Show Me - Tell Me Questions

If you want a video about them, the www.gov.uk site has videos for the 'show me' and 'tell me' questions.

On the driving test you will be asked 1 'show me' question and one 'tell me' question.

The 'show me' question will be performed whilst driving and must be performed in a safe manner whilst not posing a danger to you or someone else – fail this and you fail your test – they are pretty simple though so don't panic.

The 'tell me' question is asked at the start of the test whilst parked and is just basic maintenance tasks and if you get this wrong then you only pick up a driver fault. You can get 15 driver faults (also known as 'minors') and still pass your test so one fault won't kill you.

If they say 'show me' they want to see you actually do something, if it's 'Tell me' they just need an explanation of how you would do it.

How to read this document

The questions you could be asked are numbered and in bold.

The bullet points show you the information you will need to tell the examiner – learn these.

The document also contains boxes with the  symbol in it. This is background reading that goes to give better understanding on a topic. I recommend that you know this as well because I think all drivers should know it; however you don't need to know them for the driving test.

I have also added some **red bold** text and this is used to either highlight a safety point or a law.

Also keep in mind that the pictures at the end relate specifically to my car. If you drive a different car then you will need to find out how your specific car manages the same tasks. Obviously, the task itself will be the same i.e. check the lights are working, but how to get those lights on will vary from car to car.

Tell Me Questions

1) 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.

- This task should be performed with a cold engine (because engine oil gets very hot) and the vehicle parked on the flat (to get a true reading of oil level).

- Release the bonnet using the lever in the car found in the passenger foot well (**figure 1** or read the owner's manual if unsure)

Figure 1: Bonnet release inside passenger foot well

- Lift the bonnet by lifting the bonnet catch under the bonnet (**figure 2**) with your right hand and lift the bonnet itself with your left hand

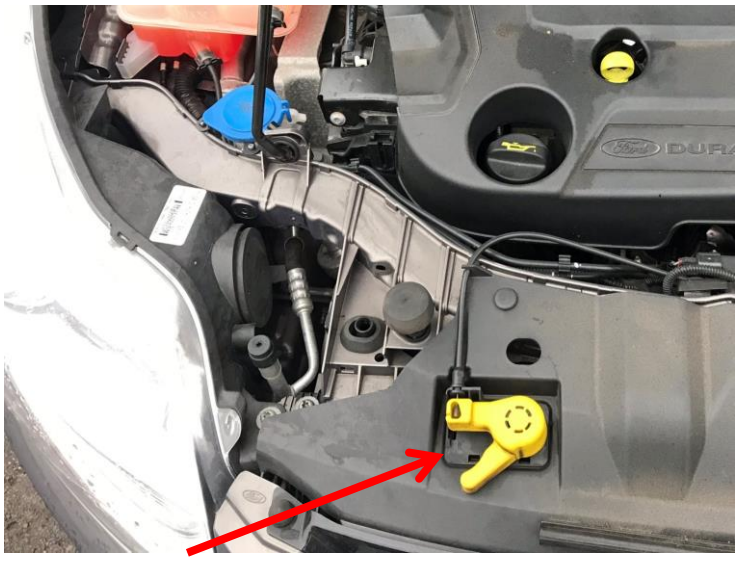

Figure 2: Pull bonnet catch to enable lifting

- Secure the bonnet in elevated form using the bonnet prop (**figure 3a**)

