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Bumper bank holiday traffic on the cards with an estimated 16m trips planned by drivers

Drivers are set to make the most of the fine weather that is expected this bank holiday with an estimated 16.7m leisure trips planned, a similar number to 2019, new RAC Breakdown research suggests.*

The figures suggest today, Friday could see the largest numbers of cars on the roads with 4.3m leisure journeys by car planned and, according to transport analytics experts INRIX, a 25% increase in delays compared to a

typical day in August. Saturday will see 3.3m trips, bank holiday Monday 3m, with Sunday being slightly less busy (2.6m trips). In addition, drivers are planning a further 3.6m trips at some point over the course of the four days – with the hope of good late summer weather perhaps encouraging even more people to jump into the car for a day trip or last-minute break.

Roads in the South West of England are expected to bear the brunt of the traffic with an estimated 3.6m trips expected to and from the region between today and Monday.** INRIX data suggests that some of the longest queues in the country could be in the South West with journey times on classic holiday routes like the M5 and A303 more than doubling at certain times over the weekend.

The RAC is warning those taking to the roads to expect queues and delays this weekend, but also urging drivers to do everything they can before setting out to avoid adding to the jams by breaking down. Many of the breakdowns RAC patrols will attend in the coming days are avoidable if drivers check their cars are 'road ready' before setting out. This includes checking tyre pressure and tread, checking oil and coolant levels and topping up where required. Drivers should also ensure their mobile phones are fully charged ahead of their journeys in case they are unlucky enough to break down.

RAC Breakdown spokesperson Rod Dennis said:

“It’s been an incredibly busy summer on the UK’s roads with vast numbers of people on the move both for ‘staycation’ holidays and for day trips to the sea and countryside. Our figures suggest this is a trend that will continue, with bumper-to-bumper bank holiday traffic expected, especially on the most popular holiday routes.

“While this weekend will see many people returning from summer holidays in the UK, the fine and settled weather will also be seen as an opportunity by lots of people to jump in their cars for last-minute trips – after all, this is the last bank holiday weekend in England, Wales and Northern Ireland before Christmas.

“Our expert local patrols will be continuing to work incredibly hard to keep people moving, but we’re urging drivers to take a few steps to avoid breaking down in the first place, something that has the potential to spoil the bank holiday weekend and will only add to the inevitable traffic queues. Making a

sure a car is 'road ready' isn't difficult – ensuring tyres are properly inflated and have plenty of tread, and that oil, coolant and screenwash are all at the right levels, can ensure a smooth journey – if not a particularly fast one given the likely jams.”

Bob Pishue, transportation analyst at INRIX, said:

“Drivers hitting the road for one last getaway before the end of summer should expect long delays on key corridors. Knowing when and where congestion will build can help drivers avoid the stress of sitting in traffic. Our advice is to avoid travelling in the afternoon – leave early in the day or be prepared for some travel times to double.”

National Highways customer service director, Melanie Clarke, said:

“We'd encourage motorists travelling over the August Bank Holiday to make sure their vehicle is roadworthy before setting off. It's always a good idea to spend some time checking the condition of the tyres, making sure you have enough fuel and topping up oil levels.”

Around 98% of National Highways' roads in England will be free of roadworks over the bank holiday period. A total of 988 carriageway miles of roadworks will be completed (833) or suspended (156) ahead of the bank holiday. Some roadworks need to be kept in place for safety reasons, and motorists are encouraged to plan their journeys before setting off by visiting www.trafficengland.com for real-time traffic updates.

The fastest way for RAC members to log a breakdown and get help is online at www.rac.co.uk/reportbreakdown.

[View embedded content here](#)

Get ready for the road: tips for avoiding a breakdown this bank holiday

Always remember the word 'FORCES':

Fuel – Don't risk running out of fuel, top up before you set out. More people heading onto the roads in the good weather can lead to traffic jams, especially on routes to the beaches

Oil – check it's at the right level, and get your car booked in at a garage if you're topping up more than usual

Rubber – tyres need to be properly inflated and in good condition to give your car a safe, sure grip on the road. The legal tread depth is 1.6mm, so change them well before they reach this point

Coolant – this does a vital job in the warmer weather, in ensuring the engine runs at the right temperature. If it's not between the 'min' and 'max' levels, this could be the sign of a problem so contact a good garage without delay

Electrics – if your indicators, hazard lights, headlights, fog lights, reverse lights or brake lights are not functioning properly, you are putting yourself and your family at risk. Plus, you'll need your lights on during any unexpected downpours

Screenwash – helps keep your windscreen clear of dirt and insects

Notes to Editors

* Research conducted among 1,300 UK drivers on 24 August 2021. 2021 estimated overall planned leisure trips between Friday preceding bank holiday and bank holiday Monday: 16.7m. 2019 figure for same period: 16.5m

** Research conducted by the RAC earlier in the summer revealed the South West to be the country's premier staycation destination this year, with 30% of drivers having planned a holiday there. See <https://media.rac.co.uk/pressreleases/rac-forecasts-unprecedented-summer-on-the-uks-roads-3117243>

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](#).

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