

Best Practice Guide

Journey Planning



Before You Make A Move - Make A Plan

Journey planning is about avoiding unnecessary journeys, considering the many forms of transport available and planning the most appropriate route.

Before any journey you should ask yourself whether the journey is really necessary as cutting down on the number of journeys you make can reduce your chances of a collision, save you money and help the environment. If a journey is necessary then there are several ways you can help to make your time on the road as safe as possible.

Consider Remote Communications

Telephone conversations, email or video-conferencing can sometimes provide a substitute for face-to-face meetings. When planning a meeting for work purposes ask yourself whether you really need to meet face-to-face and whether communicating via remote communications could replace the need to travel.

Make Changes To Your Mode Of Transport

You could improve your safety on the road by choosing an alternative mode of transport such as walking or cycling. These options also benefit your health, your pocket and the environment. However, don't forget that even if you choose an alternative mode of transport you should still plan your journey.

For example:

- If you intend to cycle, check that your route has a designated cycle path.
- If you choose to walk, check that there is a safe path away from the traffic.

Share The Journey

It is worth considering car sharing when you are travelling in the same direction as friends, family members or colleagues.

Car sharing has many benefits including:

- Less driving for each person.
- Less wear and tear on each vehicle.
- Less fuel.
- Less pollution.
- Less cost for each person.
- Easier car parking due to the reduced number of vehicles at each location.

Maintain Your Vehicle

You should keep your vehicle well maintained at all times, but should make extra checks before setting off on a long journey. You need to know that the lights, indicators and brakes are all working correctly and that fluid levels are topped up.

Be Prepared

There are some things you should always carry in your vehicle with you - especially when making long journeys.

Always carry:

- A pen.
- A mobile phone.
- A torch.
- Water.
- A map.
- A warning triangle.

Consider Overnight Stays

If you have had a long day and are located over 2 hours away from your home you should consider staying overnight to avoid having to drive a long distance while tired. It is much safer to put off driving until after a good night's sleep.

Select The Right Roads

Journey planning involves selecting the most appropriate roads for each journey - taking into account the time of day, the likelihood of roadworks on a route, avoiding incident hot-spots etc.

If possible, avoid driving:

- On motorways and dual carriageways when they are likely to be at their busiest (early morning and evening rush hour).
- On stretches of road which are particularly notorious for crashes (for example at some intersections or junctions to / from major cities).
- Close to schools, particularly during the 'school-run'.
- Through city centres at peak times.

Avoid 'Sleepy' Times

The most high-risk times for falling asleep at the wheel are 2am to 6am and 2pm to 4pm. Where possible, avoid driving at these times and if you do have to drive make sure you take regular breaks - at least every 2 hours.

Read The Reports

Before making a journey - particularly a long one - you should check weather reports and traffic updates on the internet or on the local radio station. This way you know whether to cancel or re-route a journey before setting off.

Don't Drive When Unfit

Driving while unfit can refer to driving while impaired, when tired, when ill, while in a bad mood - or for any other reason that you may not give the road 100% of your attention. If you do not feel yourself before a journey you should not hesitate to cancel.



Know Where To Park

When setting off to a location you haven't visited before make sure you know where to park beforehand so you do not need to drive around covering unnecessary miles.

Take A Break

Driving is a monotonous task and can easily cause drivers to feel fatigued - especially on long journeys. Because of this you should never drive for more than 2 hours without a break of at least 15 minutes. Plan ahead if possible so you can take breaks in locations where it is safe to step out of your vehicle to stretch your legs and get some fresh air.

- J** Journey planning involves avoiding unnecessary journeys.
- O** Other modes of transport and communication should be considered.
- U** Use the most appropriate roads for the journey.
- R** Read weather and traffic reports before you set off.
- N** Never drive while unfit.
- E** Ensure your vehicle is maintained and prepared for the journey.
- Y** You must have a break from driving at least every 2 hours.
- S** Share journeys where possible.

WARNING

Travelling by car is much more dangerous than travelling by train or bus. In fact it's 14 times safer to take the train and 2.5 times safer to take the bus than it is to travel by car.