

## Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles Testing Manual

Please note that this document is intended for the guidance for licence holders who are intending to present their vehicle for a test, and not as definitive test requirements. If in the Tester's opinion other items with regards to the vehicle are detrimental to passenger safety, the Tester may, after due explanation, fail the vehicle.

Anyone who wishes to complain about or is in dispute with any of the approved testing stations may contact the Licensing Team who will investigate the complaint. Complaints concerning the part of the test that checks the councils' conditions will be dealt with by the Licensing Team with reference to an expert if necessary. Complaints about the mechanical part of the test may be referred to DVSA if appropriate.

Vehicles which are less than one month old **and** with less than 1500 recorded miles will be exempt from the requirement for a compliance check, but if the vehicle is to be licensed as a hackney carriage it will need to have a meter and roof sign check at a compliance testing centre.

Version control		
Version	Date	Revisions
v1	1 October 2022	Document comes into force

For any queries, please contact the licensing team:

Licensing Team  
Vale of White Horse District Council  
01235 422556  
[licensing.unit@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:licensing.unit@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

Licensing Team  
South Oxfordshire District Council  
01235 422556  
[licensing@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@southoxon.gov.uk)

# CONTENTS

1. GENERAL .....	3
2. ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES .....	3
3. EXTERIOR OF THE VEHICLE .....	5
4. SIGNAGE - PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES.....	6
5. SIGNAGE - HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES .....	7
6. LICENCE PLATES (HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE).....	8
7. TYRES AND SPARE WHEEL .....	8
8. BOOT/LUGGAGE AREA .....	9
9. ENGINE COMPARTMENT .....	10
10. INTERIOR OF VEHICLE .....	10
11. REQUIRED EQUIPMENT .....	13
12. ROAD TEST .....	13
13. METER CHECK (hackney carriage vehicles only).....	14

## 1. GENERAL

	Inspection / checks	Notes
1.1	Vehicle complies to all current MOT Regulations at time of test	Vehicles must pass <u>all</u> checks required under the MOT test irrespective of whether a current MOT is held in respect of the vehicle
1.2	Check vehicle can carry no fewer than four passengers and no more than eight passengers	
1.3	Vehicles must be right hand drive and have at least four wheels	
1.4	Check for any evidence the vehicle has previously been written off. The councils will not license vehicles that have been classified as Category 'A' (whole vehicle to be crushed), 'B' (body shell to be crushed) or 'S' write offs (structural damage), or any vehicle with a 'Q' plate registration.	

## 2. ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

NB Any failure to comply with all of the requirements in this section mean the vehicle will also be ineligible for a discounted licence fee

	Inspection / checks	Notes
2.1	Check that vehicles fitted with special facilities for disabled passengers post manufacture or those modified to be wheelchair-accessible post manufacture have been given DVSA approved certification.	In the event of failure to provide suitable documentation drivers/owners should be referred to the relevant licensing authority.
2.2	Passenger should be able to remain sitting in their wheelchair facing either forwards or backwards in the vehicle as recommended by the vehicle manufacturer or conversion company.	Wheelchairs must never be carried facing sideways in a vehicle
2.3	Check necessary seatbelts, safety restraints and locking mechanisms are in place and in good working order.	The system and the devices used to secure a wheelchair to the vehicle shall comply with the relevant standards laid down in European Directive 76/115 EEC (as amended by 90/629 EEC) or

