Solihull vehicle maintenance: questions and answers

41 practice questions for the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council taxi and private hire knowledge test, with answers and explanations at the end.

Free from taxiknowledgetest.co.uk. Not an official council or TfL document: check the current official guidance.

Questions

Daily checks and upkeep

1. **When must a driver do the walkaround check?**
   - ☐ A. Once a week
   - ☐ B. Each day before taking charge of the vehicle
   - ☐ C. At the end of each shift
   - ☐ D. Only in the week before the vehicle test is due

2. **How long must walkaround check records be kept?**
   - ☐ A. 6 months
   - ☐ B. 12 months
   - ☐ C. 15 months
   - ☐ D. 3 years

3. **What condition must a licensed vehicle be kept in?**
   - ☐ A. Fit for an MOT only
   - ☐ B. As good as a new vehicle from the manufacturer
   - ☐ C. As it was when last approved on inspection
   - ☐ D. As the owner thinks is safe

4. **What tread depth must each tyre have at the vehicle test?**
   - ☐ A. More than 1mm
   - ☐ B. More than 1.6mm
   - ☐ C. More than 2mm
   - ☐ D. More than 3mm

5. **Your vehicle has no spare wheel. What must you make sure of?**
   - ☐ A. That a garage is always near
   - ☐ B. That your operator can send someone to help you at any time
   - ☐ C. That passengers know the risk
   - ☐ D. That it can be driven safely and legally after a puncture

6. **One seat in your vehicle has a small tear. Does this meet the interior standard?**
   - ☐ A. Yes, if it is on a back seat
   - ☐ B. No, seats must be free of splits and tears
   - ☐ C. Yes, if it is covered up
   - ☐ D. Yes, until the next test

7. **Which of these breaks the rules for the outside of a licensed vehicle?**
   - ☐ A. Visible rust on a door
   - ☐ B. Road dirt after a storm
   - ☐ C. A manufacturer's paint colour
   - ☐ D. A clean, uniform finish

The vehicle test and licence

8. **You buy a brand-new vehicle to license. Does it need a vehicle test?**
   - ☐ A. No, for its first three years
   - ☐ B. No, if it has a dealer certificate
   - ☐ C. No, it only needs an MOT later
   - ☐ D. Yes, all vehicles need one

9. **What is the supplementary test?**
   - ☐ A. A detailed mechanical inspection as well as the MOT
   - ☐ B. A second driving test for the driver of the vehicle you license
   - ☐ C. A check of your insurance only
   - ☐ D. A test of the taximeter only

10. **How long are the vehicle test papers valid for?**
    - ☐ A. 5 working days
    - ☐ B. 10 working days
    - ☐ C. 28 days
    - ☐ D. 3 months

11. **Your MOT certificate has some advisory comments. What must happen before the vehicle is licensed?**
    - ☐ A. They must be put right
    - ☐ B. You must sign to accept them
    - ☐ C. Your operator must agree
    - ☐ D. Nothing, as it is only advice

12. **Will Solihull license a vehicle that was once declared a write-off?**
    - ☐ A. Yes, if it is a low category
    - ☐ B. Yes, once it has been repaired
    - ☐ C. No, whatever the category
    - ☐ D. Yes, if it passes an MOT

13. **How recent must the HPI vehicle history report be?**
    - ☐ A. Dated within one week
    - ☐ B. Dated within one month
    - ☐ C. Dated within six months
    - ☐ D. Dated within one year

14. **How long is a Solihull vehicle licence normally granted for?**
    - ☐ A. Six months
    - ☐ B. One year
    - ☐ C. Three years
    - ☐ D. Five years

15. **What is the lowest Euro NCAP safety rating a licensed vehicle may have?**
    - ☐ A. 2 stars
    - ☐ B. 3 stars
    - ☐ C. 4 stars
    - ☐ D. 5 stars

16. **You sell your licensed vehicle and want to license a different one. What must be true of the new one?**
    - ☐ A. It must be electric
    - ☐ B. It must be under three years old
    - ☐ C. It must have a lower mileage
    - ☐ D. It must be registered at least 6 months later than the last one

