

✓ 5 Be ready for a waiting game

If you are going to an 'advertised' car park, you can pretty much expect that there will be others around, but these will mainly be single males rather than other couples. If it is a quieter car park, be prepared to wait, sometimes for long periods of time, until a suitable dogger comes along. It may be worth taking some good music to listen to (but don't overdo the car radio and end up with a flat battery) and something to drink. Dogging can be a very thirsty experience. (Remember you've got to drive home – so go very easy on the alcohol!)

✓ 6 Approach with care

On your final approach to the car park, it's a good idea to lock the car doors, make sure any valuables are out of sight and turn off your interior light. On some cars this turns on automatically when the engine is turned off and can be mistaken as a signal for the doggers already there to make their way over

to you before you've even had time to take off your seatbelt.

✓ 7 Pick your parking place

Upon arrival, make your way to your preferred spot, which hopefully won't already have been taken. Reverse into the parking space. Most couples and singles find it safer to reverse into a parking space rather than drive in forwards. It means you can see who's approaching the car, but it also makes it easier to leave in a hurry if things aren't going to plan.

✓ 8 Know your signals

So you are in the car park, and there are a couple of polite doggers standing near their cars, just waiting for you to make a move. How do you let them know you want them to come over? There are a number of ways you can get the attention of others in the car park and let them know you want them to approach. One of the most popular ways is to turn on your interior light. This normally indicates you want to be watched and lets the others see who's in the car. Some couples also flash their headlights to get attention, or just open the window and wait for someone to walk over casually.

✓ 9 Set out your rules

Whatever you decide to do, remember that YOU are in charge. YOU decide how far to go and what the rules are. However, the doggers won't know your rules, or your limitations, unless you tell them. Most doggers won't attempt to touch or join in unless they are

invited – some only want to watch and will normally let you know this – but remember there is always the chancer who may interpret an open window as an invitation to stick their arm in and have a feel. Don't be afraid to tell them exactly what you want and what they can or can't do.

✓ 10 Talk, talk and talk again

It is important when you first start dogging that you talk through what has happened. Talk about your feelings – what you liked or disliked – and make sure you are both happy with what has happened. Having fun out dogging is nice, but your relationship with your partner is paramount.

By ensuring you are both comfortable with dogging and the limits you have set, you can deal with any problems, concerns or doubts before they become issues. Most importantly, make sure that both of you are still finding it fun. When it stops being fun – for either of you – it's time to empty and hang up that dogging bag!

Gas-Guzzler... or Knob-Guzzler

In these days of fanatical eco-friendliness, as we all bend over backwards to reduce our carbon footprint for the sake of the planet, we at SHM were discussing the reasons for having a great big, road-hogging, hard-to-park, people-carrying four-wheel-drive off-roadster. Someone pointed out the obvious virtues of a great big wagon to transport Samantha and Tristram to school and take them and their friends on theme-park outings. The talk went on – and then, as they used to say in days gone by, 'the scales fell from my eyes'. Of course – a big four-wheel-drive is the perfect dogging wagon.

If you fancy a spot of exhibitionism, and are inclined to share your fun with like-minded motorists, why not do it in the lap of luxury? Why struggle with your stiletto stuck in the ashtray when you could fold down all rear seating and really give it some wellie (taking due care, of course, to avoid carpet burns)?

So maybe the 4x4 choice is a conscious statement – 'we dog – and we do it big-time'. So, next time you can't park outside your house or squeeze down a narrow street because of someone's mega-wagon in the way, don't judge the owners too harshly – chances are they're out in their dog-mobile and will soon be heading off for some fun. They may not be eco-friendly – but maybe they're friendly in other ways...