

Here is a pictorial reminder of all the aspects to be checked in a good, systematic cockpit drill for a typical modern manual car. Variations for an **auto** are also highlighted.

## 0. Know your vehicle

The pictures and instructions are typical for a current manual gearbox car with the variations for an automatic car in **red text**.

Some automatics may have column stalks or rotary knobs rather than a shift stick on the centre console.

It is recognised that it may not be possible to adjust some of the car's features such as seats or mirrors, until after the ignition has been activated.

Many current cars have electrical parking brakes rather than conventional pull-on handbrakes.

Particular vehicles may have a slightly different starting-up procedure (e.g. depress clutch, brake before pressing start or turning the key) so please check in your own car's handbook.

If you have a passenger in the car, make sure they check their doors (#2), clip in the seatbelt (#15) and understand how to lock / open doors (#16) at the same time that you reach the item in your drill.

We recognise there are a multitude of variations but you should use the principles and order given here where possible. Know your car's variations and adjust your cockpit drill to suit.

## 1. Parking brake on?



As you get into a manual car, just check that the parking brake is fully on so that the car cannot move and is secure.

## 2. Door secure?



A few inches before door closure, use your left hand to tug firmly to close it then push to check its security. Don't lock it yet though.

## 3. Wheel / seat position?



Adjust your seat/wheel for comfort and safety. Position it to have wrists on wheel and no leg stretch to depress clutch. (Or wait to #14)

## 4. Mirrors' positions?



Adjust manual mirror positions for maximum view. Align the top of the rear-view mirror to top of rear screen. (Electrical adjust? - #14)

## 5. Gear in neutral?



In a manual car, wiggle the gear stick laterally and longitudinally to ensure that it is placed in the neutral position.

## 6. Parking brake & park?



Check the parking brake is on and the gear shift is set to **Park**. In modern autos, the shift must be in **park** to switch off /on the ignition.

## 7. Power steering active?



Before starting the car, pull down the wheel with your other hand. After ignition #8 or #9, you should feel the power steering activating.

## 8. Ignition & warnings



Depress the clutch to start. Have all warning lights illuminated and then extinguished apart from the parking brake and seat light?

## 9. Ignition & warnings



Depress the footbrake to start up. Have warning lights lit up and then gone out apart from the parking brake? Auto is showing P.

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## 10. Apply a little gas



Slowly release clutch after start up and depress the accelerator pedal to ensure the engine is responding correctly. (~1500rpm)

## 11. Instruments



Is the rev counter responding to a slight depression of accelerator pedal? Are fuel and temperature gauges showing correctly?

## 12. Static brake check



Apply firm pressure on the footbrake to check servo is active. You may maintain this while you check / adjust auxiliaries' settings.

## 13. Auxiliaries' settings



Check your lights, wipers, heated screens, climate control, etc. are in the correct setting. Adjust radio and set satnav before setting off.

## 14. Electrical positions



In many modern cars, the ignition must be active to move the seats and mirrors electrically to the correct position. (see #3 & #4)

## 15. Seat belt secure?



After everything has been checked, clip in your seat belt. Does the seat belt warning light extinguish?

## 16. Door lock



Set the doors to lock or if an option, they will automatically lock after the car moves and reaches more than 5mph.

## 17. Mirror check & signal



Check for traffic in mirrors and over both shoulders before getting ready to move off. Only signal if necessary.

## 18. Move off



When safe to do so, depress the clutch, select the gear and release the parking brake to move off. Check park brake light is off.

## 19. Move off



When safe to do so, depress the brake, release the parking brake then select drive. Press gas pedal to move off.

## 20. Moving brake check



If you have not been using the car recently, check your brakes work effectively by stopping from about 30mph in a non-retarding gear in a place clear of traffic soon after setting off.

You should brake gradually and progressively but not harshly to check that the car does not pull to one side or the braking causes some sort of vibration or strange noise which may indicate a brake calliper is binding. Release the brake pedal before coming to a complete stop to ensure the brakes also release correctly.