

## Content

### **Incorrect seating position: High risk of injury despite seat belt**

Biomechanics expert Andreas Schäuble of DEKRA Accident Research warns: "Anyone who puts their feet up on the dashboard, folds the seat back too far or bends over in the footwell risks serious injury or even death in the event of an accident. People should be aware that if they are "out of position" in an accident, they will not be protected, or only partially protected, by the seat belt.

### **Watch out in the fall: Ice patches cause slippery roads**

DEKRA accident experts warn that the approaching fall means that patches of ice can form on individual sections of road, even if the average temperatures are still above zero. Wooded areas, bridges, exposed heights and north-facing inclines can encourage the formation of ice patches on the road.

### **DIY tire changing: A rough and ready attitude is not without risk**

It is essential that "Car owners intending to change their tires themselves have the right equipment, a suitable location and the requisite knowhow," says DEKRA tire expert Christian Koch. "A simple change of tires is often not enough."

### **Further topics**

- Safe driving in poor visibility: low beam throughout the day
- Repair costs for electric cars: easily 10 percent higher than on combustion cars
- Purchasing or selling real estate: keep an eye on follow-on costs



*"Out-of-position": In an accident  
the passenger risks serious or fatal  
injury*

Photo: DEKRA  
Reproduction free of charge.  
Please mention DEKRA and  
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:  
The image can be obtained from  
the DEKRA Press Office.  
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

### Incorrect seating position in the car

## High risk of injury despite seat belt

Biomechanics expert Andreas Schäuble of DEKRA Accident Research warns: "Anyone who puts their feet up on the dashboard, folds the seat back too far or bends over in the footwell risks serious injury or even death in the event of an accident. People should be aware that if they are "out of position" in an accident, they will not be protected, or only partially protected, by the seat belt. The correct upright seating position is the only way to ensure effective protection in an emergency."

Passengers casually resting their feet on the dashboard or folding the seat back flat run the risk of submarining, for instance. If your legs are resting on the dashboard at the moment a frontal impact occurs and the airbag triggers, the passengers' legs will be thrown rearwards in fractions of a second. At the same time the pelvis can slip out under the safety belt, meaning that the belt is no longer offering optimum protection. In a worst-case scenario, fatal injury can follow.

"The seat belt is still the most important life-saver in a car, regardless of the plethora of safety systems such as airbags, ESP and other assistance systems," says Schäuble. Only about 2 percent of car occupants are not wearing a seat belt – yet 20 percent of fatally injured people were not wearing a seat belt at the time of the accident. "Is there any more convincing evidence of its life-saving effect?" asks the accident researcher.

"However, the seat belt can only provide optimal protection if it is worn correctly and the person is sitting in the correct position. This is also important at low speeds, such as in city traffic, when the airbag is not deployed. For this reason, the biomechanics expert recommends that the following points be observed:

The belt should be adjusted so that it is centered over the shoulder. It should not touch the neck, go around the side of the arm, or go under the armpit, as this will greatly reduce its protective effect. It should also not lie over hard objects that are carried on the person, such as a smartphone or keychain. It is also important that it lies flat on the body from the start of the trip. The person must sit upright, with the top of the headrest approximately at the level of the hairline. (DEKRA Info)



*Beware of black ice: Cool wooded areas, on bridges and exposed heights can attract black ice*

Photo: DEKRA  
Reproduction free of charge.  
Please mention DEKRA and  
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:  
The image can be obtained from  
the DEKRA Press Office.  
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

### Roads can be icy even in the fall

## **Ice patches cause slippery roads**

DEKRA accident experts warn that the approaching fall means that patches of ice can form on individual sections of road, even if the average temperatures are still above zero. Wooded areas, bridges, exposed heights and north-facing inclines can encourage the formation of ice patches on the road. The temperatures in these locations can occasionally fall lower than that of their surroundings. Early morning is particularly prone to such drops and motorists are advised to adjust their driving style appropriately.

“Typical locations where the driver can be confronted by the first inklings of black ice are bridges because the underside is frequently exposed to cold air,” explains Stefanie Ritter at DEKRA Accident Research. A cold wind can push the temperatures down on exposed heights and hollows can allow cold air to build up. Especial care is required in forest areas too, or on north-facing inclines that hardly encounter the sun’s rays during the day, “all these places offer conditions that can freeze dew, rain or damp foliage and turn the road into a slide,” says Ritter.

