

## What is an ITV inspection?

One of the wonders on moving to Spain is to see the signs for ITV. “Oooh look we can get English telly!”

English language TV is a subject that is far too thorny for me to get involved in, but in Spain, this stands for “Inspeccion Tecnica de Vehiculos”

In the UK, we would call this the “MOT” and the function is essentially the same, but there is one fundamental difference that I believe makes the Spanish system better.

At the ITV the vehicle will be inspected in a similar way to the MOT and includes the following

Headlights (sorry, but the plastic beam benders are not acceptable)

All other running lights. Whilst a rear fog light will probably be used as often as snow chains, they are nevertheless compulsory. If your car has 2 rear fog lights, then great. If one only, it has to be on the left hand side (closest to the middle of the road)

The reversing light however can be on either side

Indicators. It has been rumoured that this is the only time they are used in Spain!

Emissions testing.

Brakes, both running and handbrakes must all be effective and in balance so that you don't take a dive into a ditch under emergency braking

Wipers and washers function. Though the condition of the wipers seems immaterial

Seat belts match the number of seats

The exhaust is OK; there are no oil leaks or damage to the car that may affect performance

In Spain the tyres have to be identical on the same axle (so the pair at the front can be a different make to the pair at the back).

The speed rating (how fast the tyres are designed to be driven at) is stipulated by the manufacturer and should be in your vehicle manual

Four-wheeled vehicles also have the pleasure of having the front wheels shaken about by moving plates to check that all of the connections are intact

For vehicles undergoing an import standard ITV, then they are measured, and sometimes weighed. The VIN or chassis number is also found and a “brass rubbing” of it taken for comparison with the paperwork

Any well-maintained vehicle should have no problem, but if the vehicle fails, then after remedial work, the vehicle is re-inspected but only in the areas where it failed.

After first ever inspection in Spain, you will eventually be given an ITV card which, unlike MOT certificates is a permanent document. When the vehicle is re-tested, this document is stamped with the result and handed back to you

Brand new vehicles are first tested when they reach their 4<sup>th</sup> anniversary. After that it is every 2 years until the vehicle is 10 years old; thereafter annually

The main difference between an MOT and ITV is this. In the UK mainland, vehicles are normally inspected at garages. Where a vehicle fails its test, then the garage would normally carry out the remedial work and re-test the vehicle.

Whilst I’m sure that the vast majority of garages are totally straight, we have all had examples where the mechanic has put on his long face and said whilst sucking his teeth says, “sorry sir, but your brake pads are low and need changing; we’ll take care of it and your car will pass”. We don’t argue but pay up just to get that all important piece of paper

In Spain, the inspectors do just what is says on the can and inspect. Where a vehicle fails, they cannot and will not undertake the repair work at the ITV. This is for the owner to deal with

Of course the inspectors are human and subject to the normal whims that we all have after a row with our spouse, a whinge from the boss or alternatively a win for our favourite team, so discretion plays a part in the process

Fortunately for us, we have developed a very good relationship with the inspectors and more often than not a borderline situation will go our way as long as they see us advising the customer that he must get it sorted. They will not however, nor would we wish them to, pass a car that has a safety problem

You will know that after inspection, you car is safe and ready for the rigours of the Spanish roads

*For further information, please see our ad’ in the motoring section*