



DRIVING IN SCOTLAND

This booklet is for visitors from overseas who are living in Scotland and explains what you will need if you wish to drive in this country. If you are resident in the UK (that is for more than 185 days in any 12-month period), then the vehicle you are using must be registered, licensed and insured in the UK. Otherwise you may be breaking the law.

You will need:

- a valid driving licence
- insurance
- a registration document for your vehicle
- current road tax
- an MOT certificate if your vehicle is over three years old
- an awareness of GB road traffic laws and how people drive in Britain.

We hope that you will find this booklet helpful and will enjoy trouble-free motoring on our roads.





LICENCES



Do you have a valid car driving licence?

If you are from a country in the European Economic Area (EEA)*

- you can use your existing licence until aged 70 or for three years after becoming resident here, whichever is longer. If, for example, you are aged 45 you will not need to exchange your licence until you are 70 years old; and if you are 68 you will not need to exchange it until you are 71 years old. When it expires you must exchange it for a GB licence. You will not need to take a driving test to do this.

If you are from certain designated countries**

- you can drive for up to 12 months on your existing licence
- to continue driving beyond this, you will need to exchange it for a GB licence within the 12-month period. You will not need to take a driving test to do this
- if you do not do this you will have to stop driving. However, you can still exchange your licence within five years of coming to this country without taking a British driving test.

If you are from any other country and have a licence or an International Driving Permit

- you can drive for up to 12 months. To continue driving you should apply for a Provisional Licence and arrange to sit the British driving test before the end of the 12-month period.

If you do not have a licence and wish to drive, you will need to apply for a provisional licence and, after training, sit a driving test.

* EEA countries are as follows: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

** Australia, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Falkland Islands, Hong Kong, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Zimbabwe.



If your licence does not allow you to ride a moped or motorcycle you will need to complete a Compulsory Basic Training course before you can ride these. For further details contact the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) on 0115 901 2595 or online at www.dsa.gov.uk.

For more information about licences, see

www.direct.gov.uk/Motoring/DriverLicensing/fs/en or the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) leaflet *What you need to know about Driver Licences* (D100).

It is important that you have a valid licence. Without one you could:

- be fined up to £1000 and may be banned from driving or receive up to 6 penalty points (with 12 points you will no longer be allowed to drive). In addition, your insurance will not cover any costs that result from a crash.

Do you have a vocational licence?

Are you employed as a driver of a lorry, minibus or bus?

If so, your employer should have made sure that you meet all legal requirements.

If, however, you are driving any of these on your own behalf, you should make sure you meet the following requirements:

- you must register with the DVLA, telephone 0870 240 0009. Once you do so your licence will be returned along with a counterpart document. In the event of any incidents, this will allow you to take advantage of the fixed penalty system rather than have to go to court. If you have a car licence you can also register if you wish to do so. The counterpart scheme applies only to those with a licence from an EEA country
- if from an EEA country and under 45 years of age, you can drive in the UK on your own licence until aged 45 or for five years, whichever is the longer; if over 45 and under 65, you can drive up to your 66th birthday or for five years, whichever is the shorter; if 65 or older you can drive for 12 months. Once any of these age limits is reached your licence must be exchanged for a British licence
- be 18 years of age to drive medium-sized vehicles
- be 21 years of age to drive large lorries or buses.

If you are from any other country (including the designated countries mentioned above) you must pass a British driving test before you can drive lorries, minibuses or buses on the roads.



Are you driving an agricultural tractor?

If you wish to drive an agricultural tractor on the road you, or your employer, should check your existing licence to make sure you can drive these vehicles. The DVLA on 0870 240 0009 will advise you if your licence allows you to do this.

If you do not have this entitlement you will need to apply for a provisional licence and then a category f test. You do not need an ordinary driving licence to do this but you can only use the category f licence to drive agricultural tractors on the road and no other vehicles.

Useful safety advice on working with tractors can be found at:

www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg185.pdf or call the Health and Safety Executive on 01787 881 165 and ask for a copy of their booklet *Tractor Action*.



INSURANCE



Do you have insurance?

You must have insurance to drive a car. The cost will depend on your age and the type of car you are driving. There are three types:

- **Third party.** This covers costs to anyone injured or whose car, or other property is damaged because of you. It does not cover damage to your car.
- **Third Party, Fire and Theft.** In addition to the above, it covers damage to your car through fire or loss through theft.
- **Comprehensive.** This covers all the above and the cost of injury to yourself and repairs to your vehicle.

