

How to Use This Manual

1. The Manual

The Manual is written on the assumption that the inspection will be carried out by a qualified NT, with an assistant working under their direction, unless using an approved ATL where the use of an assistant is not mandatory.

It should be read in conjunction with all current Special Notices relevant to the class of vehicle under test.

Further guidance may be gained by consulting the Vehicle Specific Information held on the MOT database for the vehicle under test.

This manual is also available electronically via the VTS Device.

2. Page layout

a) Information Columns

These contain important details an NT needs to know, and should be used in conjunction with the other columns.

b) Method of Inspection Columns

These detail:

- The way in which the inspection of items on the vehicle must be carried out, and
- The equipment to be used.

The MOT test must be carried out without any dismantling, so it is not always practicable to inspect testable items completely.

Bonnets engine covers, luggage compartments, access flaps and passenger compartment doors must be opened where this is necessary to inspect testable items that cannot otherwise be seen.

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If because a bonnet, door etc, cannot be opened or has been significantly reduced in size, you cannot gain access to a testable item, which was originally accessible **only** through a bonnet, door, access panel, etc., you must refuse to carry out the test or fail the vehicle. (See item 2 of the introduction).

C) Reasons for Rejection Columns

These list the defects that result in a vehicle failing the MOT test.

d) Notes

When carrying out each inspection, the NT should pay particular attention to the 'notes' since they give valuable guidance on the conduct of the test and the scope of the inspection.

3. Vehicles 'first used' dates – application of test criteria

NT's will normally be provided with the vehicle details as part of the Vehicle Specific Information supplied by the MOT database. This will usually include the vehicle's first used date. Where this information is available, the NT should only use Reasons for Rejection applicable to the Vehicle's age.

However, in cases where this information is not available or incorrect, the NT should determine the vehicle's 'first used' date as follows;

- a. Its date of manufacture, if the vehicle was originally used without being registered in GB (e.g. an imported vehicle or ex-HM Forces vehicle), or
- b. Vehicles having a Q plate registration when presented for MOT are to be treated as follows: **For emission purposes only**, all these types are to be considered as vehicles first used before **1 August 1975**. **For all other testing purposes** they are considered as being first used on 1 January 1971, or

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Paragraph 3 continued

C. In any other case, the earlier of either

- Its date of first registration or
- The date six months after it was manufactured.

This information should be entered onto the VTS Device to enable the NT to select the appropriate Reason for Rejection.

Examples of 'first used' dates

- (i) The requirements for seat belts apply to vehicles first used after 31 March 1987, but vehicles manufactured at least 6 months previously (i.e. October 1986) do not require rear seat belts.
- (ii) The exhaust emission test for a vehicle first used before August 1975 is a visual check only. Vehicles first used on or after 1 August 1975 are also subject to only a visual check if they were manufactured before February 1975 (i.e. 6 months or more before August 1975).

4. Assessment of Component Wear and Deterioration

Because it is not practicable to lay down limits of wear and tolerance for all types of components on different models of vehicles, a NT is expected to use experience and judgment in assessing the condition of a component. The main criteria to be used when making such an assessment are;

- a. whether the component has reached the stage where it is obviously likely to affect adversely the roadworthiness of the vehicle;
- b. Whether the condition of the component has clearly reached the stage when replacement, repair or adjustment is necessary.

5. Use of Equipment

The statutory test must be conducted using **only** equipment designated as acceptable for the test, and the designated equipment must always be used for test.

In the event of any item of designated test equipment failing, the VOSA local office must be notified. This will usually be via the VTS Device. Testing must stop on any class or type of vehicle as soon as any Mandatory item of equipment malfunctions, in a way that could prevent a test being properly conducted on that class or type of vehicle. Where the failure is to a roller brake tester, testing may continue using a calibrated decelerometer for 2 working days, **only** for vehicles previously booked in before the breakdown occurred. At approved ATL VTSs where the failure is to a wheel play detector then testing may continue using the conventional method with an assistant for those specific parts of the test.

The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency publishes a list of equipment which it has accepted for statutory testing within the relevant vehicle classes. This does not apply to general workshop equipment such as levers, inspection lamps, tyre pressure gauges.

Some items of testing equipment are provided with a device to enable test Information to be transferred to the VTS Device by use of the NT's Smart Card.

6. Use of an Assistant

Some parts of the inspection require the use of an assistant to conduct an adequate examination of a component or system, for example some Steering checks. An assistant is not required when conducting inspections using an approved ATL however, an assistant may be used if the NT considers it necessary.

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