

Night Driving

Making it through the night safely begins with preparing ourselves and our car.

Ask yourself how well you can see. Are glasses or contact lenses needed? Our eyesight deteriorates as we get older.

When leaving a brightly lit building before driving, our eyes need time to adjust to the darkness. If we're driving as dusk falls this is another need to allow our eyes to adapt.

A clean and clear screen inside and outside cuts down dazzle. Are our wipers working effectively? Has the water level in the screen wash bottle been checked recently? Are all the vehicle's lights working, clean and set correctly? Do you have a set of spare bulbs? Having lights that don't work is illegal, and that includes number plate lights.

Headlights

Get yourself seen. When driving in town use dipped headlights.

On country lanes you must use dipped beam, but where the road isn't lit and there's no approaching traffic you'll need full beam.

Judging speed and distance of other road users correctly is less easy in the dark. So is getting your own speed and following distance correct! Can you be sure that you pull up safely in the distance that can be seen? Depending on the quality of the street lighting, at night, that distance is usually the distance lit by the headlights.

Do you use the light from oncoming vehicles to give you valuable clues? If you're dazzle by oncoming traffic, don't retaliate. Two dazzled drivers are twice as dangerous as one. Move your eyes away to the left side of the road away from the dazzle. Reduce speed and be prepared to stop if necessary.

Fatigue

Night driving is tiring, especially on long journeys. You have to concentrate harder and may get tired more quickly, so ensure good ventilation in the car and take enough refreshment breaks.

Overtaking

Be extra careful about overtaking at night. There may be something out of the range of your lights. If in doubt - don't!

Noise at Night

Keep this to a minimum, especially in built up areas. It is an offence to use your horn between 11.30pm and 7am, except to avoid danger from a moving vehicle. If you need to warn of your presence at night you should flash your headlights.