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## Winter Tyres: Lifesavers in Cold Weather

By Gretta Schifano

**L**AST winter, more than 19,000 people were killed or injured on our roads during November's freeze, according to the Department for Transport. Winter tyres could have prevented many of these accidents, but account for only 0.4% of tyres sold in this country, in contrast to Germany's 48%, despite our similar climates.

The life-saving benefits of winter tyres in cold weather are increased traction, shorter braking distances and better handling, in comparison with ordinary tyres.

Experts such as the British Tyre Manufacturers Association and Tyresafe, are urging motorists to switch tyres when it's below 7°C, in order to save lives. It's been difficult finding winter tyres in the UK in the past, but

the situation is better this year, with many tyre fitters, car dealers and local garages actively promoting them.

One motorist who's already made the switch is Guy, a Police Officer. Concerned about road safety, he says the dangerous scenes he witnessed during the last two winters convinced him of the need for winter tyres.

Company director Steve is also a convert. Driving home in last winter's freeze, his BMW spun around, slid sideways down a hill, and stopped centimetres from another car. Shaken by the experience, he bought winter tyres soon afterwards. Steve says 'If the weather continues to be so extreme the government should seriously consider adopting the European legal requirements for winter tyres.'

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