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Ready for an emergency? When you need to move fast

In the event of a fire, you need to move fast because you may have as little as two minutes to get to safety. "You should be prepared for an emergency so you don't lose valuable time if something actually happens," recommends Lars Inderthal, a DEKRA fire safety expert. "Take a few minutes to consider how you would behave if the alarm sounds. This may make the difference between life and death."

Driver's license at 17: Accompanied driving

For young people below the age of 18 who are eager to get their driver's license, it is possible to reduce the wait and help improve road safety by getting a license for accompanied driving at 17. This enables 17-year-olds to start driving but they must be accompanied by an experienced driver until their 18th birthday.

Extending tire life: Full speed has its price

Tires are one of the classic wear parts on a car. Extending their life helps both the environment and the driver's wallet. "How many kilometers you get out of your tires not only depends on their quality but also on how you treat them," says Christian Koch, a tire expert at DEKRA. "Your style of driving is as important to tire life as the correct tire pressure, regular tire checks, and careful storage."

Further topics:

- Getting your car ready for spring: Checks to improve safety
- New requirements for companies: Sustainability training
- Be careful of the curb: The risk of unrecognized damage



*Before a fire happens: Know how
to handle a fire extinguisher*

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Ready for an emergency?

In the event of a fire, you need to move fast

In the event of a fire, you need to move fast because you may have as little as two minutes to get to safety. “You should be prepared for an emergency so you don’t lose valuable time if something actually happens,” recommends Lars Inderthal, a DEKRA fire safety expert. “Take a few minutes to consider how you would behave if the alarm sounds. This may make the difference between life and death.”

- Stay calm and avoid stress or panic. This will make it easier to leave the danger zone in a fast and controlled manner.
- Warn other people who may be at risk and help anyone who needs it.
- Use the marked escape routes, provided they are smoke free, and close the doors of smoke-filled rooms behind you.
- Call the fire department as soon as you can – by dialing 112 in Germany, for example. Remember, it is better to call too often than too late.
- Do not put yourself at risk with any improvised attempts at extinguishing the fire. If in any doubt, you should get to safety and leave firefighting to the fire department.
- The same applies to the use of a fire extinguisher. You need to know how to use one, how to tackle a fire, and when things are too dangerous.
- Never inhale smoke. Inhaling the toxic gases caused by fire kills more people than fire itself. The dangerous thing about these gases is that they cause unconsciousness in just a short time, leaving a person unable to save themselves.
- If there is a fire, never take the elevator but use the stairs.
- Always ensure that escape routes are unobstructed and that the front door of your home can be opened quickly from the inside. You should test smoke alarms monthly and know how to use a fire extinguisher. (DEKRA Info)



*Driver's license at 17: Application
can be submitted six months
before a young person's 17th
birthday*

Driver's license at 17

Accompanied driving

For young people below the age of 18 who are eager to get their driver's license, it is possible to reduce the wait and help improve road safety by getting a license for accompanied driving at 17. This enables 17-year-olds to start driving but they must be accompanied by an experienced driver until their 18th birthday.

"According to a study by Germany's Federal Highway Research Institute, new car drivers who start out with the support of a more experienced driver are around one fifth less likely to be involved in an accident and less likely to infringe traffic regulations," explains Thomas Riedel, Head of the Driving License Center at DEKRA. Six months before their 17th birthday, young people can register with a driving school for theoretical and practical lessons and apply to their local authority for their driver's license.

The application must also name an accompanying driver although others can be added in the future. The accompanying driver must be at least 30 years old, have held a valid driver's license for at least five years, and have received no more than one penalty point. They must also be named on the driving test certificate and may not actively intervene when the young person is driving.

Taking the wheel unaccompanied is not recommended because it would put a young driver's newfound freedom at risk with a fine of 70 euros, one penalty point, and the revocation of their license. They then have to do a refresher driving course before regaining their license.

Young people who obtain their driver's license at 17 take standard lessons at a driving school. However, they cannot take the theoretical test until three months before their 17th birthday and the practical test one month beforehand. If they pass their test, a young driver receives a certificate that entitles them to drive in Germany and Austria. They must then apply for their driver's license in card format when they turn 18. As is the case for the regular driver's license, a probationary period of two years starts after issue of the driving certificate. (DEKRA Info)

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*High speeds, racing starts, and
emergency braking reduce tire life*

Extending tire life

Full speed has its price

Tires are one of the classic wear parts on a car. Extending their life helps both the environment and the driver's wallet. "How many kilometers you get out of your tires not only depends on their quality but also on how you treat them," says Christian Koch, a tire expert at DEKRA. "Your style of driving is as important to tire life as the correct tire pressure, regular tire checks, and careful storage."

If you take an express train, you pay more for your ticket. Similarly, a brash style of driving comes at an extra cost. It does not even have to be a power slide; high speed, a racing start, and emergency braking also do not come free. If this is your thing, then you will need to invest sooner in new tires.

