

THE HIDDEN DANGERS FOR DRIVERS WHEN THE CLOCKS GO BACK

As the clocks go back an hour in October, many welcome the extra sleep - but for drivers, this seasonal shift brings a spike in road risks that shouldn't be ignored.

WHY THE CLOCK CHANGE MATTERS

The transition to Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) means darker evenings arrive earlier, catching many drivers off guard. This sudden change in light conditions, combined with autumn weather, contributes to a noticeable increase in road accidents.

STARTLING STATISTICS

- Road crashes rise by 11% in the two weeks following the October clock change, according to AA Accident Assist data.¹
- The RAC Foundation found an average of 278 more personal injury collisions - nearly 20 extra crashes per day in the fortnight after the clocks go back.²
- Crashes between 5pm and 6pm spike by 55%, with some years showing increases as high as 83%.³
- In 2023, there were 3,680 collisions where someone was injured or killed due to the driver's vision being impaired by dazzling sun or adverse weather, and 4,244 injury collisions due to slippery road surfaces.¹

KEY RISK FACTORS

- **Low-lying sun:** Nearly 73% of drivers say being dazzled by the sun is the worst part of autumn driving.¹
- **Poor lighting habits:** Over half of drivers report issues with others not using their lights properly.⁴
- **Slippery roads:** Wet leaves, rain, and fog reduce traction and visibility.
- **Fatigue:** Disrupted sleep patterns and longer periods of darkness can lead to drowsy driving.

WHO'S MOST AT RISK?

Pedestrians and cyclists: Harder to see in low light, especially near schools and residential areas.

Young and inexperienced drivers: More likely to struggle with reduced visibility and changing conditions.

Fleet and business drivers: Often driving during peak crash hours and under pressure to meet schedules.

TIPS TO STAY SAFE

Check your lights: Don't rely solely on automatic settings - ensure all lights are clean and functioning.

Carry sunglasses: Combat glare from low sun and wet roads.

Slow down: Reduce speed in darker conditions and increase following distance.

Stay alert: Take regular breaks and avoid driving when tired.

Prepare your vehicle: Check tyres, brakes, and windscreen fluid regularly.

The clock change may seem minor, but its impact on road safety is significant. By staying informed and adjusting your driving habits, you can help reduce the risk of an accident and keep yourself and others safe this autumn.

For further information contact your usual Account Executive or contact Safedrive on **0344 892 1728**.



1 <https://www.theaa.com/about-us/newsroom/crashes-rise-by-11-percent-when-clocks-go-back>

2 <https://www.racfoundation.org/research/safety/more-crashes-after-autumn-clock-change>

3 <https://www.fleetnews.co.uk/news/warning-after-collision-data-shows-crash-increase-after-clock-change>

4 <https://www.waviva.com/newsroom/news-releases/2025/02/dont-get-left-in-the-dark-over-half-of-drivers-could-be-using-lights-incorrectly>

