

Appendix 3 Taxi Licensing Policy 2025 – Summary of Changes

Section	Change	Notes
1.4	Addition of the December 2023 Department for Transport Taxi and Private Hire vehicle licensing best practice guidance	DFT additional Best practice guidance, licensing Authorities must give due regard to the best practice guidance.
4	Inclusive Service Plan (ISP) Accessibility	In line with the DFT Guidance, the ISP outlines the needs and approach to fulfil accessibility within the taxi licensing regime.
6.2	Include subject to complaints, subject of criminal behaviour or patterns of unacceptable behaviour. Include may result in license revocation, suspension or enforcement action of a license	Clarification of enforcement actions and criteria of enforcements scenarios.
6.5	Renewal applications should be made allowing sufficient time for processing prior to a license expiry.	Clarification of the requirement to renew a license in good time.
8.1.1	Inclusion of DBS checks managed via Taxi Plus, and outlines the existing statutory requirement for 6 monthly DBS checks.	Sets a deadline for the introduction of the Taxi Plus DBS service, enabling the authority to complete statutory checks throughout the licensed periods.
8.1.4	Inclusive of Taxi Plus references. Addition of regular checks- replace 6 monthly checks for regular. failure to maintain that subscription would result in the suspension of a license until this requirement is resolved. Taxi Plus subscriptions will be used to monitor the criminal record of the licence holder throughout the term of the licence.	As above
8.1.5	In order to sign up to the online service DBS checking service the applicant, must create an account with Taxi Plus. Licensee's or applicants unable to access the internet, or requiring assistance, should make an appointment with licensing to facilitate their application.	Requirement to create a Taxi Plus account.
8.1.6	DBS checks will only be accepted through Taxi Plus accounts, all pre-existing licensee DBS subscriptions will no longer be valid once their exiting license has expired from implementation of this policy.	Outlining time scales of the transition from DBS subscription to Taxi Plus.
8.1.7	A Licence will not be issued without a current enhanced DBS certificate corresponding with a Taxi Plus account subscription, associated to Cherwell District Council.	Requirement for a valid DBS certificate corresponding with a Taxi Plus subscription for a CDC license account.
8.1.8	DBS subscription through Taxi Plus	Addition of Taxi Plus as means of DBS checking.
15.1.1	15.1.1 Vehicle licences are for a period of 1 year and will be subject to MOT testing upon grant or renewal applications. Additionally, all licensed vehicle must be inspected after an	The introduction of a mid-license inspection includes safety features not included in a standard MOT test, and meets the DFT best practice guidance.