A less obvious issue is driving when the tire pressure is too low. This not only impacts safety, but also reduces the tread. If the tire pressure is far too high or low, it results in uneven wear. Extremely low pressure can even lead to tire failure. Even if a vehicle has a tire pressure control system, the tire pressure should always be adapted to the vehicle's load and otherwise always comply with the manufacturer's specifications. Measuring the pressure on cold rather than warm tires may also come at a cost to the tread because too little air is added.

Likewise, storage errors can affect tire life. Tires should never be kept near oil, fuel, grease, or chemicals because these can corrode and prematurely age the rubber. Extreme heat, UV radiation, and moisture should also be avoided. Instead, unused tires should be stored in a dark dry room. Cleaning them first will ensure that aggressive dirt does not affect either the tires or wheel rims.

"It is generally recommended that tires are examined for cracks, bulging, or punctures as well as any surface anomalies when they are changed," says Koch. Uneven or one-sided wear of the tread may be caused by incorrect wheel alignment or defective shock absorbers. If a vehicle is fitted with all-season tires, an annual check by a specialist and occasional rebalancing of the wheels are recommended. (DEKRA Info)

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*Poor visibility: A risk in the
dazzling spring light*

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Getting your car ready for spring **Checks to improve safety**

The winter months put stress on our cars, which may be damaged by extreme fluctuations in temperature, ice and snow, gravel and road salt. DEKRA's experts recommend a fitness check for vehicles as spring starts. This helps to ensure road safety, prevent breakdowns, and preserve the vehicle's value and appearance. However, any necessary work on safety systems should be performed by a specialist workshop.

Poor windshield visibility is a safety risk in the dazzling spring light. It is often advisable to replace wiper blades that may have been damaged by ice and snow. Drivers should also check their windshield wash water and switch to summer cleaning fluid. The often unnoticed deposits on the inside and outside of the windshield should be removed to ensure unimpaired visibility, especially at night. In addition, headlamps and other lights should be cleaned and their function checked.

Spring is also a good time to change the interior filter. Activated carbon filters are particularly effective because they not only keep dust, soot, and bacteria out of the car but also block ozone, odors, and pollen. The engine oil level should also be checked to prevent expensive engine damage. A glance at the car's service record will show when it is time for the two-yearly replacement of the brake fluid.

Every kilogram of weight saved relieves strain on the car, reduces fuel consumption, and protects the environment. It therefore makes sense to remove winter equipment such as snow chains, jumper cables, and antifreeze from the trunk. Vacuuming and wiping freshen the interior of the car and restore its appearance. If foot mats and carpet are still damp, it helps to air the vehicle or to cover them with newspaper. Door and window seals can be kept flexible by treating them with a special care product.

Aggressive dirt and salt residues on the outer skin of the vehicle can be removed by thoroughly washing the body and underside. It makes sense to prewash before going through the car wash so that any residues do not act like sandpaper and cause unsightly scratches on the paintwork. Slight paint damage can be corrected with a touch-up stick to prevent rust from spreading. Anyone who really wants to give their car a treat will apply a hard wax sealer to ensure longer-lasting protection. (DEKRA Info)

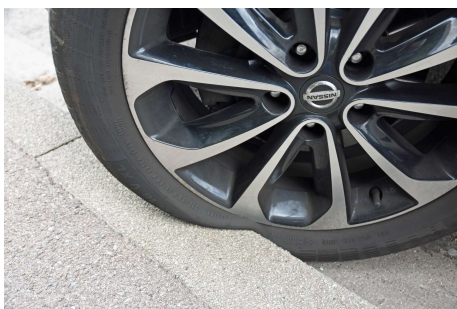


*High demand for training:
Companies must invest more in
sustainability*

New requirements for companies **Sustainability training**

Companies are facing new sustainability requirements relating to ESG, CSRD, CSRDD, and co. Testing and certification organization DEKRA has developed an extensive portfolio of training courses and workshops on these topics. At the moment, demand for training on disclosure and reporting obligations is particularly high.

The DEKRA Academy offers four modules: basic and practical seminars on sustainability reporting in accordance with the CSRD and ESRS; a practical seminar on materiality assessment in accordance with the CSRD; and a seminar on the EU Taxonomy and sustainable finance with a focus on sustainable investment. There are also courses for sustainability managers, covering sustainable supply chains and ESG ratings. Special training courses address decarbonization, product sustainability, and the circular economy. Further information can be found at: <https://www.dekra-akademie.de/weiterbildung/nachhaltigkeit> (DEKRA Info)



*The curb: The natural enemy of
car tires*

Be careful of the curb

The risk of unrecognized damage

Curbs are the natural enemy of car tires, warns DEKRA. Drivers can cause considerable damage by maneuvering incorrectly. Typical mistakes include driving up the curb too fast or at the wrong angle, or scraping the tire wall along the edge of the curb. This may squash a tire so badly that it fails at a later point in time. What is deceptive is that damage is not always visible from the outside. A severe knock can also upset the geometry of the chassis. A specialist workshop should be asked to measure the chassis of a vehicle that starts pulling to one side. If driving onto the curb is unavoidable, it should be done very slowly and at a right angle. (DEKRA Info)

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