

DRIVING IN WINTER: CAREFULLY AND WITH THE FEELING!

Lots of ski fans is taking ski trips during winter. Mostly with car, because this is the most comfortable and fastest way to get to their favorite ski resort. But winter driving conditions, weather and traffic are demanding at least some preparations, before we get on the road that is why we have to take a good care for our safety and good state of health.

In winter months you have to pay special attention on vehicle equipment, on what our law is warning us about as well. In Slovenia there is an obligatory usage of winter equipment between 15th of November and 15th of March (it consists out of four winter pneumatics with M+S sign and minimum 3mm deep profile OR four yearly pneumatics with minimum 3mm deep profile and proper snow chain), otherwise we can get a fine in the amount of 120 EUR for inadequate vehicle equipment or 400 EUR if we impede the traffic due to our inadequate equipment.

If you are going to Austria, the usage of winter equipment is necessary between 1st of November and 15th of April, but if you are driving a vehicle lighter then 3,5 tone, then winter equipment is obligated only during winter driving condition. Winter equipment consists out of winter pneumatics with minimum 4mm deep profile OR yearly pneumatics with minimum

4mm deep profile and snow chains on drive wheels.

DID YOU KNOW?

Long-term driving vibration is among the highest risk factors for neck and back injuries and pain. As soon as the vehicle starts moving, physical forces on the body change: accelerations, decelerations, pressing on the clutch, swaying from side to side, body vibrations, unnecessary violent head thrust at sudden breaking – all these leads to discomfort and back pain. It also does not help the fact that we cannot rest while driving and that we cannot stabilize our lower part of the body. Driving time, speed, and length of drive, these all increase the risk factor and are even more significant for men who drive 4 hours or more each day.

In spite of winter pneumatics, snow chains are obligatory in all higher-lying roads if there is snowing and where this is particularly marked with a traffic sign. A fine for not obeying that is 35 EUR or 5.000 EUR if the traffic is impeded.

In Italy the usage of winter equipment is statutory only in the area of Aosta valley, where it is obligatory between 15th of October and 30th of April. On all the other areas the usage of winter equipment is obligated only in the case of winter driving conditions (if the road is covered with snow or ice).



But conscientious drivers are paying attention to other things as well. Cold weather and consequently more dangerous road conditions can quickly get us in to trouble. Therefore be careful, if you are planning a longer journey, that you quickly check engine oil level, coolant and a level of liquids for windscreen washer before you go. Even if the container with a liquid for windscreen washer is full, you might consider taking a spare one with you because this container might get empty real soon due to often spraying abovementioned liquid on the windscreen glass because of all the snow or rain, salty roads and dirt. Do also not forget to check and set jet nozzles.

It is also good to have in car an appropriate scraper for ice glass, small snow broom, and some chemicals means for defrosting windows and locks can be very in handy as well. On the end also put in trunk a couple of warm blankets and an additional pair of gloves if you meet some major inconvenience and you get stuck on the road.

Before leaving on a longer trip, it is also recommended to wash a car. Not because you would like to arrive in ski resort with shiny car, but because a washing cleanse the winter dirt from the car, first of all from the windows (side ones as well) and lights.

Before you go on a trip...

(1) If there is snow in the morning on your car, clean the whole car area, not just the windows; snow from the motor cover can very quickly cover your windscreen and a driver behind you can get on his windscreen the snow from the top of your car. You can also get a fine for not cleaning your car.

(2) You will have problems with driving if you will be wearing thick fur-lined jacket, a cap and gloves because your motor abilities will be limited and your field of vision will get smaller as well. These also do not contribute to safety or to effective activity of safety belts. So as soon as the temperature rises in the car, take off all your thick clothes and continue driving in lighter clothes.

(3) In any circumstances do not sit behind the driving wheel with your ski boots on. Wearing ski boots is reducing a feeling for brake, clutch and gas and due to bigness of the ski boots, you also have very little space on those pedals.

While driving...