	initial 6 month license period, and before the	
	start of the 7 month of a license.	
	The 6-month (mid license) vehicle inspection	
	will be conducted by Authorised Officers at a	
	Council designated vehicle inspection facility.	
	All MOT and Council vehicle inspection	
	reports must show that the vehicle has no	
	faults, or advisories, has passed the stated	
	inspection/test, and meets Licensing Policy minimum standards. Where advisories or	
	faults have been reported, the license or	
	application or license may be suspended or	
	refused until the applicant/Licensee have	
	documented the completion of any remedial	
	works required to correct the advisory fault/s;	
	the vehicle passed a new inspection or MOT.	
	Where the authority asses a vehicle needs	
	additional vehicle checks, the vehicle must	
	be taken to a Council appointed vehicle	
	testing station within 7 days of such a	
	request. The appointed MOT or vehicle	
	inspecting station used for additional checks	
	will be detailed by Cherwell District Council at	
	the time of such request.	
	Vehicle MOT and inspection appointments,	
	and all associated additional fees which are	
	solely the applicant or licensee responsibility.	
15.1.2	Non-Wheelchair accessible vehicles grant	In line wite the DFT best practice guidance
	applications may only be licensed as a	and ISP to encourage wheelchair accessible
	Private Hire vehicle, in accordance with ethe	vehicle licensing.
	Private Hire vehicle license requirements.	
	Such vehicles must be less than six years old	
	at the time of first licensing and must have working stop/start engine technology if it is	
	propelled by petrol, diesel, or hybrid engines.	
	That stop/start technology must be fully	
	functional throughout the term of the licence.	
	All new grant applications for a Hackney	
	license must be wheelchair accessible.	
15.1.4	Non-Wheelchair accessible vehicles grant	In line wite the DFT best practice guidance
	applications may only be licensed as a	and ISP to encourage wheelchair accessible
	Private Hire vehicle, in accordance with the	vehicle licensing, and encourage low or zero
	Private Hire vehicle license requirements.	emission vehicle licensing.
	Such vehicles must be less than six years old	
	at the time of first licensing and must have	
	working stop/start engine technology if it is	
	propelled by petrol, diesel, or hybrid engines.	
	That stop/start technology must be fully	
	functional throughout the term of the licence.	
	All new grant applications for a Hackney	
	license must be wheelchair accessible. Wheelchair accessible vehicles,	
	propelled by petrol or diesel, upon first	
	licensing will be exempt from the stated	
	maximum vehicle age restriction, and will be	
	licensed until the vehicle is 10 years old from	
	the date of first registration.	
	Wheelchair accessible vehicles	
	propelled by electric hybrid engines will be	
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	licensed until the reach 15 years old from first registration. Wheelchair accessible vehicles propelled solely by electric, or hydrogen, will be exempt from all vehicle licensing age restrictions.	
15.1.5	15.1.5 Once a vehicle is licensed, that licence cannot be transferred to another vehicle, whether temporary or otherwise, which has been categorised by the DVLA as emitting levels of pollution higher than the current licensed vehicle. When a vehicle has been replaced following a vehicle accident/damage, the replacement vehicle may be like for like with regards to emissions, wheelchair accessibility, and euro categorisations up to the accident vehicle age limits listed. Any vehicle exceeding the age limit thresholds will not be renewed, and any replacement vehicle must meet the relevant policy requirements	Includes clarification that wheelchair accessible and low or zero emissions vehicles cannot be replaced with vehicles of a different standard.
15.4.6	Licensees, Operators, and drivers should complete a daily vehicle check before starting hire and reward work, and document that check on a vehicle condition check list. All such documented checks should be retained and made available to the Authority upon request.	In line with the DFT Guidance
15.7.6	Add 'associated licensing age limit.	Clarification to changes to vehicle age limits
16.1	Addition of 'will be subject to a charge' to plate exemption applications	Addition to fees to facilitate cost recovery.
16.3	Addition 'inclusive of fulfilling contracts for school transportation on behalf of an Authority'	Preventative conditioning where vehicles with discreet pate authorities from completing any schools transport contracts, to ensure safeguarding of vulnerable passengers
16.4.3	Addition 'will be subject to an administration fee'	Addition to fees to facilitate cost recovery.
16.4.3	Addition of: Following the issuing of a Plate Exemption, the authorised vehicle cannot be used for any other hire and reward journeys other than those listed on the plate exemption authorisation. Failure to comply with the stated requirements of the plate exemption will result in the immediate removal of that authorisation. The duration of the discrete plate exemption will not exceed the vehicle licensed expiry date	Plate exemption requirement clarification and conditions.

17.1.6	Addition:	In line with the DFT Guidance
	Licensed Operators should ensure that they are aware of their legal responsibilities under employments laws, inclusive of "Reporting Rules for Digital Platforms" legislation. The legislation mandates that all taxi and private hire digital platforms gather and submit earnings data from their drivers to HMRC, and will include reporting personal details from their drivers, such as National Insurance numbers. This data should be annually reported directly by the Operator to HMRC.	
17.6.1	Addition of 'Accessibility'	In line with the DFT Guidance
17.7	Addition: Licensed Operators with 10 or more licensed vehicles facilitating Hire and reward journeys under their operator's license, should aim to have at least 20% of the private hire vehicles operating under their license registered as wheelchair accessible before 01/01/2028.	In line with the DFT Guidance and ISP, promote wheelchair accessibility in the Private Hire Trade.
17.7.2	Addition: The Licensing Authority may request documentation of the licensed operators' vehicles and wheelchair accessibility vehicles at any time during their licensed period.	In line with the DFT Guidance and ISP, promote wheelchair accessibility in the Private Hire Trade.
17.7.3	Addition: Licensed Operators must ensure that their booking systems are accessible and comply with WCAG2.1 accessibility standard to Level AA and with the principles of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 as a minimum for digital content: https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag	In line with the DFT Guidance and ISP, ensuring on-line accessibility is compliant.
17.7.4	Addition: Licensed Operators must ensure that all bookings identify and record any disabilities,	In line with the DFT Guidance and ISP, promote wheelchair accessibility, and disability need are met by the Private Hire Trade.

