

# Parking ticket appeal pack

Work out which ticket you have, what the deadlines are, and copy a letter that fits. Free to use and share. Covers England and Wales in detail.

## Read this first

**General information, not legal advice.** This pack explains public rules in plain English. Your case may be different, and no outcome is guaranteed. A free letter cannot promise that your ticket will be cancelled.

**Only say what is true.** Delete any ground in the letters that does not apply to you. Never invent facts or evidence.

**Check your own ticket.** The notice in your hand shows your deadlines and how to appeal. If it conflicts with this pack, follow the notice and check GOV.UK.

**Rules are changing.** A new Private Parking Code of Practice was laid before Parliament on 20 October 2026. It is not in force yet, but private parking appeal rules will change. Check GOV.UK for the latest before you rely on the private parking section (last checked 26 October 2026).

## Step 1: Which kind of ticket do you have?

There are two very different systems. Mixing them up is the most common mistake, so check first.

|                    | Private parking charge                                                                                                                                                              | Council penalty charge notice (PCN)                                                                        |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Who issues it      | A private company on private land: supermarkets, retail parks, hospitals, housing estates.                                                                                          | A council (or Transport for London) on a public road or council car park.                                  |
| What it is         | A contractual charge, like an invoice. Also called a parking charge notice.                                                                                                         | A legal penalty under statute (Traffic Management Act 2004).                                               |
| Who can be pursued | The driver. The registered keeper only if the operator has followed strict rules (Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, Schedule 4). That keeper rule applies in England and Wales only. | The registered keeper (owner) of the vehicle.                                                              |
| First step         | Appeal to the parking company.                                                                                                                                                      | Ticket on the car: informal challenge to the council. Notice to Owner in the post: formal representations. |
| Independent appeal | POPLA (if the company is in the British Parking Association) or IAS (if it is in the International Parking Community). Free.                                                        | Traffic Penalty Tribunal (England outside London, and Wales) or London Tribunals (London). Free.           |
| If you do nothing  | Reminders, debt-collector letters, then possibly a county court claim.                                                                                                              | A charge certificate adds 50%, then a court order and enforcement.                                         |

Not sure? Look at the wording at the top of the notice ("Parking Charge Notice" from a company, or "Penalty Charge Notice" with a council name). Bus lane, Dart Charge and TfL red route or congestion charge PCNs are not private tickets: they have their own representations route, shown on the notice. Scotland and Northern Ireland have different parking rules and appeal routes, so check GOV.UK and the notice.

## Step 2: Know your deadlines

### Council PCN (England and Wales)

| Stage                             | What happens                                                                                                   | Time limit                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ticket on the car or given to you | Pay at the discounted rate or challenge informally.                                                            | Discount (often 50%) if paid within 14 days. 28 days to pay or challenge in total.                 |
| Informal challenge                | A letter or online form to the council. If rejected you may be sent a Notice to Owner.                         | Do it within 14 days if you can: if it is rejected you may only have to pay the discounted amount. |
| Notice to Owner (in the post)     | Pay, or make formal representations.                                                                           | 28 days from the notice to make formal representations.                                            |
| Notice of Rejection               | Pay, or appeal to the independent tribunal. If you do neither, a charge certificate raises the penalty by 50%. | 28 days from the notice to pay or appeal; then 14 days to pay the increased amount.                |

### Private parking charge

| Stage                            | What happens                                                                                                                                                                     | Time limit                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Notice on the car or in the post | Pay (often a discount for early payment) or appeal to the operator.                                                                                                              | Look at your notice. The appeal window is usually 28 days, with a discount if you pay within 14 days.                                           |
| Operator rejects your appeal     | You can appeal to POPLA or IAS using the details and verification code the operator gives you. POPLA decisions cannot be reviewed later, so put everything in your first appeal. | Appeal to POPLA or IAS within 28 days of the operator's rejection. While your appeal is with POPLA the operator must not chase you for payment. |

## Step 3: Collect your evidence

- ☐ The ticket or notice (photos of the front and back) and the envelope showing the date it arrived
- ☐ Date, time and exact location, with a map screenshot; your vehicle registration (and the V5C if the notice has the wrong details)
- ☐ Photos of the **signs** (entrance signs, bay signs, small print), the markings and the space where you were parked, with date stamps
- ☐ Proof of payment or permit: card statement, app receipt, ticket, permit number
- ☐ Proof of any emergency or breakdown: doctor's letter, breakdown report, hospital letter, mechanic invoice
- ☐ For council PCNs: photos of the road markings and signs, and a copy of the council's evidence photos (ask for them)
- ☐ Names and dates of every call or email, kept in one folder

### Tips that help in all cases

Be polite, factual and short. Keep a copy of everything you send and use recorded delivery or an email you can prove you sent.