Figure 3a: Bonnet prop

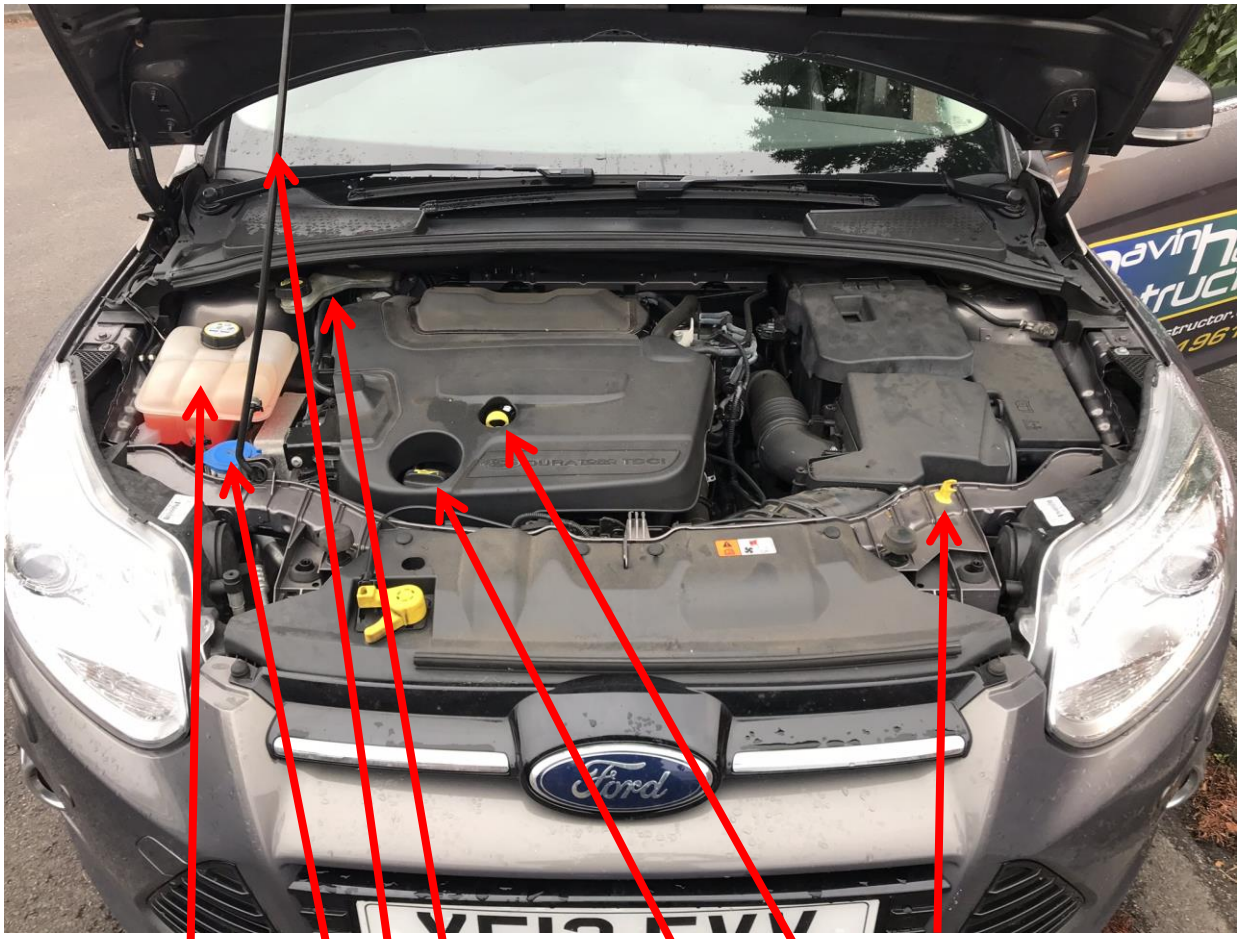

Figure 3b: Engine coolant
Screen washer fluid
Bonnet Prop
Hydraulic brake fluid
Engine oil filler cap
Engine oil dipstick
Bonnet prop clip

