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More than 14m cars expected to getaway for August Bank Holiday

As many as 14.4m cars are expected to take to the country's major roads from Thursday through to bank holiday Monday to make summer leisure trips, according to research of drivers' travel intentions conducted by the RAC and INRIX.

More than 11m (11.2m) people say they have planned car journeys over that time period but another 3m (3.2m) say they will be driving but are at present undecided as to which day they will be travelling on.

Friday and Saturday are likely to be the busiest days on the road for leisure 'getaway' trips as RAC research* shows 3.6m cars are expected to be making journeys on both days. Thursday is estimated to be the next busiest with 3.2m cars, followed by the bank holiday Monday with 2.4m. With the extra day of the bank holiday weekend, Sunday is forecast to be quieter with only 1.6m leisure trips being made although some delays can still be expected.

Data from transportation analytics specialist INRIX** shows ahead of the bank holiday the M5 will be worst hit on Friday between J4 and J1 from 9.30am to 2pm with travel times increasing from 21mins to 1hr 21mins. On Saturday the M1 is predicted to be badly affected from J22 to J25 with journey times increasing from a typical 16mins to 62mins.

From early on Friday morning Highways England is lifting and completing more than 300 miles of roadworks on motorways and major A roads to help drivers get to their leisure destinations more easily this August bank holiday.

RAC traffic spokesman Rod Dennis said: "While the late August bank holiday is not typically one of the busiest on the roads due to it falling in the middle

of the school holidays when people are already away, either in the UK or abroad, it still has huge potential to bring gridlock to major roads, especially if we were to see the sun make a welcome comeback.

“There are plenty of known hotspots on the motorway network but probably the single biggest one in the summer months is the Almondsbury interchange at Bristol, right by the RAC building, where the M5 and the M4 meet. As tens of thousands of drivers head for Devon and Cornwall the coming-together of traffic leads to regular tailbacks every Friday afternoon. Add a bank holiday and some sunshine into the mix and it’s the perfect recipe for a long wait on the motorway.”

INRIX data scientist Josh Kidd said: “The best general advice to anyone driving to spend some time away from home this weekend is to travel as early or as late in the day as possible in an effort to avoid the worst of the traffic. However, on Friday, the joint busiest day this weekend, our data suggests drivers should set off between 10:00 and 13:00 to avoid clashing with commuters and other people planning a bank holiday getaway.

“With delays expected across the country all weekend, it is great to see Highways England lifting roadworks, a move which will no doubt ease traffic conditions.”

Travel this weekend - in numbers

| | Planned leisure trips by car | Worst times to travel | Best times to travel | Worst road for long delays |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Friday 24 th August | 3.6m | 1400 to 1930hrs | 1000 to 1300hrs | M5 J4 to J1 1300 to 18:00hrs |
| Saturday 25 th August | 3.6m | 1100 to 1500hrs | 1700 to 1900hrs | M1 J22 to J25 1430 to 1700hrs |
| Sunday 26 th August | 1.6m | 1630 to 1900hrs | 0900 to 1100hrs | M8 A725 to A779 1130 – 1730hrs** |
| Monday 27 th August | 2.4m | 1000 to 1530hrs | 1700 to 1900hrs | M2 J3 to J7 1030 – 1500hrs |

Longest expected delays this weekend

Worst delays on Friday 24th August

| Region | Affected road | Peak traffic expected between | Typical travel time | Predicted travel time |
|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| West Midlands | M5 J4 to J1 | 1300 to 1800hrs | 21 min | 1 hr 21 min |
| South East | M20 J9 to J3 | 0730 to 0930hrs | 22 min | 1 hr 6 min |
| North West | M6 J28 to J32 | 1200 to 1500hrs | 14 min | 39 min |
| North East | A1 A197 to Old Felton | 1100 to 1700hrs | 13 min | 28 min |
| Wales | M4 J29 to J24 | 1030 to 1730hrs | 15 min | 28 min |

Worst delays on Saturday 25th August

| Region | Affected road | Peak traffic expected between | Typical travel time | Predicted travel time |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| East Midlands | M1 J22 to J25 | 1430 to 1700hrs | 16 min | 1 hr 2 min |
| Northern Ireland | A6 Eden River to Dungiven | 1330 to 1900hrs | 10 min | 35 min |
| West Midlands | M5 J4 to J1 | 1200 to 1500hrs | 13 min | 37 min |
| South West | M5 J22 to J20 | 1400 to 1630hrs | 10 min | 21 min |
| South West | A303 A338 to A36 | 0900 to 1400hrs | 19 min | 36 min |

Top tips for avoiding - or just coping - with the jams

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| 1 | Think carefully about when you're travelling | Most traffic queues are caused by too many cars on the same roads at the same time. If you can travel outside the peak times – think early in the morning or later in the evening – you can easily miss them. |
| 2 | Make sure your car, and anything you are towing, are up to the job... | Many summer breakdowns are avoidable – punctures for instance can be caused by a tyre that is in poor condition or just not inflated properly. And ageing batteries can struggle in lots of stop-start traffic – consider replacing it if you have any concerns. And check your air conditioning is cooling properly – if it's not, it might need re-gassing, an easy job for a good garage. |
| 3 | ...and make sure you and your passengers are as well | Hungry, thirsty or tired passengers are recipes for in-car irritability – and 'carguments'. So when setting out, pack enough food and water to keep your passengers happy, and plan in enough breaks along the way. |

The RAC has put together a [comprehensive guide on to how to avoid breakdowns experienced in warmer weather](#) to help drivers. The RAC app, free to download for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) devices, also offers up-to-the-minute traffic information and smart route planning guidance.

Notes to Editors

* Research of drivers' travel plans conducted for the RAC by Ragdoll Research. Base: 1,884 motorists surveyed between 9th and 15th August 2018

** This bank holiday applies to England, Wales and Northern Ireland only

About INRIX

INRIX is the global leader in connected car services and transportation analytics. Leveraging big data and the cloud, INRIX delivers comprehensive services and solutions to help move people, cities and businesses forward. Our partners are automakers, governments, mobile operators, developers,

advertisers, as well as companies large and small. Learn more at [INRIX.com](https://www.inrix.com).

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