

CONGESTION CHARGES:

London is the first British city to charge drivers for entry. The idea is to reduce traffic and make the air cleaner. But other cities will soon follow.

The signs look like these:



The charge is for vehicles going into the zone between 7 am and 6 pm on weekdays. But there is no charge for weekends, bank holidays and the days between Christmas and New Year.

The usual charge is £8 a day. If you pay before midnight on the day after it costs £10.

Cameras photograph every vehicle registration number as they enter the zone. If you don't pay you get a £120 penalty. If you pay that within 14 days it is reduced to £60. If you don't pay within 28 days the fine goes up to £185. If you don't pay 3 or more times, your vehicle may be wheel-clamped (at a cost of £70), then removed, then released (at a cost of £200). Every day the vehicle is held costs another £40. After 56 days your vehicle can be destroyed (at a cost of £70). And you will still have to pay all of the fines if you are caught!

So don't mess with the Mayor of London!

You will not have to pay the full charge and there may be no charge if you:

- Are disabled
- Are resident within the congestion charge area
- Drive an 'alternative fuel vehicle'
- Drive an electric vehicle
- Drive a motor-trike
- Drive a vehicle with 9 or more seats

You can pay the following ways (you need your car registration number with you!):

- Online at www.cclondon.com
- At selected shops, petrol stations and car parks
- By post (get the form from the website)
- By telephone – call 0845 900 1234
- By SMS (details from the website)
- At BT Internet kiosks (see website for details)