

Motorists' Breakdown & Emergency Guide

from GEM Motoring Assist



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GEM
MOTERING ASSIST
ESTABLISHED 1932

Prevention...

We all know that prevention is better than cure so here's some advice on how to keep your vehicle on the road in top condition...



Reduce the risk

Get to know your vehicle and ensure that it is regularly serviced. Watch out for changes to the feel of the car or strange noises or smells and investigate. Don't ignore warning lights. Carry out regular checks as follows:



Weekly checks

- Tyres - condition & pressure
- Coolant system - fluid level
- Screenwash level & adjust nozzles
- Fuel - refill when below half full
- Oil level
- Windscreen & wipers
- Lights - clean & check
- Mirrors - clean & check



Additional monthly checks & before a long journey

- Tyres - check tread for depth (min. 1.6mm); look for uneven wear or poor condition



Be prepared

Plan your journey ahead. Get clear directions. Take items to help you cope with a breakdown:

- Satellite navigation system
- Warm waterproof clothing
- Note pad & pencil
- Car Manufacturer's Handbook
- First Aid Kit
- Spare bulbs & fuses
- Up to date road map
- Breakdown membership details
- Torch
- Hi-Visibility jacket / tabard
- Warning triangle & tow rope
- Fully charged mobile phone



Additional items to take in winter

- Ice scraper / de-icer
- Wellington boots
- Shovel
- Blanket

What to do if you break down on a road...



Stay Safe!

- Get your vehicle off the road if possible.
- Ensure your passengers are safe and that animals are kept under control.
- Wear a high-visibility jacket or vest to help other road users see you.
- Don't stand (or let anybody else stand) between your vehicle and oncoming traffic.
- It is always best to wait away from your car when you've broken down but if you feel at risk from another person then remain in your car. Lock the doors and put your seatbelt on. Once you feel that the danger has passed leave your car and wait at the roadside, preferably behind a barrier if there is one.



Warn other road users by...

- Using your hazard warning lights and keeping your sidelights on if it's dark or visibility is poor.
- Placing a warning triangle on the road at least 45 metres (approximately 10 car lengths) behind your vehicle. Always take care when placing or retrieving them and **never** use them on motorways.
- Not standing where you will prevent other road users seeing your lights at night or in poor visibility.



Call for help...

- If you have broken down in a location that may endanger you or others contact the Police by dialling 999 and explain the situation.
- Contact your breakdown recovery operator. Give clear instructions on your location: road number, direction of travel and any specific local landmarks to help them locate you.
- Give them your vehicle details (make, model and registration number) together with the number of people it was carrying. An indication of what is wrong with the vehicle will also help.
- When help arrives ask for proof of identity.



What to do if you break down on the motorway...

If something goes wrong with your vehicle on the motorway, try to leave at the nearest exit or pull into a service area.



If this isn't possible:

- Pull on to the hard shoulder, stopping as far to the left as possible. Turn your wheels to the left.
- Use your hazard warning lights and keep your sidelights on if it's dark or visibility is poor.
- Try to stop near an emergency telephone (every mile on the hard shoulder).
- Leave the vehicle by the left-hand doors and encourage passengers to do the same.
- Wear a high-visibility jacket or vest to help other road users see you.
- DO NOT cross the carriageway.
- Keep passengers well away from the carriageway, standing behind the crash barrier.
- Any animals must be left in the vehicle unless there is an emergency where they should be kept under proper control behind the crash barrier, well away from the carriageway.
- Do not attempt even simple repairs.



Call for help...

- Follow the arrows on the marker posts along the hard shoulder (every 100 metres) to the nearest emergency telephone. Calls are free and are connected directly to the relevant highway authority Regional Traffic Control Centre.
- If you use a mobile telephone make sure you give the marker post number to help your breakdown recovery operator and police to locate you.
- If you feel vulnerable or at risk from another person return to your car by the left hand doors, lock the doors and put your seatbelt on. Once you feel that the danger has passed leave your car and wait behind the crash barrier as far back from the carriageway as possible.
- If you have a disability or medical condition that prevents you from leaving the car, leave your seatbelt on, use your hazard lights and contact the police via 999.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU BREAK DOWN IN A LIVE LANE?

IF YOU BREAK DOWN IN A LIVE LANE, DO NOT ATTEMPT TO LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE. USE YOUR HAZARD LIGHTS, KEEP YOUR SEATBELT ON AND CALL THE POLICE IMMEDIATELY VIA 999 EXPLAINING THAT YOU ARE ON THE MOTORWAY.

What to do if you breakdown on a Smart motorway...

Smart motorways use technology to keep the traffic flowing and may include sections where there is no hard shoulder.



In addition to our motorway advice, if you find yourself broken down on a Smart motorway then do the following:

- Pull into an Emergency Refuge Area (ERA) that are located at regular intervals (they can be identified by a blue sign containing an orange SOS telephone symbol).
- Use your hazard warning lights and leave your sidelights on if it is dark or visibility is poor.
- Leave the vehicle by the left-hand doors and encourage passengers to do the same.
- Keep passengers well away from the carriageway, standing behind the crash barrier.
- Wear a high-visibility jacket or vest to help other road users see you.
- You **MUST** use the emergency telephone within the ERA to speak to the Regional Traffic Control Centre. They will send someone to assist you.
- If you cannot pull into an ERA then try to pull as close to the nearside boundary/verge as possible. Consider if it is safe to leave your vehicle by the left-hand doors and wait behind the crash barrier. **DO NOT** put yourself at risk. If you do not feel safe then follow the advice for a live lane breakdown and call 999.
- Once the Regional Traffic Control Centre is aware of your situation they will be able to close lanes and will send help in the form of the police or traffic officers.



