



MURPH'S TOP TIPS on car safety



1 Research the brand and model of car

If buying a second hand car, and not New Zealand new, make sure it is a popular model that is or was sold new in New Zealand. If you need repairs then parts will be much cheaper and easier to find.

2 Technology

The age of your car will determine the level of technology and driver safety systems that are fitted. Make sure you have a good understanding of any systems the car has and exactly what driver support they are designed to provide. That said, never rely on, or expect Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS) to do the driving for you and fix your mistakes or poor decisions.

3 Anti-Lock Braking System (ABS)

This is the single most important piece of technology in a car. In an emergency situation, ABS allows the driver to stand on the brakes as hard as they can without locking the wheels, and continue to be able to control and steer the car in a direction to possibly avoid hitting something. ABS gives you the chance to change an outcome. Make sure your car has ABS!

4 Warrant of Fitness (WOF)

The Warrant of Fitness is a health and safety check for your car. Making sure your car's brakes, suspension, tyres and other critical items are in a safe condition is of paramount importance

5 Tyres

Having the correct tyres for your car and good tyre tread is super important. Talk to your tyre supplier about the correct tyres for your car. The tread of your tyres is really important. The deeper the tread of your tyres - the safer you are, especially in wet driving conditions. Never go under 4mm across the whole width of the tyre.

6 Driving Seat Position

Being comfortable and positioned correctly in the driver's seat to ensure proper control is really important. A lot of cars have more than just forward and back adjustability of the seat, so make sure you are aware of all the adjustments available. With your foot pressing hard on the brake pedal, you should still have a slight bend in your knee. A straight leg means you are stretching which is not good. With your hands at "9" and "3" on the steering wheel and your back against the seat, you should have at least a 75 degree angle bend in your elbows.

7 Air Bags

These are for when it's all gone wrong and you don't have any control of the outcome anymore. They certainly don't guarantee your safety in a crash but you wouldn't want to be in a car without them.

8 Loose items in car

Loose items can become dangerous projectiles inside your car in a crash, and could cause very unnecessary damage to you and your passengers. Be aware of unsecured items in your car and move them to the floor or the boot.