The Motor Ombudsman urges drivers to book MoT tests in good time

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‘Book your car’s MoT test in advance’ is the message from The Motor Ombudsman this summer…

They tell us:

(Photograph and all words from The Motor Ombudsman).

• The Motor Ombudsman is urging motorists not to leave booking their vehicle's MOT until the last minute before hitting the road for their summer vacation

• Motorists are able to arrange the legally-required annual test of vehicle safety and roadworthiness, up to a month (minus a day) before it becomes void

• Over 7,500 vehicle repairers across the UK are accredited to The Motor Ombudsman's comprehensive Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair, and are listed on the body's online Garage Finder

London, 01 August 2024 As schools close, and families head off on their summer holidays, The Motor Ombudsman is encouraging owners of vehicles aged three years and over in England, Scotland and Wales*, to book the legally-required annual MOT in advance if it is set to expire in the coming weeks, and not to leave it until the last minute. Motorists are able to arrange the annual test of vehicle safety and roadworthiness up to a month (minus a day) before it becomes void, but keep the same renewal date.

Booking an MOT in advance carries a number of key benefits for consumers, namely that it:

• Reduces the risk of driving illegally without a valid MOT certificate, which can incur a £1,000 fine, points on their driving licence, and invalidate their insurance in the event of an accident;

• Helps avoid a last-minute rush, potential delays in their cars being tested, and may offer more availability at MOT stations that fits better with their personal and work commitments; and

• Can give the opportunity to address any necessary repairs identified during the MOT, ensuring a vehicle is safe to drive, and reducing time off the road. Furthermore, for motorists looking to take their car in for an MOT, a service, or for repairs, there are over 7,500 independent garages and franchise dealer workshops across the UK, that are accredited to The Motor Ombudsman's Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI)-approved Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair, and are listed on the body's intuitive online Garage Finder (TheMotorOmbudsman.org/Garage-Finder).Rebecca Pullan, Managing Director at The Motor Ombudsman-accredited Carmaster Garage in Harrogate, said: "An MOT is a legal obligation – an annual check that ensures your vehicle meets the required road safety and environmental standards. Contrary to the misconception of some consumers, there is no grace period once the MOT certificate becomes void. This means we always advise securing an appointment in advance, to ensure that the test is done well ahead of the deadline."Rebecca added: "As a general rule, it is good practice to bring your car to a garage for routine checks at least twice a year. Many drivers like to schedule their MOT and annual service for the same time, as they're just making one trip to the garage. However, 'uncoupling' these visits means vehicle owners are much more likely to catch small issues before they become serious problems. This can therefore help avoid incurring unwanted expense in the long run."

Bill Fennell, Chief Ombudsman and Managing Director of The Motor Ombudsman, explained: “As the summer holiday period gets underway, and with millions of drivers set to take to the nation’s roads, we are urging consumers who own cars of three or more years age to arrange the annual assessment as soon as possible in advance of their trip. This gives a better chance of securing a booking at their preferred business, whilst it also helps spread the workload for MOT stations, particularly in locations across the country where garages may be busy.”

Bill added: “There are handy free-of-charge MOT reminder services available that can send a text or an e-mail direct to your smartphone to give you advance notice of a certificate expiring. It is therefore worth signing up to keep this important date in the vehicle ownership calendar front of mind, and to avoid a last- minute scramble to secure a slot on the ramp.”

To view the businesses that are accredited to The Motor Ombudsman’s Motor Industry Code of Practice for Service and Repair, visit www.TheMotorOmbudsman.org/Garage-Finder