

# Pre-paid parking cards on way out

Drivers to use Nol cards or mparking in Dubai.

- By Ashfaq Ahmed, Chief Reporter
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Dubai: The number of pre-paid parking cards available for sale have been reduced and many motorists have been forced to use Nol cards or coins to buy parking tickets from parking meters.

Pre-paid parking cards are the cheapest option to pay for parking vehicles in paid parking zones compared to using coins, Nol cards or the mParking service, which costs the most.

The pre-paid cards are typically used by motorists to pay for parking for short periods and were available in denominations of Dh30, Dh50 and Dh100.

Motorists were able to save money by using these cards because a card with Dh100 parking credit is available for purchase for Dh85. Cards with Dh50 credit are sold for Dh43 and a card with Dh30 credit can be bought for Dh26.

## Curious customer

"I am just wondering why these cards are not available in the market any more," said Chris, who always prefers to use the cards instead of carrying coins.

"It was the cheapest mode to pay for parking using these cards," he noted.

He said that he was forced to buy a Nol card as he was unable to find the pre-paid card for sale any longer.

It costs a motorist Dh2 per hour to pay for parking using the Nol card while those who opt to use the mParking service pay Dh2.30 per hour. An official at the Dubai Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) said that the cards are still available at some places but he could not say where.

"We reduced the supply of these cards because the demand has been quite low," he said.

However, another official said the pre-paid cards would gradually be replaced with Nol cards to pay at the parking meters. Currently, Nol cards are used by commuters on public transport in Dubai.

"Why should I buy a Nol card when I don't use public transport and commute in my car only?" said Lahiba, an Indian manager. She said that RTA should keep all the options open especially the cheaper ones.

Apart from Nol Cards, coins, and mParking, motorists can also use long term parking cards to park their vehicles in the paid parking zones. The long- term seasonal parking cards are available in two different categories.

### **Long-term**

Motorists must fix these cards to the windscreen of their cars. They can be used to park cars round-the-clock without purchasing tickets from parking meters. Cards in Category A can be used to park cars all over Dubai including zones A and B and cost Dh700 for three months.

### **In the Zone: Ticket renewal**

Renewal of parking tickets is limited to four hours using the mParking service in Zone A of paid parking but motorists can renew mParking for up to ten hours in Zone B parking, a senior official clarified.

Gulf News reported yesterday that many motorists were upset over not being able to renew their parking tickets for more than four hours using the mParking service and demanded the Roads and Transport Authority improve the service. However, the RTA official said that the limited renewal hours policy was followed to give other motorists a chance to park but he could not explain why motorists are able to park for days at the same parking space using the coins at the parking meters or long- term seasonal cards.

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