

35. Weekly vehicle checks

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The best way to learn about vehicle checks listed on this page is to do them.

Carry out the following checks with help from a friend or relative, using their car, or with your driving instructor. If you have a car of your own, use that. Look at the car's handbook to find out about each check and then make the checks while being supervised. The checks should be repeated every week.

Your driving test examiner will not ask you to check the tyre pressures, oil level etc. However, you may be asked to explain how these checks are made. Always remember the safety aspects! Never make under-bonnet checks when the engine is running; the moving parts can trap clothing and jewellery and cause serious injury. Also be aware that some engine parts get dangerously hot.

Check the items below and tick them off - discuss the vehicle checks with your instructor:

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| <input type="radio"/> Engine oil level | Too much or too little oil can lead to engine damage that may be expensive to repair. |
| <input type="radio"/> Engine coolant level | If there is a leak, or if the level is low, the car can overheat and break down - a common but easily avoidable problem. |
| <input type="radio"/> Brake and clutch fluid | This sounds complicated but it is simply a matter of looking to see how full the relevant reservoir is. If these levels are low you should consult a mechanic. |
| <input type="radio"/> Screen wash level and wiper blade condition | If you check this weekly you should never run out. Dirty windscreens have led to several serious accidents - some fatal. They could have been avoided by this two-minute check. |
| <input type="radio"/> Battery electrolyte level | These days most car batteries are maintenance free; if this is the case there are no checks to make. Most calls to breakdown companies are because of flat batteries. A well-maintained battery will last longer and will always start your car. |
| <input type="radio"/> Tyres | You should also make a detailed inspection of your tyres once a week. This involves checking the tyre pressure, looking for damage on the inside edges (be careful of your hands when doing this in case there is glass or other debris embedded in the tyre) and |



Lesson Notes: