

Navigating vehicle breakdowns

We understand the safety of yourself, and your passengers is a priority during a vehicle breakdown. Our guide provides you with helpful tips to help prepare your vehicle for each journey and what to do during a breakdown.

Before starting your journey

- Check fuel levels – low fuel is a common cause of breakdowns.
- Keep an eye on your battery – repeated short journeys can flatten them.
- Regularly inspect your tyres – flat and worn tyres can be dangerous.
- Check your screen wash – it's essential for year-round safe motoring.
- Listen out for unusual sounds, keep an eye on dashboard warning lights and check your fuel or electricity levels.
- Keep a copy of your breakdown cover documents in your glove compartment and save your provider's emergency number.
- Download an app to your mobile phone, so you can easily find and share your location.

Staying safe you breakdown

- **If you think your vehicle is about to stop**, try to find a safe place to pull over. On a dual carriageway or on a motorway, this could be a layby or a hard shoulder.
- **If your vehicle stops before you reach a safe place**, try to bring it to a halt as far away from the main flow of traffic as possible.
- **If you're on a smart motorway and there's no hard shoulder**, stop in the emergency refuge area or if you can, pull over off the road.
- **When you stop on a motorway hard shoulder**, normally the safest place to wait for help is away from moving traffic and so that you can see the rear of the vehicle.
- **If you stop in a live lane of a motorway** or on the carriageway and you can't safely move the car off the road, put your side lights and hazard lights on straightaway. If you decide to remain in the vehicle, keep your seatbelts on and call 999.
- **Never try to fix the car at the side of the road**, call your breakdown service as soon as possible.

BE PREPARED





Being visible if you breakdown

- **Turn on your hazard lights, and side lights if weather conditions are poor** – if you're not in a safe place, such as a layby or service station, you'll need to assess whether it's safe to leave the vehicle.
- **Make sure you wear a hi-vis jacket** – this makes it easier for other drivers to see you on a busy road, in poor weather and in the dark if you exit the vehicle.
- **Put out a warning triangle** – warning triangle should be placed at least 45m behind your vehicle if it's safe to do so. Warning triangles should never be on the motorway.

Calling for help

- If you breakdown on the motorway, there are markers on the side of the road that indicate the nearest emergency phone and your location. If safe to do so, you can walk along the hard shoulder to the nearest emergency phone or you can call your breakdown service for help.
- You can check your phone's GPS for your location, especially with motorway breakdowns. Or use an app to find your location.
- Contact your breakdown cover provider if you feel unsafe in the area you've broken down. They'll advise you on what to do and will often prioritise people who are stuck in unsafe situations.

Essential breakdown kit checklist

Before you set off on your trip, don't forget to have these essentials in your vehicle in case of breakdowns.

1. **Mobile phone**
2. **Spare tyre and jack**
3. **Empty fuel carrier**
4. **Warm clothes and a waterproof coat**
5. **High-vis vest, torch and warning triangle**
6. **First aid kit, food and water**
7. **Jump leads**
8. **Spare screen wash, de-icer, and a scraper.**