



# Driving abroad<sup>o</sup>

A guide

Go further



Travelling abroad by road, especially within the European Union, is now very easy.

However inexperienced drivers may find themselves burdened with additional requirements and legislation. Don't drive abroad unprepared - read our tips to avoid falling foul of local etiquette, customs and officials.

## Before you travel.

Research – the driving laws of the country you are travelling to and through.

### Check

- with your insurer that you're fully covered to drive abroad, including provision of breakdown cover and medical expenses as a result of an accident,
- whether you need a Green Card (this provides proof of minimum insurance) for the country you're visiting,
- whether you need an International Driving Permit,
- you can comply with the vehicle requirements of the countries you'll visit.

**Service** - your vehicle before leaving the UK.

**Find out** - what you need to take with you. Regulations of what you need to carry with you in your vehicle can differ very much from the UK.

**Be sure** - If you're travelling within the EU then get a free European Health Insurance Card for free or reduced emergency care (you still need full travel insurance though) Also remember, you can call 112 to contact the emergency services in any EU country.

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## Keep on the Right side

Driving in Europe is on the right side of the road. Special care is needed at road junctions and traffic islands where traffic approaching from the right mainly has priority, and when overtaking because of the difficulty of pulling out 'blind' from other vehicles.

When travelling on autobahns or autostradas drivers should remember that the speeds at which many European cars are is far higher than on British motorways. Cars travelling at 100-120 mph is still common despite some restrictions, so extra care must be taken to ensure the road is clear before pulling out.

Most traffic signs on European roads conform to international standards (as do those in the UK) and therefore are instantly recognizable.

Drivers who infringe local road traffic rules, parking restrictions or drivers' hours / tachograph rules may have pay on-the-spot fines if they are to avoid returning to the country to appear in court.

## 'When in Rome' ...and elsewhere

Find out about local customs, behave accordingly and obey local laws.

Be sure to carry your identification, your passport and driving licence, with you when driving abroad. You'll find in some countries that being pulled over for a routine spot check is much more common than in the UK, so don't be alarmed if you find yourself being told to do so. Remain calm and co-operate in full and you'll have no problems.

Drive defensively and expect the unexpected – the local driving style may be different to that of the UK.

Don't drive when you're tired and take regular breaks on long journeys.

Always wear a seat belt and make sure any passengers do too.

Don't drink and drive – the alcohol limit may be lower than in the UK and in some countries there is zero tolerance for drink driving.

Don't use your mobile whilst driving.

Don't overload your vehicle and ensure your visibility isn't impaired.

Do think about what you are doing at all times and trust your instincts.

Don't take risks you wouldn't at home... do drive safely.



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