



BERMUDA INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED MOTORISTS
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Routine Cockpit and Safety Checklist (5 minutes)

Before any journey, the following cockpit and visual safety checks should be carried out:

- 1 **Outside Visuals** - all round vehicle - for leaks under the vehicle and tyre pressures/punctures, dents, scratches or light cover breaks etc. Fuel leaks cause engine fires or explosions!
- 2 **Handbrake** – applied and operating correctly?
- 3 **Doors** – all closed but not locked and no seat belt **straps** hanging loose outside?
- 4 **Seat positioning** – for maximum control (not just comfort) and free access to all car controls?
- 5 **Steering wheel** – firm without too much play in either direction – try springback test?
- 6 **Mirrors** – all interior/exterior mirrors adjusted for maximum all round vision to the rear?
- 7 **Seat belts** – fasten seatbelt and request passengers to do so as well. Double check no straps hanging outside vehicle over door sills etc.
- 8 **Footbrake** – firm and not mushy.
- 9 **Neutral** – for safety - select neutral while placing one hand on steering wheel as well as declutching (stickshifts or remaining in Park (automatics).
- 10 **Ignition** – switch on to **first position only** – do not yet start engine! Check all ignition, oil, fuel, handbrake and any other **warning lights and gauges** for proper operation.
- 11 **Start engine** – while depressing clutch (stickshifts) or brake pedal (automatics).
- 12 **Gauge/Warning lights** - ensure they **extinguish**, apply slight accelerator pressure if necessary to check this accurately. Heed them if they register a problem. In particular, do you have **enough fuel** for your journey?
- 13 **Mirror and shoulder check** – for safety and to ensure it is all clear, visual rear view check in all interior and exterior mirrors supplemented by an over the shoulder check before moving off or pulling out.
- 14 **Gears** – select appropriate gear (1st or reverse) and only when the drive has **taken up the weight** of the vehicle, release handbrake.
- 15 **Final Observation** - one last all round visual and mirror/shoulder check before moving off – for absolute safety to ensure all is clear. Are there children playing nearby? Cyclist or mopeds suddenly appearing? Etc.
- 16 **Running brake test** – as soon as practicable after moving off and at 20 mph/35 kph in 2nd gear, apply the brakes. Ensure that you do not compromise the safety or convenience of other road users when doing this.

This guidance is adapted from the

Bermuda Institute of Advanced Motorists Advanced/Defensive Driving Course Manual
by Roger Kendall (Price: \$25.00)

Copies are available from local bookstores or by mail order by contacting the BIAM Secretary via the BIAM website www.biam.bm or BIAM Secretary, PO BOX 1837, Hamilton, HM AX (please send a cheque for \$27.50 (includes P&P) made payable to Bermuda Institute of Advanced Motorists).