



There can be few experiences as disheartening and utterly deflating as floating back to your car after some marvellously therapeutic shopping trip, laden with parcels and shopping bags, to find a black and yellow parking notification attached to your windscreen, like some enormous striped stinging hornet - and certainly having a stinging effect on your feelings too.

It could spoil anyone's day - but don't let it! Don't panic, don't curse and don't waste any time before getting to grips with the problem.

The Citizens Advice website has a useful section which you should consult: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/parking-tickets/>

If you think the ticket was justified (and let's face it, some of them are), one option is to pay the fine right away, thus getting a substantial discount:

- 50% if you pay a Penalty Charge Notice or Excess Charge Notice within 14 days
- 40-60% if you pay a Parking Charge Notice within 14 days

If you think that you were parked correctly and within the rules, or there were mitigating circumstances, you can try an appeal (but don't pay a ticket issued by a parking company that isn't a member of the Accredited Trade Association - they can't force you to pay or take you to court).

If you appeal, you should explain that you didn't break any rules, and, if possible, send evidence to prove it.

Citizens Advice is frequently consulted about parking tickets. If you get one and aren't sure how to proceed, it's comforting to know that there are sympathetic people you can talk to.

For more help, contact Citizens Advice on Adviceline 03 444 111444 or drop in to your nearest Citizens Advice. For locations and opening hours see www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale