

Driving for Work - Vehicle Checks

Vehicles need to be fully serviced and maintained by a competent mechanic. However carrying out daily and weekly checks on your vehicle can help prevent a serious accident occurring and save you money at the same time.

For example a quick visual inspection of your tyres could identify cracks or poor threading which could lead to a blow-out or loss of control. The following checks can be carried out weekly to help reduce the risk of harm or damage to your vehicle.

Tyre Checks

- ✓ Are the tyres correctly inflated?
- ✓ Is the threading on the tyre at or above 3mm?
- ✓ Wheel nuts are secure?
- ✓ Are the tyres free from bulges, cracks or tears?



Windows

- ✓ Are the windows clean?
- ✓ Are the windows free from cracks?
- ✓ Do you have an unobstructed view out your windows?
- ✓ Are the wipers and windscreen washer working correctly?

Lights/ indicators

- ✓ Are the lights and indicators in good working order?
- ✓ Are the light and indicator fitting undamaged?
- ✓ Are the light and indicators fitting kept clean?

Mirrors

- ✓ Are the mirrors positioned correctly to maximise your view?
- ✓ Are the mirrors maintained in good working order?
- ✓ Are the mirrors kept clean?

General

- ✓ The vehicle is not leaking any fluids from under the engine
- ✓ There is no excessive smoke visible while driving
- ✓ There is no excessive noise audible while driving
- ✓ The oil level is appropriate?
- ✓ The water level is appropriate?
- ✓ The windscreen washer is kept topped up?
- ✓ Seatbelts are maintained in good working order?
- ✓ Interior of the vehicle is kept clean and tidy?

*the above list is non-exhaustive

The legal limit for tyre thread depth is 1.6mm however it is recommended to replace your tyres once they reach 3mm. Below this level the braking efficiency of the tyre is significantly reduced and it is far more dangerous in wet or icy conditions.

Driver Fatigue

Driver fatigue is one of the most dangerous hazards contributing to road accidents. These accidents often result in a fatality due to the speed involved and the fact that drivers are not aware of obstacles that need to be avoided.

You can minimise the risk by:

- Planning your journey
- Allow adequate time for breaks
- Stop in a safe place when you **start** to feel tired
- Drink a caffeine drink or two (coffee, energy drink)
- Allow 20 minutes for the caffeine to take effect
- When tired, take a short nap of no more than 15-20 minutes

People who drive at night are particularly at risk as you are working when your body wants to be asleep. If you drive at night, ensure that you get adequate sleep. You should try to:

- Avoid tea, coffee or stimulant drinks prior to settling down for sleep
- Tell your family, house-mates, etc. how important it is for you to get adequate sleep
- Unplug your house phone
- Turn off your mobile phone
- Make your bedroom a dark, calm place where you can relax easily