- Make the turns slowly, go a little bit more around in the turns and don't be fast or jerky;
- Decelerate slowly; your foot should be lying softly on the breaks and most of all be careful, that you are decelerating in time. Accelerate gently, softly, with the same pace and more slowly than usual. If you have problems with driving off, try to start in second gear with just enough gas, so that drive wheels don't rotate in blank.
- Reduce speed, extend the safe distance and keep an eye on road signaling or listen carefully to the radio traffic information.

Tips for driver & fellow passenger

Now that you took such good care of your motor vehicle and road safety, it is time to take care of yourself as well. In winter conditions it can happen lots of times that we get stuck in a long column of cars which are hardly moving forward. And despite the fact that the drive seems comfortable and pleasant, your body won't agree with you. While driving our body is often tensed in it is suffering from vibration, long-lasting sitting and forced posture. For this reason we are feeling tension, back pain and lower back pain and often we have difficulties getting up from the car.

Car seats are usually not absorbing the vibrations caused by driving and your weight is not properly arranged on the seat as well. All these can lead to uncomfortable feelings in your neck and lower back, even at very short driving.

Ideal car seat – how to place your car seat to minimize back strain?

- Can you adjust the seat to accommodate different leg lengths? To judge leg room, with your hands evenly placed on the steering wheel, you should be able to see equal amounts of both legs between the arms. If you can see the left leg, but not the right, this can result in rotating the pelvis when driving, which can cause more pain.
- Does the seat height adjust? There should be room for your fist between the crown of your head and the top of the car. If there is only room to put your flat hand between the top of your head and the roof, the car is definitely not offering enough head room for you and you will slouch in the seat, straining the back and thighs. Is the back rest angle made to be in either an upright or reclined position.
- Is it easy to adjust the headrest so the top is even with your eyes? This is the optimal position for support and helps prevent neck injuries in an accident.
- Can the front of the seat be adjusted in height so that it doesn't press against the back of your knees?

- Are the arm rests comfortable? Height adjustment for them is ideal, but often hard to



What else we can do to have a healthy and comfortable drive?

- On the longer trips stop every two hours, take a break, stretch your legs and body; a short walk is recommended as well.
- From time to time change your position.
- There is a right way how to get in and out of the car – push the seat back, then sit down and only then pull your legs in the car. Now adjust the seat, the mirrors, etc. When you are getting out of the car, first push the seat back, then stretch your legs out of the car and only then step out with the whole body.
- If you need anything from the back seat, stop the car, get out and take that thing. Don't turn on your front seat because that can injure your healthy spine.
- Place on your seat a device which will massage your body and offer you an additional support as you drive.
- Keep your knees and thighs at the same level (fellow passengers).
- Maintain the natural curves of your back during all activities.
- Use proper lifting techniques and body mechanics.



Car Application

A special Kosmodisk model made for the use in vehicles (cars, busses, coaches, trucks). It beneficially influences pain in the back and spine area caused by vibrations and lengthy sitting when driving with the body in a permanent forced position. The KOSMODISK PRESTIGE Car Application offers also additional support to the back, reduces fatigue while seating and makes driving more comfortable.

It is intended for all people, who are daily confronted with lengthy sitting and not only for those suffering from chronic pain in the back and/or spine area.



Available in 4 standard colours: black, grey, blue and beige

For drivers and co-passengers!



SPECIAL CAMPAIGN:
KOSMODISK PRESTIGE Car Application + LCD Thermo Clock for only 84,50€!

Just till Monday, 28th February 2011 on www.kosmodisk.com

»I wouldn't trade Kosmodisk Prestige for anything!«

I spend a lot of time in the car. After driving for hours, I used to get out of the car totally tired. Today with the KOSMODISK PRESTIGE Car Application, I don't have these problems anymore. I actually got so much to it, that when I go on a longer journey by plane and rent-a-car, I always take the Kosmodisk with me and put it in the car there, because on such trips my health and well being is really important to me.

This car application is really brilliant, because you actually become one with the seat. It's a sort of an invisible helper. I simply feel great, and I can drive for 13, 14, 15 hours.

Aleš Fevžer, Sports Photographer



The KOSMODISK PRESTIGE Car Application package contains the following:



KOSMODISK SYSTEM



UNIQUE COVER
made of polyamide microfibres