If borrowing a car, make sure that your own or your friend's insurance will cover you. If hiring a car, insurance is usually provided by the hire company.

Anyone else who drives your car has to be named on the insurance policy – there will be an extra cost for this.

It is important that you have insurance. Without insurance you could:

- be fined up to £5000
- be banned from driving
- receive up to 8 penalty points
- have to pay the costs that result from the crash.

Insurance companies can easily be found on the internet or in local phone books. Ask them what the insurance will cost and compare their prices as some can be cheaper.



REGISTRATION



Is your car registered?

If you have brought your car from your own country and it has been registered and taxed there, you can use it for 6 months in any 12-month period. To use it beyond this time, contact a DVLA Local Office or telephone 0870 240 0010.

If you buy a car in the UK, it must be registered with the DVLA

- if you buy it at a car sales outlet, they will usually help to register the vehicle
- if you buy privately, make sure the seller gives you the registration document and MOT certificate (if the vehicle is over three years old) and that they own the car.

Advice on buying privately is included in the DVLA leaflet *Registering and Licensing your Motor Vehicle (V100)*.



TAX



Is your vehicle taxed?

All vehicles must be taxed. The amount of tax depends on the size of engine, the type of fuel, and how much carbon dioxide is produced. You pay less tax on vehicles with lower emissions.

- if you have bought a new car at a car sales outlet, it will often be taxed. If not, you will have to register the vehicle at a DVLA local office using form V55/4
- if you already own the car and it is registered in your name, you should receive a form about two weeks before the renewal date. Complete this form and take it to a main Post Office with your insurance and MOT certificate (if the vehicle is over three years old). They will then give you your tax disc. Place the disc on the inside of the left-hand side of your windscreen.



MOT CERTIFICATE



Do you have an MOT certificate?

The MOT test is administered by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) and is intended to ensure that vehicles over three years old are in good mechanical condition. The test will check brakes, tyres, lights, exhaust emissions and many other parts of the vehicle that could make it unsafe to drive or cause environmental pollution.

Once your car is three years old you will need to have it tested, and every year after that. Tests are carried out at approved MOT centres and you will be given a certificate if your vehicle passes. If the vehicle fails, it must be repaired and then retested before you can drive it. There is a fee for this certificate.

Even if your vehicle passes the MOT test, you have to make sure that it stays in good condition between tests by getting it repaired. The police can stop any vehicle that does not appear roadworthy, for example, one with faulty lights or a faulty exhaust.



LEARNING TO DRIVE



If you do not have a licence and wish to learn how to drive, you should:

- be 17 years of age or over
- obtain a form at a Post Office to apply to the DVLA for a Provisional Licence
- once you have the Provisional Licence take driving lessons, preferably with an Approved Driving Instructor (if you are taught by anyone else, they must be at least 21 years of age and have held a licence for at least three years)
- display “L” plates at the front and rear of your vehicle
- not drive on motorways
- not drive alone.

The driving test consists of:

- A two-part theory test:
 - › Part one is a multi-choice test of 35 questions, 30 of which you must answer correctly. The test lasts 40 minutes and is taken at the nearest theory test centre.
 - › Part two is a hazard perception test. Fourteen video clips of driving are shown where you must identify situations that could become dangerous. The test is taken at the same time as the theory test.
- A practical driving test. This lasts about 40 minutes.

You have to pass both parts of the theory test on the same day before you can take the practical driving test.

You can book a driving test online at www.dsa.gov.uk or by phoning 0870 010 1372.



GENERAL ADVICE

As laws vary from country to country, you should ensure that you are aware of traffic laws in the UK. The *Highway Code* is a guide to driving in the UK that also gives details of traffic laws. You can buy it in bookshops or view it online at www.highwaycode.gov.uk/. It is strongly recommended that you read the *Highway Code*.

Some important rules are listed below:

- Drive on the left and overtake on the right. At roundabouts give way to traffic approaching from the right. At junctions obey any Stop or Give Way signs and markings.
- If you are used to driving on the right-hand side of the road your automatic reaction in an emergency will be to swerve in that direction, that is, into the path of traffic on the other side of the road. In view of this it is important that you give all your concentration to your driving and are not distracted by the car radio, etc.
- On busy roads other traffic will remind you to drive on the left. Extra care is needed on quieter roads where there are fewer vehicles on the road.
- Road signs may be different from those at home. British signs are shown in the *Highway Code*.
- Drinking and driving. The legal limit is 80 milligrammes per 100 millilitres of blood, 35 micrograms per 100 ml of breath or 107 mg per 100 ml of urine.

