

In Their View (ITV)

The subject of ITV (Inspeccion Tecnico de Vehiculos) is very much in the press recently not least because the Valencia Community has the highest charges in Spain and uniquely tests noise levels, so play safe if you live in this region and have your car inspected within its boundaries

So let's take another look at this process which is the Spanish equivalent of the MOT. The inspection is impartial, being undertaken by testing stations, ultimately responsible to the Industry Ministry, and not by workshops who may have a vested interest in finding fault (yes madam of course your brake pads are dangerous, they are the wrong colour)

The inspection process

The process varies from station to station, but all will follow the strictures laid down that include the usual stuff such as lights, wipers, brakes, washers, horn, tyres, emissions, exhaust etc. Many of you will be familiar with the shakers that move your wheels back and forth and side to side to check your ball joints- trust me loose ball joints can be quite uncomfortable. The driver has to play a willing part, not so easy if your Spanish is below par and the inspector is having a bad day

Remembering the following words may help

Lights	Luces
Headlights	Faros
Low beam	Corto
High beam	Larga
Fog lights	Luces antiniebla
Brakes	Frenos
Hand brake	Freno de mano
Indicators	Intermitentes
Go ahead	Adelante
Reverse	Marcha atrás
OK	Vale (ballet!)
Tyres	Neumáticos

Stop

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Inspections normally take 20-30 minutes as the stations are custom built for the purpose. This time scale only applies if there is no coffee break in between, discussion over the latest Madrid- Barca game is over and there are not too many pretty girls in sight. At the end of the inspection you will be given a grunt or a warm smile depending upon your gender plus a report of the inspection, a stamp on the back of your ITV card (ficha tecnica) and a sticker for the windscreen

Frequency, lining up and grief prevention

The frequency for inspections is when a vehicle is 4 years old, up to 2 years until it is 10 years old and then annually. Bikes are always biannually. Vehicles classed as commercial or "mixto", most Citroen Berlingos for example, are inspected twice as often

Appointments can be made or you can just turn up and take pot luck. You will need your registration document, ITV card and proof of insurance. Normally there are various lanes for different vehicle types such as "tourismos" (cars) and "gasolina" (petrol) or diesel. It is customary to put the vehicle in the correct lane to reserve your place and then enter the office to present your papers and pay.

Occasionally you will see cars move in front of you, this is not queue jumping which is as much frowned upon by the Spanish as by us Brits, but because the car is having a shorter second inspection or maybe has an appointment, so yelling "marcha atras Pedro" may end up in grief

Failures and reforms

If your vehicle fails the ITV you will be advised verbally and the problem shown on the report. After the problem has been resolved you must take it back to the same station for inspection of the failed elements only; a charge is levied in the Valencian Community but elsewhere in Spain is normally free

ITV stations are also responsible for checking any reforms to the vehicle such as a tow bar. Tow bars must be of an approved type, fitted by a recognised company and finally approved at an ITV station where details of the reform are added to the ficha tecnica

Basically anything bolted onto the car after it left the production line is a reform and must be of an approved type (homologated). This includes bull bars and side runners. Some of these are a grey area and will only be accepted by the ITV station if they are OK In Their View

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