

July 2007

## Satellite Navigation (Sat Nav) Devices

Satellite navigation systems work by using satellites to track the position of the car. The satellites monitor a vehicle's heading, speed, and co-ordinates, which are then cross-referenced against a roadmap or database of zones stored aboard the car. They can then give the driver directions to a destination by comparing the vehicles heading and co-ordinates with the layout of the road network. Several different types of Sat Navs are available to drivers, many of which are built into the vehicle itself.

A well used Sat Nav can help drivers plan routes and prevent drivers from making last minute lane changes or hesitating because they are not sure of the directions, however a badly used Sat Nav can cause a distraction and increase the risk of an accident. It is important that drivers understand how best to use their sat nav and learn not to use it when it may be dangerous to do so.

Tips on the safe use of Sat Navs

- **Plan your journey in advance.**

Sat Navs will help you plan a route, not every aspect of a journey. RoSPA have produced a leaflet providing advice on journey planning. Planning a journey in advance can reduce the drivers reliance on the Sat Nav at dangerous times, and will also prompt drivers to think about issues such as fatigue and the best time to do the journey.

A leaflet about journey planning is available for download from the RoSPA website and is entitled Safer Journey Planner - [http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/safer\\_journey.pdf](http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/info/safer_journey.pdf).

- **Position the sat nav safely, out of the way of airbags and not obstructing a driver's vision.**
- **Find a method of using the Sat Nav that is not distracting to you.**
- **Always make the same observations to keep you safe that you would without the Sat Nav.**
- **Learn from your mistakes and if in doubt, seek refresher training.**
- **Organisations must ensure that staff can use Sat Navs safely.**  
Even if an organisation has not provided the Sat Nav system and their employee who is using it whilst at work owns it, they must still ensure that drivers are not using it dangerously.

These points are expanded upon in the RoSPA leaflet “Using Sat Navs Safely”, this leaflet is useful advice to distribute to members of the public looking to improve their safety when driving with a Sat Nav, or for businesses to raise awareness of the safety issues of Navigation Devices as part of their policy on Managing Occupational Road Risk.

## How to order Using Sat Navs Safely

Hard copies are available, from our sales department on 0870 777 2227, or email [sales@rospa.com](mailto:sales@rospa.com).

Product Code: RSDR188  
Price Members: £9.99  
Price Non-members: £11.50  
(Pack of 100)



## Speed Enforcement Warning Devices

There are several devices currently available on the market that can alert drivers to the presence of speed cameras and accident black spots. They are marketed and sold on the basis that they aim to prevent accidents.

Although drivers are informed about the dangers of the road ahead via road signs and the speed limits of the road, these devices can provide additional information about some areas where drivers need to take extra care - for example around schools and on stretches of road with an accident history.

The Road Safety Act 2006 has made fitting or using a device that detects or interferes with equipment used to assess a vehicles speed illegal. Devices that warn drivers that they are in an area where cameras are used to enforce the speed limit are not illegal, as they do not “detect” the camera itself.

Speed Enforcement Warning Devices that work in this manner should not be used as a replacement for good observation of the road and vehicle speed. Drivers should use them as a reminder to check the speed that their car is driving at, not as a prompt to only slow down in areas where they are more likely to get caught for speeding. Traffic police or other speed enforcement can still catch drivers who are breaking the speed limit in areas that are not included in the system.

RoSPA have produced a Top Ten Tips for drivers to help them stay under the speed limit - <http://www.rospa.com/roadsafety/toptentips>.