As the amount of alcohol in your body depends on various factors such as what you are drinking, your weight and your metabolism there is no easy way of knowing if you are under the legal limit. The best advice is not to drink and drive.

Legal penalties are severe – you could be fined up to £5000, be imprisoned and you will automatically be banned from driving. If anyone is killed because you have been drinking, you could be imprisoned for up to 14 years. In addition, you could be liable for any costs to someone injured in the crash.



- Drugs and medicines. It is also against the law to drive whilst impaired by drugs or by medicines. If you are taking medicines make sure they will not affect your driving.
- Speeding. Speed limits in the UK are as follows:

Motorways and dual carriageways	70 mph (112 kph)
Single carriageways	60 mph (96 kph)
Built-up areas	30 mph (48 kph)

Sometimes different speed limits will apply on these roads; these are clearly signed. In particular, there are 20 mph (32 kph) limits near many schools.

Many residential areas are 20's Plenty zones: these have an advisory 20 mph speed limit and can be recognised by the signs being green.

Medium-sized vans, large vans, lorries and buses have lower speed limits. These are shown in the *Highway Code*.

- Seatbelts must be worn by the driver and passengers. As the driver, you have to make sure all passengers under 14 years of age wear seatbelts or an approved child restraint, if applicable.

The following rules on carrying children apply with very few exceptions:

- Children under 3 must be in a correct child restraint in front and back. If there are no seatbelts in the vehicle to which a restraint can be fixed, the child cannot travel.
- Children aged 11 or younger and under 135 cm in height (4ft 5in) must use correct child restraint in front. They cannot use the seatbelt. If there is a seatbelt in the back to which a restraint can be fixed, the child must use the correct restraint.
- Children aged 12 or 13, or younger children over 135 cm in height, must wear a seatbelt in front and back if fitted.
- Rear-facing child seats must not be used on seats where an active frontal airbag is fitted.

Further information is available at:

www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/childcarseats/childcarseats.htm



- Hand-held mobile phones must not be used, including sending or reading text messages. To use your phone, park safely and switch off your engine. You could be fined £60 and receive 3 penalty points.
- Crash helmets must be used by motorcyclists and their passengers.
- You must stop if you have crashed. You have to give your name and address and insurance details to anyone who is injured or whose property or vehicle has been damaged. The police should be called if someone is injured. If the crash is serious call the police on 999 and, if necessary, an ambulance.
- Once a pedestrian steps onto a zebra crossing you must stop to allow them to cross. At pelican crossings you must stop if the red light is showing as this means people are crossing. When the amber light flashes, you can proceed if there are no more pedestrians on the crossing.

There are two other types of pedestrian crossings:

- Puffin crossings – these allow more time for pedestrians to cross.
- Toucan crossings – these allow cyclists and pedestrians to cross.

Both these crossings look very like a pelican crossing, however, there is no flashing amber phase. You must stop if the red light is showing and proceed only when the green light is showing, provided no one is on the crossing.

- You should drive more slowly near a school or where pedestrians may be present. At many schools you will see a School Crossing Patroller who helps the children to cross the road. They will hold up a Stop sign if they want you to stop to allow the children to cross.
- If you see an emergency vehicle such as a fire engine or ambulance using its blue lights, headlights or siren, you should pull over to let it pass as soon as it is safe to do so and without putting other road users in danger.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Websites

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
www.dvla.gov.uk

Driving Standards Agency

www.dsa.gov.uk

Motoring Information

www.direct.gov.uk/Motoring/fs/en

Highway Code

www.highwaycode.gov.uk/

Note: Large public libraries often have internet facilities

Leaflets

Registering and Licensing your Motor Vehicle (V100)

What you need to know about Driver Licences (D100)

These leaflets are available from Post Offices

Telephone Numbers

DVLA Local Offices 0870 850 0007
Vocational Licence Registrations 0870 240 0009
DSA Driving Tests 0870 010 1372

The information contained in this leaflet is intended as a guide to driving requirements in Scotland and not as a definitive statement of law.



Road Safety
SCOTLAND

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