17. **What is the smallest range an electric vehicle may have to be licensed?**
    - ☐ A. 50 miles
    - ☐ B. 86 miles
    - ☐ C. 100 miles
    - ☐ D. 150 miles

Plates, signs and fittings

18. **Where does the exterior licence plate go?**
    - ☐ A. On the rear windscreen, where following drivers can see it
    - ☐ B. On the front bumper
    - ☐ C. Fixed to the rear of the vehicle, not the rear windscreen
    - ☐ D. On the passenger door

19. **Where does the interior plate go in a private hire vehicle?**
    - ☐ A. On the driver's side of the dashboard
    - ☐ B. On the near side of the windscreen
    - ☐ C. On the back of the driver's seat
    - ☐ D. In the glove box

20. **Where does the interior plate go in a hackney carriage?**
    - ☐ A. On the partition behind the driver
    - ☐ B. On the near side of the windscreen
    - ☐ C. On the rear window
    - ☐ D. On the roof sign

21. **You finish work for the day. May you take the licence plates off?**
    - ☐ A. Yes, at any time you are not working
    - ☐ B. Yes, at weekends
    - ☐ C. Yes, if you tell your operator you have finished work
    - ☐ D. No, unless the Council gives written permission

22. **A driver wants to hang an air freshener from the rear-view mirror. What applies?**
    - ☐ A. Nothing may hang from the mirror
    - ☐ B. Allowed if it is small
    - ☐ C. Allowed if it does not swing
    - ☐ D. Allowed in the daytime

23. **An owner wants to add a sticker advertising a local shop. What applies?**
    - ☐ A. Allowed on the back window
    - ☐ B. Allowed if the shop pays the Council
    - ☐ C. Not unless the Council has authorised it or the law requires it
    - ☐ D. Allowed if it is under A4 size

24. **Where must a phone used for work be fitted in the vehicle?**
    - ☐ A. On the driver's knee or lap
    - ☐ B. Loose on the passenger seat
    - ☐ C. At the top of the windscreen, in the driver's direct line of view
    - ☐ D. Securely fixed, without blocking the driver's view or control

25. **A vehicle licence expires and is not being renewed. How long does the owner have to return the plates?**
    - ☐ A. Immediately
    - ☐ B. 48 hours
    - ☐ C. 7 days
    - ☐ D. 28 days

Collisions, repairs and inspections

26. **Your vehicle is in a minor road traffic collision. How soon must the Council be told?**
    - ☐ A. As soon as you can, within 72 hours at most
    - ☐ B. Within 7 days
    - ☐ C. Within 14 days
    - ☐ D. Only if someone is hurt or the vehicle cannot be driven

27. **After a collision the vehicle cannot be driven. What must you send the Council?**
    - ☐ A. Only the MOT certificate
    - ☐ B. Photos of the damage, plus a report if required
    - ☐ C. A new application form
    - ☐ D. A letter from your operator explaining what happened

28. **The Council suspends your vehicle licence after a collision. What must you do with the plates?**
    - ☐ A. Keep them safe at home
    - ☐ B. Leave them on the vehicle
    - ☐ C. Give them to the repairer
    - ☐ D. Bring both plates back to the Council

29. **What happens if the repairs are not finished within two calendar months?**
    - ☐ A. You pay a fine
    - ☐ B. The licence is revoked automatically
    - ☐ C. You get a further two months
    - ☐ D. You must retake your training course and pay the fee

30. **You are asked to bring your vehicle for a spot check. What could happen if you do not?**
    - ☐ A. Nothing, as checks are optional
    - ☐ B. A small charge on your next renewal
    - ☐ C. You must then pay for a full new MOT and supplementary test
    - ☐ D. You could be investigated for obstruction

31. **An authorised officer asks for a copy of your insurance certificate. How long does the proprietor have to send it?**
    - ☐ A. 24 hours
    - ☐ B. 48 hours
    - ☐ C. 7 days
    - ☐ D. 14 days