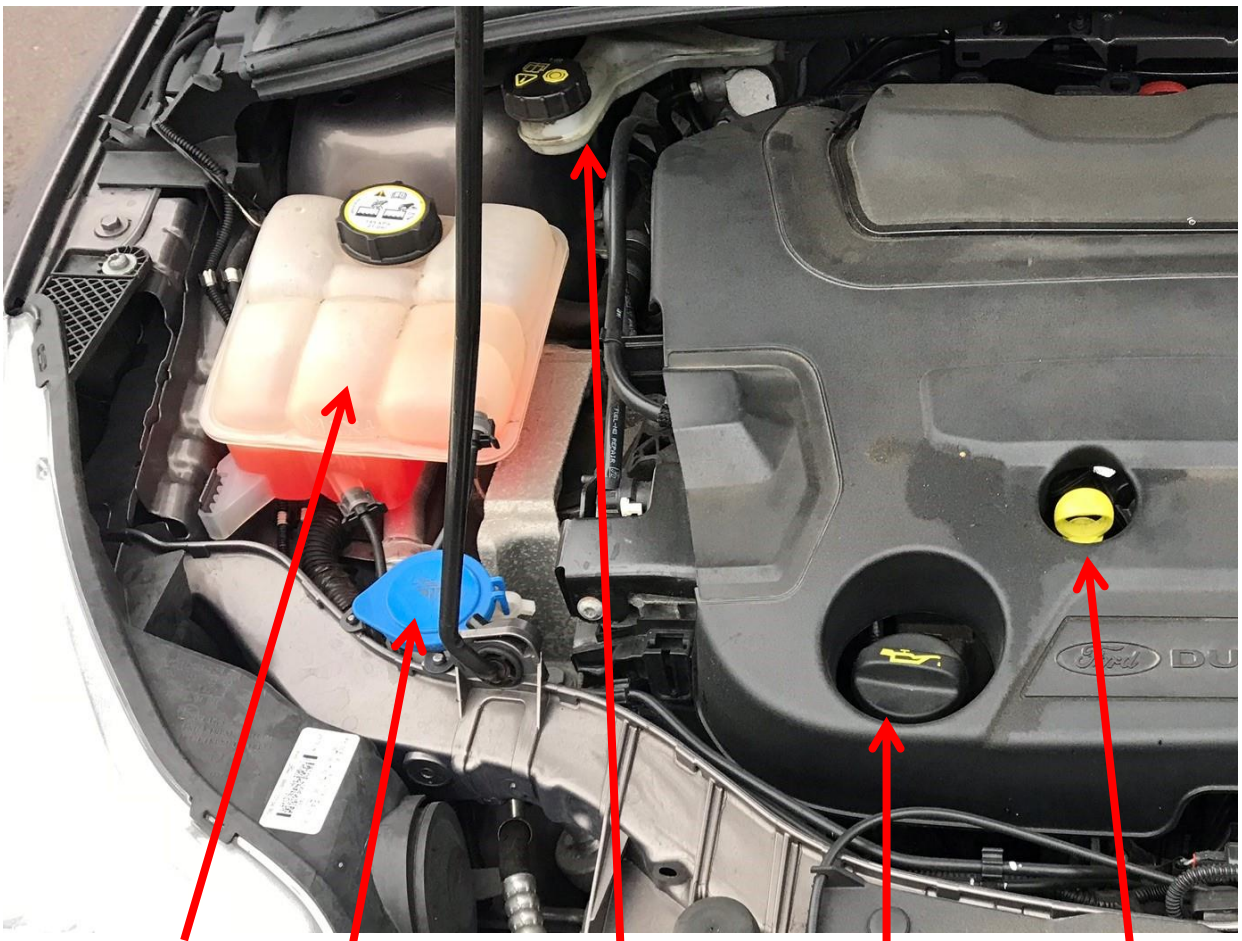

Figure 3c: Engine coolant

- Locate dipstick (**figure 3b and 3c**)
- Pull it out and wipe clean with a tissue
- Put it back in and pull out again to see what level the oil in the sump is (**figure 4**)

Figure 4. Dip Stick

- If the oil level looks low then top up the oil using the recommended grade of oil (as per the owner's manual) by unscrewing the oil cap and pouring it in a little at a time, waiting a bit then cleaning and measuring the dip stick. Repeat this process until the engine is full and don't forget to put the oil cap back on.
- When happy, just put the dip stick back in making sure it is securely seated
- Place the bonnet support back in its clip (**figure 3b**)
- Gently close the bonnet and push down on it to lock it back in place

Underneath an engine is a bowl (called a sump) and this is where all the oil collects when the engine is off.

When then the engine is started, an oil pump takes this oil and pumps it up to the top of the engine. This oil then runs back down through the engine back to the sump, all the time lubricating the moving parts as it goes.

A long metal measuring stick (called a dip stick (figure 3b)) is suspended from the top of the engine into the sump. On the stick you have a maximum and minimum level; **never allow the level of the oil to get below minimum or above maximum or damage will occur to the engine.**

Once the oil has been pumped on top of the engine, it will take a minute or two for the oil to go all the way through and back to the sump. You want to ensure that all the oil has dripped back into the sump before taking a measurement; so when you top up the oil level, you should allow a couple of minutes before taking a new measurement.

The oil will be splashed on to the dip stick so you must wipe the stick clean before each measurement.

You also make sure that the car is parked on the flat so that the oil doesn't collect at one end and the dip stick hangs in mid-air (thus showing low oil levels when there is plenty in there).

How quickly oil is burned off depends on the engine itself and how hard the engine is worked; drive carefully and you should burn away small amounts of oil, drive hard and you'll burn away lots.

2) Open the bonnet, identify where you would check the engine coolant level and tell me how you would check the engine has the correct level.

- Open the bonnet as described in question 1
- Locate the header tank (**figure 3b and 3c**) and read the level off the side
- Level should be between maximum and minimum
- Top up using the correct engine coolant (also called antifreeze) as per the owner manual

Avoid opening the radiator cap when the engine is hot, the system may spray boiling water. If you must do it then release the pressure slowly by turning the cap slowly.

3) 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.

- Open the bonnet as described in question 1
- Locate the brake fluid reservoir (**figure 3b and 3c**) and read the level off the side
- Level should be between maximum and minimum
- Top up to maximum using the correct oil grade as per the owner's manual

4) Tell me how you would check that the brake lights are working on this car.

- Turn key to ignition position 2 if you have a key, in my car just press the power button without pressing any pedals so as not to start the engine (**figure 5**)
- Put your foot on the brake pedal
- Get a friend to walk to the back of the car and look at the lights

Figure 5. Power button behind the steering wheel

How would you check your brake lights are working on your own? Reverse up to something reflective such as a shop window or garage door, put your brakes on and look in the mirror to see if everything is working ok.

