



A GUIDE TO **YOUR MOT**

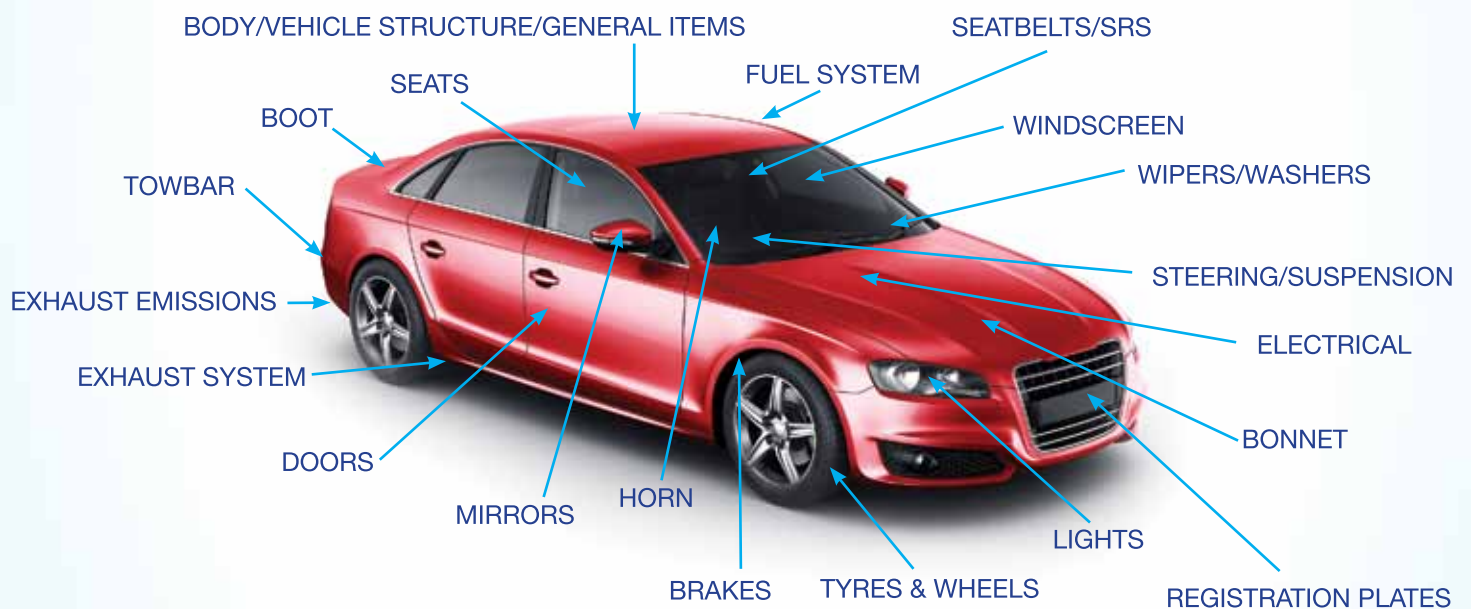


What is the MOT Test

If you own and use a vehicle on the road it is your responsibility to ensure this vehicle is maintained and kept in a condition that deems it roadworthy at all times. To ensure your vehicle is kept in a roadworthy condition and to make sure it complies with road safety laws, an MOT test needs to be carried out on your vehicle. Once your vehicle is three years old you need to book it in for an MOT test. However, if your vehicle is used as a taxi or has more than eight passenger seats then different rules apply.

Every car needs to meet the required minimum legal requirements at the time of the MOT test. The MOT test will check important items on your car to ensure everything complies. It is imperative that you understand what the MOT certificate means. The certificate does not guarantee the overall mechanical condition of a vehicle. An MOT certificate confirms that at the time of the test your vehicle met the minimum acceptable environmental and road safety standards required by law without the need for dismantling your vehicle. The certificate is not a substitute for regular maintenance. The test does not cover the condition of the engine, clutch or gearbox.

What is included in the MOT test?



MOT Vehicle Components which are inspected

The following is a complete list of all the checks your vehicle will undergo during its MOT test. The list groups the checks under each component. However, during the test, the tester will carry out the checks in a specific sequence that has been designed to save time.

Vehicle Structure, Body condition and security

- Body of the vehicle and components including spoilers and bumpers . The body must not be insecure or displaced which might lead to loss of control of the vehicle when driven or be a danger to other road users.



