

# Occupational safety and health information

## Getting around safely in autumn and winter

As autumn comes around, the situation on roads and footpaths also changes. Initially, it is fallen leaves that make the ground slippery or hide damage to the surface of roads and paths. Later, frost, ice and snow require heightened attention on your way to work, back home or between University locations.

**Background:** With the beginning of autumn, the days will be shorter than the nights for half a year. It will be increasingly unlikely that the sun is able to dry up paths and roads over the course of the day. Fallen leaves even increase the already heightened danger of slipping and hide everything underneath, from potholes on roads to trip hazards on footpaths. The immediate result is less traction on the ground for tyres and soles. For vehicles, braking distances become longer and the risk of skidding when turning corners increases. In this context, the greater weight of large vehicles is not equivalent to more safety. Grip on the road surface depends entirely on traction. Other road users' incorrectly positioned headlights may blind you at night, while more slanted sunlight during the day can have a dazzling effect, thus making it harder to see hazards on roads and paths. Fog, which occurs frequently around dusk, can also reduce visibility.

### Action to be taken:

#### Adapt your behaviour to the weather conditions.

- Be more attentive.
- Reduce your speed.
- Avoid hazardous routes.

#### Prepare for autumn and winter.

##### Bicycle/car

- Tyres with deep treads ensure road grip (TWIs and the alpine symbol indicate where to check your tyres – see Illustration 1).
- Properly positioned, working lights illuminate your path optimally and do not blind others (see Illustration 2; in the case of cars, a [free lights check](#) is helpful).

##### On foot

- Robust shoes with deep-tread soles improve traction on slippery surfaces.

##### Tips

- Shining and reflective features make it easier to see you even if you're dressed in dark colours. High-visibility vests are particularly helpful (see Illustration 3).
- Change into different shoes indoors (e.g. for formal occasions).
- Note the ADFC's (German cyclists' association) information on cycling in [autumn](#) and [winter](#) (only available in German).

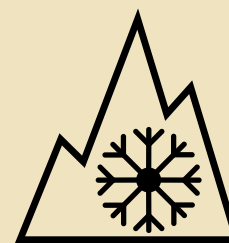
#### Pass on information on safety issues.

- Inform the control room of unsafe situations: Essen campus: ☎ +49 201 18 32200  
Duisburg campus: ☎ +49 203 37 92211
- Inform your line manager of any accidents on your way to/from work.

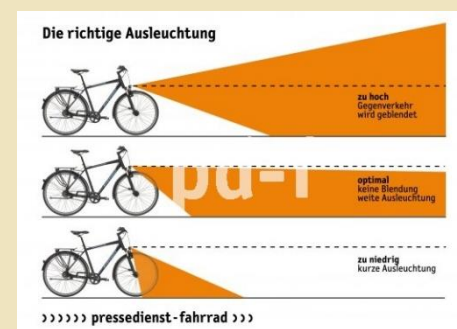
UNIVERSITÄT  
DUISBURG  
ESSEN

Offen im Denken

Arbeitssicherheit



[1] Alpine symbol for approved winter and all-season tyres (compulsory from October 2024).  
[Grummelbacke – Wikimedia Commons – CC0 1.0]



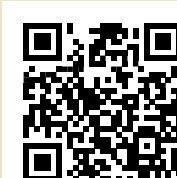
[2] Bicycle front light position:  
top – too high | middle – ideal | bottom – too low  
[Bernad Bohle – [www.pd-f.de](http://www.pd-f.de)]



[3] 'It's yellow, it's ugly, it doesn't go with anything, but it can save lives.' Karl Lagerfeld's take on high-visibility vests.  
[Sécurité Routière, French Ministry of the Interior]



[Lights check campaign](#) (German only)



ADFC information for [autumn](#) and [winter](#)

