

A picture paints a thousand words.

Dashcam tips from IAM RoadSmart



We have all seen the publicity on TV and online that exposes bad driving on our roads in the UK and worldwide. The essential ingredient that draws us all in is the dash-cam footage of the bad behaviour – a picture paints a thousand words. There is no doubt that dash-cam footage is invaluable in exposing scam claims and can be of benefit when it all goes wrong. Here are some simple essentials to consider if you are fitting a camera to your car.

- If possible, get the camera fitted professionally. The wires will be concealed and the unit itself properly secured in a location that does not impede your vision. If fitted correctly the unit will not provide any distraction to you while driving.
- If you have fitted the camera yourself, you need to get a balance between replicating the driver's view and making sure the unit is not a distraction. Remember wires dangling across the windscreen or controls will affect your control.
- Make sure the unit is recording and set correctly – there is no point in having the camera if the memory card is still in the box or the setting requires manual activation and you forgot. Always make sure you activate before you start your journey.
- The best units will give a view to the front and the rear, this will give a better perspective of any incident especially if your collision is from the rear.
- The camera lens will not necessarily pick up all the information you are seeing as the driver. There may be relevant information to the sides of the vehicle that is not recorded. Be aware the clip may be of poor quality or too short to see the developing situation.
- Most importantly, the camera is not a substitute for good driver behaviour. It will tell the story of an incident from its own perspective, whoever is to blame. But if we are behaving properly and maintaining our Advanced Driving standards on the road, the extra information afforded by the camera, should an incident happen, will of course be beneficial.
- If you do record an incident make sure you save or copy the clip correctly, it may be required by your insurance company or the police.

Richard said: "The benefits of having access to the footage far outweigh the possible problems if it has all gone wrong. Remember the recording is a last resort, it means that you have been unable to avoid an incident and are now trying to mitigate the circumstances. Is there information in the clip that allows you to learn? Could you have done something differently to avoid the problem? If you do record evidence of the bad behaviour of others, make sure you assess your part and if you can learn anything about your own driving before sharing. The best footage to have is of a safe journey with no incidents, and then a short

piece of your car safely parked. The dashcam is no substitute for good training and better driver behaviour.”