

Driving in Germany

What you need to know

In addition to the **General Driving Advice for Western Europe**, the following laws apply when driving in Germany:

Children

- Any children aged under 12 and less than 1.5 metres tall must use a suitable child seat/restraint
- You may only place a child in a rear-facing child seat in the front if the passenger airbag has been deactivated
- Any child restraints/seats you use must conform to ECE 44/03 or ECE 44/04
- The driver is responsible for ensuring that all children are safely restrained

Motorcycles

- You must wear a crash helmet when riding a quad bike or trike capable of more than 20km/h unless seat belts are fitted and worn

Lights

- You must use dipped headlights during the day if fog, snow or rain restricts visibility
- You must not drive using only sidelights (parking lights)
- You must use dipped headlights when driving through tunnel

Environmental zones

- Some German cities, including Berlin, Hannover, Stuttgart, and Dresden, operate environmental zones where access to some vehicles is restricted. If you intend on driving in one of these restricted areas, you must display a 'Plakette' (sticker) in your windscreen

Speed Limits

- Motorways 80mph (130km/h). Some rural sections of the motorway have no upper speed limit, but the Highway Code states the vehicle must be under control at all times
- To drive on German motorways, your vehicle must have a design speed of more than 37mph (60km/h)
- In bad weather (visibility below 50m), the maximum speed limit is 31mph (50km/h)
- If snow chains are fitted on tyres, the maximum speed limit is 31mph (50km/h)
- Built-up areas 31mph (50km/h)
- Outside built-up areas 62mph (100km/h)
- Dual carriageways 80mph (130km/h)

In addition:

- Winter tyres are compulsory during winter weather conditions, including black ice, snow, ice, slush and frost
- You must not use spiked tyres
- If you are driving a slow-moving vehicle you must stop at suitable places and let others overtake
- You cannot overtake a school bus that is approaching a stopping point
- It is recommended, though not compulsory, to carry the following items:
 - Warning triangle
 - Reflective jacket
 - First-aid kit
 - Spare bulb kit

Drinking and driving

- The legal limit is 49 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood
- If you are under 21, or have held your licence for less than two years, there is a zero legal limit tolerance