

Car Parking Blunders Cost Motorists £716 Million

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- Average repair cost is £1,428
- Latest Golf leaves just 17.5cm each side when parked in typical bay

UK drivers cause nearly three quarters of a billion pounds* of damage annually simply parking their cars, according to research by Accident Exchange.

Costing £1,428 on average to repair vehicle damage, car park prangs are second only to rear-end shunts as the most common kind of car accident.

Up nearly four per cent since 2010, it is estimated that there are 500,000** car parking collisions of this type annually, or an eye-watering 1,373 every day.

The replacement vehicle provider to the motor industry found most parking incidents take place at slow speeds but that does not stop motorists damaging doors, wheels, bumpers and other parts of the bodywork.

A possible contributing factor is that today's larger vehicles are now squeezing into parking spaces of only 237.5cm*** in width – the average car park space size – leaving drivers of the latest Golf for instance, at 203cm wide, with only 17.25cm either side.

In comparison, the original Golf MK1 was just 171cm wide.

Liz Fisher of Accident Exchange said: "Looking at the statistics, you'd think there is chaos in car parks up and down the country and that drivers are literally battling for spaces to park.

"The fact is, though, that drivers are having to squeeze their larger cars into smaller spaces and there are many more car journeys made than just a decade ago.

"On top of that, visibility from inside the cabin of new cars is compromised compared to older vehicles, which used far more glass and had lower sills and narrower pillars. That could be part of the explanation for the recent increase."

There were an estimated 2.2 million**** accidents on UK roads in 2011. The Accident Exchange analysis reveals that general car park incidents represent around 25 per cent of the total.

Accident Exchange, part of the Automotive & Insurance Solutions Group which also incorporates DCML and In-Car Cleverness, has commercial partnerships with 1,500 franchised dealerships across its suite of products. Last year Accident Exchange provided onward mobility to over 100,000 customers.

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Notes to editors

*22.78% of accidents recorded by Accident Exchange were car park-related accidents. It is estimated that there are roughly 2.2 million accidents annually, so 501,160 multiplied by an average repair cost of £1,428 is £715,656,430.

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***Accident Exchange conducted research in Kingston Upon Thames which established that the average width of car park spaces is 237.5cm (from inside of white line to inside of white line). The Golf Mk7 is 203cm in width (inc mirrors).

****Based on an industry wide accepted figure of 2.2m accidents in 2011. Survey data on road accidents: this takes statistics from the DfT and combines them with those from the National Travel Survey and the

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British Crime Survey to enable an estimation of the total number of accidents. It is believed the total number, including small accidents not reported to the police, is in the region of 2.2 million.

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Its portfolio of Companies incorporates a number of brands including In-Car Cleverness, Accident Exchange, DCML Ltd and APU Ltd.

Accident Exchange

Through its dedicated service centre and fleet of vehicles, Accident Exchange helps motorists who have found themselves on the wrong end of an accident get back on the road as quickly as possible. Removing some of the stress resulting from a crash, Accident Exchange will interact with insurers, organise repairs and keep drivers mobile.

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