Accident Research generally suggests a defensive and proactive driving style on autumnal roads. Don’t be caught off guard! Drive particularly carefully when temperatures fall, adjust your speed and don’t let yourself be distracted,” recommends the accident expert.

Furthermore, pay attention to the corresponding warning signs and instructions. The symbol “snow and ice” depicted by a snowflake symbol is set up on sections of road where black ice frequently forms and a careful driving style is advisable. Technology also lends a helping hand: modern vehicles continuously monitor the exterior temperature and warn drivers by means of optical and acoustic signs if the temperature, falls below 4°C, for example.

However, if the vehicle does happen to skid it is recommended to catch the vehicle by letting out the clutch, sensitive counter steering and, if necessary, with an emergency braking. There is no need to be tentative in modern cars equipped with ABS and ESP, so apply the brakes firmly in order to achieve the full braking effect. The best thing of all would be to attend a driving safety training course to practise such eventualities. (DEKRA Info)



*Tire change requires knowhow.  
The simple exchange of the tires is  
often not enough*

Photo: DEKRA  
Reproduction free of charge.  
Please mention DEKRA and  
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:  
The image can be obtained from  
the DEKRA Press Office.  
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

### DIY tire change

## **A rough and ready attitude is not without risk**

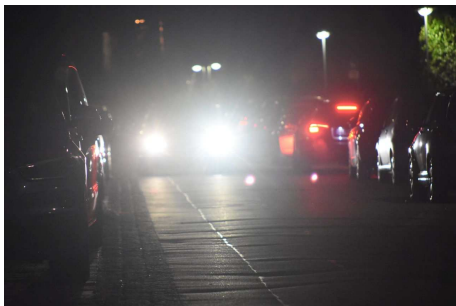
As a general rule, winter tires should be installed on vehicles from October to April. Surveys show that about one in four car owners mount the tires themselves. DEKRA tire expert Christian Koch explains. "It is important that people who want to change their tires themselves have the right equipment, a suitable location and the necessary know-how. A simple tire change is often not enough."

Before mounting, it is essential to inspect the tires for abnormalities. Is the wear even? Are there cuts in the tread? Were the sidewalls or tread damaged last winter? Do bulges indicate cracks or foreign objects? Take a closer look so as not to miss anything. In time these faults might well lead to a complete failure of the tire or induce an accident. Koch warns that "a rough and ready attitude is not without risk."

"Tire abnormalities, such as, for example, uneven wear can also indicate that there is something wrong on the vehicle itself. Everybody should honestly admit whether they can assess these things correctly by themselves. If in doubt, play safe and consult an expert even if it means you have to fork out some cash," says the expert. Also, whether a tire with an embedded nail can be repaired is generally best judged by a tire expert.

Koch also advises against reducing the quality of equipment used during the fitting process. "It is of the utmost importance that the vehicle owner employs a stable car jack when changing tires. Strong blocks and wedges should be used to secure the vehicle against rolling away or slipping. An unstable vehicle can quickly become a danger to the individual changing the tires," adds Koch.

It is essential to clean the contact surfaces of the hubs when changing tires and to remove any rust from the wheel bolts. It is also important to ensure that the wheel bolts are tightened to the manufacturer's recommended torque and to conduct a check after 50 to 70 kilometers. Please note that tires lose pressure during storage. Therefore, the tire pressure must be adjusted in accordance with the instructions set forth in the owner's manual. (DEKRA Info)



*A light check gives peace of mind:  
One in four cars are out and  
about with faulty lights*

Photo: DEKRA  
Reproduction free of charge.  
Please mention DEKRA and  
send reference copy.

