

Driving licences

For more information go to www.direct.gov.uk/driving



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How to apply for your driving licence

To apply for your driving licence you need to fill in:



- **form D1** – application for a driving licence (for all driving licences except those for lorries and buses); or



- **form D2** – application for a lorry or bus licence.

You can order application packs for the D1 and D2 online from **www.direct.gov.uk/motoringforms** or from us by phoning **0870 240 0009** (between 8am and 8.30pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 5.30pm on Saturdays).

You can also get these application packs from:

- Post Office® branches (D1 only);
- Traffic Area Offices (D2 only); and
- DVLA local offices.

You can use these application packs to apply for a:

- provisional licence;
- full licence;
- replacement licence;
- new licence after it has been withdrawn for health reasons; or
- new licence after you have been disqualified from driving.

You can also use them to:

- renew your photo;
- change your details;
- renew your licence;
- remove out-of-date points or details of driving disqualifications; or
- exchange a Northern Ireland or non-British licence for a British one.

You may need to pay a fee (see the relevant application form).

Provisional licences

To learn to drive you must have a valid provisional licence. We will normally send this to you within 15 working days of receiving your application.

You must not drive until you receive your licence, as this will give details of what and when you can start driving.

Learning to drive cars

Learners must be supervised by a qualified driver who must:

- be at least 21;
- hold a full valid British, Northern Ireland or EU Community licence in the appropriate category; and
- have held that licence for three years or more.

For cars and motorcycles

- If you have never held a GB driving licence you need to apply for a provisional licence using form D1.

For motorcycles only

- If your provisional motorcycle licence was issued before 1 February 2001 it was only valid for two years. If you did not pass a test by the end of those two years, you may apply for another provisional licence.
- If your provisional motorcycle licence was issued on or after 1 February 2001 it will be valid until your 70th birthday.
- Since March 2002, driving licences have automatically allowed you to learn to ride a motorcycle. (That is, you have 'provisional motorcycle entitlement').
- If you have a full moped licence that includes provisional motorcycle entitlement, that is also valid until your 70th birthday.

Note: you must complete a compulsory basic training (CBT) course for a moped or motorcycle before you can ride on a public road. For more information visit www.direct.gov.uk/learning2drive or phone the Driving Standards Agency on 0115 936 6666 and choose the CBT section.

For lorries and buses only

- You must hold a full licence for driving a car and you need to apply for a provisional lorry or bus licence using form D2.
- You will need to get the medical report form (D4) (included in the D2 application pack) filled in by a doctor.

When you pass your driving test

- You can drive unsupervised as soon as you pass your test.
- We will normally issue you with a full licence automatically.
- If we cannot issue your licence automatically, your driving examiner will tell you what to do.
- We will normally send your driving licence to you within 15 working days of receiving your application.

Note: the certificate you get when you pass your test is only valid for two years. If you do not claim your full licence within this period you will have to take both the theory and practical tests again.

The Road Traffic (New Drivers) Act 1995

- If you get six or more penalty points within two years of passing your first driving test in GB (the probationary period) you will lose your licence.
- To get your full licence back you must:
 - get a provisional licence;
 - drive as a learner; then
 - pass the theory and practical tests again.
- The total number of penalty points on your licence includes any you got before passing the test.
- Points you get after the probationary period will also count if you committed the driving offence during that period.

- Passing the driving test again does not remove the penalty points from your licence, and if, within the following three years, the total number of points reaches 12, you could be disqualified from driving by a court.

If you have exchanged a licence issued in a designated country see 'How to fill in your Application for a driving licence (D1)' (INF1D) and pass a British driving test to gain additional driving entitlements. The two year period begins from the date you passed a driving test in Great Britain.

Penalty points you received before passing your first test, and which still apply, will count towards the total of six. Points you get after the two-year period will also count if you committed the offence during that period.

Passing the theory and practical tests does not remove the penalty points from your licence, and if the total reaches 12 you may be banned from driving.

