

The MOT test checks your vehicle meets road safety and environmental standards.

You must get an MOT test and certificate by:

- ✓ The third anniversary of the date it was registered
- ✓ The anniversary of the last MOT expiry if it's over 3yrs old.

If your vehicle is in order you will be issued with an MOT certificate and it will be recorded in the MOT database.

If your vehicle **fails** the test you will be issued with a 'refusal of an MOT test certificate' and it will be recorded in the MOT database.

You can take your vehicle away after it fails if your current MOT certificate is still valid and no 'dangerous' problems were listed in the MOT in which case it will need to be repaired or recovered before driving again.



The penalty for driving a vehicle without a valid test certificate (no MOT) is a Traffic Offence Report (ticket) at the roadside which is a £100 fine (no points) or a fine of up to £1,000 at court.

Assuming there are no serious defects such as tyres with a cord exposed the officer will probably allow you to drive away however it is important you know this is at your own risk. The purpose of an MOT is to check your vehicle is safe and therefore your vehicle could have dangerous defects affecting the brakes, suspension or other key systems. In all likelihood your vehicle will be safe enough to drive if the officer has not formally prohibited it, however it is important you realise the officer **isn't saying your vehicle is safe to drive – that is a decision for yourself**. You should also be aware that if you have a collision your insurance company may not pay out fully or even at all as they could consider this a relevant factor.

Keep hold of the ticket and be ready to show it to an officer if stopped as this will show you have already been stopped and you won't get another ticket **as long as you are driving home or finishing your journey** – this isn't an exemption to continue driving for the rest of the day and once you are home, you must **not drive it on a public road again until you are on your way to a pre-booked test** (see the next column).

Getting the vehicle tested

You will be able to legally drive* to a pre-booked test without a current MOT certificate however it must be booked in advance, before you start your journey. This means if stopped by Police you can say where and when you are booked in and the officer can check this.

Should the garage fail to confirm this booking you would be subject to a prosecution for any relevant offences therefore if it's one which doesn't require booking and they invite you to bring it straight in, you should ask them to make a note you will be coming (and perhaps confirm by text/email) so they can confirm this arrangement if needed.

If your vehicle fails the test then you are also covered to drive* home, in one direct journey without stopping (at a shop, café or even a cash machine for example) and by taking the most direct or logical route.

You are also covered to drive* to or from a **pre-arranged** appointment to have any defects identified on the failure certificate repaired.



Only centres showing the blue sign with 3 white triangles can carry out your MOT.



You can get a free reminder one month before your MOT by visiting www.gov.uk/mot-reminder

Police vehicles serviced at approved workshops by their own technicians (as all of ours are) are **exempt from MOTs** and won't show up on the MOT database.

This is because they are subject to far more rigorous and regular testing than normal cars (typically several times a year). We often receive complaints from members of public who have looked up our vehicles on the database and think they have caught us out because they aren't aware of this.



*If you drive away from a test centre in a vehicle that has failed an MOT because of a '**dangerous**' fault you can be fined up to £2,500 and receive 3 points on your license or even be banned from driving.

You can check the MOT status of a vehicle at www.gov.uk/check-mot-status



See the back of this page for some details of the changes made to the tests in May 2018.



The guidance here only relates to private cars - rules are different for good vehicles, Taxis and some other vehicles, many of which are recorded elsewhere so won't show up on the standard MOT database.

The way that the MOT test works in England, Scotland and Wales changed on Sunday 20 May 2018. The changes affect cars, vans, motorcycles and other light passenger vehicles. There are 5 main changes you need to know.

1. Defects are categorised differently

Defects found during the MOT are categorised as either *dangerous*, *major*, or *minor*.

The category the MOT tester gives each item will depend on the type of problem and how serious it is.

MOT testers will still give advice about items you need to monitor. These are known as 'advisories'.

What the new categories mean:

Item Result	What it means	Effects on the result
Dangerous	<i>A direct and immediate risk to road safety or has a serious impact on the environment.</i> Do not drive the vehicle until it's been repaired.	Fail
Major	<i>It may affect the vehicle's safety, put other road users at risk or have an impact on the environment.</i> Repair it immediately	Fail
Minor	<i>No significant effect on the safety of the vehicle or impact on the environment.</i> Repair as soon as possible.	Pass
Advisory	<i>It could become more serious in the future.</i> <i>Monitor and repair it if necessary.</i>	Pass
Pass	<i>It meets the minimum legal standard.</i> <i>Make sure it continues to meet the standard.</i>	Pass

2. Stricter rules for diesel car emissions

There are stricter limits for emissions from diesel cars with a diesel particulate filter (DPF). A DPF captures and stores exhaust soot to reduce emissions from diesel cars. (check your handbook to see if your car has a DPF).

Your vehicle will get a major fault if the MOT tester can see smoke of any colour coming from the exhaust or finds evidence that the DPF has been tampered with.

3. Some new items are now tested during the MOT

These include checking:

- ✓ if tyres are obviously underinflated
- ✓ if the brake fluid has been contaminated
- ✓ for fluid leaks posing an environmental risk
- ✓ brake pad warning lights and if brake pads or discs are missing
- ✓ reversing lights on vehicles first used from 1 September 2009
- ✓ headlight washers on vehicles first used from 1 September 2009 (if they have them)
- ✓ daytime running lights (LEDs) on vehicles first used from 1 March 2018 (i.e. from 2021 when they are 3yrs old)

There are also some other smaller changes to how some items are checked.

4. The MOT certificate will change

The design of the MOT certificate has changed. It now lists any defects under the new categories, so they're clear and easy to understand. The service to check the MOT history of a vehicle has been updated to reflect the changes.

5. Some vehicles over 40 years old won't need an MOT

Cars, vans, motorcycles and other light passenger vehicles won't need to have an MOT if they're over 40 years old and have not been substantially changed. Until now, only vehicles first built before 1960 were exempt. Now the rules have changed, vehicles won't need an MOT from the 40th anniversary of when they were registered or manufactured.

You can check the date the vehicle was registered online



For more detailed information and guidance go to www.gov.uk/getting-an-mot