

Aug 21, 2019 12:38 BST

More than 16.5m leisure trips planned this bank holiday weekend as summer makes a welcome return

Drivers are planning to make an estimated 16.5m leisure trips by car between Friday and next bank holiday Monday, new research conducted by the RAC and INRIX suggests.*

Friday and Saturday are expected to be the busiest days, with a combined 9.4m trips on those two days, followed by bank holiday Monday itself with around 3.7m separate leisure journeys. But the reality may be there are even more trips than this – given the weather looks set to improve in much of the UK after some decidedly Autumnal conditions, many more families might decide to take a last-minute day trip or short break to enjoy the long weekend.

Data from transportation analytics specialists INRIX indicates some of the worst major roads for delays will include the M25 anticlockwise (between J1 and J4) and the M6 north (between J18 and J24) on Friday, and the M6 south (between J27 and J13) on Monday, with delays of up to an hour on each of these stretches.**

RAC patrol of the year Ben Aldous said:

“For many people, this coming weekend is the last chance to enjoy a long weekend this side of Christmas – and with the weather improving that’s likely to mean a lot of cars on the road heading to popular tourist destinations.

“A lot of the breakdowns we expect to see this weekend are preventable, so

it's vital drivers check over their car before setting out. Tyres with plenty of tread and properly inflated are far less likely to cause drivers problems, and it's crucial that oil and coolant are at the right levels too. All are quick, easy things to check and can save drivers the hassle of a breakdown at the roadside."

Trevor Reed, transportation analyst at INRIX, said:

"Bank holidays have historically been one of the busiest times for road trips, and this year drivers could even see record-level travel delays. Knowing when and where congestion will build can help drivers avoid the stress of sitting in traffic."

Melanie Clarke, Highways England's customer service director, said:

"We're doing everything we can to make journeys as smooth as possible and that's why we're keeping 97 per cent of the road network we manage, free from roadworks.

"Safety is our top priority and we know from experience that almost half of breakdowns can easily be avoided if motorists carry out simple vehicle checks before setting off over this period."

Beat the queues: a guide to travel this weekend

Date	Planned leisure trips by car	Major roads likely to be particularly busy between	Best times to be on the road	Expected longest delays on major roads (breakdowns or collisions can significantly increase journey times across the road network)
Friday 23 August	5m	11am to 6.30pm	After 9pm	M25 anticlockwise J4 Bromley to J1 Swanscombe/Dartford: 55-minute delay around 3.15pm M6 north J18 Northwich/Chester to J24 St Helens: 54-minute delay around 2pm

Saturday 24 August	4.4m	10.30am to 2pm	After 4pm	M6 north J22 Newton/Leigh to J26 Liverpool: 21-minute delay around 3.45pm M25 anticlockwise J4 Bromley to J1 Swanscombe/Dartford: 21-minute delay around 1.45pm
Sunday 25 August	3.4m	12.30pm to 2pm	Before 10.30am, after 6.30pm	M25 clockwise J7 Gatwick Airport to J16 (for M40): 26-minute delay around 1.30pm A303 West Amesbury to A36: 22-minute delay around 5pm
Monday 26 August	3.7m	12pm and 2.30pm	Before 11am, after 6pm	M6 south J27 Wigan to J13 Stafford south: 61-minute delay around 2.15pm M25 anticlockwise J10 London/Guildford to J6 East Grinstead: 18-minute delay around 2.45pm

The RAC website has [comprehensive advice](#) to drivers on how to reduce the chances of a vehicle breakdown.

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

1	Think carefully about when to travel	Most bank holiday 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 vehicle is properly prepared	Many breakdowns are avoidable – punctures for instance can be caused by a tyre that is in poor condition or not inflated properly. Check oil and coolant levels as if these run low you could be in for an unwelcome breakdown and a big repair bill.

3	Keep you and your passengers happy...	Hungry, thirsty or tired passengers are recipes for in-car irritability – and ‘carguments’ – so pack enough food and water to keep your passengers happy, and plan in enough breaks along the way.
4	... including your dogs if you are travelling with them	Only use a safe and well-secured pet carrier, and make sure they aren’t hungry when you set off – it’s best to give them a light meal a few hours before leaving. And of course make sure you give your dog exercise if you are going on a long journey – they need to stretch their legs just as much as you do.

Notes to Editors

* 2019 figures based on a survey of 1,900 UK drivers’ travel plans for this weekend, and extrapolated to cover equivalent of 31.2m UK licensed cars

** See table further down the release for full details of roads and expected jams

About the RAC

First formed in 1897, the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members for more than 120 years.

Today it has approximately 10m members and is one of the UK’s most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it’s [roadside assistance](#), [insurance](#), [buying a used car](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#) – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC supports the interests of its members and UK drivers at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – is one of a kind and provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#). It provides a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump - and tracks these prices daily to help drivers check if the price they pay to fill up is a fair one.

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