32. **You hire your licensed vehicle to another driver. How long must you keep records of who used it, and when?**
    - ☐ A. 3 months
    - ☐ B. 6 months
    - ☐ C. 12 months
    - ☐ D. 15 months

Hackney carriage meters and access

33. **What must a vehicle be like when it is first licensed as a Solihull hackney carriage?**
    - ☐ A. Under three years old
    - ☐ B. Under five years old
    - ☐ C. Under 30,000 miles
    - ☐ D. Brand new, with delivery mileage only

34. **What kind of wheelchair access must a Solihull hackney carriage have?**

- ☐ A. Rear-loading
- ☐ B. Side-loading
- ☐ C. A wheelchair stored in the boot
- ☐ D. A swivel seat only

35. **How often must a hackney carriage taximeter be calibrated?**

- ☐ A. Every month
- ☐ B. Every six months
- ☐ C. Every year
- ☐ D. Every three years

36. **The Council brings in a new fare tariff. How long do you have to set the meter to it?**

- ☐ A. 14 days
- ☐ B. 21 days
- ☐ C. 28 days
- ☐ D. 3 months

37. **Where must the fare table be displayed?**

- ☐ A. In the passenger compartment, easy to read
- ☐ B. On the outside of the rear door
- ☐ C. At the operator's office
- ☐ D. In the glove box, on request

38. **You are waiting for a fare and the taxi is not hired. What must the meter be?**

- ☐ A. Running on tariff one
- ☐ B. Switched off
- ☐ C. Set to the minimum fare
- ☐ D. Showing the last fare

39. **When must the illuminated roof sign be switched off?**

- ☐ A. At the end of the shift
- ☐ B. After dark
- ☐ C. As soon as the vehicle is hired
- ☐ D. When you pass a rank with other taxis already waiting

40. **Once hired, which route must you take?**

- ☐ A. The quickest one, even if it costs the passenger a bit more
- ☐ B. The shortest available, unless the hirer says otherwise
- ☐ C. The one with less traffic
- ☐ D. The one the meter suggests

41. **You find a passenger's wallet in your hackney carriage and cannot return it. What must you do?**

- ☐ A. Keep it for 28 days
- ☐ B. Give it to another driver
- ☐ C. Leave it at the nearest rank
- ☐ D. Hand it to the Licensing Authority within 72 hours and get a receipt

Answers

1. **B. Each day before taking charge of the vehicle.** The conditions require a walkaround check each day, before the driver takes charge of the vehicle.
2. **C. 15 months.** The records must be kept for at least 15 months and shown to an authorised officer on request.
3. **C. As it was when last approved on inspection.** The vehicle must be kept in the condition it was in when the licensing authority last approved it on inspection.
4. **C. More than 2mm.** Solihull asks for more than 2mm of tread on each of the four tyres.
5. **D. That it can be driven safely and legally after a puncture.** Provision must be made so the vehicle can be driven safely and legally following a puncture.
6. **B. No, seats must be free of splits and tears.** The interior must be free of splits and tears to the seats, and free of stains to the upholstery.
7. **A. Visible rust on a door.** The exterior must be free of visible rust and large or sharp-edged dents. Officers may use discretion on cleanliness in bad weather.
8. **D. Yes, all vehicles need one.** All vehicles need the test whatever their age, including brand-new ones.
9. **A. A detailed mechanical inspection as well as the MOT.** As well as an MOT, the test centre does a detailed mechanical inspection, called the supplementary test.
10. **B. 10 working days.** The test papers are valid for only 10 working days.
11. **A. They must be put right.** Any advisory matters on the MOT certificate should be put right before the vehicle is licensed.
12. **C. No, whatever the category.** The Council will not license a declared write-off, regardless of the category.
13. **B. Dated within one month.** The report is accepted only if it is dated within one month, and it is needed every time, for new licences and renewals.
14. **B. One year.** A vehicle licence lasts one year and runs with the MOT date.
15. **C. 4 stars.** The vehicle specification asks for a Euro NCAP rating of at least 4 stars.
16. **D. It must be registered at least 6 months later than the last one.** The registration date must be at least six months newer than the vehicle you licensed before, so the fleet keeps getting younger.
17. **B. 86 miles.** An electric vehicle must be able to travel at least 86 miles on a full charge.
18. **C. Fixed to the rear of the vehicle, not the rear windscreen.** The exterior plate must be securely fixed to the rear exterior, must not cover the registration plate, and must not be on the rear windscreen.
19. **B. On the near side of the windscreen.** It goes on the near side of the windscreen, where people inside and outside can clearly see it.

