

REGISTRATION PLATES

INFORMATION

Unregistered vehicles need not be fitted with registration plates.

Vehicles manufactured 40 or more years ago may display traditional style “black and white” plates i.e. white, silver or grey characters on a black plate.

Vehicles manufactured less than 40 years ago must display registration plates of reflex-reflecting material, white at the front and yellow at the rear, the characters must be black. The reflex-reflecting material is not part of the inspection.

NOTE:- The following requirements for registration plates fitted to vehicles first registered on or after 1 September 2001 are **not part of the inspection** :-

- a. The display of the name and postcode of the registration plate supplying outlet.
- b. The display of the BSAU number.
- c. The display of the Euro symbol on registration plates which is optional. They may also show a green flash to indicate that the vehicle is electric.

Size of Characters

Examiners are not required to physically measure the characters or their spacing and the following information is provided for guidance only. Registration plates should only be rejected for character dimensions or spacing if they are clearly incorrect.

	Vehicles before 1 Sept 2001		Vehicles on or after 1 Sept 2001
	Option 1	Option 2	
Character height	89mm	79mm	79mm
Character width (except 1 & l)	64mm	57mm	50mm
Character stroke	16mm	14mm	14mm
Space between characters	13mm	11mm	11mm
Space between groups (horizontal)	38mm	33mm	33mm
Top and bottom margins (minimum)	13mm	11mm	11mm
Side margins (minimum)	25mm	11mm	11mm
Space between groups (vertical)	19mm	19mm	19mm

Note 1: The space permitted between a “1” or an “l” and another character is proportionately greater than the above dimensions.

Borders

Registration plates can optionally display a non-reflective border with a maximum width of 6mm and not closer than 5mm to the characters.

Mandatory Font

123456789
ABCDEFGHI
JKLMNOPQ
RSTUVWXYZ

Note 1: 3D style letters and figures are permissible, provided the font style is adhered to.

Note 2: There is no difference in '0' and 'o' nor is there deference in 'l' and '1'.

Registration Plate Layout



Note: Vehicles registered on or after 1st September 2001, can only use the layout shown above i.e. one or two row. While vehicles registered before 1st September 2001 may also use a three row layout as shown below.



Cherished Plates

Older style registrations must meet the registration plate requirements according to the date of first registration of the vehicle, with a format style similar to that illustrated below e.g. letters on one line, figures on another, or a larger space between the two groups of characters.



METHOD OF INSPECTION

1. Check that there is a registration plate both at the front and the rear of the vehicle, and check each one for security and condition.
2. On vehicles manufactured less than 40 years ago, check
 - the colour of the characters and background
 - that the registration plates are fixed vertically, or as close to vertical as is reasonably practical.
3. On vehicles first registered on or after 1 September 2001, check that the registration plates do not display a honeycomb or similar effect background.
4. Check visually that the characters are correctly formed, spaced, and are not obviously likely to be misread due to, for example, badly positioned or uncovered retaining bolts etc.

REASON FOR REJECTION

**Deficiency
Category**

1. A registration plate
 - a. missing or incorrect MAJOR
 - b. so insecure that it is likely to fall off MAJOR
 - c. letter or figure missing or incomplete MAJOR
 - d. faded, dirty, delaminated, deteriorated or obscured, (for example by a towbar) so that it is likely to be misread or is not easily legible by a person standing approximately 20 meters to the front/rear of the vehicle MAJOR
 - e. background overprinted or shadowed with text e.g. vehicle manufacturer name MAJOR

2. On a vehicle manufactured less than 40 years ago
 - a. a front registration plate does not have black characters on a white background MAJOR
 - b. a rear registration plate does not have black characters on a yellow background MAJOR
 - c. a registration plate not fixed vertically, or as close to vertical as is reasonably practical. MAJOR

3. A registration plate on a vehicle first registered on or after 1 September 2001 obviously displaying a honeycomb or similar effect background. MAJOR

4. A registration plate with
 - a. any feature that has the effect of changing the appearance or legibility of any of the characters, so that the true identity of the vehicle is not easily established MAJOR
 - b. character likely to be misread. MAJOR
 - c. a character not correctly formed, or sloping, but unlikely to be misread MINOR
 - d. characters which are obviously not the correct height, character width, stroke width, not of equal width along their entire length or incorrectly spaced, but unlikely to be misread. MINOR

- e. characters formed using a font which is not substantially similar to the prescribed font but unlikely to be misread. MINOR
- f. characters formed using broken or multiple strokes but unlikely to be misread. MINOR
- g. characters laid out in an incorrect format but unlikely to be misread. MINOR
- h. a margin obviously less than the minimum requirement but unlikely to be misread. MINOR
- i. a non-reflective border obviously wider than permitted or positioned too close to the characters, but unlikely to be misread. See note on Borders. MINOR