

Austria (Central Europe)

Touring Tips



*For the
road ahead*

The following is additional to our [general advice for motoring in Europe](#).

Driving licence

- You must be at least 17 years old to drive a temporarily imported car or motor cycle up to 50cc (with a maximum design speed of 45 km/h (27 mph))
- UK driving licences that do not incorporate a photograph are only valid when accompanied by photographic proof of identity, e.g. passport.

Motor Insurance

You must have a minimum of third party insurance, including trailers.

Fuel

- Unleaded petrol (95 and 98 octane) and Diesel are available.
- Leaded petrol isn't available (but lead substitute additive is). LPG availability is limited
- You may carry spare petrol in a can
- Credit cards are accepted by most filling stations but check with your card issuer for usage in Austria before travel.

Speed limits

(Standard legal limits, which may be varied by signs, for private vehicles without trailers)

- Built-up areas: 31 mph (50 km/h)
- Outside built-up areas: 62 mph (100 km/h)
- Motorways: 80 mph (130 km/h)
- You're not allowed on motorways if your vehicle isn't capable of sustaining a minimum speed of 37 mph (60 km/h)
- Mopeds must not exceed 45 km/h
- The maximum recommended speed limit for vehicles with snow chains is 31 mph (50 km/h). Vehicles equipped with spiked tyres must not exceed 100 km/h on motorways and 80 km/h on other roads.
- A number of towns have a general speed limit of 18 mph (30km/h).

Seat belts

Front and rear seat occupants must wear seat belts, if fitted and could be fined €35 for not doing so.

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Passengers/Children in cars

- Children under 14 and less than 1.5m tall cannot travel as a front or rear seat passenger unless using an appropriate child restraint.
- Vehicles in which child restraints cannot be fitted i.e. those without seatbelts may not be used at all to transport children under 14 years of age.
- Children under 14 years but over 1.5m tall must use the adult seat belt.
- Children over 1.35m tall are allowed to use an adult lap and diagonal seatbelt if the belt does not cover the child's throat/neck.

Lights

You must use dipped headlights when visibility is poor due to bad weather conditions.

Motorcycles

- Riders must wear crash helmets
- You must not ride with side (position) lights only
- You must use dipped headlights during the day

Drinking and driving

- The legal limit of alcohol is 49 milligrams in 100 millilitres of blood
- If the level of alcohol in the bloodstream is between 50 millilitres and 79 millilitres a fine will be imposed. 80 millilitres or more a severe fine and / or driving ban for Austria will be imposed.
- A lower limit of 1 millilitre applies to new drivers who have held their licence under 2 years.

Fines

- On-the-spot fines can be imposed. An official receipt should be obtained.
- For higher fines you will be asked to pay a deposit and the remainder of the fine within two weeks.
- Parked vehicles that obstruct traffic may be towed away.

It's compulsory to carry the following in Austria:

- **Warning triangle**
- **First-aid kit** - which must be in a strong dirt proof box.

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- **Reflective Jacket** – you must carry a reflectorised jacket / waistcoat (compliant with European regulation EN471) which has to be used in the case of a breakdown or accident and even when setting up a warning triangle on the road. This regulation does not apply to passengers, mopeds/motorcycles, however it is recommended.
- **Winter equipment** – All Motorists have the legal obligation to adapt their vehicle to winter weather conditions (see information below).

Between 1 November and 15 April, vehicles must be fitted with winter tyres (which must be marked M&S on the side walls and have a minimum tread depth of 4mm) or all-season tyres which must be marked M&S (mud and snow) and if roads have a covering of snow, slush or ice outside these dates.

Theoretically snow chains on summer tyres can be used as an alternative to winter tyres where the road is heavily covered with snow and no damage to the road surface is caused by the snow chains. In practice, because road conditions and the weather cannot be predicted, use of winter tyres is effectively compulsory.

Note: It is the driver's legal responsibility to carry the required winter equipment so it is essential to check that it is included in any hire car.

Other rules/requirements in Austria

All vehicles using Austrian motorways and expressways must display a motorway toll sticker (vignette). The stickers, which are valid for one calendar year, two months or 10 days, may be purchased at some petrol stations located close to the border in neighbouring countries and in Austria: at the frontier, at petrol stations, post offices, tobacconists or in ÖAMTC offices. The 'Korridor Vignette' is no longer available. Fines for driving without a vignette can be severe, minimum €120. A vignette cannot be purchased retrospectively.

Some mountain passes are closed in the winter due to heavy snowfall or danger of avalanche.

Tolls are also payable when passing through certain motorway tunnels.

The use of the horn is generally prohibited in Vienna and in the vicinity of hospitals.

When a school bus has stopped to let children on and off, indicated by a yellow flashing light, drivers travelling in the same direction are not permitted to overtake.

It is prohibited to use radar detectors. Dashboard cameras are prohibited in Austria.

If a voucher is required for parking they can be obtained from most tobacconists, banks OAMTC Offices, ticket machines in the metro and some petrol stations.

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Drivers must stop their vehicle and wait for an audible warning if approaching a level crossing with a white sign featuring a train engine and the words “auf pfeifsignal achten”.

It is compulsory to form an [emergency corridor](#) whenever traffic congestion occurs on motorways or dual carriageways and highways regardless of whether emergency vehicles are already in the vicinity or not.

[Read more detailed information from the Austrian authorities >>](#)

Vienna has a large pedestrian zone, parking is very limited with a maximum stay of three hours in ‘blue zones’. These zones are indicated by a blue circle bordered in red with a red diagonal line through and the word Kurzparkzone.

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