



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

Whatever your essential journey,
make it **SAFE**

Vehicle safety campaign toolkit

Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**



Introduction

Since December 2020, most people have not been driving as often and are only using their car for essential journeys that they need to make.

Vehicles that are not used regularly can experience problems with key safety features like tyres and lights. Extended non-use of a vehicle can also lead to issues like faulty bulbs not being identified.

We know that garages are likely to have lower demand for MOTs in April and May because of the 6-month MOT exemptions that were introduced in March 2020, as part of measures to help stop the spread of coronavirus.

As more people need to drive on essential journeys, reminding drivers about the importance of ensuring their vehicle is safe and roadworthy could generate business and make up some of the MOT shortfall.

We have produced some materials for you to use to contact customers about getting their vehicle serviced or having a health check before they need to start driving more regularly.

Our recent survey of garages told us that customers trust their MOT garage and prefer to choose a garage they've used before:

- 59% of MOT customers prefer to choose a garage they have used before
- 91% of customers are satisfied with the customer service from their MOT garage
- 95% of customers trust their MOT garage

As we did with the 'Beat the Rush' campaign last autumn, we want to help and support you during this difficult period. This time by nudging motorists to get their vehicle professionally checked if they need to start driving more regularly. Offering customers peace of mind through a service or health check or even an early MOT, could help you to increase business.

Introduction

Ahead of schools reopening, we will roll out a campaign to encourage motorists who need to drive to:

- **Check:** carry out some simple vehicle safety checks
- **Book:** get your vehicle checked by a professional (either through a service, health check or early MOT), for added peace of mind

This pack contains some ideas to help you reach your customers and prompt them to book a service, health check or early MOT. You may have social media accounts and customer email addresses*, so we have provided ready-made content for you.

By working together to provide customers with consistent, useful information, and to explain the importance of vehicle safety checks and a professional service, we can make this challenging time easier for everyone. We look forward to working with you now and in the future.

3 easy steps to get involved with our campaign

1. Download the toolkit and read the blog at: <https://mattersoftesting.blog.gov.uk/>
2. Use material from the toolkit for social media or emails to your customers – or create your own
3. Keep an eye on your emails as we will be in touch as the campaign rolls out over the spring

* Providing those customers have given you consent to contact them under PECR. You can get [more information on PECR](#) from the Information Commissioner's Office.

‘Whatever your essential journey, make it SAFE’
About the campaign



About the campaign

The campaign will target motorists:

- **who are not using their cars regularly during the lockdown**

What we know: 50% of drivers said they were not doing as many miles as before in an AA poll in October 2020. The drop in car travel highlights the need to check for faults before the first journey.

- **who don't always know how to check their vehicle is safe**

What we know: Millions of British drivers lack the basic knowledge of vehicle maintenance and cannot – or do not want to know how to – check straightforward features such as their car's tyre pressure, the condition of the number plate or screenwash level, according to research by Halfords

- **who are busy and vehicle safety isn't top of mind**

What we know: DVSA research shows a third of parents and carers (30%) said that lack of time is the main reason they do not check their car more often. Oil, windscreen washer fluid and tyre checks are the most popular vehicle maintenance checks undertaken by parents and carers.

Our plans

As schools reopen, we will use this as a hook for the start of the vehicle safety campaign aimed at those who need to drive.

We will encourage motorists to:

- do simple vehicle checks to get safely back on the road
- get their vehicle professionally checked through a service or a health check
- or even get an early MOT, for drivers who want to go back to their original MOT date

This campaign is a media, social media and partnership campaign. We will try to get stories in the national and regional media, we will post messages on our social channels, and we will work with trade bodies to reach their members.

We hope this toolkit provides ideas and content that you can use on social media or via other customer communication channels.

Throughout the campaign we will be signposting people to www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-safe.



Key messages

Overall key message

Need to drive? Whatever your essential journey, make it **SAFE**.

Do 4 basic checks before your next trip:

- Service or health check if needed
- Air in tyres
- Fill up screenwash
- Examine lights and tyre tread



Key messages

Supporting key messages:

- As schools reopen, some people will need to use their cars more often
- If you need to do an essential journey, there are simple checks to get you safely back on the road
- Vehicles which have not been used frequently can face some common problems with tyres, lights and screenwash
- For added peace of mind, get your vehicle professionally checked with a service or a health check
- If you want to go back to your original pre-exemption MOT date, consider getting an early MOT
- Garages will be quieter in April and May, so you are likely to get an appointment of your choice
- Doing simple vehicle checks or having a check by a professional means you know your vehicle is safe and roadworthy if you need to use it

Vehicle safety checks

The **SAFE** advice we will be offering to motorists is:

Service or health check if needed

- For added peace of mind, get your vehicle professionally checked with a service or a health check. If you want to go back to your original pre-exemption MOT date, consider getting an early MOT. Your garage can check the things you can't see
- For example, brakes need to work properly and are fundamental to your safety when driving a vehicle. You can test the brake pedal each time you drive the car
- If the brakes feel different or make a continued noise, or if the vehicle pulls to one side, you must contact your local garage as soon as possible
- If the warning lights on the dashboard come on, get the vehicle professionally checked as soon as possible

