

Satnavs and driving – ten tips to avoid trouble

You're driving not the Satnav. If you have an accident or commit an offence you can't blame the satnav. It's your fault.

What you see must take priority over what the satnav says. People have been marooned in fords, and driven into rivers and down railways because their satnav told them to. If the road looks wrong - don't take it.

You know what you're driving, the satnav probably doesn't. This means that if you have a large vehicle, or a trailer, you can't be sure that the road is suitable for you just because the satnav tells you to go down it. Watch for signs.

Watch the road not the satnav. A satnav can give all sorts of information about where you are going, much of which you don't need. Remember to watch the road not the satnav.

Put the satnav in a sensible place. It should be in your line of sight, but should not create a blind spot. Put it where it won't injure anyone in an accident.

Don't try to programme the satnav while driving. You know it will take one hand from the wheel, along with two eyes from the road and a brain from driving.

Use all the satnav's features. On a complicated, busy roundabout, it is unwise to take your eyes off the road to look at the satnav, and much better to receive spoken instructions. Some have features which show you a simple diagram of the road ahead and only need a quick glance.

Check the route is practical before you start. Is the satnav taking you to the right Farnborough? Hampshire, Warwickshire or Kent? If you put in the wrong destination, it will take you to the wrong destination. Does the route look right?

Update the satnav regularly. It needs to know about new roads, new one way systems and generally keep itself up to date.

Remember, thieves like satnavs! If it is a detachable type, always take it out when you leave the car. Thieves know that when people remove them they tend to keep them in the car, so mounts or suction cap marks also attract thieves.