

THE DRIVING **D**OS AND **D**ON'TS

How to **stay safe** on the road

Welcome to some top tips and great ideas to keep you safe on the road at work

It's shocking – so absorb it!

- There are **9 deaths every day** on UK roads (and 10 times as many serious injuries) – 1 in 3 occurs at work
- **1 in 2** drivers on company business are involved in a collision every year
- Fleet vehicle drivers have **30 – 40%** higher incident rates per mile travelled
- **95%** of all collisions are caused by human error

From time-to-time or as part of your daily role you may be asked to drive a vehicle operated by Network Rail. Whether it's a car, van or lorry, this booklet will help you and your vehicle stay safe on the road.

Be as vigilant on the roads as you are on track. Know the risks, be aware and stay safe.



Road safety is
as important
as track safety.



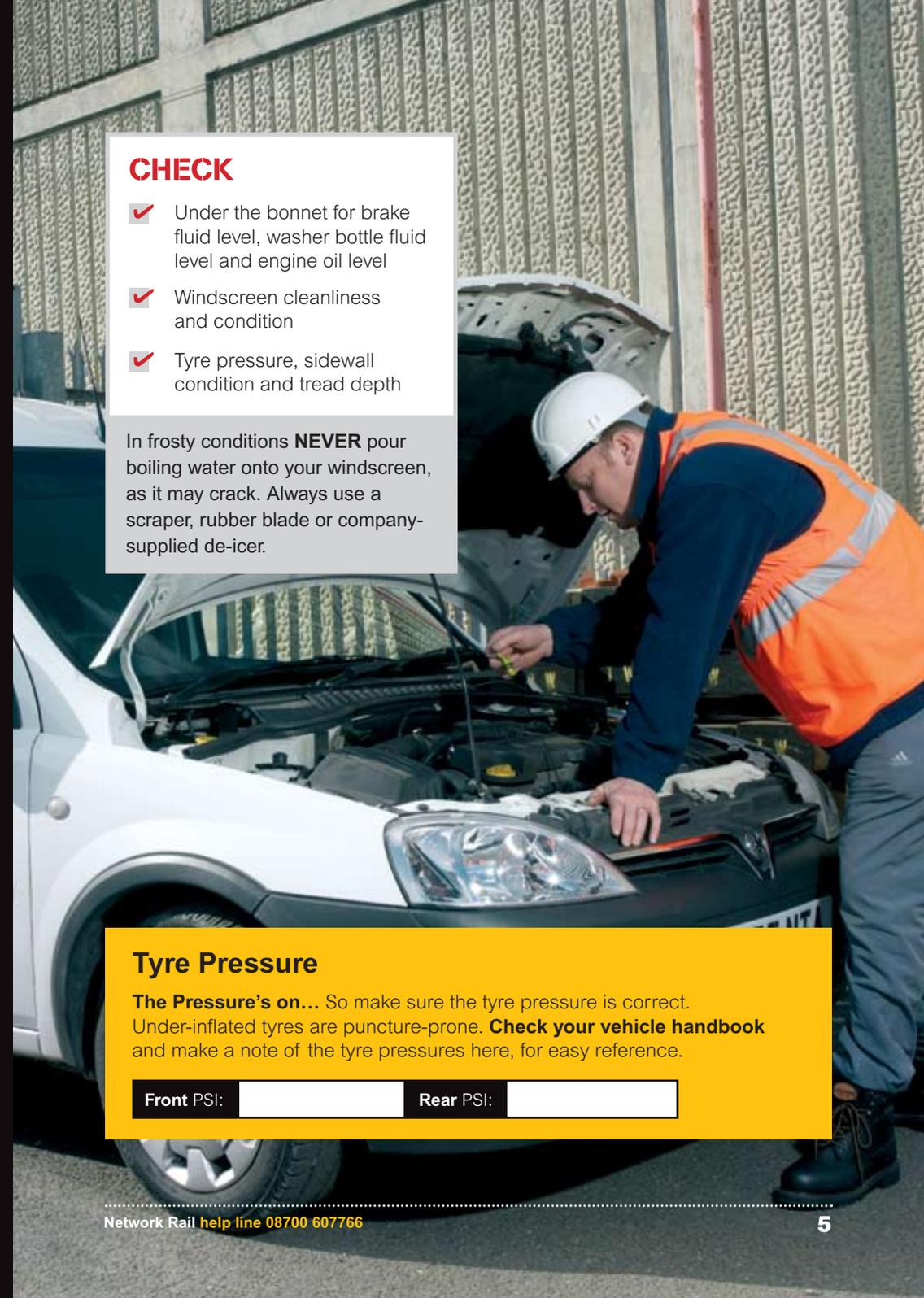
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If you're checking out a vehicle **check this out too...**

Although **95% of all accidents are caused by human error**, you can help avoid mechanical faults by using the checklist. After all, **it's YOUR responsibility** to make sure your vehicle is safe and legal before you hop into the driver's seat.



