

At the start of your practical driving test, your examiner will ask you to answer two “Show me, Tell me” questions. The purpose of the questions is to check that you understand how to perform essential basic checks and routine maintenance on your vehicle, checks that will keep your vehicle roadworthy and safe.

Some of the questions require only a verbal answer ('tell me') but some of them will require you to actually carry out the check fully ('show me').

THE QUESTIONS AND THEIR IDEAL ANSWERS

- Q. Open the bonnet, identify where you would check the engine oil level and tell me how you would check that the engine has sufficient oil.**
- A. Open the bonnet and secure it with the strut. Explain that before carrying out the check, you would ensure that the car is on level ground and that the oil has had time to settle. Identify the dipstick / oil level indicator. Explain that you would remove the dipstick, wipe it and then replace it fully. You would then remove it for a second time and check that the oil level was between the maximum and minimum markings, and that you would replace the dipstick securely.
- Q. Open the bonnet, identify where the brake fluid reservoir is and tell me how you would check that you have a safe level of hydraulic brake fluid.**
- A. Open the bonnet and secure it with the strut. Identify the brake fluid reservoir (it is usually a small plastic container attached to the engine bulkhead, and will contain an oil-coloured fluid). Check the fluid level in the bottle is between the high and low markings on the side of the translucent bottle.
- Q. Open the bonnet, identify where you would check the engine coolant level and tell me how you would check that the engine has the correct level.**
- A. Open the bonnet and secure it with the strut. Identify the high/low level markings on the header tank (where fitted) or the radiator filler cap. Describe how you would top up to the correct level.
- Q. Identify where the windscreen washer reservoir is and tell me how you would check the windscreen washer level.**
- A. Open the bonnet and secure it with the strut. Identify the windscreen washer reservoir (it usually has a lid that is marked with a windscreen symbol) and explain how to check the level by looking through the lid or looking for the level through the side of the container.

- Q. Show me how you would check that the brake lights are working on this car. (I can assist you, if you need to switch the ignition on, please don't start the engine).**
- A. Press the brake pedal and either make use of reflections in windows, garage doors, or another parked vehicle, or ask the examiner to help by standing behind the car as you press the pedal (the brake lights of some cars do not work unless the ignition switch is on).
- Q. Show me how you would check that the direction indicators are working.**
- A. Turn on the hazard warning lights and walk around the car to check that all of the indicator bulbs are operating (this test can also be carried out by using the indicator switch - but for this, the ignition must usually be on - and it is not recommended that you turn on the ignition unless you are sitting in the driver's seat).
- Q. Tell me how you would check that the headlights & tail lights are working (no need to exit vehicle).**
- A. Operate switch (turn on ignition if necessary), then explain that you would walk around the vehicle to check that they are all working.
- Q. Show me how you switch your headlight from dipped to main beam and explain how you would know the main beam is on whilst inside the car.**
- A. Operate switch (with ignition or engine on if necessary) and check with the main beam warning light (usually blue).
- Q. Show me how you would switch on the rear fog light(s) and explain when you would use it/them (no need to exit vehicle).**
- A. Operate switch (turn on dipped headlights and ignition if necessary). Check warning light is on. Explain that you would use them when visibility was seriously reduced to less than 100 metres and switch them off again once visibility improves.
- Q. Show me how you would clean the windscreen using the windscreen washer and wipers.**
- A. Operate control to wash and wipe the windscreen (turn ignition on if necessary).
- Q. Show me how you would set the demister controls to clear all the windows effectively, this should include both front and rear screens.**
- A. Set all relevant controls including; fan (and air conditioning if fitted), temperature, air direction / source and heated screen to clear windscreen and windows. The engine does not have to be started for this demonstration.

Q. Show me / explain how you would check that the power assisted steering is working before starting a journey.

A. If the steering becomes heavy the system may not be working properly. Before starting a journey two simple checks can be made. Gentle pressure on the steering wheel, maintained while the engine is started, should result in a slight but noticeable movement as the system begins to operate. Alternatively, turning the steering wheel just after moving off will give an immediate indication that the power assistance is functioning. If the steering is very heavy then the system has failed.

Q. Show me how you would check that the horn is working (off road only).

A. This check is carried out by locating the horn control and pressing it (note that you should only carry out this check if it is legal for you to do so. Also, some cars do not allow the horn to operate unless the ignition is switched on).

Q. Tell me how you would check that the brakes are working before starting a journey.

A. Explain that, immediately after starting the engine and setting off, the brakes should be tested in a safe area by applying them firmly. The vehicle should not pull to one side, and the brakes should not feel spongy or slack.

Q. Show me how you would check the parking brake (handbrake) for excessive wear, make sure you keep safe control of the vehicle.

A. Apply the footbrake firmly. Demonstrate by releasing and then applying the parking brake, that when it is fully applied it secures itself and is not at the end of its working travel (the cable that the handbrake operates should be tight enough to prevent the car from rolling, before the point at which the handbrake mechanism cannot go any further).

Q. Tell me how you would know if there was a problem with your anti-lock braking system.

A. Explain that a warning light should illuminate if there is a fault with the anti-lock braking system.

Q. Tell me how you make sure your head restraint is correctly adjusted so it provides the best protection in the event of a crash.

A. Explain that the head restraint should be adjusted so the rigid part of the head restraint is at least as high as the eyes or top of the ears, and as close to the back of the head as is comfortable (note that some restraints might not be adjustable).

Q. Tell me how you would check the tyres to ensure that they have sufficient tread depth and that their general condition is safe to use on the road.

A. Explain that there should be no cuts or bulges anywhere in the tread or in the sidewall and a minimum of 1.6mm of tread depth across the central $\frac{3}{4}$ of the breadth of the tyre and around the entire outer circumference. A tyre tread depth gauge can give an accurate measure of the tread depth.

Q. Tell me where you would find the information for the recommended tyre pressures for this car and how tyre pressures should be checked.

A. Explain that the correct tyre pressures can be found in the manufacturer's guide or vehicle hand book (they are often printed on a label on the inside of the fuel filler lid or inside one of the front door-frames). Explain that you would use a reliable pressure gauge, checking and adjusting the pressures when the tyres are cold. You would also need to check and adjust the spare tyre's pressure and remember to refit all of the valve caps.