20. **A. On the partition behind the driver.** It is fixed to the partition that separates the driver from the passengers.
21. **D. No, unless the Council gives written permission.** The exterior plate must not be removed without written or electronic permission, and the Council says plates must stay on when you are not working.
22. **A. Nothing may hang from the mirror.** Nothing at all may hang from the rear-view mirror or be fixed to it.
23. **C. Not unless the Council has authorised it or the law requires it.** No signs, notices or advertisements may be displayed unless the licensing authority has authorised them or the law requires them.
24. **D. Securely fixed, without blocking the driver's view or control.** Any such device must be securely fixed, in a place that does not impair the driver's view or control while moving.
25. **C. 7 days.** Plates go back within seven days of expiry. If the licence is suspended or revoked, they go back immediately.
26. **A. As soon as you can, within 72 hours at most.** Any road traffic collision involving the vehicle must be emailed in as soon as reasonably practicable, and within 72 hours at most.
27. **B. Photos of the damage, plus a report if required.** Send photos showing the damage. The Council may also ask for a report from an engineer or the recovery company.
28. **D. Bring both plates back to the Council.** You must bring both plates back, and they are filed until the repair is done.
29. **B. The licence is revoked automatically.** If repairs are not completed within two calendar months, the licence is automatically revoked.
30. **D. You could be investigated for obstruction.** Presenting the vehicle is a must. If you do not, you could face an investigation for obstruction.
31. **B. 48 hours.** The certificate must reach the authorised officer within 48 hours of any request.
32. **C. 12 months.** You must keep these records for at least 12 months. Tell the Council before the hire with an 'On Hire' form and proof of insurance.
33. **D. Brand new, with delivery mileage only.** A vehicle licensed as a hackney carriage for the first time must be brand new with delivery mileage only.
34. **B. Side-loading.** All must be side-loading wheelchair accessible vehicles, able to carry a reference wheelchair.
35. **C. Every year.** Once a year the meter must be calibrated. It must also be on the current tariff and sealed so nobody can tamper with it.
36. **C. 28 days.** The meter must show the current approved tariff within 28 days of it starting.
37. **A. In the passenger compartment, easy to read.** The current fare table must be inside the passenger compartment, where passengers can read it clearly.
38. **B. Switched off.** The taximeter must be switched off when the vehicle is not hired.
39. **C. As soon as the vehicle is hired.** The roof sign tells people the taxi is free. Turn it off the moment the taxi is hired.

40. **B. The shortest available, unless the hirer says otherwise.** You must go to the destination by the shortest available route, unless the hirer directs otherwise.
41. **D. Hand it to the Licensing Authority within 72 hours and get a receipt.** If you cannot return it, hand it in within 72 hours with details of when you found it and the journey, and get a receipt.

Sources

- Private Hire and Hackney Carriage Licensing Handbook (Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy 2026), version 1.2, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Version 1.2, dated 1 July 2026, the day it came into force; PDF file created 27 July 2026. Checked 1 November 2026. https://www.solihull.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-05/Taxi-Private-Hire-Licensing-Policy.pdf
- Taxi licensing frequently asked questions, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Undated. Checked 1 November 2026. https://www.solihull.gov.uk/business/licences/taxi-licensing/taxi-licensing-frequently-asked-questions