

Quick MOT checks

1. Number plate. An easy one to start, make sure your number plate is clean and readable – a quick wash is sufficient. The font and spacing of the number plate characters must also comply with the [legal requirements](#).

2. Lights and indicators. Check the headlights, licence plate light, hazard lights and indicators and are all working as normal.

3. Brake lights. You may need a friend for this; ask them to check the brake lights while you press the brake pedal. If you're on your own, try carefully reversing up to a reflective surface and look behind to see if they're working.

4. Tyres. The [minimum legal tyre tread depth](#) is 1.6mm in a continuous band around the central 3/4 of the tyre. Any tyres with less than this will be marked as an MOT fail. This is easy to check: most tyres have tread wear indicators - raised ridges running across the tyre in the bottom of the grooves. These are 1.6 mm high, so if the tread's worn down to the same level the tyre needs replacing before the MOT.

5. Windscreen and wipers. Carefully check the view out of the front of the car for any damage such as cracks or chips. Any damage more than 10mm in the driver's area of the windscreen and more than 40mm in the rest of the windscreen will cause a fail. For wipers, test they can still clean the front and back windscreens properly. Windscreen stickers or other obstructions to your view may also cause an MOT failure.

6. Screen wash. The screen washers must provide enough fluid to clean the windscreen so a blocked jet or an empty screen wash container can cause an MOT fail. Easily avoid this by making sure it's topped up before taking your car for its test.

7. Seats and seatbelts. Test to see if the driver's seat moves normally and locks securely in any position, without any difficulties. For seatbelts, check every belt fully to see if they have:

- Any cuts or fraying.
- If they retract properly.
- If the attachment to the floor or seat is secure.
- Whether they clip in and unclip without hassle.
- Give them each a good tug to see if they lock properly.

8. Car horn. Test your horn. If it doesn't work, it'll need to be repaired or replaced.

9. Fuel and engine oil. Your car will need enough of both fuel and engine oil for its MOT. The MOT tester will need to run the engine to check exhaust emission levels and might refuse to test your car if the fuel or engine oil level is too low. Before checking or topping up the engine oil, be sure that your car has been off for a little while and has had a chance to cool down.