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## Two-thirds of drivers say their vehicles have been damaged in car parks

- *Supermarkets named number one place for vehicles to suffer car park damage*
- *Only 9% of motorists found a note on their car from the person responsible*

**The everyday task of parking in a car park has led to two-thirds of motorists suffering damage to their vehicles, research carried out by [RAC Insurance](#) has found\*.**

More than a third (35%) of drivers reported that they had experienced this at least once and an unfortunate 31% said they had had it happen on several occasions. Of those who have been affected multiple times 28% say they have endured it three times and nearly a quarter (23%) have seen it more than five times.

And, the number-one place for a motorist to have their car damaged is a supermarket car park, with half (48%) saying this was where their car picked up a scratch or dent. Public car parks such as those in town centres, at leisure centres and at libraries were named by 16% of drivers, whereas shopping centre car parks were blamed by 11%. Work car parks and privately operated car parks were only mentioned by 8% and 4% of those surveyed respectively.

In the majority of cases the extent of the damage is small – but not to say cheap to fix – with 44% saying their vehicle ended up with a little dent or scratch about the size of a golf ball. But a fifth (21%) reported their damage was the size of a tennis ball.

Luckily, less than one in 10 (8%) have returned to their car to find a large

dent or scratch the size of a football. A quarter (25%) say their car suffered some type of bumper damage ranging from small to large.

While the cause of car park vehicle damage in seven in 10 cases (70%) is thought to be accidental, the chances of someone owning up to it is extremely rare with only 9% of motorists saying they found a note on their car from the person responsible.

This, however, was not a surprise to most as 38% said 'they wouldn't expect anyone to do the right thing and leave a note these days'. Forty-five per cent were 'disappointed' that the perpetrator didn't have the decency to leave a note and 35% described their reaction as 'angry or upset'.

Of the 70% who felt the damage was accidental half (53%) felt it had occurred as a result of another vehicle hitting or scraping theirs while a third (32%) believed it had been caused by a car door being opened onto it. Among those who thought the damage was deliberate, 46% thought a car door was the cause and a third (32%) said it had been 'keyed' with a car key.

RAC Insurance director Mark Godfrey said: "It's frightening to think that so many motorists suffer damage to their vehicles in car parks and that the people responsible hardly ever leave a note. We all use car parks every day so the chances of your car picking up a dent or scratch are pretty high, especially as vehicles have got wider over the years while parking spaces generally haven't.

"The best advice to motorists has to be to pay careful attention to where and how you park. Always try to leave a good gap either side so you limit the chances of someone accidentally opening their car door onto your vehicle's bodywork or scratching it as they walk past. If you are worried the gap is too small it might be best to take a couple of extra minutes and try to find a wider space.

Not many motorists who find their vehicle has picked up car park damage go on to claim, presumably because they are fearful of a combination of things including having to pay their policy excess, losing their no claims bonus or making their premium go up at renewal. You should speak to your insurer if you have suffered damage, even if you don't make a claim.

“When taking out car insurance motorists should think carefully about the excess value they opt for and consider protecting their no claims bonus so they can have a dent or scratch fixed without worrying. If damaged bodywork is left unrepaired owners could lose out in the long run as the re-sale value of the vehicle will be negatively affected.”

### **RAC Insurance top tips for avoiding car park damage**

- Always park centrally in the space within the white lines and as straight as possible
- Get into the habit of reversing into parking spaces – it gives you greater control and it will be easier exiting
- Look for spaces at the end of a row and wider space offering more room
- Fold in your wing mirrors if space is tight
- In supermarket car parks steer clear of the trolley park
- Always open your doors slowly and carefully
- Encourage your children to be ‘car smart’ when they are getting in and out of the vehicle
- Park next to smarter looking cars – they tend to have more careful owners
- Be courteous and considerate to other drivers and hopefully they will treat you in a similar way

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### **Notes to Editors**

\* Research conducted online with 1,464 members of the RAC Opinion Panel from 1-7 August 2016.

## **About the RAC**

With more than eight million members, the RAC is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's roadside assistance, insurance, buying a used car, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK motorists at a national level, including advancing levels of road safety, supporting the needs of young drivers and voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring. The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#) or follow [#racfuelwatch on Twitter](#). This is a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump. RAC Fuel Watch analyses how prices changed through the previous month and compares the most recent prices with those from three, six and 12 months before.

### Key facts:

- RAC patrols fix four out of five vehicles at the roadside and on average within 30 minutes
- RAC vans carry more than 500 parts and tools to get members' vehicles going again
- 92% of members would recommend RAC Rescue to their friends and family

## Contacts



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