- There must be no excessive corrosion or dangerous sharp edges in key areas which can cause injury to other road users. Excessive corrosion can either be a hole or a major weakened component. A vehicle can fail if it has excessive corrosion in key components - brakes, steering, suspension etc. It can also fail if it has excessive corrosion in areas which can affect the braking or steering of the vehicle.
- The car battery and electrical wiring are also tested. The battery is tested to make sure no battery fluid is leaking. The wiring is tested to ensure there is no danger of a short circuit .
- All engine mountings are checked to ensure they are safe and secure and have not seriously deteriorated as these provide essential support for the engine.
- Tow bars are checked for security / condition / inappropriate repairs or modification. Correct operation of 13 pin electrical socket.

Fuel System

If your vehicle has a fuel leak this will result in an MOT fail straight away. The tester will check under the bonnet and throughout the run of the fuel line from the fuel tank to the engine.

The tester will check:

- The fuel filler cap fastens securely
- The seal in the cap is not torn or deteriorated in any way.
- The fuel tank is mounted securely
- There are no other defects which can cause the fuel to leak out
- The fuel pipe or hose to ensure there is no damage

Exhaust and Emissions

If any of the following are evident with the exhaust system, the MOT of the vehicle will fail if:

- Part of the system is missing or excessively deteriorated
- The mounting is missing or damaged making the exhaust system insecure
- There is a major leak
- The system emits more noise than a similar vehicle fitted with a standard system in good condition.

Emissions are checked using specialised equipment. Dependant on age and fuel type of vehicle, vehicle must meet the requirement for exhaust emissions. Excessive smoking (tester visually checks) is a reason for failure.

Diesel smoke emissions are checked by using a smoke meter.



Seat Belts

All seat belts fitted to any vehicle must be inspected for:

- Security of seat belt mountings
- Security and operation of locking/release mechanism
- Condition of webbing
- Seat belt retraction

Part of the seat belt test includes checking of supplementary restraint systems. This inspection includes air-bags, seat belt pre-tensioners and seat belt load limiters. A check of the malfunction indicator lamp (MIL) is also carried out. The MOT will fail if:

- The airbag is missing or defective
- The SRS Malfunction Indicator Lamp is on

Seats

All seats within a vehicle need to undergo the following checks by the MOT tester:

- The driver seat and front passenger seats must be secure
- The driver's seat mechanism must function as intended
- All seat backs must be securable in the upright position.

Doors

The MOT tester will check all doors to make sure:

- Both front doors are open able from the inside and out and that all doors latch securely in a closed position
- Rear doors should open from the outside of the vehicle
- All door hinges, catches and pillars to be assessed for opening and closing of the doors securely.

Mirrors

All checks are applied to obligatory mirrors. Each vehicle must have the minimum number of required mirrors. All mirrors must:

- Be secure
- Be visible from the driver's seat
- Not be distorted or damaged so as to seriously impair the driver's view to the rear.



Load Security

This test checks to make sure the boot or tailgate can be secured in the closed position.

Brakes

Brake efficiency and balance is tested as part of the MOT. The test carried out is an efficiency test and checks the operation and performance of the brakes. Anti-lock braking system is checked and tested as well as electronic stability control, the electronic park brake and the brake fluid warning light.

The parking brake is also checked. This could be a hand, foot or electronically operated brake. The mountings will be checked for security and/or corrosion.

The brake lever or control will be a fail if it is:

- Missing
- Insecure
- Defective or located so that it cannot be satisfactorily operated
- Deemed to have had an inappropriate repair or modification

Tyres and Wheels

This part of the MOT test looks at the condition, security, tyre size and type and most importantly tread depth. The grooves of the tread pattern must not be less than the legal requirement of 1.6mm. It must be noted spare tyres are not inspected. All tyres must be correctly matched with regard to:

- Type
- Size
- Structure

Note: vehicles first used on or after 1 January 2012 will require a check of the MIL for tyre pressure monitoring.

Registration Plates and Vehicle Identification number (VIN)

All vehicle registration plates will be checked to ensure they meet the legal requirements. The VIN must not be an incomplete number. For registered vehicles the registration plate must be:

- Present
- Secure
- Not faded, dirty or obscured
- Letters and digits must conform to the approved font design with correct spacing
- Front plates must be black digits on white background, rear must be black on yellow



Lights

All lights are checked on the vehicle. Headlamp beams are checked to ensure they are correctly set so as not to dazzle other road users. All lights are checked for:

- Operation
- Condition
- Security

Bonnet

The bonnet of a vehicle will be checked to ensure it latches securely when in the closed position

Windscreen

This check includes all items that affect the driver's view of the road. The check includes the condition of the windscreen, wipers and washers.

Nothing must be obstructing the view in the windscreen - satnavs, air fresheners or hanging trinkets from the mirror. The driver's view of the road must be clear. Any cracks directly in front of the driver less than 10mm in diameter are acceptable. The washers and wipers are checked to ensure:

- Correct operation
- Correct condition
- The correct area is swept by the wipers

Horn

The MOT test of the horn is carried out to ensure:

- Correct operation
- Control can be easily reached by the driver
- It is loud enough
- It is suitable and not a multi-tone.

