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Don't suffer a 'traumatic Tuesday' on the first day back at work with a bad case of the flat battery blues

The RAC is warning motorists to make sure they don't suffer a 'flat' start to the new year by turning the first working day of 2018 into a truly traumatic Tuesday.

The first day back after the festive break is traditionally the biggest breakdown day of the year for the RAC as thousands of cars have been left unused over the holiday period, with older batteries slowly draining to nothing. As a result when their owners go to start them they are greeted with

anything but the sound of the engine firing up.

This year the RAC is expecting to be called out to more than 12,000 breakdowns with more than a quarter of these call-outs likely to be flat batteries.

RAC patrol ambassador Chris Burgess said: “We are gearing up for the busiest breakdown day of the year as millions head back to work after enjoying their extended festive breaks only to find their car battery is not up to the task.

“Luckily, it really doesn’t have to be that way, all motorists need to do is make sure they take their cars for a good run over the weekend or on New Year’s Day. That way they will revive the battery or have time to sort the problem out before heading to work. Experience tells us that it is often families with two or more vehicles that suffer most from flat batteries on the return to work after Christmas and New Year as they tend only to drive one over the festive period.

“The combination of a long break where vehicles aren’t used much and cold damp weather is a recipe for the battery blues. A vehicle’s electrical system has to work a lot harder at this time of year as drivers are more likely to use their lights and heated windows. The starter motor also has to work harder to turn over the engine on these cooler mornings, making a battery failure more likely.”

The RAC believes much of the stress of this coming Tuesday can be avoided if motorists take a little time to prepare for a smooth return to work by giving their battery some tender loving care during the rest of the festive season.

RAC’s top tips for battery care:

- Park your vehicle in a garage whenever possible
- Ensure everything is switched off when you finish your journey including lights, heater, fan, heated rear windscreen, radio etc. Some sat-navs, in-car DVD players and iPods can also drain the battery if left connected – every volt is precious first thing in the morning

- Check the battery connections, ensuring that they are tight and free from any corrosion and don't forget that battery acid is highly corrosive to skin and paint work
- It's worth getting your battery tested, particularly if it is over four years old
- Take your vehicle for a decent drive to get your battery well charged, and get the engine to its proper operating temperatures, before you really need it – ideally the day before. Don't just turn it over as this will further drain the battery

If your battery does need replacing, visit the RAC online shop – racshop.co.uk/car-battery to find out which battery you need or call us on 0800 8620676.

Chris Burgess added: "It's also a good idea to top up with fuel a day or two before you have to go back to work so you avoid the queues at filling stations. If you think your battery could do with a little bit of a boost this is probably the perfect opportunity to drive a few extra miles to do that.

"If you already have a full tank the best advice is to go for a reasonable drive a day or so before you need to go back to work but don't just start the vehicle and then switch it off because that may do more harm than good."

Contacts



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