

## Clamped? Car gone?

Don't take a chance. It isn't worth the hassle. You risk having your car...

- Clamped or towed away by the local authority if you ignore the parking regulations.
- Towed away by the police if you park dangerously.
- Clamped or towed away by the DVLA if your road tax is out of date.

You will have to pay to release the car, and penalties are high. The best advice is: DON'T RISK IT. You will be seriously inconvenienced, and out of pocket.

What to do...

- Follow the advice attached to the windscreen. If your car has gone, contact the police. If it has been towed away, they will have details.
- If you are in London and you suspect that your car has been towed away, you can use the TRACE service (020 7747 4747) to find out where it is.
- You must pay to have the car released, but you may appeal afterwards. Details of how to do this will be given to you when you pay. Hard evidence will help any appeal.

Landowners may legally use wheelclamps to stop people parking on their land, but they must play fair. Many rogue wheelclampers charge exorbitant fees to release vehicles:

- Don't risk parking on private land unless you have permission.
- Take serious note of threatening signs.
- The boundaries between private and public parking are often unclear so don't be tempted.

If you are clamped...

- Keep calm don't lose your temper or tamper with the clamp.
- Contact the telephone number shown and ask for release.
- While you are waiting, take a good look round. Note particularly whether signs and boundaries are clear enough.
- Ask the wheelclampers who they work for, whether the landowner's authority can be produced, and if they have a licence from the Security Industry Authority (SIA). If you don't get satisfactory answers, call the police the wheelclampers may be guilty of a criminal offence.
- When you pay up, insist on a receipt and try to get the address and phone number at which the wheelclamper can be contacted.
- If you want to challenge the clamping (perhaps because of poor signing), you can do so through the small claims court or if it is a licensed clamper complain to the SIA.
- If necessary, take legal advice but be in no doubt that many wheelclampers operating on private land are unscrupulous and will evade all attempts to be traced and challenged in court.

Tell us if you have been the victim of unscrupulous clampers the information will help us get this practice brought under control. In Scotland, wheelclamping is already illegal. Full advice on clamping on private land can be found in [Roads and Traffic](#) section.