

## Holiday Driving - Are we there yet?

Excitement! The day has come and all the waiting is over, we're on our way, or are we? Have we got the journey planned out? Holidays can often involve a lot of traveling by road. The Easter period is regarded by many people as an ideal time to take that weekend break with family or friends. It is important to remember that drivers can protect themselves and their passengers by following our basic holiday driving recommendations.

Give yourself good time to make a plan, try and think of everything you will need for your journey. Consider what can go wrong? Always allow extra time for the journey, any break down that may occur, traffic jams, adverse weather conditions, or accidents etc. Plan the route! Make sure you know where you are going and you have a map or directions. Alternatively use a G.P.S System.

Before getting on the road ensure that the vehicle is tuned up and in good shape for travel. Check your tyre pressure (DON'T FORGET THE SPARE!), oil, water and coolants. Don't forget to ensure that the windscreen washer is full, always keep it topped up and keep windscreen clean at all times. Ensure that you fill your vehicle with fuel before you set out and set the trip meter.



Check on the road and weather conditions in advance. Check the weather forecast before you set out on your journey. You can check road, weather conditions and also plan your route using [www.aaroadwatch.com](http://www.aaroadwatch.com).

Bring a fully charged mobile phone for emergencies. But remember do not use hand held phones when driving. If you are overseas, ensure that your phone is set up for the country that you are visiting. Because driving requires a lot of attention pull off the road to use your mobile phone.

Buckle Up! Always, always, always wear your seatbelt. Make sure that every occupant of the vehicle is wearing their seatbelt also. Remember that the rear seat is the safest place for children of any age to travel.

Stay alert when driving. Allow time for plenty of breaks en route. When taking breaks get out of the vehicle for some fresh air, buy something to refresh you or just relax until you feel revived enough to continue. Another alternative is to consider if another person can take over the driving so that you can take a break. Bring some drinks (non alcoholic) for the drive and some healthy goodies to eat.

Slow and steady keeps you safe – Give yourself plenty of time and distance to react to the traffic around you. Let impatient and aggressive drivers pass you by and be sure to keep within the speed limits. Speed is deadly and causes many accidents.

Develop a driving emergency kit – carry a wheel brace, carjack; puncture kit, first aid kit, fire extinguisher, breakdown triangle, high visibility vest (in some countries this mandatory), torch (spare batteries), jumper cables and a blanket.

Make the others traveling feel comfortable by playing some nice music. Many car accessory shops have portable DVD players that can be fitted in the back of the car to entertain any children that may be asking the famous question **Are We There Yet?**

### **Driving Overseas**

Before driving in a different country it is always advisable to check with your insurance company if you require extra cover for the trip.

A simple question to ask yourself is, "Do you know the rules of the road for the country you are driving in?" For example, what side of the road to drive on? Do some research to find out. If you are going to drive in another country make sure you know that many countries rules of the road differ and you need to be aware of these.

Remember a good plan is the start of a good holiday. Driving should be fun, relaxed and enjoyable. Enjoy the drive and consider it a part of the holiday.