	or additional needs of the customer, and allocates an appropriate vehicle and driver to fulfil the needs of their customer. Where such additional needs are identified and associated with a disability or registered assistance animal, the Operator cannot add additional fees	
17.7.5	Addition:	In line with the DFT Guidance
	Licensed Operators must ensure that all vehicles working under their license have been inspected by the driver before any jobs are allocated to that vehicle. Daily 'Driver Vehicle Condition Checklists' reports must be inspected by the operator, and the reports held/stored by the operator for a period no less than 12 months. The vehicle condition check lists may be stored digitally but must be accessible for inspection by an authorised officer.	
20.1.2	When a license is renewed existing penalty	Addition of clarification of licensing points
	points will carry over to the renewed license until the points specified period has expired	carrying over to renewed licences
	APPENDICIES A to I	
	Appendix H Vehicle Inspection	Addition -Council Vehicle inspection document
	Appendix I Drivers vehicle condition checklist	Addition of document In line with the DFT Guidance
4.3.5	4.3.5 All drivers will have an enhanced Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check undertaken at the time of application, and a minimum of every six months during their licensed period. All new and renewal applicants must complete a DBS application via the Taxi Plus portal from the implementation of this policy. During the DBS application, or once the certificate has been received by the applicant, the applicant/licensee must sign up to the DBS Online Update Service via Taxi Plus. Costs associated with the DBS checks are the responsibility of the applicant. The DBS update service is a less expensive service than a single Enhanced DBS check every six months and should prevent licensing delays.	Addition of Taxi Plus requirements for DBS checks, and clarification of existing statutory licensing requirements.

4.3.6	4.3.6 Applicants and licensees must sign up to, and maintain, subscription to the Council chosen designated DBS update service. This is required before licencing, and throughout the licensed period. Failure to subscribe and maintain subscription to the nominated DBS update service will result in the suspension, revocation, or refusal of a license.	Clarification of requirements for DBS checks, and clarification of existing statutory licensing requirements.
4.3.7	Addition of: 4.3.7 Any changes to the councils designated DBS service provider will be notified to the applicant/licensee.	Allowing a change of DBS check provider is required by the authority.
10.1	However, if an applicant has more than 6 DVLA penalty points or 6 DVLA penalty points for a singular offence the application will be refused	Insert -DVLA to clarify which points system is being referenced.
11.1	11.1 If an applicant or license holder is the subject of a Authority investigation, or an outstanding charge or summons his/ her application may be suspended, refused, or revoked until the matter is resolved. Such a decision will be made on a case-by-case basis.	Insert- Authority investigation
12.1	12.1 The Council will also take into account situations and circumstances that have not resulted in a prosecution or conviction. This may include acquittals, circumstances in which convictions were quashed due to misdirection by the court, circumstances where the decision was taken not to prosecute, situations where the applicant or licence holder has been arrested and bailed but not yet charged, repetitive behaviours (alleged or otherwise), and complaints from the public.	Insert – repetitive behaviours (alleged or otherwise)
12.2	An existing licence holder in the same situation is subject to the same. His/ her licence may be revoked dependant on the information available. Such offences may include violent and/ or sexual offences, offences of dishonesty and drug related offences, or other.	Removed – suspended – inline with DFT best practice advising that serious offences should not be dealt with through a license suspension.
Appendix B	Change wording to- applying to renew your license.	Change or wording removing – booking an appointment

