



Image: Adrian Dennis / Getty

May 26, 2021 00:00 BST

Estimated 11m leisure trips by car planned as bank holiday finally heralds some settled weather

The forthcoming bank holiday weekend will see an estimated 10.8m leisure trips taken by car, new RAC research of drivers' plans suggests,* but if the sun shines there's likely to be even more trips which will inevitably cause jams.

While the figures indicate drivers have firm plans to take around 7.2m trips to see friends and family between Friday and bank holiday Monday – with Saturday and the bank holiday itself busiest at 2m separate journeys each day

– an extra 3.6m are due to be taken at some point over the weekend by motorists who have not yet decided on which days they will be on the roads. This suggests the weather is set to play a pivotal role in deciding just how much traffic congestion there is.

The research also shows the effect the reduction in Covid cases is having on motorists' increasing confidence to drive longer distances to see friends and family. Only one-in-10 drivers (11%) aren't planning leisure trips next weekend due to the pandemic, compared to [18% over the early May bank holiday](#) and [25% over Easter](#).

The RAC and Highways England are urging all drivers to make sure their cars – and anything they might be towing – are ready for the road this bank holiday by completing some easy pre-departure checks. Ensuring all tyres are in good condition and properly inflated, and that oil, coolant and screenwash are all at the right levels, can go a long way to ensuring a stress and trouble-free journey.

Drivers will be pleased to know that 98% of Highways England roads – motorways and major A-roads – will be free of roadworks over the bank holiday to provide extra capacity. A total of 899 carriageway miles of roadworks will be completed (775) or suspended (124) ahead of the holiday.

RAC patrol of the year Ben Aldous said:

“With Covid restrictions gradually lifting and some better weather on the horizon at last, we're anticipating large numbers of drivers to be venturing out and about over the bank holiday weekend. The fact only one-in-10 said they weren't planning a trip because of the virus, down from a quarter over Easter, shows people now have more confidence to drive to see friends and family safely.

“Our research points to Saturday and Monday being the busiest days, but in reality, there's a good chance the weather will have the final say as to how busy the roads get. A return to more typical late May temperatures and an end to the recent wind and rain could spark a sudden surge in journeys and mean some routes – especially those to the coasts and hills – start to clog up.

“Drivers can help my colleagues and I have a better bank holiday weekend by making sure their vehicles are in good working order, something that’s particularly important for anyone driving longer distances. Taking a few minutes to check tyres and fluid levels before setting out could very easily make the difference between a plain-sailing journey and one beset by a breakdown.”

Highways England traffic officer Dave Harford said:

“If you haven’t driven for a while due to lockdown, you might feel a bit strange getting back behind the wheel. Checking your tyres, oil, screenwash, lights and fuel doesn’t take long – but it will help keep you and your loved ones safe.”

Highways England advises that drivers should plan ahead this weekend and aim to travel at quieter times if at all possible, which are likely to be the afternoon and evening of Friday 28 May, and mid-morning to mid-afternoon on the remaining days of the bank holiday.

Ready for the road? Tips to avoid a breakdown this bank holiday from Highways England and the RAC

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 heavy downpours

- **Screenwash** – helps keep your windscreen clear of dirt and insects

[View embedded content here](#)

Plan your route using the [RAC Routeplanner](#), and keep track of the latest traffic situation at [TrafficEngland.com](#), [Traffic.wales](#) and [TrafficScotland.org](#).

Notes to Editors

* Research conducted among 1,100 UK drivers, between 17 and 24 May 2021

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 Contact

press.office@rac.co.uk

Emails monitored during normal office hours. For breakdown queries, call 0330 159 0740

ISDN number on request