I have also been known to put a brick on the pedal, got out and looked myself!

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

- You need the engine running for the brakes to work because they are hydraulically operated
- Push the brake pedal – it should feel like it normally does!
- Brakes should not feel spongy or slack
- Drive a couple of metres and put the brakes on; the vehicle should not pull to one side

This is actually tied in to question number 14.

If a warning light comes on regarding the braking system, I recommend that you stop as soon as it is safe to do so.

Now, if a warning light comes on regarding the anti-locking braking system (ABS), I wouldn't know if it's the ABS system itself or the brakes as a whole that have become defective. It could be something as simple as a fuse that needs replacing.

The ABS system is a secondary assistant to help in harsh emergency braking. If you don't have ABS, you have to supply the required anti-skidding braking technique (called cadence braking) yourself.

You can still drive the car to a garage if you have a pressurised braking system that brakes in a straight line and to find that out, you do as described above to answer this question.

If the car does pull to one side when braking, you might have some gravel in the brakes on one side (or you have a bigger problem). Be very careful if you do decide to drive.

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

- Find out what size tyre you have (**figure 7**)
- Look in the owner's manual for the recommended tyre pressures (there's also a sticker on the inside of the front passenger door **figure 6**)
- Use a reliable pressure gauge (pronounced like the word 'age' but with a 'g' on the front i.e. 'gage')
- You could also use a foot pump or that machine a petrol stations
- Check and adjust pressures when tyres are cold
- Don't forget spare tyre
- Remember to refit valve caps.

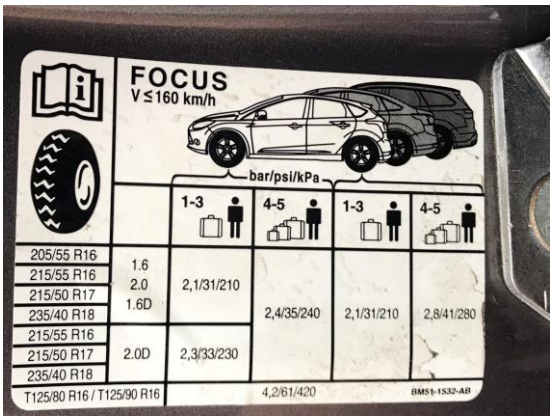

Figure 6: Tyre pressure chart

Figure 7: Tyre size on tyre

To check your tyre pressures you need to know your tyre size and the amount of weight you are putting in your car.

Because tyres compress when you put weight on them, the more weight you put on them the more they compress. When you put air in a tyre, the middle of it gets bigger. You need to raise the tyre the same amount that it compresses when you add weight. The net result is that you should end up with as much tyre touching the road as possible.

If you over inflate a tyre, the middle part is all that touches the road and so you run the risk of skidding, you also wear the middle away faster and so you need to replace the tyres more frequently.

If you under inflate a tyre, the middle of the tyre doesn't touch the road and so you drive on the outside edges of the tyre. This also reduces the amount of tyre on the road and increases the chance of skidding.

The tyre size is written on the side of the tyre (**figure 7**). You then refer to the tyre chart, work out how much weight will be in the car and adjust the tyre pressure using a suitable gauge and tyre inflator (petrol stations have these)

7) 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.

Do a visual check of the tyres; the requirements are:

- No cuts or bulges in the tyre or sidewalls
- No foreign objects (such as nails) sticking out of the tyres
- **LEGAL REQUIREMENT: 1.6mm of tread depth across the central three quarters of the tyre width and around the entire circumference**.
- **Figures 8 and 9**

Figure 9. A tread depth gauge

Figure 8. Tyre requirements: 1.6mm across the centre three quarters and all the way around

8) Tell me how you would check that the power steering is working before starting a journey.

- Steer with the engine off – it should feel heavy or hard to turn
- Steer with the engine on – it should feel lighter and easier to turn
- If there is no difference in the feel with the engine off and on there is a problem and you need to get it checked by a mechanic

9) Tell me how you would check that the headlights & tail lights are working. You don't need to exit the vehicle.

- Turn ignition to position two or press the power button (**figure 5**)
- Rotate switch on the headlights to position two (dipped beam) (**figure 10**)
- Walk around the car making sure the front headlights, side lights and rear lights are on

