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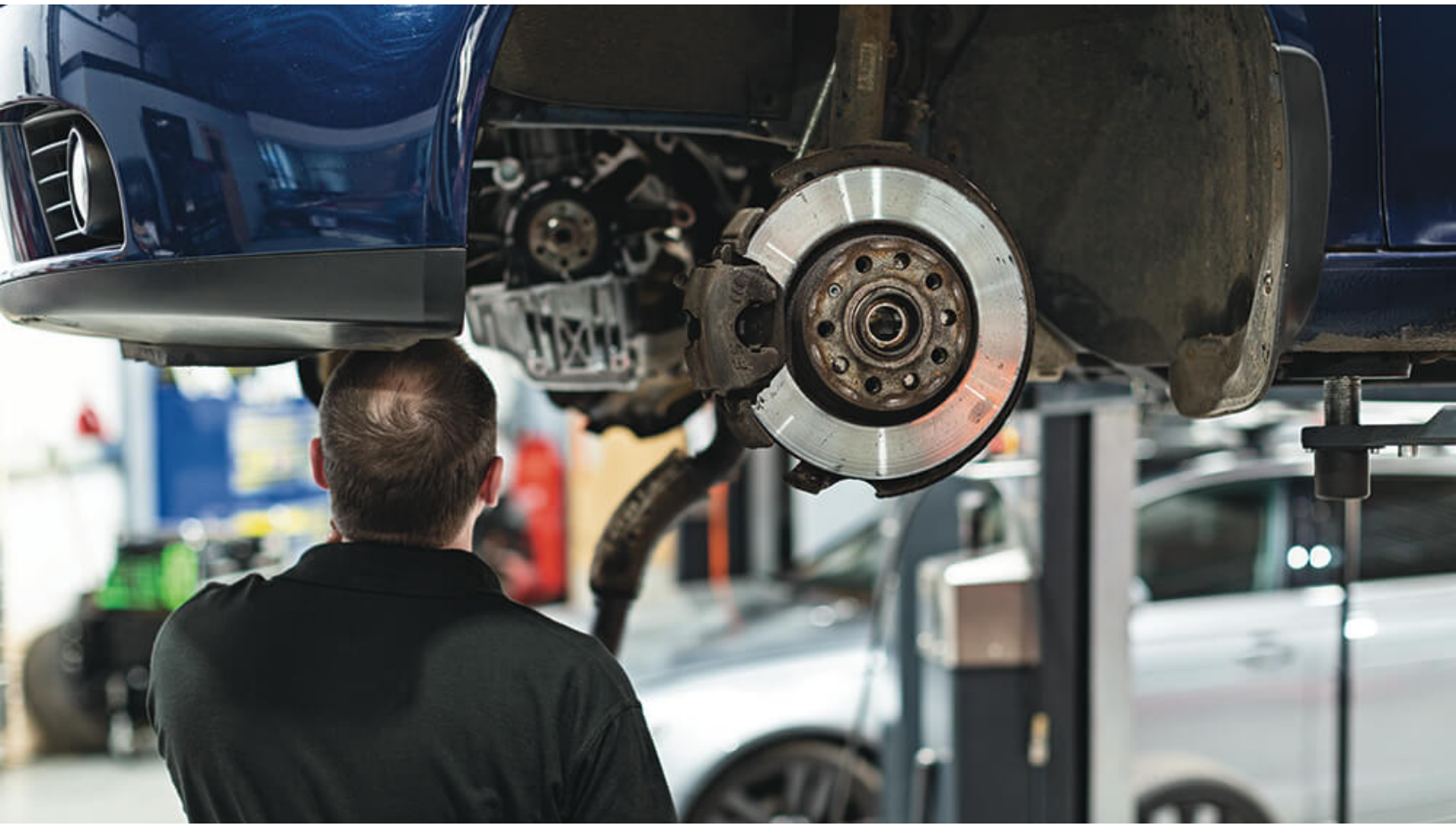

Image: RAC

Jul 03, 2020 00:00 BST

Drivers urged to avoid the expected MOT rush by booking now

Drivers are being urged to 'beat the rush' and get their vehicles through their annual MOTs this summer to avoid joining hundreds of thousands of others* who have held off getting theirs done by making use of the six-month MOT coronavirus extension, which ends on 1 August.

