

Danger Ice!!



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Foto: Stefan Lindloff

Wintertime

The preparation of the vehicle for winter should start before the first snow falls. Remember the windows of a vehicle must be defrosted before starting to drive.

Insufficient preparation regarding winter weather conditions could cause tragic and sometimes fatal accidents.

The use of winter tyres for winter driving, or additional equipment like snow chains during snow conditions or icy conditions and low

temperatures, is an important point to consider during this period.

Sufficient profile and tread depth of the tyres increases the stability of the vehicle, ensures shorter braking distances and accurate steering of the vehicle. The manufacturer's recommendation of the tread depth of winter tyres should not be less than 4 millimetres.

Recommendations

Good clear views mean safe arrival!

Before starting the trip check that all ice and snow is removed from the vehicle. During the journey keep regular checks on the windows and lights, so that you can see and be seen.

These measures increase your visibility to other traffic, and give a better illumination of the road, especially during at the beginning of twilight and longer hours of darkness during the winter.

It is recommended that aids for cleaning of iced up windows (de-icing spray, ice scrapers, etc) are carried and if necessary snow chains, broom, shovel, sand/grit or salt.

Snow chains could be required in extreme weather conditions and give a high level of grip for the driving wheels.

In special cases the use of snow chains could be compulsory.

Stretches of road where snow chains are compulsory are marked with the following traffic sign.



Snow chains must be put before encountering snow, not when the vehicle is stuck!

Winter Driving

- Check that the radiator coolant and the windscreen washer fluid are suitable for winter use.
- Check that the air brake compressor is suitable for winter use (alcohol injector).
- Check that the battery is fully charged and capable of winter use.
- Plan your routes carefully, allowing extra time for severe weather conditions.
- Anticipate hazards and drive accordingly.
- Drive defensively; anticipate the movement of other vehicles.

Ice and snow on the vehicle roof- not only a problem for heavy trucks!

Snow and ice can gather on vehicle roofs easier than you might think.

Typical examples are:

- Rain early in the evening, during the night the temperature falls causing the rain to freeze.
- The vehicle was parked outside during a snowfall or heavy rainfall.

This ice and snow can then easily be shed from the vehicle by acceleration, braking or cornering causing danger to other road users.

What to do?

It is very easy to recognize and remove ice and snow on the roof of a car but it is very difficult to do the same when applied to a roof of a truck.

Not to check the roof of a truck during icy conditions is bordering on the careless. It is the driver's responsibility to ensure that the load is secure and not shed, this extends to snow, ice and debris.

In no case should a trip be started without inspecting the roof of the vehicle and, if necessary, removing ice and snow!!

Easy and practical solutions are difficult and effective solutions are limited.

Feasible solutions;

- If possible, use a roofed parking place.
- Use a ladder to climb up and check the roof, subject to Health & Safety Regulations.
- Using aids (for example Roof-Safety-Air-Bags-RSAB) to prevent the formation of ice and snow on the tarpaulin.
- Using a rolling brake test to check for the existence of foreign goods on the roof of the vehicle. This test can only be carried out if there is no danger of any person or goods being damaged.
- Using other drivers to warn of ice and snow on the roof.
- Using a framework in accordance to the regulation, which could be pushed or driven along the vehicle.
- In cases of tarpaulin constructions another method can be used, provided there is access inside the load bed. By using a broomstick or rod, push away the ice and snow. Ensure that there are no

pedestrians in the vicinity during this operation.

English Legislation

Regulation 30 Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986

States that all glass or other transparent material fitted to a motor vehicle shall be maintained in such a condition that it does not obscure the vision of the driver while the vehicle is being driven on a road.

Regulation 100(2) Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986

The load carried by a motor vehicle or trailer shall at all times

- Be so secured, **if necessary**, by physical restraint other than its own weight and
- In such a position

that neither **danger** nor **nuisance** is likely to be caused to any person or property by reason of the load or any part thereof falling or being blown from the vehicle or by reason of any movement of the load or any part thereof in relation to the vehicle.

German Legislation

Main Principle:

All road users must ensure that no other third party will be suffer damage or harm or be caused to be in danger whatsoever other than unavoidable special circumstances

Regulations

If a vehicle (car, truck or trailer) during a trip loses snow or pieces of ice from its roof an offence is committed against the German traffic law. According § 23 (1) StVO (German traffic regulations) the driver is responsible for the vehicle condition.

If somebody suffers harm or damage as a result then § 1 (2) StVO will be used and the penalty will be increased.

Additionally if a person is injured or even killed the Federal Prosecutors Office will start an investigation according to § 229 (negligent bodily harm) of the German penal law or § 222 (negligent homicide) of the German penal law.

The responsibility of the vehicle owner exists according § 31 and § 69 StVZO.

A requirement in this case must be that the owner of the vehicle has knowledge about the condition of the vehicle and that the vehicle is in his area of control.

The owner responsibility is not valid if the driver is on a trip with the vehicle. According to professional and legislative rules of avoiding accidents, the employer is obliged to instruct his drivers.

This is covered by the subject: "[Removing dangerous items from vehicle and trailer roofs](#)"!!!

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