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Jul 15, 2019 00:01 BST

Busiest summer getaway since 2014 expected with over 13m leisure journeys planned this weekend

Drivers are expected to take 13.4m separate summer getaway trips between this Friday and the end of the weekend, the highest number in five years and 4m more than in 2018, according to a study by the [RAC](#) and [INRIX](#).*

RAC research suggests 'Frantic Friday' at the end of this week, the day many school terms end, will see some 5.3m separate getaways by car taking place which, when added to the normal daily traffic seen on a Friday, could mean it's the worst day for congestion. But Saturday also looks busy with 5m leisure trips planned, followed by a further 3.4m on Sunday.

Data from INRIX, the transportation analytics specialists, shows the M1 and M25 will likely witness some of the longest jams of up to 90 minutes and 60 minutes respectively, with some further significant queues also forecast towards the end of this week and into the weekend on the M40, M5 and M6. Any vehicle breakdowns or collisions that happen will only add to the time drivers have to spend getting to their destinations.

With so many families eager to make a break for it from this weekend, and with vehicle breakdowns expected to soar, the RAC and INRIX are backing [Highways England's campaign](#) that calls on every driver to check their vehicle before they set out – doing so can radically cut the chances of them getting stuck at the side of the road.

RAC patrol of the year Ben Aldous said:

“The last thing any family wants is a breakdown spoiling the start of their summer holiday they’ve no doubt been looking forward to for a long time. Traffic jams are pretty much guaranteed from the end of this weekend and while it’s possible to predict where some of these will be, every summer we see extra delays caused by broken-down vehicles blocking lanes, leaving drivers faced with hours of frustration.

“We therefore urge holidaymakers to heed the advice and spend just a few minutes checking the basics like oil, coolant and tyre tread and pressure on their cars before they get packed up. Doing this could make the difference between a smooth and trouble-free journey, and one plagued by the stress and wasted time that comes from being broken-down at the roadside.”

INRIX transportation analyst Trevor Reed said:

“With record-level travellers hitting the road for the start of summer, drivers must be prepared for delays on popular routes,” said . “Although travel times are expected to increase throughout the weekend, Friday afternoon will be the worst time to be on the road as commuters mix with holiday travellers.”

Highways England’s Head of Road Safety Richard Leonard said:

“Breakdowns are still too common. We urge motorists to get behind the ‘check your vehicle day’ initiative this Friday (19 July) and while we remind motorists to check their vehicles on a regular basis, this week is really important because schools are breaking up for summer and people are setting off for holidays and getaways.

“By doing the correct checks, motorists can make sure they reach their destinations safely and keep us all moving.”

Met Office Deputy Chief Meteorologist Mark Sidaway said:

“The weather becomes increasingly unsettled this week with showers gradually becoming more widespread. By Friday much of the country will see some wet and windy weather, which could make driving conditions difficult especially in the South West. While parts of the south and east will stay warm and dry. We are in for a weekend of sunshine and showers, with the heaviest and most frequent showers on Saturday, and Sunday turning drier for many.

The changeable weather looks set to continue into next week.”

Beat the queues: An at-a-glance guide to travel this weekend

Expected worst day for delays over this period is **Friday 19 July**

Date	Leisure trips by car	Major roads likely to be particularly busy between	Major roads likely to be less busy between	Expected longest delays on major roads (breakdowns or collisions can significantly increase journey times across the road network)
Thursday 18 July	3.7m	Between 1.45pm and 6.45pm	After 8pm	M40 south J14 Leamington to J11 Banbury: 72-minute delay from 2.45pm with an average traffic speed of 13mph M5 south J4 Birmingham SW to J8 M50 South Wales: 64-minute delay from 6.15pm with an average traffic speed of 16mph
‘Frantic Friday’ 19 July	5.3m	Between 11am and 6.45pm	After 8pm	M1 south J16 Northampton to J6 North Watford: 89-minute delay from 7.45am with an average traffic speed of 20mph M25 anticlockwise J4 Bromley to J1 Swanscombe/Dartford: 54-minute delay from 2.45pm with an average traffic speed of 7mph

Saturday 20 July	5m	Between 11am and 2pm	Before 9.30am or after 4.30pm	M20 west J7 Maidstone to J3 Gatwick: 19-minute delay from 9.30am with an average traffic speed 18mph A30 west Pathfinder Village to Whiddon Down: 15-minute delay from 2.45pm with an average traffic speed of 24mph
Sunday 21 July	3.1m	Between 1pm and 3pm	Before 11am or after 8pm	M1 north J12 Flitwick to J16 Daventry: 40-minute delay from 1.30pm with an average traffic speed of 24mph M25 anticlockwise J4 Bromley to J1 Swanscombe/Dartford: 35-minute delay from 7pm with an average traffic speed of 13mph
Monday 22 July	2.8m	Between 11.30am and 6pm	After 7pm	M6 north J5 Sutton Coldfield to J10a Telford: 37-minute delay from 12.30pm with an average traffic speed of 17mph M25 anticlockwise J17 Rickmansworth to J12 Basingstoke: 37-minute delay with an average traffic speed of 18mph

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Don't be a breakdown statistic: the RAC's tips to keep us all moving

Drivers should remember their 'FORCES':

Fuel – Don't risk running out of fuel – top up before you set out

Oil – check it's at the right level to reduce the chances of overheating in traffic

Rubber – tyres need to be properly inflated and in good condition to give your car a safe, sure grip on the road

Coolant – this does a vital job in ensuring the engine runs at the right temperature. If it's not between the 'min' and 'max' levels, this could be the sign of a problem so contact a good garage without delay

Electrics – your wipers will help keep your windscreen clear of bugs, and you'll need your lights on during any heavy downpours. The electrics also control your indicators and windows, so check there are no problems

Screenwash – helps keep your windscreen clear

The RAC has also put together a [comprehensive guide on to how to avoid breakdowns experienced in warmer weather](#) to help drivers. The RAC app, free to download for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) devices, also offers up-to-the-minute traffic information and smart route planning guidance.

Notes to Editors

* Getaway trips based on research of drivers' travel plans conducted for the RAC by Ragdoll Research. Base: 1,600 drivers surveyed July 2019. Road-specific information courtesy INRIX

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