



FACT VS FICTION

Fiction: If I turn the engine on and off it uses more fuel

Fact: No. According to the RAC, sitting with the engine running for 10 seconds uses more fuel than switching off and on.

Fiction: I can't switch the engine off as the battery needs to warm up

Fact: Modern vehicle batteries need less engine running time to work and don't need the engine running constantly to keep them charged.

Fiction: If I switch my car on and off it is bad for the engine

Fact: Leaving the engine idling dirties your engine with incomplete combustion increasing wear and tear. Modern vehicles have much better ignitions and can be switched on and off without unnecessary wear on the engine.

Fiction: I need to leave the engine running so I can keep the heater on

Fact: It can take up to an hour for the engine to cool down. Turning off the engine but keeping the ignition on with the fan blowing will provide warm air for up to 30 minutes.
(Source: Staffordshire County Council, 2019)

Fiction: If I sit inside my car I am protected from air pollution outside

Fact: Air quality inside a vehicle is worse than the air quality outside. This is because you are sitting in a plume of exhaust emitted from the vehicle in front of you, which is sucked through your vehicle's ventilation system into your cabin.

Fiction: The air filter traps pollution and stops it entering the car

Fact: Air filters in cars, including modern HEPA filters, do not remove the toxic gases in air pollution that cause health problems.

Fiction: An idling engine doesn't contribute much to local air pollution

Fact: An idling engine is a significant contributor to local air pollution and can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion. Switching off your engine can cut pollution by up to 30% and the effects are immediate. *(Source: Bristol City Council, 2018)*

Fiction: I'm not breaking the law when I leave my engine running when stationary

Fact: It is an offence under section 42 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The Act enforces rule 123 of the Highway Code which states: "You must not leave a vehicle's engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road."

Fiction: Sitting in my car with the engine running doesn't directly damage my health

Fact: Air pollution INSIDE a stationary vehicle with the engine running is higher than the air pollution outside the vehicle, so drivers and their passengers are unnecessarily breathing in poor quality air. You can take responsibility for your own health by switching off your engine every time you wait. The main source of Colchester's air pollution is exhaust fumes. Air pollution is recognised as a contributing factor in the development of lung conditions, heart disease and cancer. It also reduces life expectancy and is linked to 1 in 20 deaths in Colchester.