Do not ignore the ticket, and do not pay in haste: paying usually ends your right to challenge. Late appeals are sometimes accepted if you explain why, but never rely on that.

If you were the driver, do not say you were not. For a private ticket you need not say who was driving, but you must not lie.

## Step 4: Pick your letter

| What you have                                         | Use                                                                            | Then                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| A private parking charge (company name on the notice) | <b>Letter A</b> to the parking company                                         | If rejected: <b>Letter B</b> outline for POPLA or IAS, within 28 days of the rejection |
| A council ticket on your car, or one handed to you    | <b>Letter C</b> (informal challenge), ideally within 14 days                   | If it is rejected you will get a Notice to Owner: use <b>Letter D</b>                  |
| A Notice to Owner in the post from a council          | <b>Letter D</b> (formal representations), within 28 days                       | If rejected: appeal to the tribunal within 28 days of the Notice of Rejection          |
| A Dart Charge, TfL or bus lane PCN                    | Follow the route on the notice. Letters C and D give you a structure to adapt. | Check the notice for the tribunal route                                                |

## Letter A: appeal to a private parking company

Use this for a private parking charge. Replace everything in [yellow square brackets]. Keep only the grounds that are true for you, and delete the rest before you send.

[Your full name]

[Your address and postcode]

[Email and phone]

[Date]

To: [Parking company name]

[Appeals address or email, shown on the notice]

**Parking charge notice number:** [number]

**Vehicle registration:** [registration]

**Date, time and place:** [date, time, car park name and address]

**Subject: Appeal against parking charge notice [number]**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to appeal against the parking charge notice above. [I am the registered keeper of the vehicle.] I do not accept that the charge is payable, for the reasons below. This appeal is not an admission of liability and I am not required to say who was driving.

**Grounds of appeal (keep only those that are true)**

1. **Payment or permit.** [I paid for the correct time at [time] by [method]. / I held a valid permit, number [number]. Evidence is enclosed.]
2. **Signs.** [The signs at the entrance and where I parked were missing, hidden, unlit or too small to read, so I could not know the terms or the amount of the charge. Photographs are enclosed.]
3. **Keeper liability.** [As registered keeper I can only be held liable if the company has complied with all the conditions in Schedule 4 of the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (England and Wales). Please show me how each condition, including the timing and content of the notice, has been met.]
4. **Mitigating circumstances.** [Describe briefly what happened, for example a medical emergency or breakdown, and enclose evidence.]
5. **Wrong details.** [The notice has the wrong registration, date or location. The vehicle was not there.]

**What I ask**

Please cancel the charge and confirm this in writing. If you reject this appeal, please send me your reasons, the evidence you rely on (including photographs and proof of your authority to operate on this land), and the code and details I need to appeal to [POPLA / IAS]. Please do not pass my details to debt collectors while this appeal and any independent appeal are ongoing.

**Enclosures:** [list, for example: photo of the ticket, photos of signs, payment receipt, doctor's letter]

Yours faithfully,

[Your name]

## Letter B: your independent appeal to POPLA or IAS

After the company rejects your appeal, you appeal online (POPLA or IAS) using the code in the rejection letter. You normally type or upload your appeal, so use this outline. POPLA says its decision cannot be reviewed later, so include all your points and evidence the first time.

**Appeal reference / verification code:** [from the rejection letter]

**Parking charge notice number:** [number] **Vehicle registration:** [registration]

**1. Summary.** I appeal against the parking charge notice because [one-sentence reason, for example: I paid the correct tariff / the signs were not clear / the company has not met the requirements to hold me as keeper].

**2. What happened.** [On [date] at about [time] I parked at [place] because [reason]. State only facts you can evidence.]

**3. Why I am not liable.** [Take each ground in turn, one short paragraph each, and refer to your evidence by number, for example Evidence 1: photo of entrance sign.]

**4. Response to the company's rejection.** [Answer each reason the company gave for rejecting your appeal. Quote it and explain why it is wrong.]

