



# The Ultimate Car Hire Checklist

29th September 2015

For many people, renting a car is a nightmare but that's not the way it should be. We've put together this handy car hire checklist that will guide you through the things you need to do once you've booked your holiday car hire. From the DVLA code to protecting yourself from unexpected charges, you'll find all the information you need here.

## Before You Leave

[Book your rental car](#) through Economy Car Hire!

Research the local road traffic regulations and read some driving guides. Here's our [guide to driving in Portugal](#) as an example.

## Guide to Driving in Portugal

### Portugal Speed Limits

	KPH	MPH
Motorways	120	74
Open Roads	90/100	55/62
Built Up Areas	50	31

### Emergency Phone Numbers

Police	112
Fire	112
Ambulance	112

### Useful Phrases

Danger	perigo
Diesel	diesel
Exit	saída
Filling Station	posto de gasolina
Petrol	gasolina
Prohibited	proibidos

Right of way	direito de passagem
Roadworks	Pião
Slow	lento

## Fuel

Credit cards are accepted throughout Portugal. A tax of €0.50 is added to credit card transactions.

[Portugal](#) offers the perfect mixture of traditional villages and lively cities. Why not visit a vineyard, drive along the awe-inspiring coastline or immerse yourself in some Portuguese culture.

Hiring a car and driving around [Portugal](#), namely the Algarve is simply the best way to discover it. There are lots of hidden beaches and beautifully set villages hidden in the Portuguese countryside that simply need to be uncovered.

Currently, there are some toll roads throughout the Porto and Lisbon area. You can purchase an automatic toll device from some motorway service stations and Via Verde shops. You must return the device prior to leaving Portugal. Tolls are due to be introduced on the main roads which serve the Algarve, including the A22, A23, A24 and A25 from mid November 2011. It is yet to be decided how payment will be collected for use of these roads.

Why not read our [Portugal travel guide](#). You may also like to view information about [destinations in Portugal](#).

## Essential Driving Information

- Seat Belts must be worn at all times, by all occupants of the vehicle.
- Traffic drives on the right hand side here.
- Children aged 12 and under or less than 1.35m (4 feet 5 inches) are not allowed to travel in a car unless supported in a child seat or booster seat.
- A reflective vest must be kept in the vehicle at all times and worn when examining/repairing a vehicle at the roadside.
- A warning triangle must be displayed at the rear of the car if you have stopped at the side of the road as a result of breakdown or problems.
- If you have held your license for less than 12 months then you must not exceed 90kph (55mph).
- The use of a mobile phone in a car is only allowed if you have either a hands free kit or a headset.
- You must park in the same direction of traffic; parking facing on-coming traffic is illegal.
- The blood alcohol limit is 50mg per 100 ml of blood.
- The use of dipped headlights during poor visibility during the day and in tunnels is compulsory.
- The minimum motorway speed limit is 50kph (31mph).

- You must carry photographic proof of identity at all times.

Double check if you need a DVLA code. If you've booked through us you only need a code if you are hiring a car within the UK or Ireland. If you're hiring a car abroad you don't need to worry. We always display this information on our website. Simply click the *Show Rental Conditions* link underneath each vehicle and look for the heading **Driver & Licence Requirements**. Here it will tell you if a code is required or not.

If you do need a DVLA code, [visit the DVLA website](#). You just need your Driving Licence number, National Insurance number and postcode.

## What You Need to Hire a Car & Collect it

### Driving licence

I know it's obvious but around 9% of renters forget their licence when collecting a hire car. Make sure anyone else who wishes to drive as an additional driver has theirs too.

In some non-EU countries you may need an International Driving Permit. These can be purchased through the [AA](#), [RAC](#), and the [Post Office](#). On our website, check the *Show Rental Conditions* link underneath each vehicle and look for the heading **Driver & Licence Requirements** to see if one is required.

If you do forget your licence, some suppliers will accept a DVLA Certificate of Entitlement. If you are unsure, please contact us and we can advise the best course of action.

### Credit Card

When collecting a hire car, you **MUST** have a valid credit card in the main driver's name. It enables the supplier to authorise a security deposit, which covers any parking or speeding fines, un-insured parts of the vehicle, fuel charges if applicable, and in the unlikely event that a claim is made when the insurance has been invalidated.

Usually, the security deposit is not debited, but pre-authorised. This just means that the funds are 'blocked-off' and therefore unavailable for the duration of your trip. Where possible, we advise the amount that will be authorised on your credit card. This information can be found when getting a quote on our website. Simply click on the *Show Rental Conditions* link underneath each vehicle and look for the heading **Deposit Requirements**.

