

Herefordshire Community Network

Support for Ukraine – information for guests

Road safety in the UK.

The UK has some key road safety laws that might be different to what you are used to in Ukraine. This leaflet explains what they are and the required modifications to headlights, rear fog lights and speedometers you may need to do if you bring your car with you. Links to provide further information or to where to get the required adaptations are included.

- In the UK, they drive on the left hand side of the road (with car steering wheels positioned therefore on the 'right hand side'), which means that cars designed for the UK markets have **headlights** that point in a different direction to European cars (which will dazzle other drivers if not corrected), and the position of the **rear fog light** may also be incorrect for UK roads. The issue with headlights must be immediately addressed by the use of 'beam benders'; these are stickers you can buy to change the beam direction. Look for the 'EU to UK' ones, not the 'UK to EU' ones! Try [Amazon](#).
- Speed signs are in miles per hour, and **speedometers** have a gauge in miles, as well as kilometres.
- Vehicles over 3 years old are required to pass an annual safety and environmental test known as an 'MOT' test (Ministry of Transport test). <https://www.gov.uk/getting-an-mot>
- Children are required to use appropriate sized car seats (refer to <https://www.gov.uk/child-car-seats-the-rules> for more details on the types of seats required and when it's allowed to travel without one)
- Use of mobile phones and devices while driving is **illegal**. You can use a hands-free device whilst driving even though there are risks to using these. The police can stop drivers who they feel are not in control because they are distracted, and this can result in prosecution.

What should I do with my Ukrainian vehicle on arrival?

It is recommend doing the following on arrival in the UK:

- Ensure your [insurance policy](#) covers you to drive in the UK
- Adjust your headlights for driving on the left, or adding 'beam benders' to ensure your headlights do not dazzle oncoming drivers (see [Road safety](#))
- Reprogramme your speedometer if possible to display in mph

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- Get a [pre-MOT test health check](#) done to ensure that there are no other significant issues after your long drive and that your car is safe and legal to drive. You could also get a full MOT done, which may require you to modify the position of your rear fog light, but this should not cost too much.
- Read <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-safe> which tells you what you need to be aware of to ensure your vehicle is safe to drive at all times.
- You will need to [apply for your vehicle to stay in the UK longer than 6 months without paying import duties](#). This also applies if you have [extended your visa under the extension visa scheme](#).

Do I need to register my car or pay Road Tax?

If you have been issued a visa under one of the Ukraine visa schemes, you do not need to tax or register your Ukrainian plated vehicle in the UK. This applies for the first 3 years you are in the UK.

It applies only to personally imported vehicles with Ukrainian number plates, including:

- motorcycles
- cars weighing up to 3,500kg

Your vehicle must remain registered in Ukraine to benefit from this exemption. You must make sure that you have insurance to drive your vehicle in the UK. Vehicle tax is also known as vehicle excise duty (VED).

What is a MOT test?

Most vehicles over 3 years old are required to undergo an MOT (Ministry of Transport test) every year to ensure they are roadworthy and meet environmental standards. This is a standard list of required checks and tests, and successful MOTs result in an MOT certificate being issued. A fail means that the vehicle cannot be driven (except to a garage to be fixed and retested).

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Fees for the MOT are currently capped at a maximum of around £55 for a car, but garages may do MOTs for less than this, so shop around. It is quite customary to have your vehicle serviced at the same time.

See for example: <https://www.halfords.com/mot/faqs/>.

If your car is not on UK number plates, the MOT test can be conducted based on a vehicle's **VIN** (Vehicle Identity Number); this is how you get an MOT certificate in the first place to then register your 'foreign' car in the UK. You may have to ask for this specifically at the MOT garage, as it's a less common process.

For example, Halfords and Kwikfit, two popular chains of garages in the UK, do not support the option of doing an MOT on a non-UK car, but smaller, independent garages may be able to.

We are advising that **vehicles driven over from Ukraine are booked in for at least a pre-MOT test inspection soon after arrival**, to ensure they are compliant with UK road safety standards. In particular, a long drive across the continent could have reduced your tyre treads to below the legal limits for the UK, which could result in a large fine.

Read for more details <https://www.gov.uk/check-vehicle-safe>

Why should I check my vehicle is safe to drive?

You are responsible for making sure your vehicle is always safe to drive ('roadworthy'). It can be unsafe even if you have a current MOT certificate.

You can be fined up to £2,500, be banned from driving and get 3 penalty points for driving a vehicle in a dangerous condition.

What checks should be carried out?

Every time you drive you should check:

- the windscreen for stone chips or cracks

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- the windscreen, windows and mirrors are clean
- all lights work
- the brakes work

Your vehicle's handbook will tell you how often to check the:

- engine oil
- water level in the radiator or expansion tank
- brake fluid level
- battery
- windscreen and rear window washer bottles - top up with windscreen washerfluid if necessary
- tyres - they must have the correct tread depth and be free of cuts and defects

The handbook will also tell you when your vehicle needs to be serviced.

What is right to do if I stay in the UK longer than 3 years?

If you stay in the UK for more than 3 years, you will need to tax and register your vehicle with the Driver and Vehicle Licencing Agency (DVLA) and receive UK licence plates.

How can I register my vehicle?

Follow the instructions for **registering a vehicle** to fill in your forms and send supporting documents.

[Vehicle registration: New registrations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

You must also send extra supporting documents for an imported vehicle.

DVLA might ask to inspect the vehicle.

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Extra supporting documents for imported vehicles

You must send the following original documents:

- proof of **vehicle approval**
[Importing vehicles into the UK: Getting vehicle approval - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/importing-vehicles-into-the-uk-getting-vehicle-approval)
- **form V267** (sometimes called the 'declaration of newness') if you're registering a new vehicle
[Declare that a vehicle is new \(form V267\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/declare-that-a-vehicle-is-new-form-v267)
- evidence showing the date the vehicle was collected, for example the invoice from the supplier
- the original foreign registration certificate to show when the vehicle was manufactured (you will not get this back)

You need to supply different documents if you are **bringing a vehicle back to the UK** which has been registered before.

[Importing vehicles into the UK: Bringing a vehicle back to the UK - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/importing-vehicles-into-the-uk-bringing-a-vehicle-back-to-the-uk)

If you do not have the original foreign registration certificate, DVLA might accept other proof of the manufacture date, for example a letter from the manufacturer or a vehicle enthusiast club.

Do not send photocopies or faxed copies.

It can take up to 6 weeks for your registration certificate (V5C) to arrive.

You need the V5C to **get number plates made up**.

Information correct as of 1.08.2024