



Driving in Europe



A complete guide for a trouble-free journey abroad

Can I use my UK driving licence?

You can use your GB or Northern Ireland driving licence in all European Union or European Economic Area Countries, including Switzerland.

Do I need specific European car insurance?

Yes. Like the UK, you must have third-party cover as a minimum level of insurance before you can drive in Europe.

As long as you already have UK comprehensive car insurance or third-party, fire and theft insurance, your policy should automatically provide the minimum level of cover when you drive in Europe.

But don't assume your UK policy will provide the same level of cover in Europe as it does in the UK. If you have comprehensive cover in the UK, your insurer may only provide third-party cover in Europe as part of your policy. This can leave you seriously out of pocket if your car's damaged while you're away.

Call your insurer to check what cover you have. If necessary, you can ask them to extend your comprehensive insurance to cover you whilst driving in Europe, or add it as an optional extra. Depending on your insurer this may cost you extra.

UK stickers and number plates

You must display the UK identifier when driving a UK-registered vehicle abroad.

If your number plate includes the UK identifier with the Union flag, you don't need a UK sticker. But there's a couple of exceptions:

- If you're driving in Spain, Malta or Cyprus you always need a sticker, no matter what's on your plate.
- If you're driving in Ireland you don't need a UK identifier on your number plate or a UK sticker.



Do I need a Green Card?

No, you don't need to carry a green card when driving in the EU.

But you may still need to carry one to drive in other countries. Some may also require you to register a caravan or trailer you're towing. Check with an [authoritative body](#) to make sure you meet the requirements of that country.



Must-have checklist

Documents

- ✓ Passport
- ✓ Valid driving licence
- ✓ Car insurance documents (plus a Green Card if required)
- ✓ Vehicle registration certificate also known as the V5C or logbook

Other

In the UK there's no legal requirement to carry any particular equipment with you when driving. But in many European countries it's compulsory to have certain gear – this might include:

- ✓ High-vis jackets for each person in the car
- ✓ Warning triangle
- ✓ Snow chains or winter tyres depending on season and terrain

The [MoneySavingExpert](#) have put together a list of country-specific need-to-knows.

The following aren't compulsory but it's also handy to bring:

- ✓ Spare wheel or tyre repair kit and spare bulbs
- ✓ Powerbank to charge your phone - make sure you have your insurer's number saved
- ✓ Spare change for tolls
- ✓ Road maps, in case SatNav fails
- ✓ First aid kit

Finally, different countries have different road rules, speed limits, and drink-driving laws. Certain countries like France and Germany may even require you to display an [emissions sticker](#) on your wind-screen.

Always check before you travel. You can visit the AA website for a full country-by-country breakdown.