



Five simple ways to improve your driving safety

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Schools are out, kids are out and families are out, so the last thought on most minds is they don't want to end up inside a hospital.

With 37.9 million licensed vehicles on the roads in Great Britain, it's important to take the time to make sure you're driving safely and confidently.

For National Road Victim Awareness Month, **Euro Car Parts** has put together a checklist of precautions to take before and during your route to help minimise the chances of collisions and build good driving habits for the safety of yourself and other road users.

Regularly check your car

Vehicle maintenance needs to be carried out quite frequently, even if your car is not in use every day. Parts like tyres, oil, and water need to be checked every fortnight. Don't forget other parts such as windscreen wipers, lights and bodywork will need checking a few times a year. A spokesperson from Euro Car Parts suggests: "Getting in the habit of regularly checking your vehicle will not only benefit you when it comes to staying safe while driving, it will also keep your vehicle healthy, giving it a longer life, and you'll notice a smoother ride when things are topped up. If you're uncertain of what to cover, don't be afraid to ask a trusted family member, friend or a qualified mechanic for help".

Medication matters

If you're currently taking medication, check the small print to see if it is legal to take before driving. Some over-the-counter medications can affect your driving ability due to certain drugs used - However, it is unlikely you will be told if this is the case when buying them



over the counter. For example, some medications used for hay fever can land you a hefty fine or even a ban for drug driving. This is because antihistamine (the drug found in hay fever tablets) can cause drowsiness and interfere with vision, hearing and reaction times. Anything that causes side-effects and will decrease the quality of driving will be under the same law as drug driving, so check with your doctor before taking any risks.

Know how to drive, rain or shine

It may be common knowledge to some to slow down in icy weather conditions, but summer has its own set of dangers that can affect driving safety too. Cars can quickly heat up and cause driver heat exhaustion and dehydration, which may impact reaction times, so make sure to stay hydrated and keep your windows open for ventilation. Keeping windows clean from dust or dirt will keep the sun from deflecting and vision clear under direct sunlight, which is very important too.

In July 2017, 106.9 millimeters of rain fell, meaning that we're due some rain this year! Rain can cause a lot of problems for drivers from affecting the time it takes to brake, to distorting windscreens and rear viewing. An astonishing 15% of UK drivers said they wouldn't use their brakes at all in wet weather, but roll to a stop instead. To stay safe, always make sure to keep your distance, rain or shine.

Take control

As the driver, it's important to be in charge of the vehicle. Make sure that house rules apply in the car with children, and adopt point scoring systems if incentives are needed to keep good behaviour in place. However, it's not just children that can cause distractions whilst on the road. Common culprits are loud music, having in-depth conversations with passengers and even a quick check of a smartphone. Be clear with passengers when it comes to your personal driving preferences, and make the glovebox the phonebox, to limit distractions.

Give yourself plenty of time



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It may sound obvious, but allowing yourself extra time when setting off - to sit in traffic, fill up for petrol and keep your distance (sticking to the three second rule) - will help keep you calm and limit any temptations to speed up, cut up other drivers, or ignore stop signs in order to get somewhere on time.