

5 Road safety tips ahead of the festive season

There's nothing like a long drive on an open road with the wind in your hair...and none in your tyres. Simple vehicle maintenance checks before each trip, can avoid travel faux pas like running out of fuel in the middle of a long stretch of road or an overheating engine because you forgot to replenish the water.



As the festive season draws near, calling for spontaneous travel planning, Total South Africa wants to inspire you to embrace the five-point check so you can arrive safely to your next destination and enjoy every adventure.

Prepare your car

Before you set off on your next quest, prepare your vehicle for travel. There's the option to schedule a quick mechanical check to evaluate the condition of your car or to simply stop at a service station and ask an attendant to help you check if:

- You have suitable oil and water levels
- Tyre pressure is correct for the road you will be travelling
- The spare tyre is in good condition and you know how to change it
- All lights, signals, wiper blades are fully functioning
- You have jumper cables and most importantly, you know how to use them

Get yourself set

With your vehicle set for the journey, make sure you are set too. Whether you find yourself exploring the garden route or random gravel road, be sure to plan for your next stop. It's smart to know the routes you will be travelling on and to plan accordingly. If you are adventurous, venture responsibly with a navigation app, by programming your routes prior to switching on your vehicle and safely discover our beautiful country. Some other safety checks to include:

- Fasten your seatbelt before starting your vehicle.
- Ensure your mobile is charged for the trip or have a handy portable charger. Making sure your phone is fully charged

will come in handy when making a call in an emergency or using Maps to find your way (remember that it's illegal to use your mobile device while driving).

- Tell a friend or family member where you are travelling to and make sure they have your contact details as well as those of another immediate contact of yours.

Be safe and alert

Plan your trip carefully and ensure you are alert, whether it's being alert enough to drive safely or simply being vigilant. Of course, safety is also up to your fellow road users and safety becomes a shared responsibility. While driving, keep the following in mind:

- Keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front
- Adapt your speed without ever exceeding the speed limit and be cautious of tailgaters
- Adapt your driving in challenging conditions and scan the road for hazards
- Avoid pulling over on the side of the road unless it is an emergency – especially at night (keep a flashlight just in case)
- Share driving responsibilities to avoid fatigue or stop every two hours for a quick stretch
- Stay hydrated and don't drive under the influence of alcohol
- Join a roadside rescue/assistance service

Fuel the journey

Having the right fuel is as important as having enough fuel. Keep in mind that travelling long distances requires more fuel than your usual weekday run-around. Budget accordingly and keep the basics in mind to get the most out of your fuel:

- Limit drastic changes in speed, keep it moderate and adhere to the speed limits
- Cool down the gearbox by placing it in neutral at traffic lights or in traffic standstills
- Have a legally compliant jerry can on hand or buy one at any Total service station in case you need to collect fuel. A service stations are bound by law to only provide fuel in appropriate containers and in certain volumes.
- Fuel up regularly and remember to pack your loyalty card to earn benefits as you go.

Enjoy the ride

Driving is an immersive hands-on experience to be enjoyed. Avoid distractions like cell phones, unruly back seat drivers and other hazardous situations to make the most of your trip and stay safe on the road. Also, have a first aid kit ready to treat minor injuries that do not require trained medical assistance

Now that you are safe, relax and remember why you planned your trip in the first place, it's as much about the journey as is the destination.