down far earlier and try to keep rolling so you reach the end of the queue as it begins to move again. Not only is this safer, but uses less fuel too.



## Keep topped up

Make sure all the fluids in your vehicle are topped up - especially screenwash. A windscreen of squished flies against a low, bright sun, can seriously impair your view. And remember to drink water to hydrate - this will help you remain more alert.

## Be aware of more cyclists & pedestrians

Better weather (when it happens!) encourages more cyclists, runners and pedestrians onto or near roads, and those riding bicycles for fun might not be as clear on the Highway Code as other more regular users. Share the road patiently and safely so everyone can enjoy their well-earned break.



### SUNGLASSES

Always have a pair to hand, should the sun come out!



### WATER

Drink it regularly: 2% dehydration equals 20% less concentration.



### PETS

Don't leave pets in your parked car: the build-up of heat can kill.

## DRIVING ON HOLIDAY: SOME TIPS



### Lane discipline

On holiday, you might well end up driving on unfamiliar roads.

#### Main roads

Be aware that driving styles change a lot in the summer. And it's not just abroad: in the UK, there may be a higher proportion of drivers not used to high mileages on main roads and motorways as in usual working periods.

#### This could manifest as:

- **Slower, less confident drivers**
- **Poor lane discipline**
- **Less awareness of other vehicles**

Abroad, take time before travelling to understand the rules of the road, speeds and signage, and local driving habits. There's plenty of online advice specific to each country.

### Country lanes

Look out for things such as shadows and telephone poles to help predict what's ahead – that extra second or two warning can be a massive help.

Also, watch where telephone and power cables go: they usually follow lanes and so point to where upcoming junctions and bends might be.

### Manage distraction

A car full of children (or other friends and family members!) can be a serious distraction when you're driving, and is very dangerous on a long, busy journey. Set some ground rules around this: reserve the right to not reply if you need to concentrate, and for somebody else in the car to be in charge of 'crowd' control...

### Plan routes and rest

Don't just switch the sat-nav on and follow it unthinkingly. Where do you want, or need, to stop? Would a slightly longer route with quieter roads suit? What are the alternatives if the traffic gets really heavy?

It's worth having a plan for all of this, so you're not making stressful decisions on unfamiliar roads at the last minute while driving.

### Company car policy

Do check your company car policy regarding permissions or requirements for:

#### Towing trailers and caravans

- Make sure you understand the additional safety measures and any weight and speed restrictions in place.

#### Taking company vehicles abroad

- Check you have the necessary approvals and any paperwork such as a VE103B form if you're going abroad.

#### Other drivers

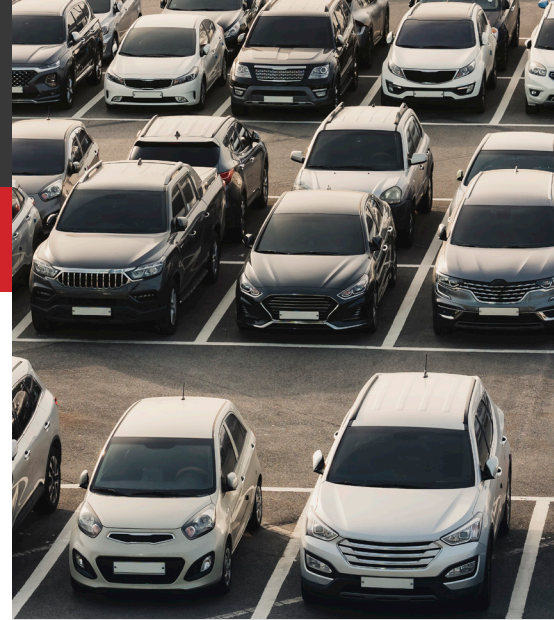
- If others will drive your car when you're on holiday, check with your employer they are allowed to, and any licence or insurance requirements.

### EV charging

There's plenty of debate about the provision of public charging points on busy summer routes, so make a practical plan regarding charging and build in contingency locations if the originally planned ones are in use.

### Spare key

If you're travelling a distance from home, make sure you take a spare set of car keys to avoid being stranded on that beach searching for your original set. Replacing lost or damaged keys can be time consuming and often costly.



## HIRE CARS

### 4 STEPS FOR DRIVING HIRE CARS ABROAD

**1** If you are planning to use a hire car abroad, firstly make sure you have the relevant documentation for that country (ie UK or International driving licence), or it will be a very short drive.

**2** Once you have the car, take pictures on your phone of every dent and scratch so there are no dispute when you hand it back.

**3** Then take some time to acclimatise to the new controls while parked. Start with pedals and work up, through handbrake, air con and dashboard controls to those closer to eye level such as steering wheel buttons, stalks and instruments.

**4** Do not start until you are completely happy with where all functions are, and how to operate them. Learning about them while driving in unfamiliar conditions is not the time, or the place, to do this safely.



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