Up to 30% of a car's structural strength is in the windscreen – if you have even the smallest of chips, **report it IMMEDIATELY via the Network Rail help line 08700 607766.**



CHECK

- ✓ Under the bonnet for brake fluid level, washer bottle fluid level and engine oil level
- ✓ Windscreen cleanliness and condition
- ✓ Tyre pressure, sidewall condition and tread depth

In frosty conditions **NEVER** pour boiling water onto your windscreen, as it may crack. Always use a scraper, rubber blade or company-supplied de-icer.

Tyre Pressure

The Pressure's on... So make sure the tyre pressure is correct. Under-inflated tyres are puncture-prone. **Check your vehicle handbook** and make a note of the tyre pressures here, for easy reference.

Front PSI:

Rear PSI:

The first 30 minutes are critical

Did you know a huge amount of road accidents happen within the first 30 minutes of a shift?



You need to make sure that you're concentrated and switched on, the minute you get into your vehicle. This is most important when you've been out the night before, had too little sleep or missed breakfast and are not at your best.

Remember, it's not just your welfare that you're responsible for.



Driving while tired is deadly



Around 300 people a year are killed because a driver has fallen asleep at the wheel.

Driver fatigue accounts for up to **20%** of crashes on motorways or similar roads, with **40%** involving people who drive as part of their job.

- **Take a 15-minute break** about every two hours on the road
- Tell your manager if anything at work or in your personal life is disrupting your sleep (e.g. stress, new baby etc.)
- Share the driving if possible
- **Be aware of your tiredness** – you don't fall asleep without warning!
- If you are 'fighting it', find a safe place for a break

Remember, turning up the radio or winding down the window will do little to stop you nodding off if you're too tired to drive.



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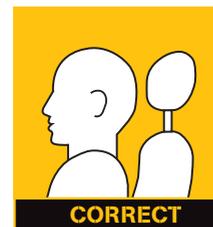
Are you risking your neck?

Many whiplash injuries at low speed can be avoided if drivers adjust their head restraints properly.

**Do everything
you can to
protect yourself.**

Handy Hints

The top of the head restraint should be level with the top of your head and no lower than 2 inches below - the minimum is just above the ears. It should be no more than 2 inches away from the back of your head.



Are you sitting comfortably? Make sure the back of your seat is in an upright and comfortable position.

Neck injuries are reported by drivers in over 20% of rear impact crashes.

Many whiplash injuries at low speed can be avoided if drivers and passengers adjust their head restraints properly.

Follow the guidelines above to check your head restraint every time you get into a new vehicle before you set off.



Over 250,000 accidents per year lead to whiplash injuries – 2,000 of these result in permanent disabilities.

“If I can drive a car, I can drive a van, can't I?”



There are currently no special requirements for drivers of small and medium-size vans, so many will have gained their road experience in cars. Make sure you request driver coaching when stepping up in vehicle size.

Handy tips for preparing vans and LGVs

- Even on the way to an emergency incident Network Rail vehicles never have any traffic dispensations and must always **follow the full Highway Code**
- Ensure you have the capability and confidence to drive the vehicle. If unsure request familiarisation or coaching

Are you well stacked?

- **Ensure your load is correctly positioned and well secured.** Loose goods can damage the vehicle internally and could cause you to lose control
- **Never place heavy loads near the rear doors** unless there is other weight in the centre of the vehicle to balance the load
- Be careful when joining motorways as it is more difficult to see your blind spot
- Take extra care if the view from your mirrors is obstructed

Maximum Speed Limits for Vans and LGVs

	Built Up Areas	Single Carriageways	Dual Carriageways	Motorways
Car-derived vans	30mph	60mph	70mph	70mph
Small vans towing trailers	30mph	50mph	60mph	60mph
Vans over 2.0t maximum weight up to 7.5t	30mph	50mph	60mph	70mph
As above, towing trailer	30mph	50mph	60mph	60mph
Goods vehicles over 7.5t	30mph	40mph	50mph	60mph



The penalty for **breaking the safe loading regulations can result in you being fined up to £5,000 for each offence!**



LORRY

What the...@?@! happened?



Driving is the most dangerous thing you do on a daily basis.

