

# Road trips made easy



BE PREPARED

Set off on your break with confidence. Discover our top tips for a stress-free journey.

## Pre-travel checklist

- 1 Check your tyre pressure**  
It's important your tyres are checked properly before you set off. A packed car for a long distance will put extra pressure on your tyres and may burn more fuel on your journey.
- 2 Fill up your water**  
Your car's engine coolant is a mix of antifreeze and water and the levels should be monitored to make sure the engine doesn't overheat and cause a breakdown. You can check the coolant levels on the reservoir next to your radiator; refer to your handbook for guidance on how to find this.
- 3 Inspect your windscreen**  
A chip in the windscreen can be extremely distracting, so it's best to get this fixed as soon as you can; before it can turn into something more serious and costly!
- 4 Fuel up**  
Make sure you have enough fuel for your journey - and if you're going further afield, plan your fuel stops before you leave.
- 5 Test your lights**  
From brake lights to indicators, make sure all your lights are working. It's also a good idea to give them a wipe with a damp cloth to get rid of any dirt.
- 6 Check your oil level**  
Without the right levels of oil, the engine's lubrication could be severely reduced; risking damage to your car. Keep them checked (every fortnight) and topped up if needed. Remember not to overfill. To see your engine oil levels, remove the dipstick and wipe it clean with a cloth, insert it back in and pull it out again and check the levels are between the min and max marks.



## Top tip

Take regular breaks along your journey to rest and stretch your legs. And if your journey's particularly long, consider an overnight stay. Comfort stops are important when you're tired, to avoid putting yourself or others at risk.



## Important

If your car unexpectedly stops in a live lane and you can't get to the leftmost lane, don't attempt to get out. Remain inside with your seatbelt and hazard lights on and call 999 immediately.

### Journey essentials

- ✓ Food and water.
- ✓ A fully charged mobile phone and a portable power bank.
- ✓ Don't forget to save your insurance provider's number in your phone before you leave.
- ✓ Road maps, in case the SatNav fails.
- ✓ First aid kit.
- ✓ If you're travelling with kids, remember to charge any portable devices, and pack travel games, blankets and pillows so they're entertained and comfortable in the back.

## 1 What to do if your vehicle breaks down?

### Come off the motorway

If you're on the motorway, try to come off at the nearest exit or service station. If this isn't possible, pull over to the hard shoulder keeping as far left as possible. If you're on a smart motorway move to the

left-hand lane, and exit at the nearest junction, service station, or emergency refuge area. Turn on your hazards and if you've broken down at night or visibility is low, use your sidelights too.

## 2 Safely exit your car

Make sure you and your passengers exit by the left-hand passenger door, wearing high-vis jackets if you have them. Keep well back from the traffic on a verge or on the other side of the barrier if there is one. Don't place a warning triangle anywhere on the motorway, including the dual carriageway.

## 3 Call your breakdown provider

If you've pulled over to the hard shoulder, use your mobile phone. If you don't have access to it, walk to the nearest emergency telephone on your side of the motorway (they're usually about a mile apart). If you're at the emergency refuge area you are required to use the emergency telephone there. Don't try to fix the problem yourself - wait for a rescue vehicle.

### Broken down and can't get to the hard shoulder or emergency refuge area?

- Try and get into the leftmost lane and as far off the carriageway as possible, and if you're on the smart motorway, as far over to the left-hand verge as possible.
- Keep your seatbelts and hazards on.
- Only leave your car if it's safe to do so. Use the left-hand door and wait behind safety barriers.
- Call 999 first, before calling your breakdown provider.