	From -booking your appointment,	
HCD applicati on process	During your application supporting documentation will be reviewed. Your DVLA record will be checked online and you must create a DVLA sharing code to allow this check.	Remove reference to an appointment to review documents. Add reference to DVLA check codes, and Taxi plus for DBS checks. Addition of an 8 month time limit on new grant applications.
	Your Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) application must be completed by creating your own Taxi Plus account.	
	For licence renewals a check of the DBS Online Update Service will be undertaken through your subscribed Taxi plus account. If renewal or grant applicants do not undertake a DBS check through Taxi Plus, and maintain their DBS update subscriptions throughout their licensed period, their application delayed, refused, or existing licences suspended.	
	It is the applicant/license holder's responsibility to pay any costs associated with their DBS check and update subscriptions	
	Application for new Grants must be completed within eight months from the application date. Applications not completed within eight months will be deemed as withdrawn.	
Appendix B	Addition and clarification of existing requirements: All grant and license renewal applications must complete a new DBS application by creating you their own Taxi Plus account.	Clarification of existing requirements for DBS checks, and clarification of existing statutory licensing requirements
	Once a DBS certificate/report is issued by the DBS via Taxi Plus that full certificate/report must be made available to the Licensing authority.	
	Once the DBS application is completed through Taxi Plus the licensee must maintain their DBS subscription, via Taxi Plus, throughout their licensed period.	
	If renewal or grant applicants do not undertake a DBS check through Taxi Plus and maintain their DBS update subscriptions throughout their licensed period, their application	

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	delayed, refused, or existing licences suspended.	
	It is the applicant/license holder's responsibility to pay any costs associated with their DBS check and update subscriptions.	
12.1	Wording clarification: Licensed Drivers must continually subscribe to the Councils designated Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Online Update Service. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licensed driver.	Clarification of existing requirements for DBS checks, and clarification of existing statutory licensing requirements
12.2	Add – Taxi Plus	Added Taxi Plus as the DBS nominated DBS
Appendix B Licensed driver conditions	2.9 - Licensed Drivers must complete a daily vehicle check, and document that check on the associated form (appendix i). The said vehicle check document must be available for inspection upon request by an authorised officer. When driving a licensed vehicle ensure that the vehicle is clean, roadworthy and well maintained, meets Council vehicle license conditions.	update service. Daily vehicle check inserted - In line with the DFT Guidance
	3.1 add - Notification must be through a license variation application on the councils website	Add application guidance for change of address.
	5.1 – add 'incident'	Addition to ensure classification of an occurrence involving a licensed vehicle is reported.
	10.1 add on their medical status or condition	Wording clarification.
	12.1 - Licensed Drivers must continually subscribe to the Councils designated Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Online Update Service. Any costs associated with maintaining this subscription must be met by the licensed driver. 15 - Daily Drivers Vehicle Condition Checks	Addition of DBS update service requirement
	13 - Daily Drivers vehicle Condition Checks	
	15.1 Licensed Drivers must inspect their licensed vehicle before commencing hire and reward work, each day. They must complete a 'Driver Vehicle Condition Checklists' report	Insert guidance for daily vehicle checks in line with DFT guidance.

and must document that completed check by keeping copies of that check for a period no less than 12 months. 15.2 When a driver is working for a Private Hire Operator, they must provide that operator with the Daily Vehicle Check report before commencing work for that operator. This is required daily before accepting any hire and reward jobs. The vehicle condition check lists may be stored digitally but must be accessible for inspection by an authorised officer. **Private Hire Vehicle condition of license Appendix** Please note that new license applications age Change wording to cover changes in maximum age limits of a vehicle on grant accessibility limits and wheelchair application. requirements may apply. Change from MOT after 6 months licensed to New MOT testing certificate are required upon council vehicle inspection. license application. Once licensed, vehicles must complete a Council vehicle Inspection at a designated vehicle inspection facility on the sixth month after that license is issued. he relevant date of inspection will be printed on the vehicle license, you will not receive a separate reminder Change from booking an appointment to applying to renew a license applying to renew a license. 1.1 In line wite the DFT best practice guidance Addition of vehicle age restrictions: and ISP to encourage wheelchair accessible On initial grant of a license non vehicle licensing, and encourage low or zero emission vehicle licensing. wheelchairs accessible vehicles must be under 6 years old from first registration. The council will only continue to licence non wheelchair accessible vehicles up to the vehicle being 10 years old from first date of registration. C. Wheelchair accessible vehicles upon first licensing will be exempt from a maximum vehicle age restriction and will be licensed until the vehicle is 10 years old, from the date of first registration.