Steering and suspension

This test checks the condition of the steering column, steering lock and steering oil level. Checks are carried out to ensure no inappropriate repairs or modifications have been made.

The malfunction indicator lamp is checked to ensure no warning light is visible. Under bonnet and under vehicle checks are carried out to check the suspension of the vehicle. The suspension is checked for wear by the tester applying loads in various ways with the wheels jacked up. The MOT tester will observe this from beneath the vehicle.



Electrical

The MOT test will check all visible electrical wiring on the vehicle and the battery.

Where Can I get an MOT?

Across the UK there are approximately 20,000 garages which are authorised by VOSA as MOT test stations. Any one of these garages can carry out your MOT test. An authorised test centre has to display the blue MOT 'triple triangle' logo which identifies them as an authorised test centre. Each test centre must display the maximum chargeable fee on a poster. However, an MOT test centre can charge less for the test should they wish.

How are vehicles tested?

- Each authorised MOT testing centre carries out the MOT test in a designated bay. A range of equipment is used to carry out the test. This equipment must meet the required specification required for MOT testing.
- MOT testers may only examine specified items, which follow guidelines laid down in a document officially known as 'The MOT Inspection Manual', generically known in the trade as 'The Tester's Manual'. If after the
- MOT test your vehicle has failed, you will be given a failure document. While your vehicle is undergoing the
- MOT test you can watch from a designated viewing area but under no circumstance can you interrupt the tester.

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) provide training courses which all MOT tester's are sent on. The agency regularly checks test standards.

Who is the scheme supervised by?

The government agency VOSA supervises and is responsible for the MOT scheme. They supervise the scheme by ensuring all the testing centres carry out MOT's to the correct standards. They do this by:

- Documenting all required test methods and standards.
- Approving and training Authorised Examiners and Testers to carry out MOT tests
- Authorising MOT test stations and nominated testers
- Monitoring standards of MOT garages and tests.
- Providing seminars and other advisory services.
- Dealing with appeals and complaints from MOT customers.
- Taking disciplinary action where necessary to improve testing standards and raise levels of compliance.



What if you disagree with a test result?

If you are not happy with the result of your MOT test then you should discuss it with the MOT test station representative. It is imperative that you don't change the condition of the vehicle and it is important that no one carries out any repairs to the vehicle.

If you think your car;

Has been incorrectly failed:

You need to complete an appeal form. Form VT17 is available from any MOT test centre. We must receive your appeal within 14 working days of the date of the MOT test along with a full test fee. Within 5 days of receiving your appeal form we will offer you an appointment to have your vehicle re-examined. If your appeal is successful we will refund some or all of the test fee back to you.

Has been incorrectly passed:

You need to notify us as soon as possible. If we are satisfied with your complaint we will offer you an appointment within 5 working days to check your vehicle without charge provided:

- No more than 3 months has passed since the MOT test if it's a corrosion-related problem
- No more than 28 days has passed for other defects

The address of your local Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) office is displayed in the MOT test station or can be obtained from our general enquiries unit on 0300 123 9000*.

- This service is provided as a means of monitoring the MOT scheme and road safety standards generally.
- What we cannot do is seek compensation on your behalf. However you are free to take action in conjunction with your local trading standards department. In serious circumstances you can refer the matter to the police.
- An inspection report will be provided by us which details all vehicle defects if any and all advisory items following our check of the vehicle.
- Should we decide to take any action against the testing station which tested your vehicle, we will do so at our own discretion. This matter will be confidential and will have no bearing on any action you may decide to take.

What if you think your MOT certificate is not genuine?

Check if your MOT certificate is genuine by comparing its details against what's recorded online. Please visit our website www.direct.gov.uk/yourmotcheck. You will be able to check the MOT status or history of your car (subject to certain conditions).



If you have lost or damaged your test certificate

A duplicate MOT test certificate can be purchased from any MOT testing station. However, to obtain a duplicate you must be able to provide the test number from the original certificate or the unique number from the registration document (V5c). However, if you are unable to do this you can visit the MOT test centre that carried out the MOT to obtain proof. The fee for a duplicate MOT test certificate is £10 or half the test fee if this is less.

If you are unhappy with our service

Not happy with the way your MOT test was conducted, then please contact us as soon as possible. Your feedback helps us to ensure all our MOT test stations provide the best service possible. Contact your local VOSA office. The address is shown on the Fees and Appeals poster at your MOT test station or you can ring our MOT enquiry line on **0300 123 9000***.

Headquarters and Training Centre

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E-mail: enquiries@vosa.gov.uk