		<p>the UK equivalent standard.</p> <p>All wheelchair tracking must comply with European Standard UNECE Regulation 14 (EC Directive 76/115 EEC) or the UK equivalent standard.</p> <p>Each wheelchair user shall be provided with a disabled-person seatbelt, which fastens to the structure of the vehicle either permanently or temporarily by use of approved fixings to the position of the wheelchair. This is required by (European Directive 76/115 EEC or the UK equivalent standard and Regulations 46 and 47 Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986).</p>
2.4	Check wheelchair access equipment (ramps or lifts) is fit for purpose.	<p>Ramps must be present and fitted to prove they are safe and secure and must have visible reference to a safe working load of 250kg and certified to relevant British Standards.</p> <p>Lifts should be operational and demonstrated to be so at test. All lifts must have a valid LOLER 98 certificate presented at time of inspection.</p> <p>The wheelchair access equipment shall be fitted such that it terminates at the interior floor level to allow smooth entry/exit of the wheelchair.</p> <p>A locking mechanism shall be fitted that holds the access door in the open position whilst in use.</p>
2.5	The aperture of the door into which the access equipment is fitted shall have minimum clear headroom in its central third of 1220mm (48 inches). The measurement shall be taken from the upper centre of the aperture to a point directly below on either the upper face of the fully raised platform or the upper face of the ramp fully deployed on level ground.	

### 3. EXTERIOR OF THE VEHICLE

	<b>Inspection / checks</b>	<b>Notes</b>
3.1	The exterior of the bodywork, the underside of the vehicle and the engine compartment must be in a suitably clean condition to allow for proper inspection of these areas.	
3.2	Check the operation of all external doors catches and locks to ensure that all doors can be easily opened and securely closed	
3.3	Check all doors to ensure that they are properly aligned and close easily.	
3.4	Ensure door hinges are in good condition allowing free movement of the door and wind-checks to ensure that doors are held in place when fully opened	
3.5	Examine the rubber seals to every door for serious damage, looseness or absence.	
3.6	Examine the external body panels and structure for evidence of corrosion, damage and/or unsatisfactory repairs which affect the appearance, performance, safety or mechanical fitness of the vehicle.	Engineer's certification may be required to satisfy the vehicle examiner that repairs have been properly carried out.
3.7	Check all external trim and fitments for security.	
3.8	Examine the external paintwork for damage which adversely affects the appearance of the vehicle. Check that all paintwork is of consistent colour and finish.	All paintwork should conform to original manufacturer's specification as far as is practicably possible.
3.9	Check that the nearside and offside door/wing mirrors are fitted to the vehicle in a secure manner and that they function	
3.10	Ensure that the front and rear bumpers are in good order (without damage) and are securely fixed to the vehicle	
3.11	The front windscreen must have a visible light transmission	Any vehicle being presented for licensing/testing for the first time

	<p>(VLT) of not less than 75 per cent and front and rear windows must have a visible light transmission (VLT) of not less than 70 per cent so that the passengers can be seen from the outside of the vehicle.</p>	<p>must comply with this requirement.</p> <p>Where currently licensed vehicles have factory-fitted tinted/privacy glass which does not comply with the requirement, they will remain licensed.</p> <p>Where currently licensed vehicles have had a tinted film fitted to the vehicle (i.e. not factory fitted at time of manufacture), they will be required to have the film removed for the vehicle to pass the test.</p> <p>Vehicles with an exemption from display of the plate are exempt from this requirement.</p> <p>Tint readings are required to be entered on the Council's system at the time of the test.</p>
--	--	--

#### 4. SIGNAGE - PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

	<b>Inspection / checks</b>	<b>Notes</b>
4.1	Check the vehicle is not displaying a roof sign	
4.2	Check there is no external signage which consists of the words "TAXI" or "CAB" whether in the singular or plural or as part of another word or forming part of a word making up any business name of operator	
4.3	Check any external signage attached to the vehicle to ensure it does not protrude and is not loose	Any advertising on vehicles (other than for the firm the vehicle works for) requires approval from the licensing authority.
4.4	Check that any signs affixed to the interior of the windscreen or any other glazing do not affect visibility.	
4.5	Any meter fitted must not display a "for Hire" sign, and no "For Hire" sign should be displayed on the vehicle.	
4.6	Check that the vehicle displays a 'No Smoking' sign in each compartment of the vehicle in which people can be carried.	This must show the international no-smoking symbol at least 70mm in diameter.