The call comes as new research conducted among members of the RAC's Approved and Accredited Garages network** has found that almost all (93%) expect demand to increase from October when the first cars that had their

MOTs automatically extended need testing.

The good news for drivers keen to get a test now is that 71% of these garages are currently reporting good daily availability for booking MOTs and servicing. However, by October 70% anticipate significantly more demand which could make it difficult for some drivers to get their cars checked before their MOTs expire.

Although every vehicle due an MOT between 30 March and 31 July is granted a six-month extension, drivers are under no obligation to make use of it – and those that get their MOTs completed as normal can be much more confident that their cars are properly roadworthy.

Nonetheless, the impact of so many more cars than usual needing their MOTs from October will be keenly felt by drivers, as well as by garages and test centres. Four-in-10 RAC Approved and Accredited Garages say they expect drivers will need to book up to a week in advance, while around a quarter (27%) expect that to extend to up to a fortnight. Nine per cent of garages say the wait will be even longer, with drivers having to book their cars' MOTs anywhere from two weeks before they are due, up to more than a month ahead.

The new findings follow separate research by the RAC in June that found one-in-seven drivers plan on making full use of the MOT extension. This week the Government announced that it would be removing the extension as of 1 August, which will help counter fears that a growing number of potentially unroadworthy vehicles will be driven on the UK's roads.

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RAC head of motoring services Adam O'Neill said:

"In many ways this is an ideal time for people to get their cars booked in for an MOT – whether they've already taken advantage of the automatic extension or not. Our garages have yet to see demand return to pre-lockdown levels, but if drivers wait until the autumn they'll be trying to arrange MOTs at the same time as hundreds of thousands of others.

"Understandably, demand for MOTs and servicing fell sharply after the coronavirus lockdown as garages closed and the Government instructed all of us to stay at home. But as the lockdown has started to be eased, drivers may be left wondering whether now is the right time to be getting their cars checked over, or whether making use of the MOT extension is the best course of action.

"The message from us is simple – our garages are fully open and all are operating to our COVID-19 Code of Conduct to help keep customers and staff safe. And with seven-in-10 offering a Collect-and-Return service, reducing interaction with garage staff, drivers needn't be put off from getting MOTs, servicing or other maintenance work completed."

Servicing and MOT at any of the 700 RAC's Approved Garages can be booked quickly and easily online.

Notes to Editors

** FOI data shows 746,157 MOTs were completed in April 2020, down from 3.7m in March

* Research conducted by the RAC among 228 garages that are members of its Garage Network, June 2020

The press office email address is press.enquiries@rac.co.uk. **Please note:** the press office is unable to help with individual customer enquiries - please visit the RAC contacts page to find the right contact.

ISDN radio studio facilities are available for interviews Monday to Friday.

About the RAC

The RAC provides complete peace of mind to 12m UK private and business drivers, whatever their motoring needs. Its services include:

- **Breakdown assistance.** Its highly-skilled, 1,600-strong branded patrol workforce attends more than two million breakdowns every year, fixing on average four out of five vehicles at the roadside. The RAC's patrol fleet is one of the most advanced in the UK, and was the first to roll out both an All-Wheels-Up recovery system, allowing the vast majority of vehicles to be recovered from a single patrol van, and EV Boost mobile electric vehicle charging units
- Insurance. The RAC is a top-five car insurance broker having surpassed the 500,000 policies-in-force milestone in 2018. It also offers 'black box' telematics policies, as well as home and travel insurance
- **Other motoring services**. The RAC leads in the development of new solutions for business, fleets, electric vehicles and future car technology. Its additional products and services include a personal loans offering, a used car buying website, vehicle inspections and checks, legal services or up-to-the-minute traffic and travel information. It also has a network of Approved Dealers and Approved Garages which combine the trust of RAC brand

with local service and convenience

The RAC also works to support the interests of its members and UK drivers on the most important motoring issues which it identifies via the annual RAC Report on Motoring and the RAC Opinion Panel. The Report on Motoring is the longest running analysis of driver opinion in the UK having been published every year since 1989.

For more information about the RAC, visit the RAC website.

Contacts

RAC Press Office

Press office team
Press Contact
For journalist enquiries only
Emails monitored during normal office hours
press.office@rac.co.uk
ISDN number on request