**5. Evidence list.** [1. Photo of ticket. 2. Photos of signs. 3. Payment proof. 4. Other.]

**6. What I ask.** I ask the assessor to allow my appeal and cancel the charge.

### Good to know

POPLA and IAS are free for motorists. An allowed appeal means you do not pay. If you lose, the company may expect payment, and delaying beyond 28 days can lead to extra charges or debt collection.

The decision usually binds the parking company, but not you: you can still defend a court claim if one follows.

If you did not appeal to the company in time, ask the operator about a late appeal. IAS also has a separate paid route that needs the operator's agreement; check its website.

## Letter C: informal challenge to a council (ticket on the car)

Use this for a council PCN stuck on your car or handed to you. Do it within 14 days if you can. Many councils have an online form for this; the wording below still helps.

[Your full name]

[Your address and postcode]

[Date]

To: [Council name], Parking Services

[Address or email on the PCN]

**PCN number:** [number] **Vehicle registration:** [registration]

**Date, time and place of contravention:** [as written on the PCN]

**Subject: Informal challenge to penalty charge notice [number]**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am challenging this penalty charge notice because [state your reason in one or two sentences, for example: I had paid and displayed a valid ticket / the signs and lines were unclear or missing / I was loading or unloading / my blue badge was displayed / I was unable to move because of a breakdown].

[Add two or three factual sentences about what happened and what the evidence shows. Refer to the enclosed photographs or receipts.]

I ask you to cancel the notice. If you decide to reject this challenge, please tell me in writing and confirm that I will have the opportunity to pay the reduced amount, and please send me copies of the evidence you rely on, including the civil enforcement officer's photographs and notes.

**Enclosures:** [list]

Yours faithfully,

[Your name]

## Letter D: formal representations (Notice to Owner)

Use this when the Notice to Owner arrives in the post. You normally have 28 days from receiving it. Councils often have an online form: the points to cover are the same.

[Your full name] [Address] [Date]

To: [Council name], Parking Services [Address or email]

PCN number: [number] Vehicle registration: [registration]

Subject: Formal representations against penalty charge notice [number]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I make formal representations against this penalty charge notice on the following ground(s) from the Notice to Owner:

[Choose the grounds that are true for you, using the wording on your Notice to Owner. Common grounds are: the alleged contravention did not occur / I was not the owner of the vehicle at the time / the vehicle was taken without my consent / the vehicle was hired under a hire agreement and I have given the details / the penalty charge exceeded the amount applicable / the traffic order is invalid / there has been a procedural impropriety by the council / the notice should not have been served.]

**Facts:** [Explain in order what happened, in as much detail as possible, and say what each enclosed document shows.]

**Compelling circumstances (if relevant):** [Explain any exceptional circumstances, for example a medical emergency, and enclose evidence. Even if these are not a legal ground, I ask the council to use its discretion and cancel the notice.]

I ask you to accept these representations and cancel the penalty charge notice. If you reject them, please send me the Notice of Rejection with your reasons and tell me how to appeal to the independent tribunal.

**Enclosures:** [list]

Yours faithfully,

[Your name]

### If the council rejects your formal representations

You get a **Notice of Rejection** with 28 days to pay or appeal. Appeal free to the **Traffic Penalty Tribunal** (England outside London, and Wales) or **London Tribunals** (London PCNs), using the grounds and facts from Letter D plus any new evidence. Check the notice for the exact route. If you do nothing, a charge certificate adds 50%.

### Where the rules come from (and what is not covered)

- GOV.UK, Parking fines and penalty charge notices: <https://www.gov.uk/parking-tickets> and <https://www.gov.uk/parking-tickets/challenging-a-ticket>
- POPLA (private land appeals): <https://www.popla.co.uk/> IAS (Independent Appeals Service): <https://theias.org/>
- Traffic Penalty Tribunal: <https://www.trafficpenaltytribunal.gov.uk/> London Tribunals: <https://www.londontribunals.gov.uk/>
- Private Parking Code of Practice (laid 20 October 2026, not yet in force): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/private-parking-code-of-practice>
- Not covered here: Scotland and Northern Ireland routes, fixed penalty notices (magistrates' court), bus lane or Dart Charge specifics, and court claims. Get free advice from Citizens Advice (England and Wales), Advice Direct Scotland or Consumerline (Northern Ireland).

OwedHub is free and never takes a cut of what you get back. You do not need to pay anyone to use the free routes above.