Your entitlement to drive

- Your entitlement to drive cars and ride motorcycles and mopeds normally lasts until your 70th birthday. After that you need to renew your licence every three years.
- Your entitlement to drive a large goods vehicle or passenger-carrying vehicle normally lasts until your 45th birthday. After that you need to renew your licence every five years until your 65th birthday, and every year from then on.
- If you have a medical condition which needs to be reviewed regularly, you may be given entitlement to drive for a period of one, two or three years. Please see 'Your health' on page 11.
- We will send you a reminder three months before your current licence ends.

When to renew your licence

- Photocard licences are only valid for up to 10 years, although your entitlement to drive will normally be valid until your 70th birthday.
- If you hold a photocard driving licence, by law you must renew your photo every 10 years.

You could be fined up to £1000 if you don't.

- If you provide a photo when you are 70 or over, you will not need to update your photo again unless you want to.
- If you hold a paper licence this is valid until your 70th birthday. At that point, you will need to apply for a photocard licence.
- We will send you a reminder two months before your current licence ends.

Change of personal details

To tell us about a **change of address** you can:

- fill in form D1; or
- if you have a photocard licence, write your new address in the changes section on the paper counterpart and send both the counterpart and photocard to us.

To tell us about a **change of name** you must fill in form D1. Please see leaflet 'How to fill in your application for a driving licence' (INF1D) for more information.

Important – you must tell us about any change of name or address. If you don't, you could be fined up to £1000.

How to renew the photo on your licence

To renew the photo on your licence you can:

- fill in the reminder that we have sent you; or
- fill in the form D1

Please see leaflet INF1D for more information.

How to get a replacement licence

If your driving licence has been lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed, you can apply for a replacement licence by filling in form D1.

If you have lost both your photocard licence and the paper counterpart, you can apply for a replacement photocard licence over the phone using a credit card or debit card, as long as none of the details have changed or are incorrect. You can pay by Visa, Delta, Mastercard and Maestro. To use this service, phone 0870 240 0009 between 8am and 8.30pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 5.30pm on Saturdays.

We will normally send your replacement licence to you within 15 working days of receiving your application.

If you find your old licence after applying for a replacement, please return it to DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1AB with an explanatory note.

Can I drive while my licence is with DVLA?

You can drive before you receive your replacement licence back as long as the following apply.

- You have held a GB or Northern Ireland licence issued since 1 January 1976, or another licence that can be exchanged for a GB licence. (Please see leaflet 'Driving in Great Britain as a visitor or new resident' (INF38) for more information).
- You are not disqualified from driving.
- You have not been refused a licence for medical reasons or for not responding to medical enquiries.
- You would not be refused a licence for medical reasons.
- You keep to any special conditions which apply to the licence.

Penalty points and driving disqualifications

If you are convicted of a motoring offence, the court can:

- put penalty points on your licence;
- disqualify you for a set time; or
- do both.

If you get 12 or more penalty points in a three-year period you will be disqualified from driving.

Penalty points

Points stay on a licence for the following periods.

- 11 years from the date of being convicted of the following offences.
 - Driving while under the influence of drink or drugs, including causing death by careless driving while under the influence of drink or drugs (shown on the licence as DR10, DR20, DR30, DR80, CD40, CD50, and CD60).
 - Causing death by careless driving then failing or refusing to take a breath, blood or urine test (shown on the licence as CD70).
- Four years from the date of being convicted of reckless or dangerous driving, and offences resulting in a driving disqualification (shown on the licence as DD40, DD60 and DD80).
- Four years from the date of the offence in all other cases.

We will automatically remove out-of-date penalty points if you change your licence for any reason.

Driving disqualifications

If you're disqualified for less than 56 days.

- The court will stamp your old-style paper licence or the paper counterpart of your photocard and give it back to you. The stamp will show how long you are disqualified for.
- You don't need to renew your licence when the disqualification ends. Your licence becomes valid again the day after the disqualification ends.

If you are disqualified for 56 days or more.

