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## May makes it seven months of rising petrol prices

After the seventh month of rising prices petrol is now more than 22p a litre more expensive than a year ago – the biggest 12-month increase seen for 11 years, data from [RAC Fuel Watch](#) shows.

Unleaded went up by more than 2p a litre (2.24p) in May to 129.27p while diesel also increased by a similar amount (1.95p) to 131.59p. In the seven months since the country last saw the average price of petrol fall (November 2020) petrol has increased by 15.5p. Diesel is now almost 20p dearer than at

the end of last May (19.73p) after a 14.4p hike in the last six months alone.

The 22p surge in the price of petrol followed a litre dropping to an average of just 106p (105.81p) on 21 May 2020 on the back of oil plunging to \$13.21 a barrel at the beginning of the pandemic. Petrol last rocketed by this amount over a 12-month period in May 2010.

At a price of 129.27p unleaded is now more expensive than it was at the start of 2020 prior to coronavirus arriving in the UK: a price last seen in mid-August 2019. Diesel, however, at 131.59p still hasn't surpassed the 132p a litre it reached at the end of January 2020.

This means a full tank for a 55-litre family car will set drivers of petrol cars back £71.10 and diesel cars £72.37 – around £8 more than before the non-stop rises began in November.

Buying fuel at a forecourt run by one of the four major supermarket chains will currently save drivers around 4p a litre with the average price of petrol standing at 124.83p and diesel 127.36p. The average increase in the cost of supermarket fuel mirrors the UK rise which the RAC says is not surprising as, since the pandemic, they are now responsible for selling 60% of all the fuel in the UK. Filling up on the motorway will set drivers back 146.78p for petrol and 149.59p for diesel after 2p and 1.6p rises in May.

**RAC fuel spokesman Simon Williams:**

“After a weekend which saw millions of cars take to the roads to enjoy a sunny bank holiday and a half term away from home the price of filling up with petrol has unfortunately reached its highest point in just shy of two years.

“After seven consecutive months of rising prices drivers will be wondering if the increases are ever going to end. We've now witnessed the biggest petrol price rise in any 12-month period since May 2010 when unleaded rocketed from 99p a year earlier to 121p.

“As always, the future of fuel prices is hard to predict more than a few weeks in advance and even more so now as the pandemic appears to have altered the dynamics of fuel retailing, with the supermarkets having an even greater

stranglehold on the market.

“Looking at the wholesale price of both fuels, in normal circumstances unleaded definitely shouldn’t be continuing to rise with the numbers actually pointing to the potential for a 2p reduction. And diesel is currently 4p too expensive which suggests retailers are using the saving in the wholesale price to help make up for lower fuel sales over the last year.

“We urge retailers not to take advantage of drivers and fairly reflect what’s happening with wholesale prices on the country’s forecourts.

“Drivers’ fuel price fate depends on what happens with global oil production and demand. Oil producers had curbed supply due to lower demand but have been releasing more product as the travel recovery continues.”

### Regional pump prices compared

Unleaded	01/05/2021	31/05/2021	Change
UK average	127.03	129.27	2.24
East	127.55	129.79	2.24
East Midlands	126.70	128.58	1.88
London	128.68	130.87	2.19
North East	125.62	128.19	2.57
North West	126.50	128.84	2.34
Northern Ireland	123.34	125.11	1.77
Scotland	126.60	128.78	2.18
South East	128.13	130.48	2.35
South West	127.17	129.63	2.46
Wales	126.08	128.21	2.13
West Midlands	126.74	129.28	2.54
Yorkshire and the Humber	125.92	128.09	2.17

Diesel	01/05/2021	31/05/2021	Change
UK average	129.64	131.59	1.95
East	130.40	132.31	1.91
East Midlands	129.43	131.32	1.89
London	130.75	132.79	2.04
North East	128.44	130.40	1.96
North West	129.23	131.06	1.83
Northern Ireland	125.30	127.47	2.17
Scotland	129.33	131.29	1.96
South East	130.96	132.89	1.93
South West	129.94	131.96	2.02
Wales	128.75	130.80	2.05
West Midlands	129.59	131.53	1.94
Yorkshire and the Humber	129.05	131.09	2.04

[Find out more about UK petrol and diesel prices](#) on the RAC website.

### **Notes to Editors**

\* UK national average pump prices quoted are based on Experian Catalyst data from 1-31 May 2021. Regional pump prices from 1-31 May. Wholesale prices, oil price and the value of sterling are based on data from 4-28 May 2021.

The press office email address is [press.enquiries@rac.co.uk](mailto: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



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