	D. Wheelchair accessible vehicles propelled by electric hybrid engines will be licensed until the reach 15 years old from first registration.	
	E. Wheelchair accessible vehicles propelled solely by electric, or hydrogen, will be exempt from all vehicle licensing age restrictions.	
Q	Addition:	In line with the DFT Guidance
	Q. Drivers must complete a daily vehicle check before starting hire and reward work, and document that check in a vehicle condition check list. All such documented checks should be retained and may be requested by the Authority.	
4	Mechanical Testing	
4.2	a) Vehicle licences are for a period of 1 year and will be subject to MOT testing upon grant or renewal applications. Following the grant of a license all licensed vehicle must be inspected after the initial 6 months, and before the 7th month of the license period. The 6-month (mid license) vehicle inspection will be conducted by Authorised Officers at a Council designated vehicle inspection facility. b) All MOT and Council vehicle inspection reports must show that the vehicle has no faults, or advisories, has passed the stated inspection/test, and meets Licensing Policy minimum standards. Where advisories or faults have been reported, the license or application may be suspended/revoked or refused a license until the applicant/Licensee have documented the completion of any remedial works required to correct the advisory fault/s.	The introduction of a mid-license inspection includes safety features not included in a standard MOT test, and meets the DFT best practice guidance.
	Where any additional vehicle checks are required by Cherwell District Council, vehicles must be taken to an appointed vehicle testing station within 7 days of such a request. The appointed MOT or vehicle inspecting station used for additional checks will be detailed by Cherwell District Council at the time of such	

	request. Vehicle MOT and inspection appointments, together with all associated fees, are solely the applicant or licensee responsibility.	
4.3	Advertising approvals- Such approval applications may be subject to a fee.	Addition of possible administration charge
4.4	Equipment Addition: g) Vehicles with driver/passengers' partitions must have a hearing loop or similar audio assistance installed.	In line with the DFT Guidance
4.6	Door sign - Applications for door sign approvals may be subject to a fee. Hackney Carriage Vehicle conditions	Addition of a possible administration charge.
j	Addition: Drivers should complete a daily vehicle check before starting hire and reward work, and document that check in a vehicle condition check list. All such documented checks should be retained and may be requested by the Authority.	In line with the DFT Guidance
3.2	Vehicle age and mechanical testing Addition/change: c) Vehicle licences are for a period of 1 year and will be subject to MOT testing upon grant or renewal applications. Following the grant of a license all licensed vehicles must be inspected after an initial 6 month license period and before the 7th month of a license period. The 6 month (mid license) vehicle inspection will be conducted by Authorised Officers at a Council designated vehicle inspection facility. d) All MOT and Council vehicle inspection reports must show that the vehicle has no faults, or advisories, has passed the stated inspection/test, and meets Licensing Policy minimum standards. Where advisories	In line wite the DFT best practice guidance and ISP to encourage wheelchair accessible vehicle licensing, and encourage low or zero emission vehicle licensing. The introduction of a mid-license inspection includes safety features not included in a standard MOT test, and meets the DFT best practice guidance.

or faults have been reported, the license or application may be suspended/revoked or refused a license until the applicant/Licensee have documented the completion of any remedial works required to correct the advisory fault/s.

- e) Where any additional vehicle checks are required by Cherwell District Council, vehicles must be taken to an appointed vehicle testing station within 7 days of such a request. The appointed MOT or vehicle inspecting station used for additional checks will be detailed by Cherwell District Council at the time of such request. Vehicle MOT and inspection appointments, together with all associated fees, are solely the applicant or licensee responsibility.
- f) On initial grant of a new license non wheelchair accessible vehicles will be refused.
- g) The council will only continue to licence non wheelchair accessible vehicles up to the vehicle being 10 years old from first date of registration.
- h) Wheelchair accessible vehicles upon first licensing will be exempt from a maximum vehicle age restriction and will be licensed until the vehicle is 10 years old, from the date of first registration.
- i) Wheelchair accessible vehicles propelled by electric hybrid engines will be licensed until the reach 15 years old from first registration.
- j) Wheelchair accessible vehicles propelled solely by electric, or hydrogen, will be exempt from all vehicle licensing age restrictions.

