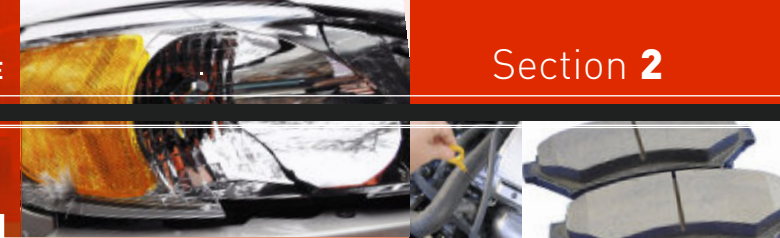


Are you ready to drive?



VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Q1: Do you carry out the following maintenance checks on your vehicle whenever setting out on long journeys?

Worrying numbers of drivers don't make essential and basic maintenance checks before setting off on long journeys. Women are less likely than men to make these checks, and young drivers (under 25) are far less likely than older drivers (age 25+). Nearly three in 10 (28%) young drivers make no vehicle checks at all before a long journey, compared with one in 11 (9%) older drivers.

- 10% make no checks (6% of men and 13% of women; 9% of older drivers and 28% of young drivers)
- 59% check lights and indicators are working properly (63% of men and 56% of women; 61% of older drivers and 20% of young drivers)
- 61% check tyres have legal tread depth, are the right pressure and in good condition (65% of men and 57% of women; 62% of older drivers and 25% of young drivers)
- 68% check windows and mirrors are clean and clear (69% of men and 68% of women; 70% of older drivers and 30% of young drivers said yes)
- 74% check oil and water levels are correct (79% of men and 71% of women; 76% of older drivers and 43% of young drivers)
- 74% check windscreen wipers and washers are working and topped up (77% of men and 72% of women; 75% of older drivers and 40% of young drivers)
- 58% check brakes are working (62% of men and 55% of women; 59% of older drivers and 30% of young drivers)

Figure 1: Do men and women carry out these maintenance checks before a long journey?

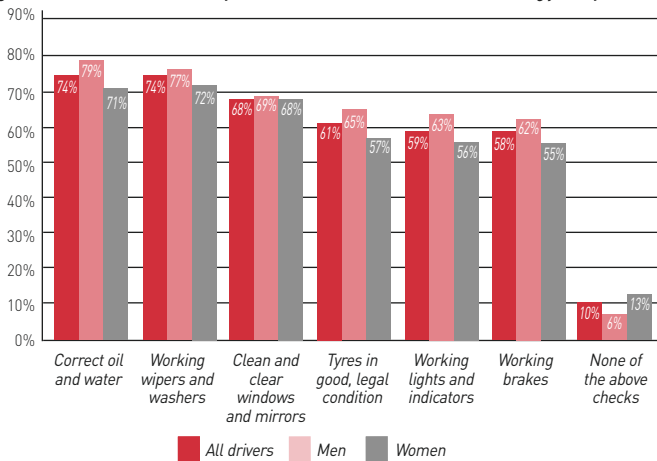
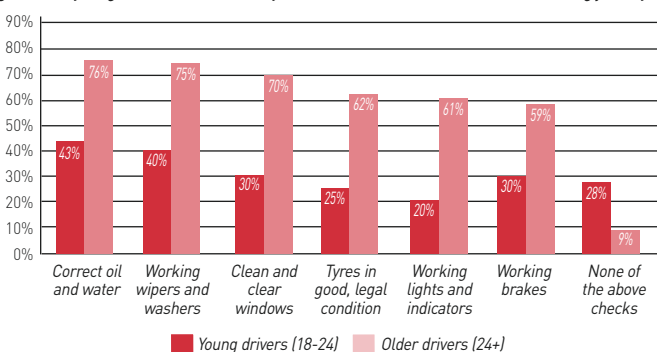


Figure 2: Do young and older drivers carry out these maintenance checks before a long journey?



LOST LIVES

Selena Muscroft, 20

Selena Muscroft died in a crash in Rotherham on 30 December 2007. Selena and her two-year-old daughter, Leila, accepted a lift from their lodger, who was driving a car with bald tyres. Selena died from a broken neck and internal bleeding. Leila spent six days in hospital recovering from her injuries and now faces growing up without her mother. The driver was convicted of causing death by dangerous driving and jailed for two and a half years.