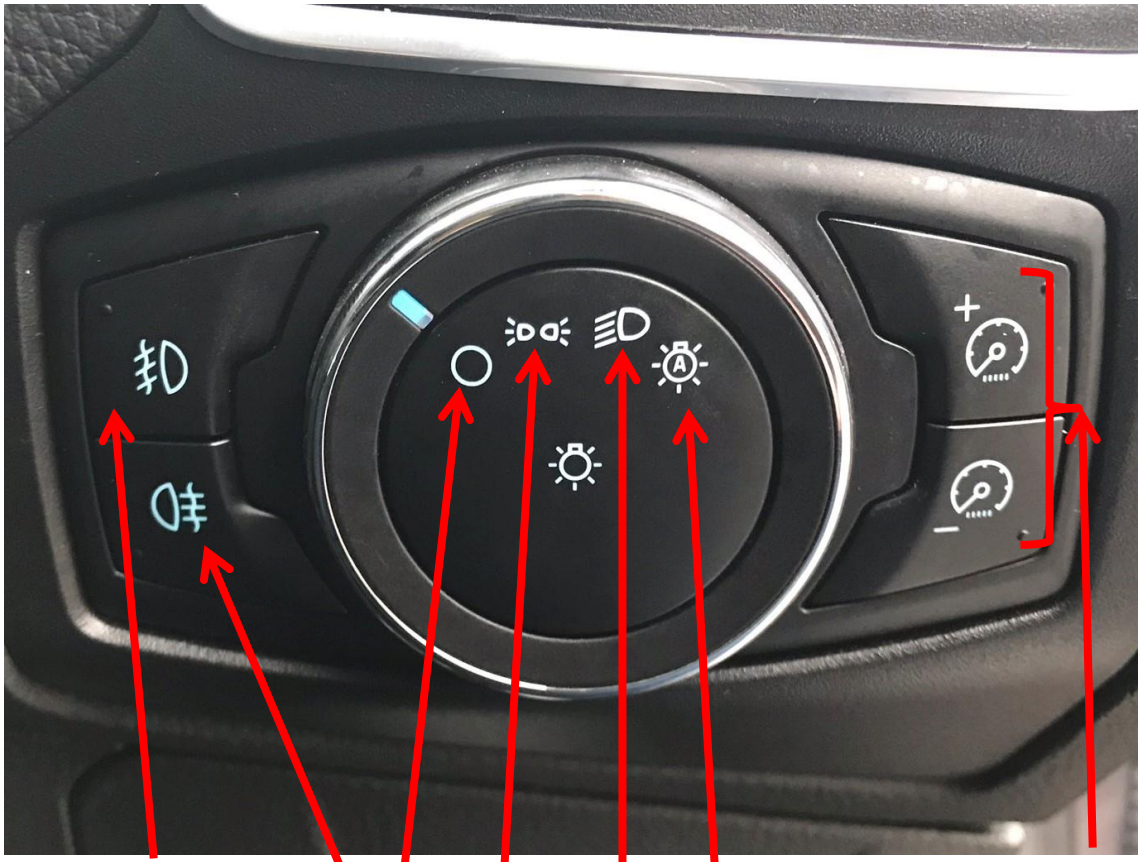

Figure 10. Front fog lights, Rear fog lights, Off, side lights, dipped headlights, automatic lights, dashboard brightness

10) Tell me how you would check that the direction indicators are working. You don't need to exit the vehicle.

- Turn the ignition to position two or press power button (**figure 5**)
- Put your indicators on (left or right – it doesn't matter which)
- Get out of the car and look at the prospective side to make sure the indicators are working (I've got them in three places: Headlight, tail light and door mirror indicators)
- Put the indicators on for the opposite side
- Get out of the car and check the indicators and working on this new side

Some people check by using the hazard warning switch. This puts on all six indicator bulbs but doesn't prove that the indicators work; it only proves that the hazard warning system works

11) Tell me how you would switch on the rear fog light(s) and explain when you would use them.

- Turn ignition to position 2 or press the power button (**figure 5**)
- Turn on the normal driving lights (dipped beam) (**figure 10**)
- Press the button to the left of the light switch (**figure 10**)
- Check there is an amber in the rev counter (**figure 11**)
- **LEGAL REQUIREMENT: Fog lights can only be used when visibility is less than 100 metres**

