

# Pass the MOT Test: How to Check and Prepare Your Car for the Annual MOT Test | RAC



Getting your car through its MOT test can be a daunting task for many drivers. Although it's an annual requirement, the MOT test can cause anxiety and stress,

as there's always the possibility of your car failing the test and incurring expensive repairs.

However, with the right preparation and knowledge, you can increase your chances of passing the MOT test without any issues. In this guide, we will provide you with essential tips and advice on how to check and prepare your car for the annual MOT test.



## Pass the MoT test! - How to check & prepare your car for the annual MoT test (RAC Handbook)

by Mark Paxton(Kindle Edition)

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 4878 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 127 pages

Lending : Enabled



## Understanding the MOT Test

Before we delve into the preparation process, it's important to understand what the MOT test entails. The MOT test is an annual examination that assesses the safety, roadworthiness, and environmental impact of vehicles over three years old in the United Kingdom. The test includes checks on various aspects of your car, ranging from the brakes and suspension to the exhaust emissions.

It's worth noting that the MOT test is carried out by authorized testing centers, such as garages, and is a legal requirement. Failing to have a valid MOT

certificate can result in a fine and invalidation of your car insurance policy.

## **Check Your Paperwork**

Prior to booking your MOT test, it's crucial to ensure that all your paperwork is in order. This includes checking the expiration date of your current MOT certificate, as well as your car's insurance and road tax expiry dates. It's important to note that booking an MOT test ahead of time is advisable, as it allows you enough time to address any potential issues before the test.

## **Check the Lights and Indicators**

One of the most common reasons for MOT test failures is faulty or non-functional lights. Therefore, it's essential to check all the lights and indicators on your car before the test. Make sure you check the headlights, rear lights, brake lights, hazard lights, and indicators. Replace any blown bulbs, as this can help avoid a potential failure during the test.

## **Inspect the Brakes**

The braking system is a critical component of your car's safety. Ensure that the brake pads and discs are in good condition and not excessively worn down. Look out for any signs of brake fluid leakage. If you notice any issues with the brakes, it's advisable to have them inspected and repaired by a professional mechanic before the MOT test.

## **Check the Suspension and Steering**

A worn-out suspension or faulty steering can result in an MOT test failure. Visually inspect the suspension components and look for signs of excessive wear or leakage. Additionally, check the power steering fluid level and ensure that there are no unusual noises when turning the steering wheel. If you notice any problems, seek professional assistance to rectify them.

## **Ensure Tire Safety**

Proper tire maintenance is crucial for your car's safety and passing the MOT test. Check the tread depth of your tires, ensuring it meets the legal requirements of at least 1.6mm across the central three-quarters of the tire. Look out for any signs of cuts, bulges or uneven wear. Remember to also check the tire pressure and inflate them to the recommended levels.

## **Inspect the Exhaust System**

A leaky or damaged exhaust system can cause your car to fail the MOT test. Inspect the exhaust system for any obvious signs of damage or corrosion. Check if all the mounting brackets, hangers, and clamps are secure. Additionally, start your car and listen for any abnormal noises or excessive smoke emissions. If you find any issues, take your car to a specialist to get it fixed.

## **Additional Checks**

In addition to the main components mentioned above, there are several other areas you should inspect before the MOT test:

- **Windscreen:** Check for any cracks or chips that could obstruct the driver's view.
- **Wipers and Washer Fluid:** Ensure that your wipers are in good condition and that the washer fluid is topped up.
- **Seatbelts:** Test all seatbelts for proper functionality, ensuring they lock and release smoothly.
- **Horn:** Check if your horn works well and is audible.
- **Mirrors:** Ensure all mirrors are intact and adjustable.

## **Booking the MOT Test**

Once you have thoroughly checked your car and resolved any outstanding issues, it's time to book your MOT test. Look for a reputable garage or testing center that has a good reputation for conducting MOT tests. Consider reading reviews and seeking recommendations from friends or family members to ensure you choose a reliable facility.

## **The MOT Test Day**

On the day of the test, make sure you arrive at the testing center well before your appointment time. Bring along all the necessary paperwork, including your current MOT certificate, insurance documents, and V5C (logbook). It's essential to be prepared and organized to avoid any unnecessary delays or complications.

During the MOT test, you will not be allowed to remain with your car. Therefore, ensure that you have made alternative arrangements for transportation while your car is being tested. The test typically takes about 45 minutes to an hour.

## **Dealing with a Failed MOT Test**

If your car fails the MOT test, don't panic. The testing center will provide you with a VT30 certificate, listing the reasons for failure. Take note of the mentioned faults and seek professional assistance to carry out the necessary repairs. Once the repairs are completed, you can book a retest within ten working days, usually at a reduced fee.

Remember, maintaining regular maintenance and servicing of your car throughout the year can significantly reduce the chances of failing the MOT test.

## **MOT Test Checklist**

To recap, here's a checklist to help ensure your car is prepared for the MOT test:

- Check paperwork - Ensure all relevant documents are up to date.
- Inspect lights and indicators - Replace any blown bulbs.
- Check brakes, suspension, and steering - Address any issues promptly.
- Ensure tire safety - Check tread depth, pressure, and overall condition.
- Inspect the exhaust system - Look for leaks or damages.
- Carry out additional checks - Windscreen, wipers, seatbelts, horn, and mirrors.

With these tips and proper preparation, you can confidently take your car for its annual MOT test, increasing your chances of passing without any major issues. Remember, prevention is better than cure, so regular maintenance and addressing any faults promptly will save you time, money, and stress in the long run.



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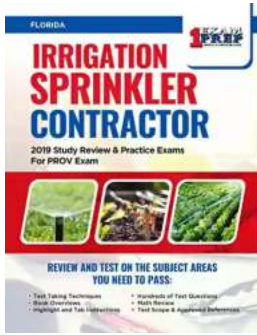
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