



WINTER CAR CHECKLIST

Check the car in October, pack the kit before the first frost, and keep it in the car until spring.

► [Read the full guide at ukprepperhub.co.uk](https://ukprepperhub.co.uk) →

■ Check in October

■ Keep in the car until April

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"I check the car on the first Sunday in October, with a flask of tea and this list. Janet holds the torch. Do the checks once, keep the kit in the car until April, and you'll never be the person scraping the windscreen with a loyalty card."

— Calm Clarissa, UK Prepper Hub

AUTUMN CAR CHECKS (ONCE, BEFORE THE FIRST FREEZE)

Twenty minutes on the driveway. Anything borderline goes to a garage now, not in January.

- ☐ Battery tested, and replaced if it's borderline or 3+ years old
- ☐ Tyre tread 3mm or more on all four tyres, plus the spare
- ☐ Tyre pressures checked cold and set to the handbook figures
- ☐ Tyres checked for cracks, bulges and uneven wear
- ☐ Windscreen chips repaired
- ☐ Wiper blades replaced if they smear
- ☐ Screenwash filled with a winter concentrate rated to at least -15°C
- ☐ Coolant freeze point checked
- ☐ All lights working: dipped, full beam, brake, indicators, fog
- ☐ Oil checked and topped up
- ☐ Brakes checked if anything feels or sounds wrong
- ☐ Diesel: anti-gel additive before a long hard freeze
- ☐ Breakdown cover current, and the number written down

USEFUL TOOLS FOR YOUR CAR CHECKS

One-off buys that let you do most of the checks above yourself.

- ☐ **Tyre tread depth gauge** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Digital readout in millimetres. Aim for 3mm or more in winter; it checks brake pad wear too.

- ☐ **12V tyre inflator** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Plugs into the 12V socket, shows the pressure and switches off at the pressure you set. Keep it in the boot for slow punctures.

- ☐ **Car battery tester** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
A quick voltage and alternator check any time. If it's borderline, get a garage to test it properly.

- ☐ **Antifreeze tester** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Count the floating discs to read your coolant's freeze protection. For ethylene glycol coolant, which most cars use.

- ☐ **Windscreen frost cover** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Frost settles on the cover, not the glass. Two sizes, so measure your windscreen first.

IN THE CABIN (WITHIN REACH BEFORE YOU STEP OUT)

If the car is half-buried or in a verge, the boot is the last thing you can safely reach. These live in the door pockets, glovebox or under a seat.

- ☐ **Ice scraper and snow brush** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Clear the whole car, roof included.

- ☐ **De-icer** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Works on frozen door locks too.

- ☐ **Spare screenwash concentrate** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Rated to -36°C. A motorway in slush can empty a reservoir in a day.

- ☐ **Hi-vis vest** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) ★ [We've reviewed this →](#)
One per regular passenger is even better.

- ☐ **Warm, waterproof gloves** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)

- ☐ **Ice grips for your shoes** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Full-sole grips, so your heel grips too. Check the size against the shoes you drive in.

- ☐ **Hand warmers** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) ★ [We've reviewed this →](#)
Nothing to charge. Check the use-by date every October.

- ☐ **Phone cable and a charged power bank** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) ★ [We've reviewed this →](#)

- ☐ **Breakdown number written on paper**
If your phone dies, this is how you get help.

- ☐ **Window breaker and seatbelt cutter** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Spring-loaded, no swing needed. Two in the pack: one for the driver, one for the back. For side windows; check your car's aren't laminated.

IN THE BOOT

- ☐ **Folding snow shovel** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
For the wheels, and to keep the exhaust clear if you're stuck.
- ☐ **Jump leads** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Or: a portable jump pack** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
Starts the car on its own, no second car needed.
- ☐ **Head torch** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
Both hands free for leads, wheels and shovels.
- ☐ **Backup torch** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
- ☐ **Spare AAA batteries** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Warning triangle** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
At least 45 metres behind the car. Never on a motorway.
- ☐ **LED road flares** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Traction mats** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Under the drive wheels when you're stuck.
- ☐ **Foil blanket** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Or: a self-heating throw** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
Warmth with no power at all.
- ☐ **First aid kit** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Bottled water** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Snacks or energy bars** [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
Swap them out each autumn.
- ☐ **Glow sticks** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
Safe light inside the car, no batteries.
- ☐ **Wind-up radio** [Check Price on Amazon →](#) [★ We've reviewed this →](#)
Travel news without draining the car battery.

WARM AND DRY

- ☐ **Thermal hat** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
- ☐ **Waterproof trousers** [Check Price on Amazon →](#)
Hi-vis or reflective, so you're seen at the roadside.
- ☐ **Waterproof jacket (any you already own)**
- ☐ **Wellingtons (any pair you already own)**

BEFORE EVERY WINTER JOURNEY

- ☐ Whole car cleared: roof, windscreen, windows, mirrors, lights
- ☐ Met Office warnings checked
- ☐ Route checked for closures
- ☐ Someone knows your route and arrival time
- ☐ Phone charged
- ☐ Fuel above a quarter of a tank
- ☐ What3Words app installed