

Smart Driving

Cars may be inanimate objects, but many of us see them as having their own personalities.

Some of us can have quite a relationship, treating them as members of the family and some 20% of us give them pet names!

At the turn of a key our car gives us one of the greatest freedoms of modern life.

How well our door to door 24-hour-a-day personal mobility machine serves us, depends on how well we look after it and how intelligently we drive it.

The majority of crashes are not accidents caused by mechanical failure, they are caused by driver error. Minimise this by:

1. Journey planning

Choose the best route to your destination for the time of day. Be prepared to accept traffic delays and have an alternative route in mind. Invest in a satellite navigation system.

2. Avoiding vehicle breakdowns

Have your car serviced regularly and carrying out the maintenance checks.

3. Cleaning your windows

Inside as well as outside, especially before a long journey. Trying to peer through a dirty windscreen is going to increase fatigue and stress factors. Keep a window cloth, de-icer and sunglasses close to hand.

4. Sitting comfortably

Give your undivided attention and be ready to react promptly. Break up long journeys with a break at least every three hours. Avoid heavy meals and crowded noisy places!

5. Timekeeping

If you're going to be late, phone to let your appointment know. It's better to be late in this world than early in the next!

Smart driving needs all your concentration. Even before starting the engine, relax and forget about problems that have no bearing on the journey.