

Switzerland and Liechtenstein (Central Europe)

Touring Tips



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

Driving licence

You must be at least 18 years old to drive a temporarily imported car or motorcycle (50cc or over) and 16 to drive a motorcycle under 50cc.

Motor insurance

You must have a minimum of third-party cover.

Fuel

- Unleaded petrol (95 and 98 octane) and Diesel (Gasoil) are available.
- Leaded petrol is not available but lead substitute additive is.
- LPG availability is limited to only around 55 sites.
- You may carry up to 25 litres of petrol in a can.
- Credit card acceptance is variable, especially at night where automatic pumps may not recognise UK PIN numbers. You should check with your card issuer for usage in Switzerland and Liechtenstein before travel.
- Some automatic pumps accept bank notes.

Speed limits

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

- Built-up areas 31mph (50km/h)
- Outside built-up areas 49mph (80km/h)
- Semi-motorways 62mph (100km/h)
- Motorways 74mph (120km/h) (Minimum 49mph (80km/h))

If you are towing you must not exceed 49mph (80km/h).

In the event of a breakdown you may only tow a car (or be towed) on a motorway as far as the next exit and at a maximum speed of 24mph (40km/h).

Seat belts

Front and rear seat occupants must wear seat belts, if fitted.

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Passengers/children in cars

Children up to 12 years of age or up to 1.50m (whichever they reach first) must use an appropriate child restraint approved to UN ECE regulation 44.03, 44.04 or 129.

Lights

- If your vehicle was first registered after 1970 you must use dipped headlights or daytime running lights during the day and could be fined if you don't.
- If you are using daytime running lights you must switch your dipped headlights on when approaching a tunnel that has a rectangular blue sign showing the entrance of a tunnel.

Motorcycles

- You must use your dipped headlight at all times.
- Riders must wear a crash helmet.

Drinking and driving

- The legal limit is 50 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood.
- A lower limit of 10 milligrams applies to professional drivers and to new drivers with less than 3 years' experience.
- Severe penalties include a fine or prison. As a visitor you could be banned from driving in Switzerland for at least a month.
- Roadside breath and drug tests are used.

Fines

- On-the-spot fines can be imposed in some cases.
- If you want to contest a fine you must ask for it to be recorded as a deposit.
- If you don't pay a fine on-the-spot or within 30 days the case will be referred to court.
- Speeding fines are severe.
- If you park illegally or causing an obstruction your vehicle can be removed. Wheel clamps aren't used.

You must carry the following in Switzerland and Liechtenstein

- **Snow chains** – must be used where signs indicate and must be fitted on at least two drive wheels
- **Warning triangle** (not for motorcycles) – must be kept within easy reach (not in the boot) and must be used in any breakdown or emergency situation.

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Other rules/requirements in Switzerland and Liechtenstein

Hitchhiking prohibited on motorways and semi-motorways.

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.

It is prohibited to transport / use radar detectors.

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 Statement 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 into the road when on crosswalks and will expect your vehicle to stop.

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

Motorway tax

An annual motorway tax applies on all motorways and semi-motorways.

You will have to buy a 'sticker' costing CHF40 (33EUR) for vehicles up to 3.5t (gross weight).

This sticker, known locally as a 'vignette' must be displayed as instructed on each vehicle (including motorcycles, trailers and caravans) and the fine for non-display of the vignette is the cost of vignette(s) plus CHF200.

You can purchase the stickers in the UK – call 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 and pay a fixed tax for periods of one day, 10 days, one month or one year.

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*For the
road ahead*

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