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## What is an MOT

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### What is an MOT ?

Car MOT testing is carried out by an approved garage to see whether a vehicle is roadworthy and safe to use on UK roads.

This article will set out the MOT test requirements as well as the mot test costs.

A vehicle MOT certificate is a receipt of the vehicle test and confirms that at the time of test it met the minimum acceptable environmental and road safety standards required by law.

MOT tests are only carried out and issued by approved garages, see below how to recognise an approved garage.

You cannot drive a vehicle on the road in the UK without a valid MOT.

When you purchase a vehicle that is more than 3 years old, you will need the most recent MOT certificate. You must ensure that it is current and that the MOT has not expired. You cannot use a vehicle on UK roads unless it has a valid and current MOT certificate.



Above are examples of the old style certificate (left) and the new style A4 size (right)

### **What does MOT stand for ?**

It stands for Ministry of Transport, this is the government department responsible for the transport network.

### **How often does a vehicle need to be MOT tested ?**

Every vehicle in the UK must be tested each year. This is to ensure that it roadworthy and complies with the relevant standards. Cars do not need to have an MOT until they are three years old.

### **How to recognise an approved MOT garage (mot testing station)**

There are about 19,000 approved garages in the UK. An approved garage will display the blue 'three triangles' logo shown here below ;



The garage should also have on display ;

- VT9a - fees and appeals poster,
- VT26 - list of nominated testers,
- VT9 - authorisation of examiner.

### **What does the garage check during car MOT testing ?**

- Vehicle identification number - a vehicle identification number must be permanently displayed and legible on a vehicle first used on or after 1 August 1980,
- Registration plate - condition, security, legibility and format of letters/numbers,
- Lights - condition, operation, security and correct colour. The headlamps will also be checked to see if the aim is correct,

- Steering and suspension - correct condition and operation,
- Wipers and washers - operate to give the driver a clear view of the road,
- Windscreen - condition and drivers view of the road,
- Horn - correct operation and type,
- Seatbelts - all seatbelts installed are checked for type, condition, operation and security. All compulsory seatbelts must be in place,
- Seats - front seats secure. Front and rear backseats can be secured in the upright position,
- Fuel system - no leaks, fuel cap fastens correctly and seals securely. The fuel cap will need to be opened. Make sure the key is available,
- Exhaust emissions - vehicle meets the requirement for exhaust emission. These vary on the age and fuel type of the vehicle,
- Exhaust system - complete, secure, without serious leaks and silences effectively,
- Vehicle structure - free from excessive corrosion or damage in specific areas. No sharp edges,
- Doors - open and close. Latch securely in closed position. Front doors should open from inside and outside the vehicle. Rear doors may need to be opened to gain access to testable items,
- Mirrors - presence, condition and security,
- Wheels and tyres - condition, security, tyre size and type, and tread depth. Spare tyres are not tested,
- Brakes - condition, operation and performance (efficiency test). Suitable vehicles will be tested on a roller brake tester. Vehicles such as those with permanent 4-wheel drive will be tested either on a suitable road using a properly calibrated and maintained decelerometer or, if one is installed at the test station, a plate brake tester.

### **How long does an MOT test certificate last ?**

Your vehicles MOT will last for one year. The certificate that the garage issues will have the date when the vehicle needs to be tested again.

### **MOT test costs.**

As of the update date of this page (20/06/2007) the MOT test costs for a car are £45.

NOTE - just because your vehicles MOT is not yet due does not mean that your vehicle is safe to drive on the road. Responsible owners/drivers will ensure that their vehicle is safe for use at all times and will not just drive the vehicle and have repair work done at every MOT. If you have a few months left before your MOT test is due and you know that work needs doing to the vehicle, don't wait, get the work done as soon as possible - it could save your life or someone elses.

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