

AdBlue FAQ



What is AdBlue and how does it work?

Since 2005, legislation on diesel vehicles in the UK & Ireland and in the rest of Europe has demanded a drastic reduction of Nitrogen Oxide emissions. Vehicle manufacturers, particularly those of large goods vehicles, have had to adapt and evolve the exhaust system on their vehicles to remain compliant and competitive in the market. More and more diesel vehicles including, tractors and other off-road vehicles are now equipped with a selective Catalytic Reduction System (SCR) in the exhaust that enables AdBlue solution to be added which will subsequently reduce the vehicles emissions.

AdBlue is a solution composed of urea and demineralised water. It is non-toxic, colourless, odourless and non-flammable.

AdBlue is injected into the engine's exhaust gases by the SCR system and through the resulting chemical reaction, the nitrogen oxides in the exhaust are converted into harmless nitrogen and water vapour.

AdBlue Technology enables diesel models to benefit from reduced emissions whilst maintaining performance in relation to power and torque output.

How often does AdBlue need to be topped up / replaced?

The consumption of AdBlue can vary dependent on vehicle type (LCV, HGV, Car, and Coach), manufacturer, driving conditions and driving behaviour. Rarely will a driver need to top up their AdBlue tank between services, but occasionally excessive consumption may force the driver to top up the AdBlue. Usually the vehicle will alert the driver when levels are low through a dashboard message.

Always refer to your vehicle manufacturer's website for guides or alternatively contact the SHB helpline on 08458 725 419 for specific fill up times, levels and the location of the AdBlue tank.

How will I know when it is time to top up?

Usually when the AdBlue supply is down to approximately three litres, a display message along the lines of 'refill AdBlue' will likely appear. This may vary dependent on vehicle manufacturer and vehicle type.

Usually, if the AdBlue tank is not topped up at this point then the vehicle will continue to run, however the driver must ensure that AdBlue is added before it completely runs out, otherwise they will not be able to start the engine. For HGVs, low levels of AdBlue may cause a loss of power to the engine, which will lead to a reduction in efficiency and may also be recorded onto the vehicles ECU which will be visible to technicians the next time the vehicle undergoes a PMI, MOT or service.

What happens if AdBlue runs out?

If the AdBlue is not topped up and is allowed to run out, you will likely see a message appear on your dash panel along the lines of 'Refill AdBlue start not possible' and the engine will not start. In order to resolve this

issue most vehicles will require a top up with at least three litres of AdBlue. The minimum top up may differ dependent on the vehicle type and manufacturer. Remember that when topping up AdBlue it is highly recommended that you use the entire contents of the bottle of AdBlue as once it is opened it cannot be re-used.

It is the customer's responsibility to ensure there is sufficient AdBlue in the vehicle, if SHB or our breakdown repair agents are called to attend a vehicle that has run out of AdBlue then this attendance will be charged back to the customer.

Where can I purchase AdBlue?

Your SHB vehicle will be delivered with AdBlue, however if you need to top up the levels during the hire period then you can purchase AdBlue from a number of forecourts across the UK & Ireland. You can also purchase AdBlue directly from suppliers of fuel and other spare-parts for large goods vehicles in the UK & Ireland. For larger consumption of AdBlue then it may be worth purchasing a quantity that is delivered straight to your bulk tank or drum.

You should only buy a product that bears the name AdBlue, and is manufactured in line with ISO 22241 standard. SCR systems with which AdBlue is used are very sensitive to potential chemical impurities that can contaminate the urea solution. Even the slightest amount of impurity has the potential to severely damage your SCR catalyst. Using a quality product will help avoid the potential for high costs of having to replace a damaged catalyst.

Warning: Most vehicle engine manufacturers will not accept the warranty requests if you have used a low quality AdBlue or a fluid that has been modified incorrectly.

Should a vehicle require repairs or maintenance assistance due to the use of a low quality AdBlue, then any costs will be recharged back to the customer.

How do I refill the AdBlue tank?

It is unlikely that a driver will be required to top up the AdBlue in their vehicle between scheduled services, however due to the consumption being affected by driving standards, conditions and mileage, a driver may be required to top up.

AdBlue must only be poured into the vehicle's separate AdBlue tank and must not be put into the diesel fuel tank. AdBlue must not be mixed with any additives or diluted with water.

The location of the AdBlue tank may vary dependent on manufacturer. It is normally covered by a blue cap but this may also vary between manufacturers.

In order to refill the AdBlue tank, your vehicle must be parked on a level surface in order to avoid fluctuations in capacity or overfilling which can cause damage.

For safety purposes, always remember to refill your AdBlue in a well-ventilated area.

What do I do if I mistakenly pour AdBlue into the diesel fuel tank?

Do not start the engine!

Do not move the vehicle!

The fuel tank of the vehicle must be drained with the vehicle still in its original position. In the event that you have incorrectly put AdBlue into your fuel tank, you should contact our customer helpline on 01794 511 458 for assistance on the matter.

If the engine is started, even for just a short period then the AdBlue will enter the wrong system, and this can have expensive consequences in the long and short term.

AdBlue is not compatible with some metals and materials, so it will slowly degrade the fuel system's pipework and components.

Similarly if you put Diesel into your AdBlue tank then the Diesel will poison the catalyst which is expensive to replace (unwarrantable damage), resulting in downtime and heavy maintenance bills.

Any damage that is caused through human error of placing AdBlue into the incorrect tank and vice-versa is classed as unwarrantable damage and therefore the Hirer will incur heavy maintenance costs.

Can I store a bottle that has been opened to use at a later date?

No. You should use the entire AdBlue product in the bottle at the one time. Empty bottles can be recycled. Once opened and exposed to air, the purity of the fluid will be compromised and therefore unsafe for further use. Impure AdBlue fluid can damage the SCR system which will be recharged back to the hirer.

How do I dispose of any excess AdBlue fluid?

Disposal of this product, solutions and any by-products should at all times comply with the requirements of environmental protection and waste disposal legislation and any regional local authority requirements. The disposal of surplus and non-recyclable products should be completed via a licensed waste disposal contractor. Waste should not be disposed of untreated to the sewer unless fully compliant with the requirements of all authorities with Jurisdiction. It is the responsibility of the Hirer to safely dispose of any excess AdBlue fluid and packaging.

The vehicle manufacturer website should always be referred to for any information regarding AdBlue for the specific vehicle. Alternatively, you can call our customer assistance line on 08458 725 419 where one of our trained advisors can help give you guidance on the matter.