



Rated by Experts

Leading the market in
clarity and transparency



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Overview

Our product ratings use a set of 'red line' criteria to calculate an underlying score for each product, which translates to a star rating.

Products can achieve between one and five stars. The more comprehensive the product, the more likely it is to be rated highly.

To achieve a five-star rating, products must meet all of our red line criteria. We focus on core product features, and don't give extra marks for unnecessary features or optional extras.

Our current red line criteria are contained in the following pages.

We do not consider price when calculating these ratings.

Product features included

Red Line 1 – cover for stolen keys

Policies must offer at least £700 to cover the cost of replacement locks if keys are stolen. The average price of a set of car locks is £689,¹ so £700 is a reasonable level of cover for a customer to expect in this situation.

Red Line 2 – cover for lost keys

Policies must offer at least £700 to cover the cost of replacement locks if keys are lost. £700 is a reasonable level as would cover the average price for a set of car locks.

Red Line 3 – 24-hour telephone helpline

Policies must provide access to a 24-hour telephone helpline. If a customer is involved in a road accident, they should be able to contact their insurance immediately. This is particularly important if their car is undriveable after the accident. Customers should not be penalised or left stranded if this happens outside office hours. Policies must provide an alternative including claims helpline and accident recovery line.

Red Line 4 – courtesy car - repair

Policies must offer customers the use of a replacement car whilst theirs is being repaired or if it has been stolen. Many people rely on their car for daily activities and this need should be provided for by their insurance.

Red Line 5 – courtesy car - total loss or stolen

Policies must offer customers the use of a replacement car to get around in the event that their car is deemed a total loss or is stolen. Many people rely on their car for daily activities and this need should be provided for by their insurance.

¹<http://blog.greenflag.com/2016/cost-of-replacing-lost-car-keys-goes-up-by-nearly-a-third-in-two-years/>

Red Line 6 – storage charges

Policies must cover storage charges whilst the customer's car is waiting to be repaired. This is a cost that all customers should reasonably expect to be covered by their insurance, and is in fact covered by a vast majority of policies. It has been included because a small minority of policies does not cover it.

Red Line 7 – original audio/visual equipment

Policies must offer at least £750 of cover for replacing original, manufacturer fitted audio/visual equipment. Most policies offer unlimited cover in this area, but £750 would be adequate in the vast majority of cases. It has been included because a small minority of policies do not cover it.

Red Line 8 – windscreen repair excess

Policies must have a windscreen repair excess of £25 or less. We believe this to be a reasonable contribution for the customer to make towards this cost.

Red Line 9 – windscreen replacement excess

Policies must have a windscreen replacement excess of £95 or less. We believe £95 to be a reasonable contribution for the customer to make towards this cost.

Red Line 10 – child car seats

Policies must cover the cost of replacing child car seats if the customer's car is involved in an accident. Child safety is a hugely important consideration for any parent, and customers should have peace of mind in this regard. We believe it is reasonable for the customer to expect their insurance to cover the cost of a replacement car seat.

Red Line 11 – damage by vermin & insects

This has been included as a red line because it is an exclusion found in a very small proportion of policies. We believe it is reasonable for a customer to expect their insurance to cover, for example, damage caused by mice chewing through their car's wiring. We see no reason why this kind of damage should be excluded.

Red Line 12 – uninsured driver promise

Policies must offer an uninsured driver promise. This means the customer won't lose their no claims discount or have to pay an excess if they are involved in an accident with an uninsured driver. Provided the accident was not their fault. We don't believe customers should be penalised because another driver doesn't have insurance.

Red Line 13 – amendment fee

Policies must have an amendment fee less than £30. We don't believe customers should be penalised by their insurance if, for example, they move house and need to update their address details. We do understand, however, that marketing and acquisition costs are relatively high in this sector. As a result, we have set our red line at the median.

Red Line 14 – cancellation fee

Policies must have a cancellation fee less than £30. Again, we understand that marketing and acquisition costs are relatively high in this sector. But we don't believe cancellation fees should be so high as to appear to penalise the customer. £25 is the median for the industry.

Red Line 15 – repairs guarantee

Policies must guarantee any repairs to your car for a minimum of 3 years or a warranty of 3 years minimum. Customers should have the peace of mind of knowing they won't be stuck with the bill if their car is not repaired to a satisfactory standard. We believe 3 years to be a reasonable length of time to expect any repairs to last and is the median for the industry.

Red Line 16 – towing costs

Policies must cover the cost of towing your car from the scene of an accident. This is another cost that all customers should reasonably expect to be covered by their insurance, and is covered by a vast majority of policies. It has been included because a small minority of policies do not cover it.

Red Line 17 – new car replacement

Policies must offer customers a new car replacement of a similar make, model and specification in the event that their vehicle has been stolen and not found or damaged to a certain extent within the first year of owning the vehicle.

Red Line 18 – Cancellation fee after cooling off period has expired

Policies must have a cancellation fee after cooling off period has expired less than £75. We understand that marketing and acquisition costs are relatively high in this sector. But we don't believe cancellation fees should be so high as to appear to penalise the customer. £75 is the median for the industry.

Red Line 19 – Electric Charging Cables

Policies must cover electric charging cables. These are vital to an electric car driver and therefore should be covered if damaged or stolen.

Red Line 20 – Electric Charging Cable liability

Policies must cover liability for accidents involving electric charging cables. Insurers should provide the same cover in case of accidents around charging, such as trips and falls over the charging cable, as they do for all car-related accidents.

Red Line 21 – Battery Cover

Policies must cover batteries, even when leased, and make this clear to the customer on the purchase journey or in the policy document. It is important cover does not exclude batteries and consumers understand how the cover works around this feature that does not apply to ICE vehicles.

Contact Fairer Finance

James Daley

Managing Director

Oliver Crawford

Head of Research

corporate@fairerfinance.com