Vehicle safety checks

Air in tyres

- Tyres need to be correctly inflated, without any cuts or bulges. Correctly inflated tyres reduce the risk of accidents, will last longer and will save you money on fuel
- Tyres can lose air and deteriorate when they are stationary for a long period
- Your car manual will tell you the right pressure for your tyres. Most petrol stations and garages will have a pressure gauge and air pump, so check when you fill up. At the same time look out for bulges and cuts
- Remember to check your advisories. If a tyre was close to the minimum tread before the lockdown, now might be a good time replace the tyre

Fill up screenwash

- You need to check fluid is topped up and the windscreen wipers work, without streaking water. When the engine is cold, lift the bonnet, check the windscreen washer bottle and top up if necessary. Using washer fluid rather than water will help to clean the windscreen and prevent the washers freezing in winter

Vehicle safety checks

Examine lights & tyre tread

Lights

- Since you last used the vehicle, a car bulb could have blown
- Turn on all the lights and walk around the car. Give them a tap to check they're not loose or damaged and check the colours are correct and match. Your car manual will explain how to change a bulb, or your garage can do this. You can test brake lights by reversing up to a garage door or window and pressing the brake. Look for a reflection in the rearview mirror

Tyre tread

- The legal tyre tread depth for cars is 1.6mm and the condition of your tyres is key to your safety. This is especially important when roads are wet and icy
- Turn the steering wheel fully to the left or right. Look for the treadwear indicators which are at the bottom of the tyre grooves. If they are flush with the level of the tread, you need to replace the tyre
- Another good rule of thumb is the 20p test. Insert a 20p coin into the groove on the tyre. If the tread covers the outer band of the coin the tyre depth is legal. Check the tread depth is even across the tyre



How you can get involved

How you can get involved

1. Directly contact your customers

- Offer a service or health check for customer's peace of mind
- Ask customers who got an exemption in April or May last year to consider going back to their original MOT month
- Provide information about how to do simple vehicle safety checks
- We have created a template email for you to tailor for your customers

2. Share the campaign materials on your social media channels

- We have created graphics for you to use with social media posts
- We have provided template social media posts for Twitter and Facebook
- We will run campaign social content on our own channels. Please comment on, share and retweet our content with your social media followers via Twitter: [@DVSAgovuk](https://twitter.com/DVSAgovuk) and Facebook: facebook.com/dvsagovuk

3. Stay in touch with us

- Our priority is helping people to keep their vehicle safe to drive. Our recent survey of garages told us that customers trust their MOT garage and prefer to choose a garage they've used before
- We've prepared the following to help you – please let us know if it helps

Template social media posts

 Need to drive for an essential journey? We're asking all motorists to make sure their vehicle is SAFE.

 Service or health check if needed

 Air in tyres

 Fill up screenwash

 Examine lights & tyre tread

 If you're not sure about anything, get in touch with us to book a professional check.

[Add in your booking link/website/phone number]

 Need to drive to school? Whatever your essential journey, make it SAFE.

 For peace of mind, book a **S**ervice or health check now to make sure your vehicle is safe to drive. 

[Add in your booking link/website/phone number]

 Not used your car as often during the last few months?

 It could have developed problems with key safety features like tyres and lights

 Book a **S**ervice or health check with us to make sure your vehicle is SAFE to drive

[Add in your booking link/website/phone number]

Template email for customers

[Salutation]

As schools reopen, you may need to use your car more often for essential journeys. Vehicles which have not been used frequently can face some common problems with key safety features like tyres and lights.

If you need to start driving more regularly, whatever your essential journey, make it **SAFE**:

Service or health check if needed

Air in tyres

Fill up screenwash

Examine lights and tyre tread

Checking items like tyres, lights and screenwash could also help to avoid some of the common issues reported at MOT.

Although schools are going back, everyone else should continue to stay at home, except for essential journeys.

Getting a professional vehicle safety check

For added peace of mind, please do think about getting our vehicle checked with our service or a health check. We are offering [insert detail on your individual services]. Having a professional check means you know your vehicle is safe and roadworthy.

If you had an MOT exemption last year, you might consider getting an early MOT if you want to go back to your original MOT date. Our workshop will be quieter in April and May, so you are likely to get an appointment of your choice.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

[Sign off and contact details]

Campaign assets



Facebook or Twitter posts

Service or health check if needed

Air in tyres

Fill up screenwash

Examine lights and tyre tread

Facebook or Twitter posts

**Back on the
school run?**

**Whatever your essential
journey, make it safe.**



Facebook or Twitter posts

**Heading to the
supermarket?**

**Whatever your essential
journey, make it safe.**



Facebook or Twitter posts

**Off to a medical
appointment?**

**Whatever your essential
journey, make it safe.**





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