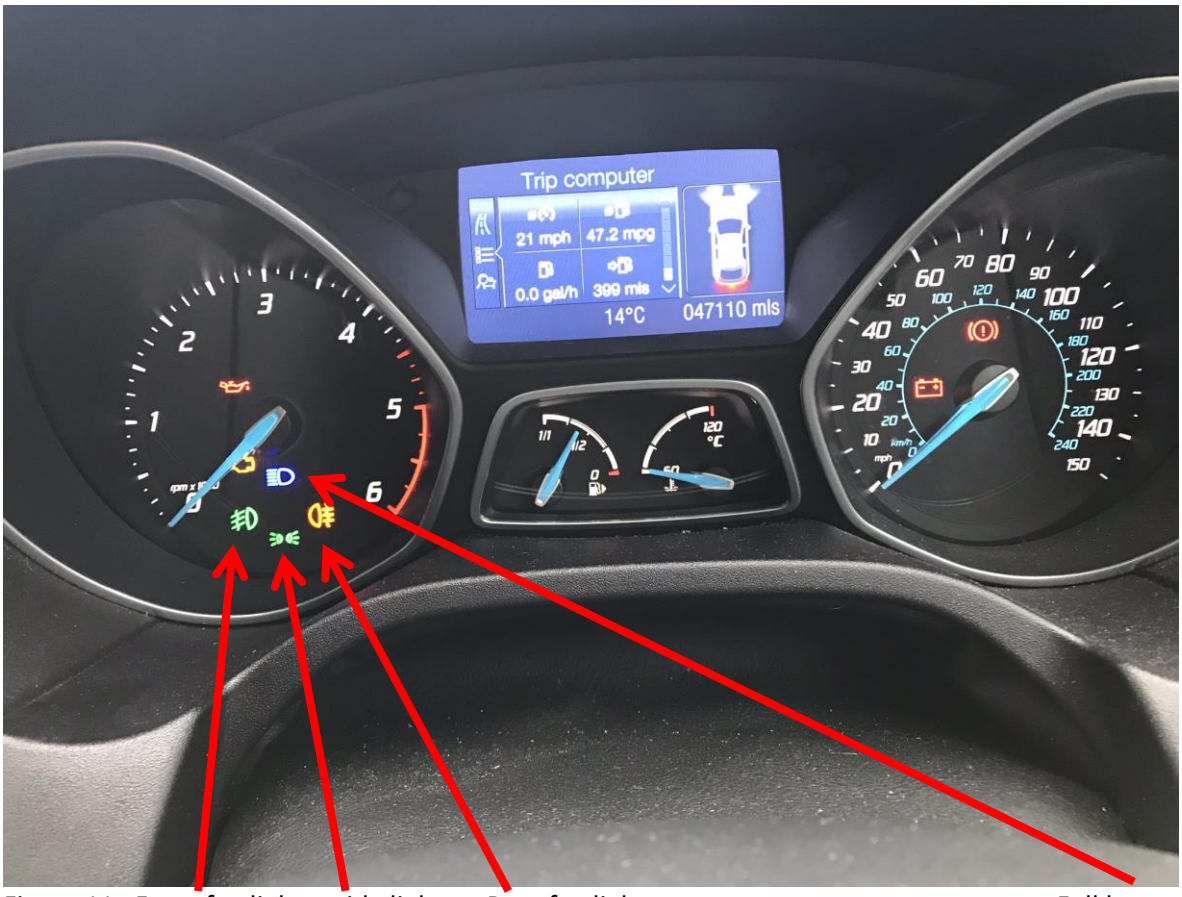

Figure 11. Front fog lights, side lights Rear fog lights, Full beam

12) Tell me how you would switch your headlights from dipped to main beam and explain how you would know the main beam is on.

- Turn ignition to position 2 or press the power button (**figure 5**)
- Turn on the normal driving lights (dipped beam) (**figure 10**)
- Push the indicator stalk towards the dashboard (away from the steering wheel)
- A blue light will illuminate on the dashboard (**figure 11**)
- Pull the indicator stalk towards the steering wheel again to switch the lights off

Please note that the main beam is a floodlight that will blind all road users in front of you; therefore use them carefully!

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

- The head restraint should be the same height as your head or as near as you can get it.
- You want a small gap between your head and the restraint so that it's there to help in the event of a crash but you won't be tempted to use it as a rest.
- Basically, top of head to top of restraint, eyes and ears to middle etc.

Make sure the gap isn't too large though or else it won't provide protection in the event of an accident.

If a vehicle collides with the rear of your vehicle, your body is rapidly moved forward with the driver's seat; if there's nothing to also take you head forward at the same speed as your body, your head will flop backwards tearing the muscles and ligaments in your neck as it goes.

I've had mild whiplash in the past and it really hurts; make sure you position your head restraint accordingly!

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

- A warning light illuminates on the dashboard with the letters 'ABS' inside (**figure 12**)