## 5. SIGNAGE - HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLES

	Inspection / checks	Notes
5.1	Check roof sign in place and complies with requirements	<p>An aerodynamic triangular structure referred to by some sign manufacturers as 'streamline' or 'sloped'. Long dimension 450mm (18 inches), base is 150mm (6 inches) and height is 150mm (6 inches)</p> <p>White background</p> <p>Must be connected to the taximeter and it be automatically controlled. Must be lit when the taximeter is not active or when the vehicle is plying for hire and not lit when the taximeter is in use or the vehicle is not available for hire</p> <p>Has the relevant council's logo, measuring 125mm wide and 95mm high displayed on the far left of the front of the roof sign</p> <p>Has the vehicle plate number must be displayed under the logo, and the proprietor's surname or company name/logo (as agreed with the licensing team) displayed in the remaining space, with nothing else displayed on the front</p> <p>NB if the vehicle is a London style cab or other similar vehicle that has a built in taxi roof sign, the council's logo, measuring 125 mm wide and 95mm high, must be displayed in both rear passenger door windows.</p>
5.2	Check any external signage attached to the vehicle to ensure it does not protrude and is not loose	Any advertising on vehicles (other than for the firm the vehicle works for) requires approval from the licensing authority.
5.3	Check that any signs affixed to the interior of the windscreen or any other glazing do not affect visibility.	
5.4	Check that the vehicle displays a 'No Smoking' sign in each compartment of the vehicle in which people can be carried.	This must show the international no-smoking symbol at least 70mm in diameter.

## 6. LICENCE PLATES (HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE)

	Inspection / checks	Notes
6.1	Inspect the vehicle licence plate to the rear of the vehicle for signs of damage or excessive wear and ensure that the licence number is clearly legible and visible.	All hackney carriages must display a rear licence plate at all times.  Some private hire vehicles have an exemption from displaying the plate. These vehicles will display smaller internal badges in the front and rear windows. They <u>must</u> also carry their main plate in the boot of the vehicle for inspection. These vehicles are primarily 'high end' chauffeur type vehicles.
6.2	Examine the plate fixing to the vehicle to ensure that it is securely fixed and in a prominent position on the rear exterior of the vehicle.	Plates fixed by temporary fixings such as Velcro®, magnets, double sided tape or cable ties are not acceptable.  Plates in the rear window/parcel shelf are not acceptable.  The plate should be fixed to the tailgate, rear panel or bumper, not the valance.  Plates may be fixed onto mounts or brackets. Plates must be attached to such mounts using tamper evident clips or fixings. Plates or brackets which cover part of the registration plate in breach of number plate regulations are not acceptable.

## 7. TYRES AND SPARE WHEEL

	Inspection / checks	Notes
7.1	Check that all tyres and wheels are serviceable with no distorted or cracked rims and no damage to treads or sidewalls. All tyres must be inflated to the manufacturer's recommended pressures.	If a car has tyres in a combination which conforms to current legal requirements (e.g. radial and cross ply) the carrying of one spare wheel/tyre cannot be accepted since it can only be used in limited circumstances. The vehicle must therefore fail the test even if the spare tyre is in good condition and matches one pair of the tyres fitted to the vehicle
7.2	Check the vehicle has <u>either</u> a spare wheel suitable for immediate use and properly maintained, with a jack and tools	Temporary space saver spare is acceptable



	for changing the wheels all in good working order, or a complete and unused tyre inflation kit of the original manufacturer fit	If locking wheel nuts are fitted check that the correct adaptor is in the vehicle
7.3	Check any spare wheel fixing bracket (or similar securing device) to ensure that the wheel is properly secured in the correct position.	