If you don't have a credit card, [contact us](#) immediately. Sometimes, we may be able to negotiate an alternative with certain suppliers. This may involve changing the main driver's, a debit card collection or purchasing the supplier's local insurance.

## Additional ID Required

## If you're hiring a car in the UK

You will usually need to provide your **passport** and proof of address such as **bank statements** or **utility bills**. You will also need a **DVLA code**, which you can at <https://www.gov.uk/view-driving-licence> .

Some UK based suppliers require 2 forms of proof of address. Always check what you need to bring with you beforehand to ensure that you are prepared. If you have booked through us, you can view this information under the *Show Rental Conditions* link underneath each vehicle beneath the heading **Driver & Licensing Requirements**, during the booking process and on your pre-paid car hire voucher.

## If you're hiring a car abroad

You'll have your passport anyway but you may need an **International Driving Permit**. You can check this [here](#) and on our website.

Please note, an International Driving **Licence** is not the same as an International Driving **Permit**. The IDP is a legally recognised document which allows you to drive abroad.

## Print Your Voucher

If you have booked with us, you will need your pre-paid car hire voucher when you collect the car. You must have a printed copy with you when you collect your vehicle. We would always recommend printing 2 copies – one for you and one for the supplier. If you lose your print out, contact us and we can send this directly to the supplier. Some suppliers may accept you showing them your voucher on your smartphone or tablet device.

Our voucher includes the name and location of your supplier, information about the rental, and the Terms & Conditions. You'll receive your booking voucher via email once your booking has been confirmed.

If you are unable to print it, you can download it from the [My Account](#) section on our website. Alternatively, contact us and we will send you a paper copy.

## What to do Upon Collection?

### Inspect the Vehicle for Damage

It doesn't matter how dark it is or how tired you are, inspect the vehicle closely for any signs of damage. If you don't, you could be billed for someone else's damage. Make sure you check it over with the agent and point out ANY marks they've missed. Make a show of taking photos and pay particular attention to the wheels.

## Check the Fuel Level

Take a photo of the fuel gauge and adhere to the fuel policy. For example, collect full of fuel, return full.

## Check the T&C's

If you want to drive to another country during your rental, you should inform us as soon as possible. Sometimes, there is an additional local fee for this. Simply check the *Show Rental Conditions* link underneath each vehicle on the quote results page and look for the heading **Border Exits**.

## Car Hire Checklist

Photos Taken?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reflective Vest?	<input type="checkbox"/>
First Aid Kit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Scratches & Dents?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fuel Level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Snow Chains?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Informed Staff of Damage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transponder/Pre-Paid Tolls?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lights & Indicators?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tyres & Spare Wheel?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Locks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Warning Triangle?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Oil level?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Winter Tyres?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parcel Shelf?	<input type="checkbox"/>		

## Should You Purchase Insurance Locally?

Suppliers will often try to sell additional insurance locally to cover damage to items which are not normally covered by collision damage and theft protection. This includes damage to items such as the wheels, tyres, and glass parts. Taking this insurance is entirely at your discretion.

You can purchase our top-up insurance when making your car hire booking. This is a reimbursement insurance which covers damage to the tyres, wheels, glass parts, underside and roof. It also provides cover for misfueling and loss or damage to keys.

You can also add this any time before the rental is due to start. Simply log into the [My Account](#) section of our website.

## On Rental

### What to do if there's a Problem?

If you experience any problems with your rental car, phone the supplier immediately. If they are unavailable, [phone us](#) and we will try to resolve the situation on your behalf.

# What to do When You Return the Car

## Leave Plenty of Time

Don't drop your car off 30 minutes before check-in closes. Leave plenty of time to go through everything thoroughly and allow time for delays.

## Check the Fuel Level

Ensure the fuel level is appropriate for your contract. Is it full? Are you returning with same amount?

## Inspect the Vehicle for Damage

Check the car over with the agent. If they pick up on anything you think was already there, tell them and show the photos from collection.

## Relax

We hope this will make your next rental even easier but if you think we've forgotten anything, get in touch below and we'll add it to the list. If you can think of must have items for certain destinations, let us know. Make sure you check out our tips on [car hire insurance](#) too and don't forget to sign up to our newsletter below and be sure to follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for the latest travel news and tips.

**Source Economy Car Hire September 2015**