

Vehicle Testing - Notes for Guidance

TESTING - WHO, WHAT, WHY AND WHEN

Who carries out the test?

Our trained staff carry out the test.

What vehicles must be tested?

Private cars and motorcycles 4 years old and over. Buses, lorries and taxis undergo different tests.

Are any vehicles exempt?

Yes - see the list opposite.

Why have a vehicle test?

The test is important for road safety. It gives an independent assurance that a vehicle is fit for the road at the time of the test. The list opposite shows what the test covers.

When is the test due?

For vehicles first registered anywhere in the UK, the test is due on the fourth anniversary of registration and then every year afterwards. For vehicles that have never been registered or have been previously registered outside the UK, the test is due on the fourth anniversary of its manufacture and then every year afterwards.

GETTING A TEST

How do I apply for the test?

By telephone

You may book a test by telephone. Call 0845 247 2471 (calls charged at local rate; calls are recorded for quality assurance purposes). When making a telephone booking you do not need an application form but it is advisable to have your log book, current test certificate and credit/debit card details handy. The call centre is open for bookings from 8am to 7pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm on Saturday.

By post

You may book a test by post. You will need to complete an application form and send it with the appropriate fee to the vehicle test centre (see list overleaf) at which you would like the test.

At the counter

You may book a test in person at any vehicle test centre (see list overleaf). When making a booking in person it is advisable to have your logbook and current test certificate details.

The Belfast centre is open for booking from 9am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.
All other centres are open from 8.45am to 12.30pm and 1.15pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

Online

You may book a test online at www.dvni.gov.uk. When making an online booking you do not need an application form but you must have your log book, current test certificate and credit/debit card details handy.

Do I need to apply in advance?

Yes. You should preferably apply about 4 weeks, but not more than three months, beforehand. We can issue a new test certificate up to 28 days before the current certificate expires. It will be dated from the current certificate's expiry date, as long as you inform the examiner and produce the previous certificate at the time of test.

How much does the test cost?

You can get information on fees on a 24-hour phone line, (08457) 581416. All calls are charged at local rates.

You may pay by cheque, postal order or credit/debit card. Payment by cheque without a cheque guarantee card requires a 10-day clearance.

Do not send cash by post. Payments will not be accepted after 4pm. Non-cash payments may be left in any centre's post box located in the reception area.

How quickly can I get a test?

We try to offer test appointments quickly, but we cannot meet requests for specified times. Tell us on the form which dates or times suit you. Can I get an urgent appointment? We will try to help. Contact us on 0845 247 2471.

Can I cancel my test appointment?

Yes, provided you give 1 clear day's notice. Clear days exclude Saturday, Sunday and public and bank holidays. These days also exclude the date on which you tell us you wish to cancel and the date of the test.
Example: if you wish to cancel a Tuesday appointment you must tell us by the previous Friday. We will only refund the fee if you give enough notice of the cancellation.

THE TEST ITSELF

What should I do before the test?

Make sure the vehicle is roadworthy with all its equipment working. It must be in a reasonably clean condition externally and internally, otherwise we may refuse the test and you would lose your fee.

What should I do when I arrive at the test centre?

Your appointment letter tells you which inspection lane number to go to. You will see equivalent numbers at the test centre. Drive to that lane number and wait. We will then ask you to drive your vehicle into the centre for inspection.

PASSING AND FAILING

What happens if the vehicle passes?

We give a Vehicle Test Certificate (commonly referred to as an MOT certificate), valid for 12 months, to the driver at the test centre. Keep it safe.

What happens if the vehicle fails the test?

If an application is received after 21 days the vehicle will have to undergo a full test and full fee paid. You will get an inspection record sheet/notification of refusal listing the faults, and a retest application form. We charge reduced fees for retest applications if we receive them within 21 days of the full test.

Loss of certificate

If you lose your certificate, apply for a duplicate. Use this form but only complete sections 1, 2, 5, 6 and 8. Send your application and fee to any test centre. Alternatively, you can apply via our telephone booking on 0845 247 2471.

Change of ownership

If the vehicle is re-registered because of a change in registration or ownership, your certificate remains valid.

If I do not have a vehicle test certificate, can I use the vehicle?

No - unless it is being driven to or from the test centre.

APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

Can I appeal against the examiner's decision?

Yes. You can appeal within 14 days of the decision. You can get appeal forms from test centre. You must pay another fee.

What happens if I appeal?

The vehicle will be re-examined and you will be asked about repairs etc, since the test. You must produce the inspection record sheet/notification of refusal and registration book. If the examiner allows the appeal, we will issue a test certificate. If there are good reasons for the appeal, we may refund all or part of the fee.

How do I complain?

If you are not satisfied with the service you receive, you can use our complaints procedure. Please ask at the test centre for details. If you are unhappy about any aspect of our service, please try to resolve it before you leave the test centre.

VEHICLES THAT DO NOT NEED VEHICLE TEST CERTIFICATE

- 1 Goods vehicles.
- 2 Public service vehicles.
- 3 Locomotives or motor tractors, ie vehicles that are not constructed to carry a load.
- 4 Pedestrian-controlled vehicles.
- 5 Invalid carriages.
- 6 Vehicles that have a current test certificate issued in GB.
- 7 Vehicles exempt from excise duty because they are used on public roads only to get from the owner's land to other land, travelling not more than 6 miles a week.
- 8 Agricultural tractors.
- 9 Vehicles temporarily in NI.
- 10 A vehicle being tested under trade plates.
- 11 Vehicles on Rathlin Island.

Testable items

- Vin/no. plates
- Lights
- Direction indicators
- Reflectors
- Windscreen
- Wipers/washers
- Horn
- Brake fluid level
- Electric wiring
- Suspension mountings
- Fuel system
- Speedometer
- Mirrors
- Steering wheel
- Steering column
- Service brake pedal
- Service brake pedal operation
- Handbrake lever
- Seats and seatbelts
- Body work and flooring
- Doors and locks
- Wheels and spokes
- ABS
- Steering linkage/gear
- Suspension units (condition and attachment)
- Shock absorbers
- Oil leaks
- Engine/transmission mountings
- Transmission
- Exhaust
- Mech. brake components
- Brake wheel units
- Fuel system and components
- Brake system and components
- Underbody/chassis condition
- Tyres
- Hubs/bearings
- Lights/headlight alignment
- Service brake test
- Handbrake test
- Exhaust emission
- Road test (if necessary)