Q2: Are you confident you know how to check the following for safety on your vehicle?

Having your brakes and tyres in good order is essential for safety. Yet nearly three in 10 (28%) don't know how to check brakes are working, while one in five (20%) don't know how to check tyres.

- 72% know how to check their brakes are working properly
- 80% know how to check their tyres have legal tread depth, the right pressure and are in good condition
- 85% know how to check their vehicle's oil and water levels are correct

ADVICE FOR DRIVERS: VEHICLE MAINTENANCE

Making sure your vehicle is in good working order before you set off needn't take long. There are a few simple checks you can do yourself to make sure your vehicle is as safe as it can be.

Check:

- tyres have a tread depth of at least 3mm (any less is risky in the wet), are free from cracks, buckles or bulges, and are at the right pressure (using a gauge to check);
- all lights and indicators are working properly by having someone stand outside the vehicle as you switch them on and off;
- windscreen wipers and washers are working by testing them while the car is stationary, and topping up the windscreen washer if needed;
- oil and water levels are correct;
- windows and mirrors are clean and clear, and the latter positioned properly;
- brakes are working, by applying them gently while driving very slowly in a safe, flat place with no one else around. If they feel different to how they usually feel – such as taking longer to 'bite' or are harder to push down or are making squeaking or grinding noises – you need to get them checked with a mechanic immediately.

If you notice any problems, get them fixed straight away, and consult a garage if you have concerns.

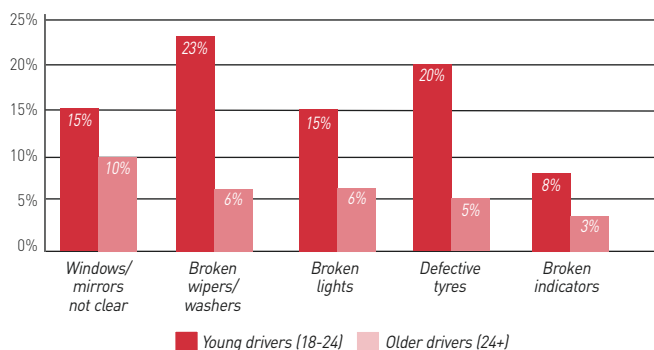
Are you ready to drive?

Q3: Within the past 12 months, have you driven, even once, when you knew any of the following was wrong with your vehicle?

Nearly a quarter of all drivers (24%) admitted driving with at least one of the potentially dangerous defects listed within the past 12 months. Young drivers (under 25) are more than twice as likely to risk driving with a defective vehicle. More than half (52%) of young drivers admit doing this in the past year, compared to less than a quarter (23%) of older drivers.

- 10% have driven knowing their windows and mirrors were not clear or clean (15% of young drivers and 10% of older drivers)
- 6% have driven knowing their windscreen wipers and washers were not working and topped up (23% of young drivers and 6% of older drivers)
- 6% have driven knowing they had one or more broken lights and it was dark (15% of young drivers and 6% of older drivers)
- 5% have driven knowing their tyres were defective, with worn tread, the wrong pressure, or cracks or bulges (20% of young drivers and 5% of older drivers)
- 3% have driven knowing they had a broken indicator (8% of young drivers and 3% of older drivers)

Figure 3: Have you driven with a defective vehicle?



THE FACTS: VEHICLE SAFETY

In 2011, 55 people were killed and 450 seriously injured in crashes on British roads where vehicle defects were reported by police at the scene as contributory factors in causing the crash.¹

30.3% of cars, vans and minibuses, 12.8% of motorcycles, 10.6% of buses and coaches, and 14.8% of trucks failed their annual MOT or equivalent in Britain in 2010-11. Defective lights were the most common reason for motorcycle, car and van failure, while buses, coaches and trucks were most likely to fail due to defective brakes.²

End notes

1. Reported Road Casualties Great Britain 2011, Department for Transport, 2012
 2. VOSA Effectiveness Report 2010-11, VOSA 2012

