



### > What is the Congestion Charge?

The Congestion Charge aims to reduce congestion within a specified area of central London. The charge is in operation Monday to Friday 07:00-18:00 and does not apply at weekends, Bank Holidays, or the days between Christmas Day and New Year's Day, when traffic levels are lighter.

It was introduced by Transport for London (TfL) in February 2003, following extensive public and stakeholder consultation and was extended westward in February 2007. In early 2009, The Mayor started the legal process to remove the Western Extension which was fully removed in December 2010.

### > Why is the Congestion Charge necessary?

London suffers from the worst traffic congestion in the UK, and among the worst in Europe. The Congestion Charge is designed to encourage motorists to use other modes of transport and has helped London become the only major city in the world to see a shift from private car use to public transport, walking and cycling.

### > How does it work?

The Congestion Charge is an £11.50 daily tariff and payment enables motorists to drive around, leave and re-enter the charging zone as many times as required in one day.

There are no barriers or tollbooths; instead drivers are paying to register their Vehicle Registration Number (VRN) on a database. Cameras read a vehicle's number plate as it enters, leaves or drives within the charging zone and checks it against the database of those who have paid the charge or those who do not have to pay (because they are exempt or registered for a 100 per cent discount). Once a VRN has been matched, the photographic images of the vehicle are automatically deleted from the database.

The daily charge can be paid before or on the day of travel, by telephone, text message, online, and by post. Drivers have up to midnight on the day of travel to pay the £11.50 charge or £14.00 if they pay the next charging day after travelling in the zone.

The charge can also be paid via Congestion Charging Auto Pay which is an automated payment system that has a discounted daily charge rate of £10.50. Drivers need to register with TfL to pay via Auto Pay and we'll automatically record the number of charging days a vehicle travels within the charging zone each month and bill your debit or credit card each month.

Drivers who have not paid the charge by midnight on the next charging day after they travel in the zone, will be issued with a Penalty Charge Notice of £160, which is reduced to £80 if paid within 14 days.



### > Exemptions and discounts

Exemptions and discounts are available to certain categories of vehicles and individuals.

The following are automatically exempt:

- > London licensed taxis and private hire vehicles
- > Motorcycles
- > Bicycles
- > Vehicles with nine or more seats that are licensed with the DVLA as buses

Residents of the Congestion Charging zone are eligible to register for a 90 per cent discount, which means they would pay a minimum of £5.75 for five consecutive charging days.

Blue Badge holders are eligible to register for a 100 per cent discount and so pay no daily charge.

Businesses and other organisations operating a fleet of at least 6 vehicles, including cars, can register for the Congestion Charging Fleet Scheme and pay £10.50 per day per vehicle.

### Contact Address

**Congestion Charging  
Customer Service  
PO Box 4782  
Worthing, BN11 9PS**

**Telephone Number -  
0343 222 2222**

**Web Address  
[tfl.gov.uk/cc](http://tfl.gov.uk/cc)**

### > Where does the money go?

By law, net revenue from the Congestion Charge must be spent on further improvements to transport across London.

### > What are the benefits?

Congestion charging continues to make a valuable contribution to London's transport network. It has reduced congestion and provided better transport services, cleaner air and safer roads. The primary aim of the Congestion Charge has been to cut traffic levels and congestion in London. Traffic entering the original charging zone has remained stable at 27 per cent lower than pre-charging conditions in 2002. This means that nearly 80,000 fewer cars enter the original charging zone each day.

Cycling levels in the Congestion Charging zone are also up by 66 per cent since the introduction of the scheme.