



# Vroom for *improvement*

**Sinead Ryan's top tips**  
on how to save on car  
insurance

**M**OTOR insurance is on the rise ... again. It seems that even when you've maintained a safe, accident-free driving record, you get punished anyway.

Since the gender directive imposed by the EU in 2012, insurance companies have no choice but to charge male and female drivers the same premium. This flies in the face of evidence, rather than political correctness, which shows that young male drivers have a far poorer claims record than women. Actuaries have tended to increase all premiums, rather than level out their books, as they also know this to be fact.

So, drivers are left with higher premiums for no extra benefit. To get premiums down, a number of factors matter:

### **The age of your car**

Insurance companies want newer cars, rather than old bangers which are difficult to repair and break down more often.

### **Cross insuring spouses**

Cross insuring spouses on each other's cars will discount both

premiums. It seems odd, but insurers like the idea of 'trust' in a policy – if you trust himself in your car, then they can too.

### **Bundling cover**

Switching your house insurance to your motor insurer will get you a discount for the extra business.

### **Security**

Keeping your car alarmed or in a safe location overnight (e.g. a garage) is worth a discount off the premium in many cases. If your company doesn't offer it, switch to one that does.

### **Haggle**

Many companies empower call centre staff to discount premiums if asked. Shop around first, get a cheaper quote and call your own company to better it. But follow through and switch if they don't.

### **Like with Like**

When looking at different insurers, make sure policies compare with each other. If things like breakdown assistance is important to you, make sure all quotes assume it.

### **Excess**

The first part of every claim you pay can be varied from €250-€750. The higher the excess, the lower your premium, but if you have a mild tip, you'll pay for it yourself.

### **Payments**

Paying by direct debit monthly is more expensive than paying up front. Many insurance companies charge outrageous

interest for this 'service', perhaps as much as 15pc pa. It's cheaper to get a credit union loan at 8pc and pay the insurer in one go.

### **Material Facts**

If you fail to disclose things like penalty points, you may get a cheaper premium, but it's a waste of a saving.

In the event of an accident, even one that is not your fault, the insurer may seek to repudiate the claim because you weren't honest with them. Even if it carries an extra premium, disclosure is the best route.

### **UK insurer**

Consider a UK-based company. The spread of risk can make their premiums cheaper and they'll only quote you if they offer cover in Ireland.

## HOW TO SWITCH... CAR INSURANCE

### STEP 1

Get a quote online from a broker like [chill.ie](http://chill.ie) or [coverna.click](http://coverna.click), ie which compares a range of companies. Alternatively, use a broker you know. Compare quotes to ensure they offer what you need — you can tailor most quotes individually.

### STEP 2

Call your own company and see can they better the best one. If not, then it's time to move.

### STEP 3

You can insure over the phone. You'll need to complete an application, send on a copy of your driving licence and existing No Claims Bonus letter (which must be given to you by your existing insurer) and payment provision.

### SAVINGS

€996.20 — based on 35-year old-nurse from Waterford driving 2011 VW Golf, comprehensive cover, €15,000. Courtesy Chill Insurance.

**POTENTIAL SAVING €996.20 TOTAL TIME 10 mins**



Keeping your car  
alarmed or in a garage  
is worth a discount