

FAQs on Odometer Fraud / Clocked Cars

What is a clocked car? It's a car whose odometer (mileage recorder) has been put back or reduced so that it appears to have less miles on the clock.

Is a clocked car dangerous? A car that has been 'clocked' could turn out to be both dangerous and expensive for a buyer. If the real mileage isn't known, then the buyer can't judge the real condition of the car and parts that should be in good working order might be at the point where they are just about to fail. Always carry out a comprehensive history check before buying a used car and get an independent qualified mechanic to inspect it thoroughly.

I bought a used car and just found out it was clocked. Do I have any rights?

Please contact the [Competition & Consumer Protection Commission \(CCPC\)](#) on 1890 432 432 or 01 402 5555 to establish what your rights and options are under consumer protection legislation. If you have concerns as to whether your vehicle is safe to drive please bring it to a qualified mechanic for a thorough inspection.

How do I find out if a vehicle has been clocked?

- Carry out a comprehensive history check through official vehicle record holders such as: [Motorcheck](#), [Cartell](#), [Carhistorycheck](#) etc. This can show if a vehicle has been written off, clocked or if it has outstanding finance
- NCTS started printing the [odometer history](#) on the NCT Cert and the current reading on the disc from July 2014. So ask to see the Cert/disc and compare with the reading on the car now
- Ask to see the vehicle's service history book and check for regular maintenance and the odometer recording

Is there a law against clocking vehicles? Yes.

- It is illegal to interfere, or engage another person to, interfere with an odometer. [Road Traffic Act, 2014](#)
- It is an offence for a trader to mislead customers by providing false information in relation to a "products usage or prior history" [The Consumer Protection Act 2007](#)
- If stopped by An Garda Síochána while driving a dangerously defective vehicle, it is the driver/owner that's liable for prosecution. So buyers need to make sure they're fully aware of what condition the vehicle is in before using it on the public road. [Road Traffic Regs.1963](#)

Please note that Enforcement of Road Traffic Law is the responsibility of [An Garda Síochána \(AGS\)](#).

I want to report a clocked vehicle. Where do I go?

Please contact your local Garda Station and the CCPC on 1890 432 432 or 01 4025555 who has successively taken cases against traders who commit odometer fraud. If the dealer/garage is a member of [SIMI](#) (Society of the Irish Motor Industry) you may also wish to report the clocking to them.

Are there legitimate reasons why a vehicle would have less mileage on the odometer?

Yes, there may be legitimate reasons why an earlier reading is higher than a more recent one. For example; if a speedometer or engine has been replaced. However, this mostly relates to commercial vehicles and should only be carried out for genuine reasons. Proof of the original mileage should always be requested by potential buyers.

Why does the NCT not check for clocked cars and report them?

The NCTS is not responsible for policing odometer fraud or clocked cars. The data recorded at the NCT is transferred to the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport National Vehicle and Driver File (NVDF) where it is stored and An Garda Síochána has access to this data. Enforcement of the law on clocking is the responsibility of AGS.

How could a clocked car pass the NCT?

A clocked car is not necessarily dangerously defective. Despite the additional mileage it may have been serviced and/or parts replaced before sale. It is important to note also that [The NCT Cert is not a warranty](#). The RSA strongly advises all potential buyers to carry out a history check and get a vehicle independently inspected by a qualified mechanic before purchase, regardless of whether it has a valid NCT. If you wish to make an NCT complaint please contact their Customer Service Team on 01 4135994

This document is for general information only. It does not, and is not intended to, provide legal or technical advice or to represent a legal interpretation of the matters that it addresses.

Where can I check if the NCT Cert is fake?

You can check whether an NCT cert is fake by visiting www.ncts.ie or www.cvrt.ie and entering the vehicle registration number. This is free and will show the expiry date of the last NCT cert issued for that vehicle.

Where can I get a list of Qualified Mechanics or Reputable Motor Engineers?

The Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI) has a list of approved garages on www.simi.ie. Alternatively, [The Engineer's Association of Ireland](#) has a list of registered mechanical Engineers.

I want to buy a used car. Does the RSA have any advice?

Buyers need to take the following steps to protect themselves before investing in a used car:

1. Never, ever, buy a car without getting it independently checked by a qualified mechanic. They can tell you what the dealer may be deliberately trying to hide. Ensure the mechanic is properly qualified and independent from the seller.
2. Always carry out a comprehensive history check through official vehicle record holders (e.g. [Motorcheck](#), [Cartell](#), [Carhistorycheck](#) etc.). This can show if a vehicle has been written off, clocked or if it has outstanding finance.
3. The National Car Testing Service (NCTS) started printing the [odometer history](#) on the NCT Cert and the current reading on the disc from July 2014. So ask to see the Cert/disc and compare with the reading on the car now. If the prior odometer reading is more than the current one it could indicate that the car was [clocked](#).
4. If buying from a garage, get a warranty for the car. If the dealer is not willing to offer this, consider walking away from the sale. [The NCT is not the same as a warranty](#). A vehicle still needs to be [serviced](#) in line with manufacturers' guidelines in between NCTs.
5. All cars over 4 years old (and registered after 1st Jan 1980) are legally required to have a valid NCT certificate. You can check whether an NCT cert is fake by visiting www.ncts.ie and entering the vehicle registration number. This will show the expiry date of the last NCT cert issued for that vehicle. This is free.
6. What may seem like a bargain at the time, can end up costing you more in the long term with expensive replacement parts and labour. A qualified mechanic should be able to identify worn or dangerous parts. Also check the vehicle's service history for regular maintenance.
7. Enquire about the vehicle's original [NCAP rating](#). Older cars normally don't have the same [safety rating](#) or [safety features](#) that would offer extra protection such as anti-lock braking systems, electronic stability control, crash protection features, airbags etc.