

This information was originally put together for the Polish community. A version in Polish is available to download.

The effects of a car crash can be so devastating to the victim, their family and the community that there are very strict laws on the use of motor vehicles in the UK.

The purpose of these laws is to make the roads safer for everyone and, as a result, the police and the courts take the breaking of these laws very seriously.

Penalties include heavy fines and imprisonment.

If you are banned from driving or have points put on your licence in the UK, that ban or points will STILL APPLY in Poland.

Roadworthiness of a vehicle

The police have the power to stop any vehicle on the road to check its roadworthiness and the documents relating to the driver and the vehicles.

If you have any questions about motor vehicle documentation or road traffic offences, ask any police officer.

Remember **DO NOT** drive or park a motor vehicle on the road unless you have the following:

1. A current driving licence

A driving licence issued in Poland is valid for that class of vehicle in the UK. You do not have to apply for a British licence.

- A provisional licence holder can be supervised by a driver who holds a full licence (Polish or British) and is over 21 years of age.

The provisional driver must display L-plates on the front and rear of the vehicle.

- When sitting your driving theory test, you are able to complete this in Polish by selecting the language on the screen.

When you take your practical driving test, you are able to have a translator with you.

- Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) law is the same in the UK as in Poland.
If the 5-year licence expires, you are required to reapply in the UK or in Poland.
See www.dvla.gov.uk for more information.

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2. A valid Certificate of Insurance

Covering, at the minimum, the risk to any third parties who might sustain injury or damage from the use of your vehicle. You can obtain this through an insurance company. If you are caught with no insurance you will be fined, possibly banned and your vehicle will be seized.

www.biba.org.uk/consumer/findbroker.asp

3. A current MOT test certificate

An MOT indicates the road-worthiness of your car at the time it was tested. It is your responsibility to make sure that you maintain your vehicle and its equipment in that condition otherwise you are committing further offences. All vehicles need new MOT certificates annually.

See www.motinfo.gov.uk

4. A current vehicle excise licence (car tax)

Car tax comes in the form of a disc to be displayed in the windscreen of the vehicle. Tax discs are issued for 6 or 12-month periods and must be in date. You must not display a tax disc from another vehicle, as that is fraud.

See www.motinfo.gov.uk

Speed limits

Speed limits are taken very seriously in the UK. They will be clearly marked and enforced using speed cameras and dedicated police officers.

If you are caught speeding you will be given a £60 ticket and have points placed on your licence. You may even be banned from driving.

Alcohol, drugs and driving

Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is viewed as morally corrupt and a very serious offence. DO NOT DO IT.

If caught, you will be arrested, fined, banned from driving and possibly imprisoned. You may also have your vehicle seized.

Using a mobile phone

Driving whilst using a hand-held mobile phone is illegal. Switch it off before you drive off. If caught, you will be fined £60 and have 3 points placed on your licence.

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Seatbelts

Drivers and passengers, including those travelling in the back of the car must wear a seatbelt. It is an offence not to, and each person travelling unrestrained will be fined £30.

If you incur 12 or more penalty points within a period of 3 years you will be liable to be disqualified from driving.

Child restraints

As a driver you are responsible for ensuring that anyone under the age of 14 wears a seat belt or use an appropriate child restraint as required in the regulations.

On 18 September 2006, the law concerning children using seat belts and child restraints changed:

All Children under 3 years must use the correct child restraint. Rear facing baby seats must not be used with an active front air bag.

Children between the ages of 3 and 12 years, up to a height of 135 cms will have to use an appropriate child restraint.

That will mean using either a booster seat (children weighing 15kg or more and from about 4 years old) or a booster cushion (children weighing 22kg or more and from about 6 years old).

You must not carry an unrestrained child in the front seat of any vehicle.

See www.childcarseats.org.uk

Visit www.direct.gov.uk/motoring where you can find more about driving in the UK, including The Highway Code, which sets out the rules of the road.

