

Understanding Fair Wear & Tear

Fair Wear & Tear refers to the acceptable level of deterioration that can be reasonably expected of any vehicle through normal use.

At the end of your lease contract, you are liable to pay de-hire penalty charges to cover the cost of any excess damage that falls outside of Fair Wear & Tear – such as specific damage as a result of an impact or neglectful treatment.

Fortunately, just like any respectable sector, the world of leasing is regulated. In this case, by the [British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association \(BVRLA\)](#) who also provide the Fair Wear & Tear guidelines – which means we and all other member leasing companies have to comply with the same rules.

The Wear & Tear Standards

A leased car or van must be maintained, serviced and repaired in line with the manufacturer's requirements, and any repairs carried out to professional standards backed by a warranty.

All electronics should still work and all paperwork and documents such as the user manual, V5C and service book should be present and in good condition on return, and all originally-provided keys should be handed over.

Acceptable Wear & Tear includes:

- Small dents (under 15mm)
- Small scratches (under 25mm)
- Small wheel scuffs (under 50mm)
- Normal tyre wear, as long as the tread still meets minimum UK legal requirements
- Light windscreen scratches or chips that do not interfere with the drivers line of sight

Unacceptable damage includes:

- Large dents (over 15mm)
- Large scratches (over 25mm)
- Any dent or scratch where the paint surface is broken
- Rust, corrosion or flaking paint on any body panel, bumper or wheel
- Sidewall or tread damage to tyres
- Windscreen scratches and chips exceeding 10mm in the drivers line of sight, or 40mm elsewhere
- Interior scratches, burns, tears or stains
- Accident damage

Returning your vehicle

It's important that before you return your vehicle, you carry out the relevant checks in preparation for the collection day.

Before your vehicle is collected and returned to the finance company, an agent may carry out an appraisal on your vehicle to ensure there is no chargeable damage. The vehicle's condition will be considered in the following areas:

- Appearance, safety, documentation and keys
- Paintwork, vehicle body, bumpers and trim
- Glass, mirrors and lights
- Tyres and wheels
- Mechanical condition
- Vehicle interior
- Equipment and controls

It is therefore recommended that you carry out an inspection on your vehicle 10-12 weeks before your contract is up, giving you sufficient time to arrange any necessary repairs or replace missing items.

When inspecting your vehicle:

- First, thoroughly clean the vehicle inside and out
- Choose a time and place with ample light
- Closely examine all body panels for any damage
- Kneel or crouch and look down the length of the car to spot those difficult-to-see dents and scratches
- Inspect the headlights and glass, including wing mirrors, for any chips or cracks
- Check all tyres for any non-wear related damage, ensuring wear is even and the legal minimum tread limit is met
- Inspect wheels and spokes for scratches, rust or corrosion
- Check interior and upholstery for tears, odours or burns

Drivers can expect to be treated fairly, and if the finance company does intend to apply any de-hire charges, you will be advised within four-weeks after vehicle collection.

If you'd like more information or advice, please contact us.

