



Breaks from work – a guide for drivers

About this guide

This guide is intended to guide you through the rules on taking breaks from work under the Road Transport Working Time regulations.

These rules are in addition to the rules on breaks from driving under tachograph rules. However, breaks taken as breaks from driving under tachograph rules can also be counted as breaks from working time, and visa versa.

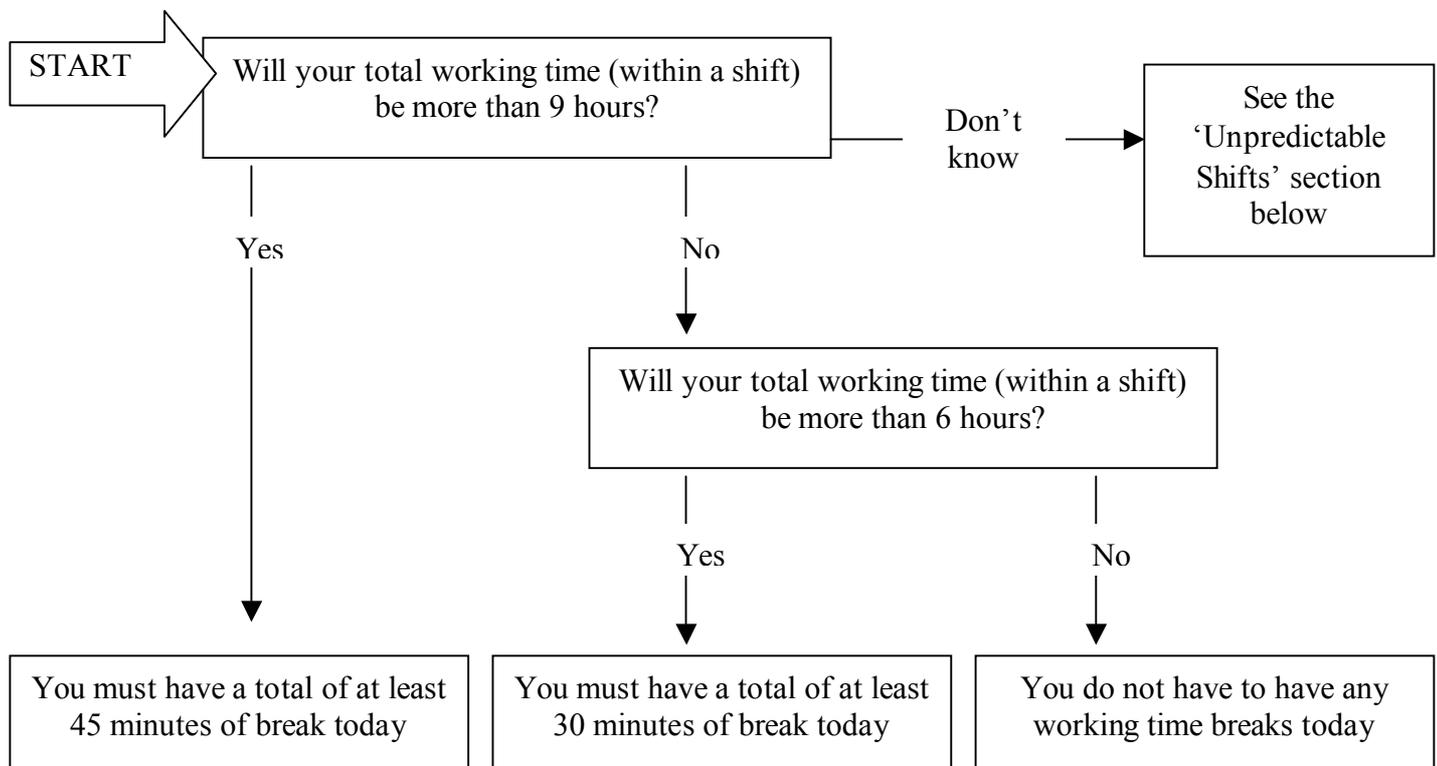
The rules on breaks from work

The rules on breaks from work can be split into three questions:

1. How much break in total must I take each day?
2. What is the minimum amount of break?
3. When must the breaks be taken?

These questions are dealt with in turn below.

1. How much break in total must I take each day?



Unpredictable shifts

There may be times when you know you will be working for more than six hours in a shift but may not know whether the total amount of working time will consist of more or less than 9 hours. In these circumstances, it is advisable that you complete 30-minutes of break before reaching 9 hours of work. This will make sure you have taken enough rest during working time if you can finish work earlier.

2. What is the minimum amount of break?

Breaks from working time must be taken in periods of at least 15 minutes. Because the break must be **at least** 15 minutes long, the whole of a 16-minute break counts as a break, but none of a 14-minute period would. For example, a 45-minute break could be made up of a 18 minute break followed by a 27-minute break.

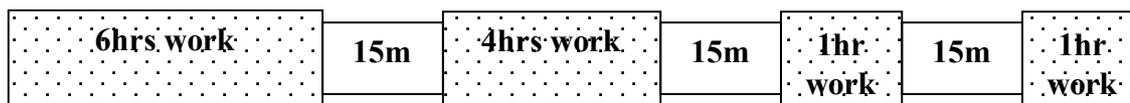
3. When must the breaks be taken?

You must not work for more than six hours without taking a break at any time during your shift. Also a break must interrupt working time – in other words, it must not be taken at the very start or the very end of a shift.

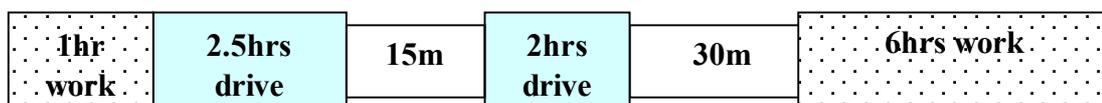
Examples

Breaks are shown in the smaller boxes in the following examples. These examples are intended to explain the rules, rather than be considered recommended or typical shift patterns.

1. In the example below, the worker has complied with all of the rules relating to breaks from work. His total working time is over 9 hours, and therefore he has taken a total of 45 minutes break. He has not worked for more than 6 hours without a break, the breaks have been at least 15 minutes long and these have been taken during working time.



2. In the example below, this driver has complied with the rules relating to breaks from driving - he has taken a total of 45 minutes break by the end of a total of 4.5 hours cumulative driving. With the same breaks, he has also complied with the break from work rules. The total working time in this shift is 11.5 hours (this includes work and driving) and therefore he must show at least 45 minutes of break – which has been taken. He has not worked for more than 6 hours without a break, the breaks have been at least 15 minutes long and have been taken during working time.



3. In the example below, this driver has taken a 45-minute break in order to comply with the tachograph rules on breaks from driving. Although this break can 'double up' as a break from work, because the driver went on to work for more than six hours, he had to take a further break of at least 15 minutes to ensure he did not work for more than six hours without a break. Again the breaks have been at least 15 minutes long and have been taken during working time.