## 8. BOOT/LUGGAGE AREA

	Inspection / checks	Notes
8.1	Examine the boot interior for evidence of damage, corrosion or water penetration.	
8.2	Examine the boot floor covering to ensure that it is in good condition and offers adequate protection to luggage stored in the boot.	
8.3	Examine the interior of the boot for accumulations of dirt, dust, grease, litter etc or staining of any surface with which luggage may come into contact.	
8.4	Check the boot for the presence of containers of any flammable or corrosive material.	Oil must be in a leak proof container.
8.5	Check that estate cars are equipped with a guard to retain luggage within the rear compartment.	
8.6	Check that adequate means are provided to secure luggage in the area provided in mini buses, e.g. compartment sub-divisions, netting or strapping.	
8.7	Ensure that the vehicle boot lid opens, closes and locks properly, and that the opening mechanism adequately supports the lid when it is in the lifted position.	
8.8	The boot size should be sufficient to accommodate the necessary luggage for the number of passengers for which the	

	vehicle is licensed, under normal operating conditions.	
--	---	--

## 9. ENGINE COMPARTMENT

	Inspection / checks	Notes
9.1	Carry out visual inspection of the engine compartment for signs of oil or fuel leaks.	The condition of all pipes, belts, hoses and wiring should be such that they will not impede the reliability of the vehicle being tested.
9.2	Ensure that the battery is properly secured in position.	
9.3	Examine visible wiring and electrical connectors for signs of wear or deterioration.	
9.4	Check drive belts for signs or incorrect adjustment and/or deterioration.	
9.5	Examine the engine mountings for signs of deterioration.	
9.6	Ensure that the radiator is properly secured to the vehicle and check for signs of any leaks.	
9.7	Examine the inner wing panels and suspension for any corrosion or deterioration	
9.8	Check the master cylinders of any signs of spillage or leakage of fluid.	
9.9	Check the clutch mechanisms for correct operation.	
9.10	Check the operation of the bonnet release catch.	

## 10. INTERIOR OF VEHICLE

	Inspection / checks	Notes
10.1	Examine the floor and upholstery inside the vehicle for accumulation of dust, dirt, litter, general debris, staining or excessive wear.	Vehicles that are dirty and/or smell unpleasant should be retested following a thorough valet. NB drivers are not allowed to smoke in vehicles at any time.

10.2	Remove any mats from the floor and examine the carpeting for signs of leakage of water into the vehicle.	
10.3	Examine any mats provided to ensure that they are not worn or damaged.	
10.4	Sit in each of the passenger seats to ensure that all seat cushions and back rests are in good condition and offer proper support to passengers.	
10.5	Check that each passenger is able to exit the vehicle with ease in an emergency.	Each passenger shall have direct access to a door without the need to remove or completely fold flat any other seating in order that passengers may access their seat easily and escape without delay in case of emergency. The council will consider vehicles that have seats that 'tilt' forward by a single operation.
10.6	Examine all seats to ensure that they are properly secured to the vehicle; seat cushions must be firmly affixed to seat frames/bases.	
10.7	Check all internal trim and fitments are present and are secure	
10.8	Check that all seats and internal trim materials meet the manufacturer's original specification and colour match throughout.	Seats which do not meet the original specification will be accepted provided all seats coverings are of the same colour and pattern and are in keeping with other internal trim.  Seat covers will be accepted if properly fitted and of a quality, condition and colour which is in keeping with other internal trim.  Specialist custom seats and child seats will be accepted provided they are of an acceptable British Standard design and manufacture and fitted in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
10.9	Each passenger seat must have a width of at least 406mm (16 inches) measured across its narrowest part and must be fitted with a seat belt. No seats may be side facing	
10.10	Check the operation of the interior light within the vehicle, both the manual switch and the door operated switches.	