Re-joining the carriageway...

- When re-joining the carriageway build up speed on the hard shoulder and look for a suitable gap in the traffic.
- When leaving an Emergency Refuge Area (ERA) follow the instructions you are given from the Regional Traffic Control Centre. They may close the nearside lane temporarily to allow you to exit and send the police or traffic officer to assist you.

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Crashes - What to do if you are involved in or come across a collision...



Remain calm!

- Stop – Apply the handbrake and switch off the engine.
- Use your hazard warning lights to warn other traffic.
- Wear a high-visibility jacket or vest to help other road users see you.
- Ask the other drivers involved to switch off their engines and not to smoke.
- Assess the scene and seriousness of the collision – determine how many vehicles and people may be involved.
- Establish if anyone is injured, trapped or if there is a danger of fire.
- Move uninjured people to a place of safety, considering hazards such as leaking fuel or chemicals and broken glass.



Call for help...

- Dial 999 for the Emergency Services. Give full details of where you are, the number of vehicles involved, any casualties and if anybody is trapped.
- On the motorway use the emergency telephones as these will allow the emergency services to locate you more easily. If you do use a mobile telephone make sure you have noted your location from the marker posts on the hard shoulder.



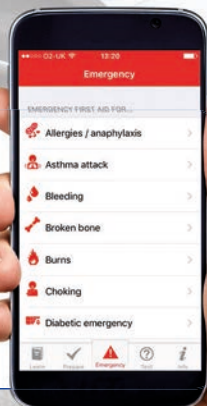
Give first aid... (See opposite for advice)

- Remain calm and reassure the casualties.
- Do not remove a motorcyclist's helmet unless it is essential to do so.
- Do not sit casualties in your car, even if they appear okay. They may have a spinal injury which could result in your car becoming a convertible!
- Do not allow anyone to smoke or offer food or drink to the casualties as this may hamper medical treatment.



BritishRedCross

The first aid information opposite is provided by the British Red Cross. Feel confident that you could help in a first aid emergency by learning simple skills via the free British Red Cross First Aid app, or online at redcross.org.uk/firstaid.
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Exchange information...

If you are involved in a collision which causes damage or injury to any other person, vehicle, animal or property (including street furniture such as road signs or lampposts) you **MUST**:

- Stop.
- Give your own and the vehicle owner's name and address (if different), together with the vehicle's registration number to anyone having reasonable grounds for requiring them.
- If you do not give your name and address at the time of the collision, report it to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any case within 24 hours.

If a person is injured you **must** produce your insurance certificate to anyone having reasonable grounds for seeing it. If you do not produce your insurance certificate at the time of the collision to a police officer or to anyone having reasonable grounds to request it, you **MUST**:

- Produce your insurance certificate for the police within seven days.



And finally...

- Make sure you get the name and warrant number of the Police Officers who attend, together with their contact details and incident reference number.
- Get details of any witnesses with their telephone numbers/e-mail addresses.
- Take photographs of the scene/damage if it is appropriate and safe to do so.
- Contact your insurance company as soon as practicable to ensure that you gain the maximum assistance and follow the correct procedures.





The British Red Cross believes all motorists and road users should learn first aid. Simple first aid could help to reduce the number of people who die from injury before reaching hospital. Remember - simple actions save lives, and if you do need to phone 999 the call handler will be there to give you guidance while the ambulance is on the way.

Helping someone who is unresponsive and breathing

If a person does not respond when you shake their shoulders and speak to them, they are unresponsive.

1. Check breathing by tilting their head backwards and looking and feeling for breaths.
2. Move them onto their side and tilt their head back to help keep their airway open.
3. As soon as possible, call 999 or get someone else to do it.



Helping someone who is unresponsive and not breathing

Someone who is unresponsive and not breathing won't be moving or responding to you. Their heart won't be working properly so they need your help quickly.

1. Check breathing by tilting their head backwards and looking and feeling for breaths.
2. Call 999 as soon as possible, or get someone else to do it.
3. Push firmly downwards in the middle of the chest and then release.
4. Push at a regular rate to keep blood pumping around the body until help arrives.



Helping someone with a broken bone

Someone could easily have a broken bone as a result of a road traffic accident, whether they are inside a vehicle or a pedestrian who has been hit by a vehicle.

1. Encourage the person to support the injury with their hand, or use items of clothing to prevent unnecessary movement.
2. As soon as possible, call 999 or get someone else to do it.
3. Continue supporting the injury until help arrives.



Helping someone who is bleeding heavily

Blood loss can be serious and should be treated as quickly as possible.

1. Put pressure on the wound with whatever is available (for example, items of clothing) to stop or slow down the flow of blood.
2. Call 999 as soon as possible, or get someone else to do it.
3. Keep pressure on the wound until help arrives.



Notes

Use this space for notes in the event of an accident:

With award winning breakdown cover from GEM, help is only a phone call away...

- Fully comprehensive UK cover
- Free GEM App for iPhone and Android
- Nationwide cover 24/7, 365 days a year
- Competitive premiums
- Personal cover

www.motoringassist.com 0345 3700 940

About GEM Motoring Assist

GEM is a road safety organisation, established in 1932. Our aim is to improve safety for all road users through the promotion and initiation of accident prevention measures in the UK, and to provide motoring and safety information to our members.

Follow us on social media:



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GEM_RoadSafety

Watch our videos for motoring tips and road safety advice:



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