3.5 **Equipment**

Addition:

g) Vehicles with driver/passengers' partitions must have a hearing loop or similar audio assistance installed.

In line with the DFT Guidance

	Appendix D	
2	Bookings Addition:	In line with the DFT Guidance
	At the time of accepting a hire and reward booking the Operator must ensure that the customers have been asked if they require any assistance, such as a Wheelchair accessible vehicle, assistance for a disability, have a registered assistance dog, or similar. The operator must then accommodate the customers' requirements at no extra charge. Operators will be required keep records of the said customer requirements as evidence of their compliance with their license.	
	any additional customer requirements	
	Addition: Licensed Operators must ensure that their booking systems are accessible and comply with WCAG2.1 accessibility standard to Level AA and with the principles of the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018 as a minimum for digital content: https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag	In line with the DFT Guidance
3	Insurance Addition: (e) Licensed operators must have public liability Insurance and maintain that insurance	Clarification of exiting licensing requirements under policy and legislation.
	throughout their license period. Standard of Service	In line with the DFT Guidance
	Addition: a) Licensed Operators must ensure that all vehicles working under their license have been inspected by the driver before any jobs are allocated to that vehicle. Daily 'Driver Vehicle Condition Checklists' reports must be inspected by the operator, and the reports held/stored by the operator for a period no less than 12 months. The vehicle condition check lists may be stored digitally but must be	THE WILL THE DITT GUIDANCE

	accessible for inspection by an authorised officer.	
9	Accessibility Addition: a) Licensed Operators with 10 or more Cherwell Council licensed vehicles facilitating Hire and reward journeys under their operator's license should ensure at least 20% of those vehicles are wheelchair accessible before 01/01/2028. b) The Licensing Authority may request documentation of the licensed operators' vehicles and wheelchair accessibility vehicles at any time.	New guidance for Operators to encourage availability of accessible vehicles in the Private Hire sector. In line with the DFT Guidance
13	Contracts All journeys facilitated or booked by the licensed operator are considered as a contractual obligation between the customer and that operator. All licensed Operators must comply with all legislative, HMRC, Employment law, and all other associated Government requirements associated with each such contract	
	Appendix E Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Driver Penalty Points Scheme	
3	Change: 3. Points will remain on a license for 3 years for licensed drivers and vehicle licensee's and for 5 years for Private Hire Operators. All licensing points will remain on a license from the date of issue, and will transfer to any license renewed during the points allocation time period	Increase of time period where points may stay on a license – In line with the DFT Guidance, and clarification of points carrying over to renewed licences, and time period points will remain relevant and on file.
	4. Where a license holder accumulates the trigger level of penalty points (namely 12 points) more than once in any Five year period the Council will decide whether a license should be suspended or revoked if it is considered that the accumulation of points indicates that the license holder is no longer a	

	(fit and proper person) to hald a Barray First	Г
	'fit and proper person' to hold a license. Each case will be considered on its own merits	
	Note:	
	General-	
	Points generally remain on the license file for a period of up to 5 years from the date of issue.	
	Driver/Licensee-	
	• License holders reaching the 12 point threshold twice or more in a 5 year period may be re- assessed under the Fit and Proper requirements of that license. Such an assessment may result in the revocation or refusal of a license. Each case would be assessed on its own merits.	
	Operators-	
	Operators reaching the 24 point threshold twice or more in a 5 year period may be re- assessed under the 'Fit and Proper' requirements of that license. Such an assessment may result in the revocation or refusal of a license. Each case would be assessed on its own merits	
	Appendix G	
	Vehicle Emission Standards	
	Addition:	In line with the DFT Guidance
	* Exemptions apply to wheelchair accessible licensed vehicles.	
Addition	Appendix H Cherwell District Council Licensing Vehicle Assessment.	Vehicle assessment document, outlines all aspects of the 6 month mid license vehicle assessment.
Addition	Appendix I Daily 'Driver Vehicle Condition Checklist	In line with the DFT Guidance, all aspects of the driver's vehicle check outlined by the DFT guidance.

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