



MENU



Make it in Germany
Working in Germany: the official website
for qualified professionals

Driving licence and mobility

Did you obtain your driving licence outside Germany? Find out here whether and how you can use it in Germany, as well as how to get around safely by bus and train, bicycle, or e-scooter.

[← Erste Schritte in Deutschland](#)

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Driving a car: Is my driving licence valid in Germany?



What else should I be aware of when driving in Germany?



How do I use car-sharing and lift-sharing platforms?



Do I need a driving licence to use a bicycle or e-scooter?

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Deny

Accept All

If you hold a driving licence issued in your home country, different rules apply in Germany depending on the country where you originally obtained your driving licence.

Driving licences issued in the EU, Liechtenstein, Norway and Iceland:

Your driving licence is valid without restrictions. You do not need to have anything amended or exchanged.

Driving licences issued in another country:

You can use your driving licence to drive in Germany for **six months** (from the time you register your place of residence in Germany). An official German translation of your driving licence is also required for almost all countries of origin. After this six-month period, you will then need a German driving licence. Whether you will need to take another driving test in Germany to obtain a German driving licence depends on the country in which you obtained your driving licence. Your local **Driving Licence Authority** (Fahrerlaubnisbehörde) or **Driving Licence Office** (Führerscheinstelle) is responsible. To obtain a German driving licence, you must also have a valid eye test and confirmation of participation in a first aid course.

You will find more information on the validity of driving licences issued abroad [here](#) .

To obtain a driving licence in Germany, you must attend a driving school and pass a theoretical and practical driving test. Fees vary depending on the number of driving lessons you need before taking the test and whether you pass at the first attempt. However, a certain number of lessons are compulsory.

Do you have your own car?

Registration

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plate (number plate) shows when your next general inspection is due. The inspector from the officially recognised inspection organisation (e.g. DEKRA) or technical inspection organisation (e.g. TÜV) checks the vehicle's roadworthiness and exhaust and emissions performance. You must arrange and pay for this inspection yourself. If your vehicle has any defects, a new sticker will not be issued until the defects have been rectified.

Insurance

There are different types of insurance for your car.

- All cars in Germany must have motor vehicle [liability insurance](#). This insurance pays for damages if you cause an accident with your car or injure someone. It does not cover the cost of repairing your own car.
- If you want to cover damage to your own car, you can take out **fully comprehensive insurance**.
- If you have **accident and breakdown cover**, your insurer will pay for things like towing or a hire car if you break down or have an accident. A slightly more expensive option than accident and breakdown cover is to join an automobile association. However, you will receive many additional benefits, which are particularly worthwhile if you drive a lot.

Motor vehicle tax

If you own a car in Germany, you must pay motor vehicle tax (Kfz-Steuer). Registration for payment of motor vehicle tax takes place at the relevant Registration Office as part of the vehicle registration process (see above). You can find more information on the export or import of vehicles as well as tax matters on the [German Customs](#)  website.

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For serious traffic offences, such as speeding, penalty points are recorded in the [Register of Driver Fitness \(points system\)](#)  in Flensburg. If you have eight points in Flensburg, your driving licence can be revoked.

Many German cities have established low emission zones in order to improve the air quality. If you want to drive in a **low-emission zone**, you are only allowed to do so with an emissions-control sticker attached to your windscreen. You can obtain an **emissions-control sticker** at motor vehicle registration offices, technical inspection organisations or in repair shops authorised to carry out exhaust emission tests (AU), if your car complies with **certain emission standards**. You can find more information on the emissions-control sticker on the website of the [Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection](#) .

How do I use car-sharing and lift-sharing platforms?

In urban areas, there are many car-sharing services from different providers. You will need the appropriate app to make bookings. Car sharing saves on running costs such as insurance, motor vehicle tax and parking, and helps the environment. You can hire vehicles not only for short trips around the city but also for longer periods and journeys. You have the option of returning the vehicle to another city.

If you prefer not to drive yourself, there are several lift-sharing platforms (Mitfahrportale) on the internet. Lift-sharing, which can often be done spontaneously, can also be used to travel long distances. If you are unable to book early, long-distance coach and train fares will increase, especially on weekends and on public holidays.

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How much does it cost to use buses and trains?

The cost of public transport varies according to the region and the route you take. Each region usually has its own transport association, which sets the prices. Please check the transport association's website for prices. Many transport associations also offer free apps so you can check timetables and possibly buy tickets at the touch of a button.

If you use public transport regularly, it is usually worth buying a season ticket or monthly pass. You pay a fixed price and can travel as often as you like.



Tip: the Deutschland-Ticket

The “Deutschland-Ticket” was launched on 1 May 2023. This ticket, available only as a monthly cancellable subscription, currently costs €58 per month, and offers unlimited travel throughout Germany on all local public transport (buses, metros, regional trains, etc.). It is not valid on long-distance trains (IC, ICE).

For longer journeys, you can use long-distance coaches and trains. In this case, it is worth comparing prices and taking advantage of early-bird offers, as there are often

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markets.

Many large cities also offer rental bikes, enabling you to rent a bike long term (subscription) and obtain services such as repairs. If you prefer to cycle only occasionally, you can register with bike sharing companies and use the app to find the nearest bike in your area. Electric scooters, which have become increasingly popular in recent years, are also controlled by an app.

Note: Bicycles and electric scooters must always be ridden on cycle paths or lanes, not on footpaths. If no cycle path is available, you should use the road.

Information on the web

German Customs

[Information on motor vehicle tax](#)

Handbook Germany

[Information on the validity of foreign driving licences](#)

German Road Safety

[An overview of the most important rules of the road in Germany](#)

International Organization for Migration | IOM, UN Migration

[Resources for Navigating Life in Germany: Workbook & Digital Companion App](#)

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For your questions

Advice and Support

Do you have any questions about visas, jobs or life in Germany? Here you will find the right advice and support services: a hotline, a live chat, an email contact form, webinars and events, as well as in-person advice centres in Germany and abroad.

All services at a glance

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