- You need to apply to have your licence renewed. If you are not sure when your driving disqualification ends, contact the court which disqualified you.
- Two months before your disqualification ends we will send you an application to renew it.
- You can also apply to renew your licence after being disqualified, or to have out-of-date points removed from your licence, by filling in:
 - form D1 (for an ordinary driving licence); or
 - form D2 (for a lorry or bus licence).

Please see either booklet INF1D (for form D1) or 'How to fill in your lorry or bus driving licence application form' (INF2D) (for form D2) for details on how to fill in the forms.

If you were disqualified for more than two years, you can ask the court to consider removing the disqualification after:

- two years – if you were disqualified for between two and four years;
- half the period of the driving ban – if you were disqualified for between four and 10 years; or
- five years – if you were disqualified for 10 years or more.

For more information on codes which explain what penalty points are for, visit our website at **www.direct.gov.uk/penaltypoints** or see leaflet 'Information on driving licences' (INS57P), which you can download from **www.direct.gov.uk/motoringleaflets**

How can I get out-of-date penalty points and disqualification removed?

When penalty points and disqualification have run out you can apply to have them removed from your licence.

To do this, fill in:

- form D1 (for an ordinary driving licence); or
- form D2 (for a lorry or bus licence).

Please see either booklet INF1D (for form D1) or INF2D (for form D2) on how to fill in the forms.

Your health

You **must** tell us if you ever had or you currently have any of the following.

- Epilepsy
- Fits or blackouts
- Repeated attacks of sudden disabling giddiness (dizziness that prevents you from functioning normally)
- Diabetes controlled by insulin
- An implanted cardiac pacemaker
- An implanted cardiac defibrillator (ICD)
- Persistent alcohol abuse or dependency
- Persistent drug abuse or dependency
- Parkinson's disease
- Narcolepsy or sleep apnoea syndrome
- Stroke, with any symptoms lasting longer than one month, recurrent 'mini strokes' or TIAs (Transient Ischaemic Attacks)
- Any type of brain surgery, severe head injury involving inpatient treatment, or brain tumour
- Any other chronic (long term) neurological condition
- A serious problem with memory or episodes of confusion
- Severe learning disability
- Serious psychiatric illness or mental ill-health
- Total loss of sight in one eye
- Any condition affecting both eyes, or the remaining eye only (not including short or long sight or colour blindness)

- Any condition affecting your visual field (the surrounding area you can see when looking directly ahead)
- Any persistent limb problem for which your driving has to be restricted to certain types of vehicle or those with adapted controls.

If you do not tell us about any of the above, you are committing an offence which could lead to you being fined up to £1000. If you knowingly give us false information, or do not give us any relevant information, to get a driving licence, you could be sent to prison for up to two years.

How do I tell you about a health problem?

- If you are filling in form D1 or form D2, you can give us details in the health section.
- If you already have a licence, contact us at:
Drivers Medical Group
DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1TU.

Phone: 0870 600 0301 (between 8am and 5.30pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 1pm on Saturdays)

Textphone: 01792 766366

Fax: 0845 850 0095

E-mail: eftd@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

Or you can download the appropriate medical questionnaire from

www.direct.gov.uk/driverhealth

We will need to know:

- your driver number or your full name and date of birth; and
- as much detail as possible about the health problem.

What happens when I tell you about a health problem?

We'll send you a medical questionnaire (unless you are also sending in form D4). It asks you for permission to let our medical adviser get reports from your doctor and specialists.

Extra rules for medium and large vehicles, minibuses or buses

The rules about health are stricter for drivers of larger vehicles. This is because accidents involving large vehicles are more likely to result in death or serious injury.

As well as those conditions already stated you also need to tell us about:

- angina, other heart conditions or heart operation;
- diabetes controlled by tablets;
- visual problems affecting either eye; or
- any form of stroke, including TIAs (Transient Ischaemic Attacks).

Epilepsy

If you want to drive a medium or large vehicle, minibus or bus you must not have a liability to epileptic seizures.

