

The snow code - tips on clearing snow and ice from pavements or public spaces

Prevent slips

Pay extra attention to clear snow and ice from steps and steep pathways - you might need to use more salt on these areas.

If you clear snow and ice yourself, be careful - don't make the pathways more dangerous by causing them to refreeze. But don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured.

Remember, people walking on snow and ice have responsibility to be careful themselves. Follow the advice below to make sure you clear the pathway safely and effectively.

Clear the snow or ice early in the day

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

Use salt or sand - not water

If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery. You can prevent black ice by spreading some salt on the area you have cleared. You can use ordinary table or dishwasher salt - a tablespoon for each square metre you clear should work. Don't use the salt found in salting bins - this will be needed to keep the roads clear.

Be careful not to spread salt on plants or grass as it may cause them damage.

If you don't have enough salt, you can also use sand or ash. These won't stop the path icing over as well as salt, but will provide good grip under foot.

Take care where you move the snow

When you're shovelling snow, take care where you put it so it doesn't block people's paths or drains. Make sure you make a path down the middle of the area to be cleared first, so you have a clear surface to walk on. Then shovel the snow from the centre of the path to the sides.

Offer to clear your neighbours' paths

If your neighbour will have difficulty getting in and out of their home, offer to clear snow and ice around their property as well. Check that any elderly or disabled neighbours are alright in the cold weather. If you're worried about them, contact your local council.

Keeping warm over winter months can help prevent colds, flu or more serious health problems like pneumonia. Find out some simple things you can do to keep warm and stay healthy and make the best use of your heating at home.

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/N11/Newsroom/DG_191868

Heating your home

To keep warm at home during the day try to:

- heat your main living room to around 18-21°C (64-70°F) and the rest of the house at least 16°C (61°F)
- heat all the rooms you use in the day
- make sure you keep your living room warm throughout the day and heat your bedroom before going to bed
- set the timer on your heating to come on before you get up and switch off when you go to bed
- in very cold weather set the heating to come on earlier, rather than turn the thermostat up, so you won't be cold while you wait for your home to heat up

To keep warm at home during the night you should:

- try to keep the temperature above 18°C (65°F) in your bedroom overnight
- open the window or door a little at night for ventilation if you use a fire or heater in your bedroom during winter
- never use an electric blanket and a hot water bottle together as you could electrocute yourself
- check what type of electric blanket you have – some are designed only to warm the bed before you get in and should not to be used throughout the night
- make sure your electric blanket is safe to use by getting it tested every three years - the Fire Brigade, Trading Standards and Age UK can test your electric blanket for safety
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Wearing warm clothes

You can help keep warm by:

- wearing plenty of thin layers, rather than one thick one
- putting on a coat, hat, scarf, gloves and warm shoes or boots when you go outside
- wearing clothes made of wool, cotton, or fleecy synthetic fibres
- wearing bed socks and thermal underwear at night

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO

To http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HomeAndCommunity/InYourHome/KeepingSafeAtHome/DG_10027755