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UK drivers could face £5,000 fine for eating, fiddling with the radio or operating a satnav at the wheel

- **Motorists who eat food, tune the radio or operate a satnav whilst driving face fines of up to £5,000 for breaching the Highway Code**
- **Volkswagen Financial Services UK is reminding drivers of the code as research from the leading car finance provider shows that 24% of us are planning a domestic road trip this spring**
- **According to Rule 148 of the Highway Code, drivers must ‘avoid distractions when driving or riding such as...trying to read maps, starting or adjusting any music or radio...eating and drinking’**

Motorists who eat food, tune the radio or operate a satnav whilst behind the wheel face hefty fines for breaching the Highway Code.

Volkswagen Financial Services UK is reminding drivers to avoid such behaviours, which can incur a £5,000 fine, as research from the car finance provider shows that 24% of Brits are planning a domestic road trip this spring*.

People who’ve had reduced time in the car because of the pandemic should note that, according to Rule 148 of the Highway Code, drivers must “avoid distractions when driving or riding such as...trying to read maps, starting or adjusting any music or radio...eating and drinking.”

These behaviours can fall under the ‘careless and inconsiderate driving’ offence or be classed as driving without due care and attention.

It’s important that everyone is aware of the rules, especially as road trips are likely be longer drives than people are used to. Roads are also expected to be busy this spring after the government announced an end to all remaining Covid restrictions in England.

Rule 150 of the Highway Code states that: “There is a danger of driver distraction being caused by in-vehicle systems such as satellite navigation systems, congestion warning systems, PCs, multi-media, etc.

“You MUST exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. Do not rely on driver assistance systems such as motorway assist, lane departure warnings, or remote control parking. They are available to assist but you should not reduce your concentration levels.”

Driving without due care and attention is not necessarily a black and white offence, but any driving that demonstrates lack of alertness to the dangers of the road, or a disregard for other road users (whether deliberate or not), could fall under this category.

Other examples of not paying attention while driving may include: allowing yourself to be distracted by passengers in the car, adjusting your seating position, tailgating, lane-hogging, and swerving across lanes.

These offences could lead to fines of £5000 and up to nine points on a driver's license. Some motorists may even be disqualified from driving in serious cases.

The enduring popularity of Blighty-based staycations is a continuation of a trend that began in the summer of 2020, with research showing that half of Brits (49%) have become more interested in staycations and road trips as a result of the pandemic.

Mike Todd, CEO at Volkswagen Financial Services UK, said: *“Not everyone will be aware of these rules in the Highway Code, but it’s vitally important that people understand what they can and can’t do whilst behind the wheel. With Covid restrictions ending in England, we’re likely to see more drivers on the road so it’s important as ever to be alert and undistracted in the car. Knowing and complying with the laws of the road is essential not just to avoid a fine but to keep everyone on our roads safe.”*

As well as adhering to the Highway Code, being safe on the road also means making sure your vehicle is kept in top working order. For more information, visit <https://customer.vwfs.co.uk/servicing---maintenance.html>

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Note to editors:

***The data for this study was collected in December 2021 and comprises responses from 2,012 British respondents.**

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Information for editors:

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