Diabetes

If you have diabetes treated by insulin you may not drive medium or large vehicles, minibuses or buses unless:

- You held a licence to drive lorries or buses on 1 April 1991; and
- The traffic commissioner who issued the licence or in whose area you lived knew about the insulin treatment before January 1991.

Medical report (D4) (for medium or large vehicles, minibus or bus drivers/applicants only)

When applying for your first lorry or bus licence, or renewing an existing licence, you will need to get a D4 form filled in by your doctor. You also need to have a D4 filled in if you hold an EC/EEA licence and are applying for your first lorry or bus licence or renewing it at age 45 or over.

If you already hold a lorry or bus licence and you are applying for the other category you **must** provide a further D4 form unless you provided one in the last 12 months. You can download form D4 and guidance notes INF4D from www.direct.gov.uk/motoringforms

Extra eyesight rules if you want to drive medium or large vehicles, minibuses or buses

New drivers

Your eyesight must be at least:

- 6/9 on the Snellen scale in the better eye and 6/12 on the Snellen scale in the other eye (while wearing glasses or corrective lenses if you need them); and
- 3/60 in each eye without glasses or corrective lenses.

An optician will be able to tell you about this.

Drivers who held a licence before 1 January 1997

If you had a licence before 1 January 1997 and you do not meet the eyesight standards above, get more information from our Drivers Medical Group, DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1TU (phone 0870 6000 301).

When a licence is no longer needed

The licence should be returned to:

DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1AB.

Enclose a covering letter if you:

- are returning your own licence because you no longer want to drive; or
- are returning the licence of someone who has died.

The Data Protection Act and you

The Data Protection Act 1998 gives you the right to be told what information we hold about you. If you want to know what information we hold about you, please write to us. Include your full name, address and date of birth. Send your letter, together with a cheque or postal order for £5 (made payable to DVLA, Swansea) to:

Driving Licence Validation Team
Driver Customer Services
DVLA
Swansea
SA6 7JL.

If you have any questions

Driving licences

- Find out more about driving licences on our website at www.direct.gov.uk/driverinfo
- Write to:
Driver Customer Services
Correspondence Team
DVLA
Swansea
SA6 7JL.
- Send an e-mail to drivers.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk
- Call Customer Enquiries Group (Drivers) on 0870 240 0009 between 8am and 8.30pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 5.30pm on Saturdays.

Textphone

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and you have access to a textphone, call 01792 766366. This number will not respond to ordinary phones.

Information leaflets

If you need more information, the following leaflets are available.

- **INF28** – Driving a minibus
- **INF29** – Minimum test vehicles
- **INF30** – Driving licence requirements for towing trailers in Great Britain
- **INF31** – Driver licensing for motorcyclists
- **INF38** – Driving in GB as a visitor or new resident
- **INF45** – Your photocard driving licence explained
- **INF52** – Special licensing arrangements for drivers of larger vehicles
- **INF93** – Photocard driving licences
- **INF95** – A general guide to driving licences
- **INS57P** – Information on driving licences

You can download all these leaflets from our website at www.direct.gov.uk/motoringleaflets or you can get copies by calling 0870 240 0009.

Our service standards

We aim to give you the best possible service. If you'd like a copy of our 'Customer Service Guide' (INS101), please write to:

Driver Customer Services
Correspondence Team
DVLA
Swansea
SA6 7JL.

Fax: 0870 240 1651

E-mail: drivers.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk

Or you can download it from our website at
www.direct.gov.uk/motoringleaflets

Please tell us:

- when we do well;
- when we fail to meet our service standards;
- how we can improve our services; and
- if you have any comments on any of our other documents.

Please write to:

Mr Ian Broom
Customer Services Manager
DVLA
Swansea
SA7 0EE.

Fax: 01792 766416

E-mail: csm.dvla@gtnet.gov.uk



Driver and Vehicle
Licensing Agency

www.direct.gov.uk/driving