

Driving in France

What you need to know

In addition to the [General Driving Advice for Western Europe](#), the following laws apply when driving in France:

Children

- Children up to the age of 10 must travel in an approved child seat or with a restraint suitable for their age and size

- Children under the age of 10 are not allowed to travel in the front seat unless:

- there is no rear seat
- the rear seat is already occupied by children under 10
- there are no seat belts in the rear

- It is the driver's responsibility to make sure that all passengers under 18 are in an appropriate seat with the correct restraints

Drinking and driving

- The legal limit is 49 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood
- Bus/coach drivers and new drivers with less than three years' experience have a legal limit of 19 milligrams of alcohol per 100

Motorcycles

- All helmets must display reflective stickers on the front, rear and sides in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 22. The stickers must have a minimum surface area of 18cm x 18cm, and must be visible from the front, rear, left and right. Inside the sticker, it must be possible to mark either a circle of 40mm diameter or a rectangle at least 12.5cm x 12.5cm in surface area and at least 20mm in width

- Helmets worn in the UK have to comply either with BS6658 or with UNECE Regulation 22. Regulation 22 helmets may come supplied with suitable stickers for you to apply

- The driver and passengers of mopeds, motorcycles, motor tricycles and motor quadricycles must wear a pair of CE-certified gloves while riding

Speed Limits

General

- Built-up areas 31mph (50km/h)
- Outside built-up areas 50mph (80km/h)
- Urban motorways and dual carriageways separated by a central reservation 68mph (110km/h)
- Motorways 80mph (130km/h) (lower in built-up areas. Minimum 49mph (80km/h))

It is compulsory to carry:

- Warning triangle (not required on motorcycles)
- Snow chains - when driving on snow-covered roads, you must fit snow chains in accordance with local road signs. When driving with snow chains on, a maximum speed limit of 31mph (50km/h) applies
- Reflective jackets (EN471)
 - You must have at least one reflective jacket and must wear it before exiting your vehicle in the event of an emergency or breakdown situation
 - Riders of motorcycles must also wear a reflective jacket in the event of an emergency or breakdown

Breathalysers

- Drivers of all motor vehicles including motorcyclists, but excluding mopeds, must carry one certified (showing an 'NF' number) and unused breathalyser

In addition:

- You must not use headphones, headsets or any other device that sits in or on the ear when driving
- You must not overtake a stationary tram when passengers are getting off or boarding
- When overtaking a bicycle, you must leave a distance of at least one metre in built-up areas between your vehicle and the bicycle. You should leave a minimum of 1.50 metres in other areas
- You must not use your horn in built-up areas except in cases of immediate danger