

The 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, ITV stands for “Inspection Tecnica de Vehiculos”. This is the Spanish equivalent of an MOT

The inspection includes the following

Headlights, sorry, but the plastic beam benders are not acceptable, so you may need to change your lights

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 must 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 to ensure that they are within acceptable parameters for your vehicle and that you are not killing the planet

Brakes, both running and handbrakes must all be effective and in balance so that you don't take a drive 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

Here, the tyres have to be identical on the same axle, so the pair at the front can be different to the pair at the back

The speed and weight ratings (how fast the tyres are designed to be driven at and how much load they can carry) as stipulated by the manufacturer. This is not an issue in other countries, but is strictly adhered to here

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

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

Documents and frequencies

Any well-maintained vehicle should have no problem, but if the vehicle fails, the remedial work only is re-inspected, not the whole vehicle

After the first ever inspection in Spain, you will be given a detailed report and an ITV card (ficha tecnica). When the vehicle is periodically inspected, this document is stamped with the result and handed back to you

Brand new cars are first tested when they reach their 4th anniversary. After that it is every 2 years until the vehicle is 10 years old; thereafter annually. Motorbikes are periodically inspected every two years. At the time of periodic inspection, you need take only your ITV card and registration document

The main difference between an MOT and ITV is that in Spain, the inspectors do just what is says on the can and inspect. Where a vehicle fails, they cannot and will not undertake repair work, so, we are not subject to unscrupulous garages finding questionable faults

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 over the years developed a very good relationship with the inspectors and often a borderline situation will go our way if 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, your car is safe and ready for the rigours of the Spanish roads, well apart from the dangers caused by our fellow motorists that is!

Spanish Number Plates
Graham Shelton
Orihuela, Alicante
www.spanish-number-plates.com
info@spanish-number-plates.com
966 753 375
605 319 889