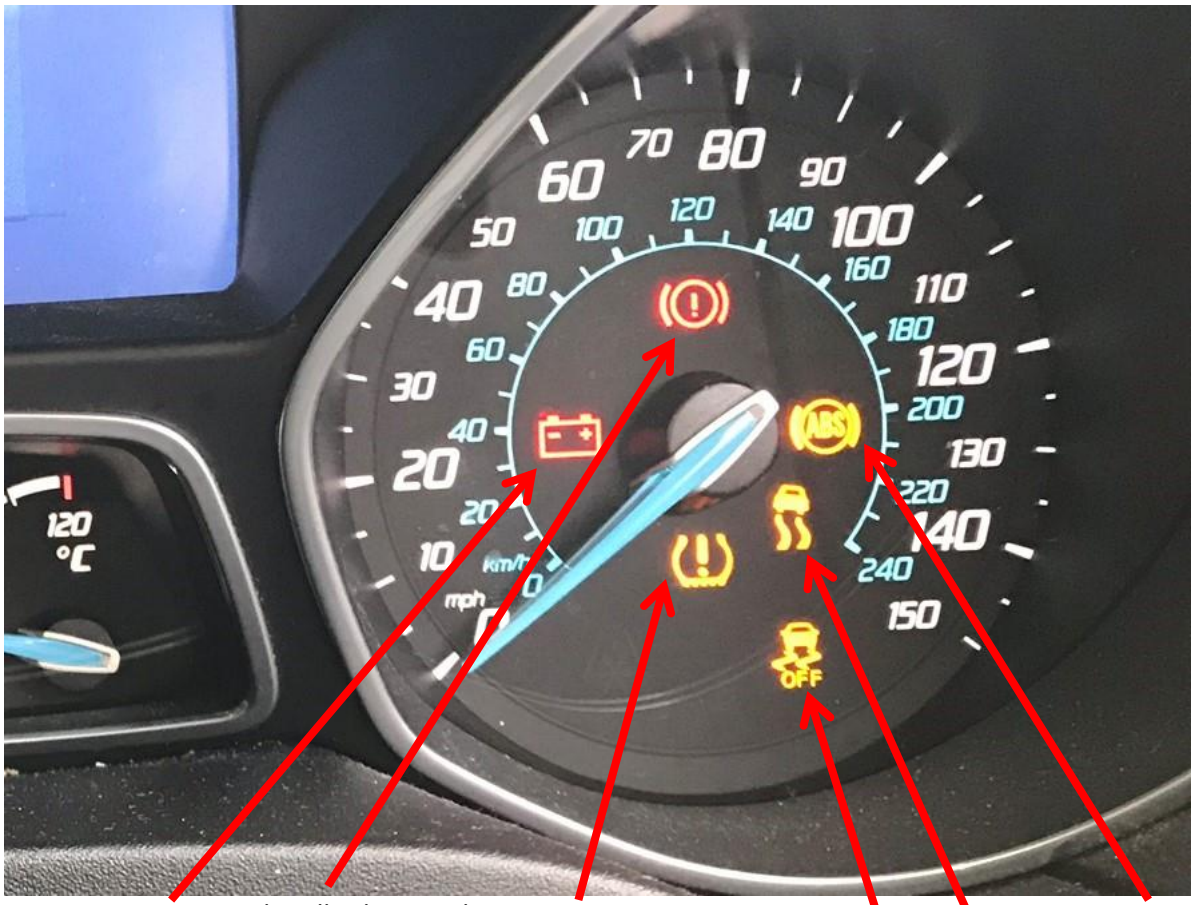

Figure 12. Battery, handbrake on, low tyre pressure, ABS Traction control off / active

Please note that whenever a problem occurs with a part of the car a warning light should illuminate on the dashboard. If this happens, check the owner's manual and follow the instructions within. **Figure 12** has examples of warning lights.

Show me Questions

These questions will be done whilst driving the car

1) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would clean the rear windscreen.

- Move the wiper lever away from the window you want to wash
- Water should be sprayed onto the window and the wipers will wipe 3 times
- Repeat as required to clear the window
- **Figure 13**

