

NEWS from the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs

Changes to MoT tests, from 20th March 2013

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There are some changes due to take effect to the MoT test **for all classes of vehicles** from 20th March 2013. I will leave out references to items that obviously don't relate to vehicles constructed in the mid-1980s or earlier, like electronic stability control, supplementary restraint systems and will simply suggest that those wanting to see how the changes might affect current vehicle may wish to search online for 2010/48/EU (the directive number) and view detailed information themselves.

I recommend that all vehicle owners with reasonable technical knowledge download a copy of the **current MOT manual** for their type of vehicle. To do this, navigate to the link below and a variety of options will be listed here. See:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/vosa/publications/manualsandguides/vehicletestingmanualsandguides.htm>

For older cars and motorbikes, click "Mot Inspection Manuals and Guides" about halfway down. For newer vehicles there are manuals for Individual/Single Vehicle Approval. For preserved buses, you have the choice of the 2013 Consolidated PSV Inspection Manual for class 6 vehicles, or the manual for class 5, which is contained within the same document as for cars.

As an aside, these documents download (and open) fine on a smartphone or a tablet, and some people may find it useful to keep a copy saved on their mobile device, for easy reference at the roadside or in the workshop. Anyone without internet access is advised to visit either a friend or relative, or their local library.

Number of reasons for MoT failure

In each of these documents, there are a number of reasons for failure that are listed in blue type. These items are advisory points (until 19th March 2013) but by the time you receive this newsletter they will be fail items. Note that files with 'March update' in their title have just gone live (as this article was being written) these however do not have the blue type, and hence do not easily show the changes. The list of items that follow is in the (approximate) order of the manuals.

Registration plates front and rear are now a requirement (hitherto, it was possible to test a vehicle just on its chassis number) and must conform to the regulations in force when the vehicle was new.

Lamps: we have a new reason for failure being 'the front and rear position lamps do not illuminate with a single operation of the switch' (side lights and tail lights) which for commercial vehicles fitted with them, also needs to switch on the position lights (which are the front and rear upper marker lights of the 1980s onwards).

Main beam "tell-tale": on a vehicle manufactured after April 1986, the main beam 'tell-tale' is required to work, that is to say the blue indication on the dashboard must work.

Battery fixings secure: there is a new section entitled 'Electrical Wiring and Battery'. The reasons for failure here seem common-sense. Included here is battery security and whether the battery is leaking.

Steering lock - there is a check on the steering lock (on vehicles where this was fitted as original equipment), both that it doesn't deploy with the engine running and that it does deploy with the key out (the manual states that where it isn't clear whether one was fitted as OE, the benefit of the doubt should be given. The presence of steering lock stops (where originally fitted as standard) is verified (previously it was just the security and correct adjustment of those fitted), as is power steering fluid level.

Brake fluid warning light becomes a testable item where fitted. This may be combined with other things such as worn pads or parking brake applied.

Exhaust brakes (HGV/PSV) inoperative or removed are reasons for failure if fitted as a mandatory fitment (if not, removal may be acceptable if the notifiable alteration procedure is followed).

Speedometer: the speedometer section now applies to all vehicles and not just class 5 (in the detail, we are reminded that this is 'all vehicles first used on or after 1st October 1937').

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Engine mountings (including gearbox mounts where they provide essential support for the engine) are a reason for failure.

Steps and stairs (on class 5 vehicles) require more thorough checking.

Driver's seat adjustment - the adjustment of the driver's seat is also checked (specifically, that it can adjust, where adjustments are so provided).

Catalytic converter missing where one was fitted as standard (I wasn't going to include this item, until I saw on Wikipedia that the automobile cat was actually invented in 1973, and initially fitted to American cars of the mid 1970s)

Brake requirements: in July 2013, some brake requirements will change (a higher efficiency requirement for cars July 2010 onwards, as well as an amended imbalance standard for cars of all ages).

By the end of 2013, a further small change is that the mileage (currently not included on HGV/PSV certificates) will be included along with the country of vehicle registration.

In summary, a vehicle doesn't need to be fitted with anything that wasn't original equipment when it was new, however more components that were originally fitted to a car will be checked. In reality this shouldn't cause any burden to the owner of a well-maintained vehicle. There is a large section (which I have omitted from the above) about ABS, EBS etc and one would expect that the owners of classic vehicles fitted with it (which in Europe, started with the Mark III Granada of 1985, badged Scorpio on the continent) to ensure this system is in full working order.

We ask all member clubs to reinforce that vehicles must be kept in a good standard of repair whenever they venture out onto the road. Vehicles that benefit from the pre-1960 MoT exemption still need to comply with all parts of the MoT manual (subject to date exemptions etc.) and if deficiencies are identified at the road side (whether in a car or a HGV) the vehicle driver and owner could be subject to VOSA or police sanction.