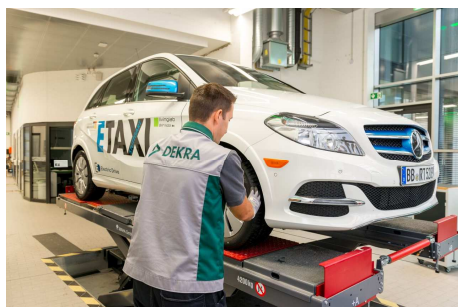
Editorial offices please note:  
The image can be obtained from  
the DEKRA Press Office.  
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

### Safe driving in poor visibility

## Low beam throughout the day

With the onset of winter, drivers need to be able to rely on their lights to avoid taking risks when visibility deteriorates. DEKRA accident analyst Thomas Gut gives the most important points to look out for so that the motorist can drive safely even in fog, rain or snowfall.

- **Low beam.** Switch on a low beam even during the day. Others can then spot your vehicle faster and easier. If visibility is hindered considerably by fog, rain or snowfall, driving on low beam is mandatory. In contrast, it is not permissible to drive with parking lights or daytime running lights.
- **Light check.** Check your vehicle lights at the start of fall. How important this is can be seen by the results of the annual nationwide light check run by the motor vehicle trade. In 2023 more than one in four cars had faulty lights (27.4 percent). Top of the defects chart were front headlights set too high or too low, as well as faulty rear lights. Also check whether the wiper blades work flawlessly.
- **Cleaning.** Keep both the inside and outside of the windshield clean. Soiling can greatly impair vision and lead to confusing dazzle. Headlights and rear lights also need to be regularly cleaned. According to the Road Traffic Regulations lights must not be obscured by dirt.
- **Visibility.** Match your speed to the visibility conditions, because a vehicle must be able to come to a halt within the visible stretch of road. This translates at about 28 meters at 50 km/h. In addition, greater distance to vehicles in front increases safety in poor visibility. Dip your headlights in good time when oncoming traffic approaches. Otherwise, your counterpart will be momentarily blinded.
- **Fog.** Fog lights may only be turned on when visibility has been considerably restricted by fog, snowfall or rain. The use of rear fog lights is only permitted if visibility is reduced by fog to less than 50 meters. In this case drive at a maximum of 50 km/h. DEKRA expert Gut warns against following the vehicle in front in fog and giving in to the temptation to drive faster than necessary. This has repeatedly led to pile-ups. (DEKRA Info)



*Repair costs for electric cars: at least ten percent higher than for conventional cars.*

### Repair costs of electric cars

## **DEKRA study: Costs at least ten percent higher**

On average, it costs well over ten percent more to repair an electric car than it does to repair a comparable conventional vehicle with an internal combustion engine. These were the conclusions drawn from examination of 200,000 DEKRA damage appraisals in which the damage of electric and combustion vehicles up to three years old were compared. "It is nothing like the differences of between 30 and 40 percent that do the rounds in the automotive sector," says Bernd Grüninger, Head of Appraisals at DEKRA. The higher repair costs for electric cars were due in part to higher hourly labour rates on account of the additional qualifications required by the mechanics and additional work needed such as vehicle de-energizing. (DEKRA Info)



*Buying and selling real estate:  
Analyzing costs and minimizing risk*

### Purchase and sale of real estate

## **Keep an eye on follow-up costs**

Investing in real estate today is more than ever about minimizing risk. Technical due diligence, which examines not only the building structure but also the condition of the building's utilities and evaluates ESG factors, is playing an increasingly important role. According to DEKRA, a technical services organization, both buyers and operators of real estate investments need to assess the follow-up costs for the coming years: These determine the short-, medium-, and long-term funds to be allocated for repairs and maintenance. Furthermore, these considerations also indicate the actual modernization potential. In order to determine the structural and technical condition of a property, the purchasers and sellers are advised to exercise sufficient due diligence and draw on the knowledge of a wide range of experts. This would cover all aspects of the building – from structure to fire protection and electrical installations and extend to building physics and sustainability. For more information consult: [www.dekra.de/de/immobilien-services](http://www.dekra.de/de/immobilien-services). (DEKRA Info)

Photo: DEKRA  
Reproduction free of charge.  
Please mention DEKRA and  
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:  
The image can be obtained from  
the DEKRA Press Office.  
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

Photo: DEKRA  
Reproduction free of charge.  
Please mention DEKRA and  
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:  
The image can be obtained from  
the DEKRA Press Office.  
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122