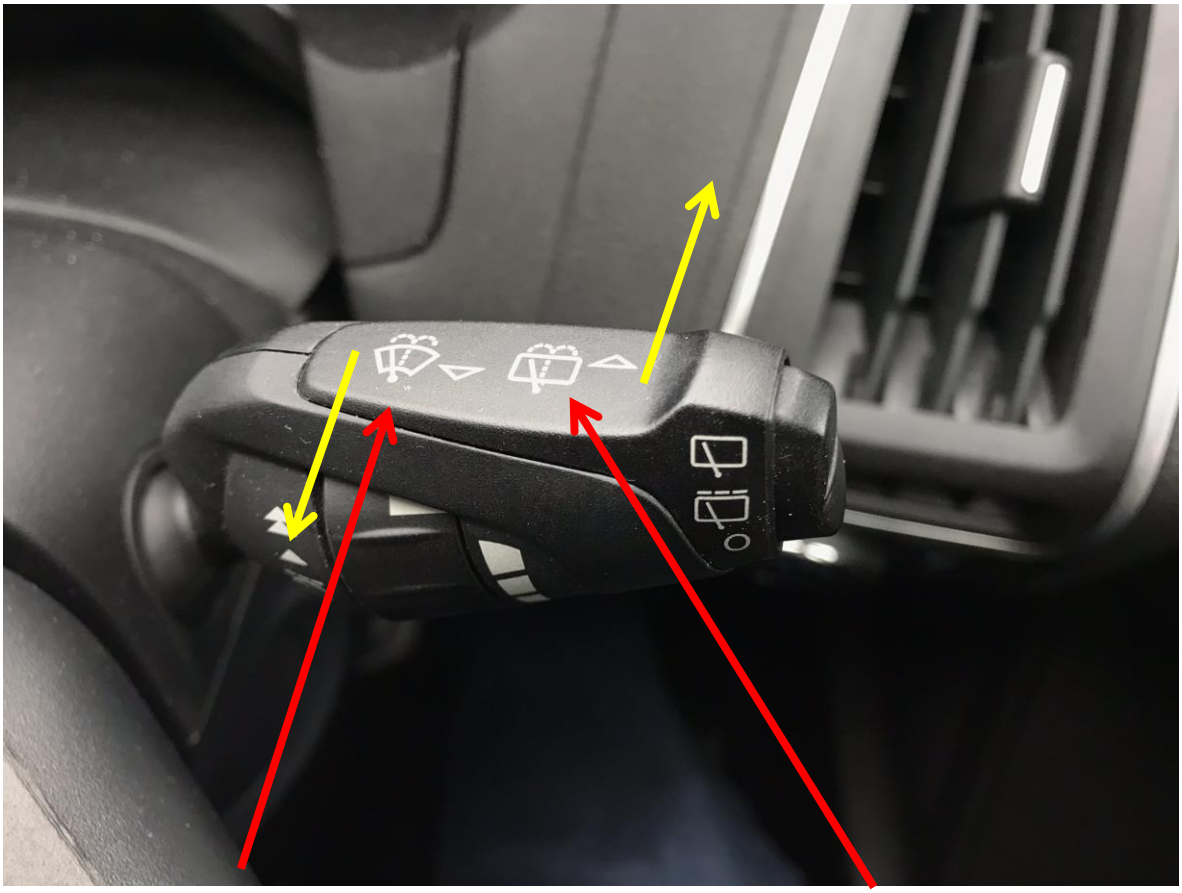

Figure 13. Wash front screen Wash rear screen

2) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would clean the front windscreen.

- Move the wiper lever away from the window you want to wash
- Water should be sprayed onto the window and the wipers will wipe 3 times
- Repeat as required to clear the window
- **Figure 13**

3) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would switch on the dipped headlights.

- Switch on the headlights to position two (dipped beam) (**figure 10**)

4) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would set the rear demister.

- Press the rear demist button (**figure 14**)

5) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would demist the front windscreen.

- Press the demist front window button (**figure 14**)

6) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would operate the horn.

- Press the middle of the steering wheel somewhere in the red zone (**figure 15**)

Figure 15. Horn

7) When it's safe to do so, show me how you would open and close the side window.

- Press the window button down (found on drivers door)
- Lift it up again to raise the window (**figure 16**)

Figure 16. Front passenger window

Other items that you should still know how to operate but aren't tested on

1) Show me how you would check the parking brake for excessive wear.

- Put your foot on the brake pedal (you don't need the engine running by the way)
- Take the handbrake off and reapply it
- The handbrake should behave as normal; if it has little resistance when being applied or it goes to the end of the working travel then get the handbrake checked soon

2) Show me how you would set the demister controls to clear all the windows effectively. This should include both front and rear screens.

- Start the engine
- Press the Maximum Demist button and it will clear all windows for you
- Press the Maximum Demist button again to switch it all back off again
- Note: An examiner once asked if you should set the temperature to hot or cold to demist a car; it's hot!
- **Figure 14**

The above instructions work fine for the question in the test but whilst driving you should consider the following:
Air direction should be pointing at the windscreen so that air circulates over the window.
Fan speed should be high to circulate lots of air.
Set the temperature up high because warm air holds moisture (hence why it's muggy in warm climates). If the air is holding the moisture then it can't be on the windows! The heat also warms the windows and so you are less likely to get condensation on them.
You want fresh air in the car so make sure you aren't recirculating the air!
Switch on the heated rear window (rear demist).
Switch on the heated windscreen (if your car has one).
You now need to get the warm air out of the car so open a window a bit or put the air conditioner on. (Air-con works by removing moisture from the air, it can also cool the air but ultimately you can dehumidify using it at any temperature).

On the driving test, just have the air-con on, fan on the window and you should be fine; if the car does mist up then just up the fan speed.

3) Identify where the windscreen washer level is and tell me how you would check the windscreen washer level.

- Open the bonnet as described in question 1
- Identify reservoir (**figure 3b and 3c**) and have a look
- Some cars have a dip stick for this, some you lift the cap and have a look
- Fill up using screen wash and water (read the screen wash bottle for instructions) until full

4) When safe to do so, operate the hazard warning lights.

- Press the hazard warning lights to switch them on, press again to switch them off (**figure 17**)

Figure 17. Hazard warning light