

Switzerland and Liechtenstein (Central Europe)

Touring Tips



This information should be read in conjunction with our [general advice for motoring in Europe](#).

Drinking and driving: If the level of alcohol in the bloodstream is 0.05 per cent or more, severe penalties include fine or prison. The police may request any driver to undergo a breath test or drugs test. Visiting motorists may be forbidden from driving in Switzerland for a minimum of two months.

Driving licence: Minimum age at which a UK licence holder may drive temporarily imported car 18, motorcycle (50-125cc) 16, motorcycle (125cc or over) 18.

Fines: On-the-spot fines imposed in certain cases. Vehicle clamps are not used in Switzerland but vehicles causing an obstruction can be removed. Speeding fines are severe.

Fuel: Unleaded petrol (95 and 98 octane) and Diesel (Gasoil) is available. No leaded petrol (lead substitute additive available).

There is limited LPG availability (only eight outlets).

Petrol in a can permitted.

Credit card acceptance variable, especially at night due to automatic pumps not recognising UK card PIN; check with your card issuer for usage in Switzerland and Liechtenstein before travel. Some automatic pumps accept bank notes.

Lights: Use of dipped headlights during the day recommended for all vehicles. Compulsory when passing through tunnels even if they are well lit, a fine will be imposed for non-compliance.

Motorcycles: Wearing of crash helmets compulsory. Use of dipped headlights during the day recommended.

Motor insurance: Third-party compulsory.

Passengers/children in cars: Vehicles registered outside Switzerland, i.e. visiting Switzerland must comply with the requirements of their country of registration with regard to child restraint regulations.

Seat belts: Compulsory for front and rear seat occupants to wear seat belts, if fitted.

Speed limits: Standard legal limits, which may be varied by signs, for private vehicles with or without trailers; In built-up areas 31 mph (50 km/h), outside built-up areas 49 mph (80 km/h), semi-motorways 62 mph (100 km/h) and 74 mph (120km/h) on motorways. Minimum speed on motorways: 49 mph (80 km/h). NOTE Towing cars on motorway only permitted up to next exit at a maximum speed of 24 mph (40 km/h).

Compulsory equipment in Switzerland and Liechtenstein:

- **Snow chains** – compulsory in areas indicated by appropriate sign and must be fitted on at least two drive wheels
- **Warning triangle** – Each motor vehicle must be equipped with a warning triangle which must be kept within easy reach (not in the boot). This must be used in any breakdown / emergency situation.

Other rules/requirements in Switzerland and Liechtenstein:

Hitchhiking prohibited on motorways and semi-motorways.

The Swiss authorities levy an annual motorway tax and a vehicle sticker (costing CHF40 for vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes maximum total weight and known locally as a 'vignette') must be displayed in the prescribed manner by each vehicle (including motorcycles, trailers and caravans) using Swiss motorways and semi-motorways. The fine for non-display of the vignette is the cost of vignette(s) plus CHF100. Motorists may purchase the stickers in the UK (telephone the Swiss Centre on free-phone 00800 100 20030 for information) or in Switzerland from customs offices at the frontier or service stations and garages throughout the country.

Vehicles over 3.5 tonnes maximum total weight are taxed on all roads; coaches and caravans pay a fixed tax for periods of one day, 10 days, one month or one year but lorries are taxed on weight and distance travelled.

A GPS based navigation system which has maps indicating the location of fixed speed cameras must have the 'fixed speed camera PoI (Points of Interest)' function deactivated.

Radar detectors are prohibited even if not switched on.

All vehicles with spiked tyres are prohibited on motorways and semi motorways except for certain parts of the A13 and A2.

Snow tyres are not compulsory, however vehicles which are not equipped to travel through snow and which impede traffic are liable to a fine.

Drivers who are involved in an accident who decide not to call the police must complete a European Accident Claim Form.

During daylight hours outside built up areas drivers must sound their horns before sharp bends where visibility is limited, after dark this warning must be given by flashing headlights.

In Switzerland, pedestrians generally have right of way and expect vehicles to stop. Some pedestrians may just step in to the road and will expect your vehicle to stop.

Blue zone parking discs are available from many petrol stations, garages, kiosks, restaurants and police stations.

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