10.11	Examine interior rear view mirror and ensure that it is securely fixed.	
10.12	Check the operation of the heater/windscreen demister including rear screen heater	
10.13	Examine clutch and brake pedal rubbers for signs of excessive wear.	
10.14	Check the operation of all window winders ensuring that they allow all windows to be fully lowered and raised easily.	
10.15	Check the operation of all door release catches to ensure that doors can easily be opened from within the vehicle.	
10.16	Ensure that child proof locks (if fitted) to the rear doors are in working order.	
10.17	Where there is a CCTV system (which faces into the vehicle, i.e. not a dashcam), there should be signage in the vehicle to confirm who manages the system (data protection legislation)	Licence holder should have notified council prior to installation of system, ensure this is marked on report to council
10.18	The vehicle should display the complaints information card so that it may be clearly read by passengers	This is provided by the council. If card is behind sun-visor, not accepted as clearly on display
10.19	Advertisements are permitted on the interior of purpose-built hackney carriages on the underside of the tip up seats and across the bulkhead above the dividing glass partition only. No advertisement may be placed on the dividing glass partition other than notices approved by the council. Advertisements are not permitted on the interior of non-purpose-built hackney carriage vehicles or inside any private hire vehicles.	

## 11. REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

	Inspection / checks	Notes
11.1	1.0kg dry powder fire extinguisher or larger foam fire extinguisher to meet BS EN 3 1996 (BS 5423) standards must be provided in a secure position. The extinguisher must be in date, not empty, and undamaged and must be marked with the plate number of the vehicle. It should be sufficiently well secured to the vehicle to prevent it being dislodged by normal use of the vehicle.	The extinguisher may be mounted within the boot compartment provided it is easily accessible
11.2	Emergency warning triangle marked with plate number of the vehicle	
11.3	Torch in working order and marked with plate number of the vehicle	
11.4	First aid kit in date and marked with plate number of the vehicle	
11.5	High visibility jacket or waistcoat marked with plate number of the vehicle	

## 12. ROAD TEST

	Inspection / checks	Notes
12.1	Check for any vibrations through the steering column or transmission.	
12.2	Check that the steering is true, positive and tracks straight.	
12.3	Check that the operation of the footbrake does not cause the vehicle to judder, or to pull the vehicle to the nearside or offside.	
12.4	Listen for any unusual noise from the engine and transmission.	

12.5	Check the clutch for correct operation.	
12.6	Check operation of gear lever for excessive wear in the mechanism.	
12.7	Observe the performance of the engine during the road test for signs of misfiring, lack of engine power etc, or any indication that the engine is not functioning in the correct manner.	
12.8	Investigate and report any other matters which affect the fitness of the vehicle for use as a licensed vehicle	

### 13. METER CHECK (hackney carriage vehicles only)

	Inspection / checks	Notes
13.1	All hackney carriage vehicles shall be fitted with a taximeter compliant with the Measuring Instruments (Taximeters) Regulations 2006 (S.I. 2006/2304) or UKCA (UK Conformity Assessed) marked and in sound working condition.	
13.2	All meters must be of the 'calendar' type to automatically change according to the wording of the council's agreed current maximum fare tariff or a lower tariff set by the operator	The maximum tariff is set by both Councils. The meter can be set at a lower level if preferred.
13.3	Check that only the tariffs displayed in the vehicle are displayed on the taximeter.	
13.4	Check the meter readings comply with the tariffs displayed by time and over a measured mile. Seal meter with appropriate tamper evident seal to prevent unauthorised adjustment	Vehicles with inconsistent displayed tariffs/meter may require meter to be reset by a specialist and returned to compliance centre for checking and resealing.
13.5	The meter must show the fare in plainly legible figures, and the meter must be securely fixed in such a position so that the fare recorded is visible to all passengers within the vehicle at all times and the figures shall be illuminated for this purpose whenever necessary.	

13.6	In the case of electronic metering equipment fitted with printout facilities check the printout corresponds to the displayed tariff.	
13.7	The tariff card must be fixed in such a position that it is visible to all passengers within the vehicle at all times. The tariff card shall clearly display the vehicle licence number and shall reflect the tariff in use by the vehicle.	