It's a scary fact but **95% of all on-road vehicle incidents** are caused partially or wholly by human error. What can you do to avoid them...

LOOK, BE SEEN AND BE AWARE

- Double check for cyclists and motorcyclists (even more so in vans and lorries where there are much larger natural 'blind areas')
- Clear your windscreens of condensation, dirt or frost
- Switch headlights on in low visibility conditions
- Ensure lights and number plates are clean
- Be aware of hazards that might not be obvious to you at first sight – people stepping out between cars etc
- Don't guess the speed of an approaching vehicle or take chances
- Leave a sufficient gap around you and other road users – 2 seconds is a safe limit
- Don't assume the vehicle in front will move off at a junction – it's the biggest cause of rear-end shunts



Everyday items such as drink cans placed on the dashboard can become lethal weapons. When braking suddenly, always ensure you have a clutter-free dash.

Violations

Don't take risks on the road, it's your passengers' lives on the line as well! Around 9% of all road incidents are caused by some form of deliberate or reckless act.

Distractions

Today's world is full of distractions that may affect our driving abilities.

Here are a few of the main culprits that affect our concentration:

- **Mobile phones**
- **Other in-vehicle devices**
- **Passengers**
- **Stress or emotional strain**
- **Illness or prescription drugs**

Road surface

Local authorities are actively improving road surfaces in and around incident black spots. However, normal surfaces can still lead to incidents if drivers fail to spot the clues.

- Scan the road surface for black ice in cold, wet weather and potholes that can cause tyre deflation or crashes
- Look out for bollards and road signs and slow down when approaching road works

Lane discipline

At roundabouts, stick to your lane all the way through and watch your side mirrors like a hawk. If a truck or other large vehicle is alongside you on the entry, hang back.

Driving off-road

You will often need to drive off-road to access track points and working areas; being aware of the risks will keep you safe off-road.

- Use your gears to control your speed; use brakes as little as possible
- Take your time and assess obstacles before attempting to pass them, even if this means getting out of the vehicle and walking ahead
- When negotiating slopes avoid changing gears; on steep descents select the lowest gear possible as this will ensure better vehicle control

Handy Hints

Getting out of the mud

- Make sure your front wheels are pointed straight ahead
- Try rocking the vehicle forward and back, but don't spin the wheels
- If this fails, place some type of friction material under the wheels e.g. carpet or foot mats
- Call for help if you can't free the vehicle with these techniques, rather than risk damaging the vehicle



When it comes to speed, drivers can be good, bad or just plain stupid. Good drivers manage their speed in accordance with the weather or road conditions and within the speed limits.

Speed Management

30mph in a 30 zone may be too fast. The limit is a limit, not a target. Here are a few clues that could help you assess your speed:

- Lamp posts at frequent intervals usually indicate a 30mph limit
- Always keep your speed down around schools and in residential areas where children may be playing. If you hit someone at 20mph they will almost certainly live

3rd gear in a 30 zone

4th gear in a 40 zone

5th gear in a 50 and above zone

- Slow down in urban areas. Parked vehicles can often conceal pedestrians about to cross the road, so cut your speed
- On rural roads, match your speed to the road conditions and be aware of hazards such as:
 - Pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders
 - Hay, mud or manure in the road
 - Slow-moving tractors
 - On-coming vehicles encroaching on your side of the road
- Count a 2 second gap between you and the vehicle in front of you. Double it if conditions are wet/icy
- Variable speed limit signs are usually linked to cameras, so don't take a chance
- Manage your speed and position on the approach to slip roads



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Keep your wits about you

How to avoid tail-end shunts

Many of Network Rail's accidents are caused by vehicles shunting into one another. **Even minor ones can cause personal injury** so take a moment to read these tips and make sure you're not on the receiving end!



Drop back so you can spot hazards earlier



Always leave enough space in front so you can stop safely if somebody brakes hard in front of you (remember the 2 second gap!)



Don't lose your cool! If somebody is tail-gating you, let them overtake when it is safe to do so



Hang back at roundabouts



Reversing and Blind Spots

A huge number of accidents are caused by low-speed manoeuvring incidents: things like reverse parking and 3-point turns. **All vehicles suffer from blind spots**, especially vans and lorries. So be aware that when driving a vehicle, your ability to see obstacles and hazards will be impaired.

Handy Hints

- Always use your side mirrors when reversing
- If possible always ask your colleague to get out of the vehicle to guide you when reversing



Seat belts should be worn at all times where fitted.

A crash at 30mph can result in unbuckled passengers in the back seats hitting the front seat and anyone in it with a force of 30–60 times your body weight.

