

Travel safely at night

AFTER a night out it can be tempting to jump into the first minicab you see, but you could be putting yourself at risk.

As the festive season approaches and more people go out to celebrate, Transport for London (TfL) is encouraging the public to get home safely by using a pre-booked minicab or a black cab.

All minicabs must be licensed by TfL and booked through a licensed minicab operator. Only black cabs can be stopped by customers to pick them up off the street.

Minicabs lined up outside pubs and clubs are breaking the law if they accept a fare without a booking

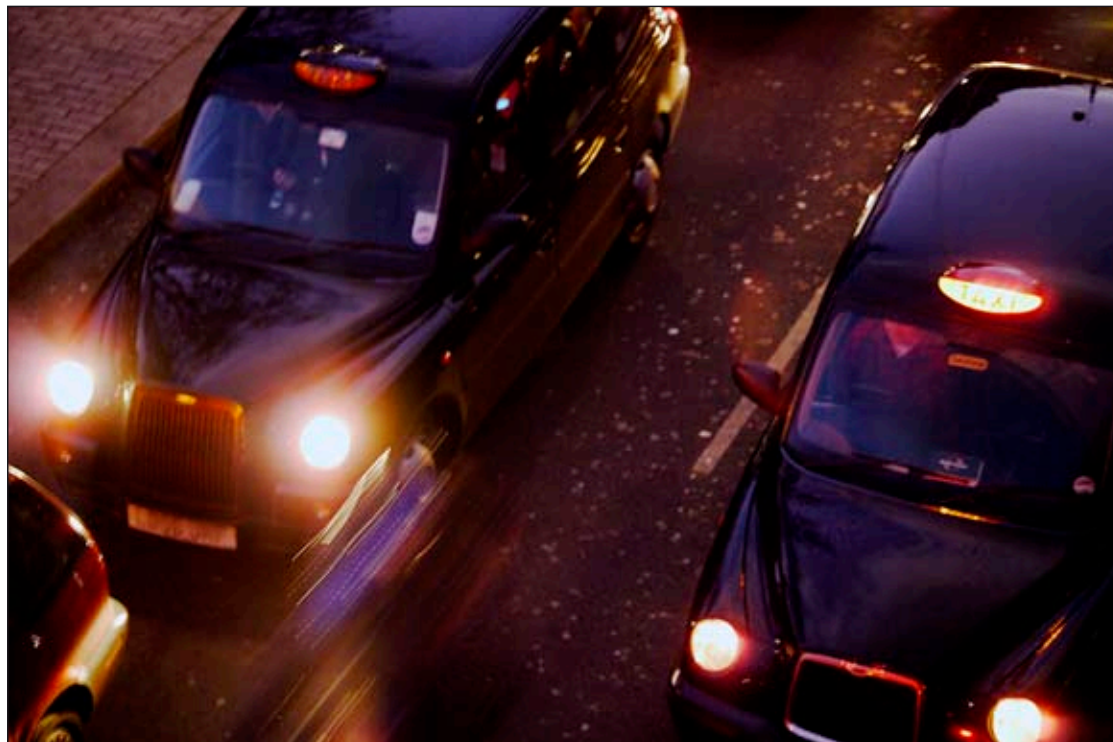
being made first.

Enforcement activity to deal with unbooked minicabs will be stepped up at hotspots across London during the festive period.

Siwan Hayward, TfL's deputy director of Enforcement and On-Street Operations, said: 'Only black cabs can be picked up off the streets; all minicabs need to be pre-booked through a licensed operator and any minicab that picks someone up off the street, whether they offer you a cab or you approach them, is acting illegally.'

'Never get into an unbooked minicab – it's not safe.'

■ **Download TfL's free Cabwise mobile app, to book a taxi or private hire vehicle. Or visit tfl.gov.uk/cabwise to find out more**



Now is the time to get festive

DON'T miss the chance to get into the festive spirit with a range of activities taking place in the capital over the next few weeks.

Trafalgar Square carols

There is carol singing beneath the Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square until December 22. More than 50 organisations, charities and groups will be taking part to raise funds. Performances take place between 4pm and 8pm on weekdays, and between 2pm and 6pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

Christmas Carnaval del Pueblo

On December 22, from 3pm until 11pm, enjoy a line-up of Latin sounds as Carnaval del Pueblo returns to The Coronet Theatre in south London for a daytime party spectacular for the whole family.

There'll be live music, including David Pabón and his 11 piece orchestra from Puerto Rico and Paraiso School of Samba, who played at the 2012 Games Closing Ceremony. You can also enjoy free salsa dance classes in the afternoon, and Latin DJs in the evening courtesy of la Latina, famed for their Latin dance parties. There's also a Carnaval del Pueblo's Got Talent, children's activities, arts and crafts, food stalls and salsaology.

■ The event takes place at the Coronet Theatre – the nearest station is Elephant & Castle – and tickets cost £10 (in advance). Visit www.coronetlondon.co.uk to find out more

New Year's Eve fireworks

Welcome in 2014 with a bang at the free fireworks display in central London. Among a host of special effects this year involving sight, sound, fruit flavours and fruit smells.

As the clock strikes 12, Big Ben's famous 'bongs' will be relayed across the viewing areas, before the UK's biggest annual fireworks display takes place to a specially-created musical soundtrack.

The celebrations carry on until 12.45am with a live DJ set. If you stay to the end you'll find it easier to get out of the viewing areas for your journey home.

Large crowds are expected on the night with limited viewing areas, and the surrounding areas will be extremely busy, so if you'd rather watch the spectacular from the comfort of your own home the fireworks will be shown live on television (BBC 1).

■ For a full list of road, bridge, station and Tube closures, go to tfl.gov.uk/festive



New Year's Parade

London's annual New Year's Day Parade is a spectacular way to kick start your new year. It features more than 10,000 performers representing the capital's boroughs and countries from across the globe. Dancers, acrobats, cheerleaders, musicians and performers assemble in the heart of the city for a colourful celebration that combines exuberant contemporary performance with pomp and ceremony.

■ Visit www.londonparade.co.uk for more information

■ Remember to check before you travel at tfl.gov.uk/journeyplanner

London travel advice: plan your journey now



tfl.gov.uk



24 hour travel information
0343 222 1234*



tfl.gov.uk/socialmedia

London Travelwatch
London's transport watchdog
call 020 3176 2999, or visit
www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

*Service and network charges apply.
See tfl.gov.uk/terms for details.



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