In the UK, the Department for Transport estimates that around 40 front-seat passengers are killed each year by unbuckled rear-seat passengers hitting them in a crash.

Wearing a seat belt in the front seat saves over 2,500 lives every year.

Seat belt sense

Ensure that belts do not pass too high across the neck. Passengers need to belt up; if they don't, refuse to move off. It's your responsibility to ensure they follow the rules.



Van drivers tend to sit higher than in cars so, in the event of an impact, there's a greater chance of them being thrown through the windscreen.



Park it safe!

Avoid parking:

- in very narrow roads
- opposite driveways, entrances and junctions
- too close to other vehicles

Handy Hints

Whenever it's practical to do so, reverse parking will cut down the chances of you damaging the vehicle as you leave the parking space.

It's also safer to drive forward out of a space as visibility is greater.

Getting there... Safe and Sound

How to avoid damage whilst parking

Here are a few handy ways to keep your parked vehicle safe

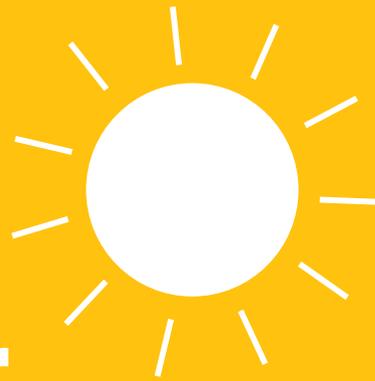
- **Park legally!** Remember that parking tickets are the driver's responsibility
- Take care at tight access points
- Help each other to reverse (work as a team)
- Slow down at access points
- Park at a sensible distance from other vehicles and avoid creating an obstacle to others



Don't forget smoking is not permitted in company vehicles.



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Whatever the weather



Who knows what's round the corner when bad weather strikes.

Stay safe with these simple tips:

Before you hit the road...

- Make sure the screen wash contains sufficient water **and** winter additive
- Check that all the lights are in full working order
- Ensure that front and rear screens are clear, **inside** and out
- Know the route you're driving
- Avoid driving in bad weather. Check weather reports and never embark on a journey if there's a weather warning. Ask your line manager for advice
- Use only Network Rail-approved containers for the carriage of petrol in vehicles

Remember **braking distances can be 10 times as long** in adverse conditions. Keep your distance!

Winter Aids

Put a few things in the boot in case you get stuck somewhere:

- A fully charged mobile phone
- Warm clothing, waterproof boots and a blanket
- A hi-vis jacket close to hand
- A torch with fresh batteries
- Pieces of old carpet to aid traction
- Cans of high-energy drinks
- Long-life high-energy bars
- A spade or shovel

Summer Driving

- On long journeys, drink plenty of fluids
- Reduce speed if the sun is directly in front of you and reducing forward vision
- Be aware on minor roads, of increased agricultural traffic
- Ensure passage of fresh air through the vehicle cab and open the windows
- Be aware that excess heat can induce drowsiness

Handy Hints

If you start to skid, come off the brakes or accelerator, turn into the skid and look in the direction you want to go.

The hang-ups with mobiles

Did you know that you're 4 times more likely to have an accident if you use a mobile while driving? This is why, back in 2003, driving while using a hand-held mobile phone was completely banned in the UK.

It is still legal to use a hands-free kit behind the wheel, but experts think they can be just as dangerous. So the best thing you can do to keep you and your passengers safe is only ever take a call if it's absolutely necessary.

Handy Hints

- Never use a hand-held mobile phone when driving. As well as putting lives at risk you could also face a whopping fine of up to a grand
- It's only acceptable to have your phone on in the vehicle if you have a hands-free kit
- Only take a call if it's absolutely necessary
- If you do need to take a call on your hands-free kit, tell the caller you're driving, then pull over somewhere safe before you continue speaking



Workmates driving you around the bend?

Ever got so caught up in a conversation that you missed a turn or even worse a red light?

We all like a chat, but driving needs your full attention and if things get a bit too rowdy in the car, or in your work van, this is when accidents can happen.

It's not just up to the driver to keep everyone safe on the road. If you're a passenger do your bit by staying calm and not distracting the person behind the wheel.

Taking care of your vehicle contents

As a driver of a company vehicle, you are also responsible for the load you are carrying, so make sure it's safe and secure every time you leave the vehicle – even if it's just for a moment.

- Lock it every time you leave the vehicle unattended
- Keep valuables out of sight
- Park in a safe, well lit and legal parking place wherever possible

**LOVE IT!
LOCK IT!**

