

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Don't let local laws exhaust your va va voom: holiday homework before approaching the autobahn

As the summer winds to a close, holidaymakers may be hoping to take their foot off the gas, and snap up a last-minute overseas bargain.

Taking a car abroad gives motorists the freedom to get off the beaten track and the flexibility to drive their own schedule.

However, even the most experienced of drivers may find it challenging to navigate rush hour on the Riviera or grid-lock in Grenoble.

Halifax Car Insurance is offering handy hints to help holidaymakers stay safe behind the wheel this summer.

1. **Licence to drive:** remember your driving licence and make sure your GB sticker is clearly visible on the back of your car if your number plate doesn't already include it.
2. **When in Rome:** familiarise yourself with local driving laws, including speed limits, road signs and markings and which side of the road to drive on.
3. **Insurance needs:** make sure you have adequate breakdown cover and motor insurance for driving abroad. If you're involved in an accident, contact your insurer immediately and take plenty of pictures of damage caused to your vehicle.
4. **Burning rubber:** with heatwaves sweeping across much of Europe, make sure you're prepared to travel in the heat. Pack enough drinking water, keep picnic items in cool bags and avoid travelling during rush hour to avoid getting stuck in traffic jams. Also think about

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checking your tyre pressure as high temperatures and under-inflation can increase the risk of punctures.

5. **All aboard:** Many European countries require drivers by law to carry a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, warning triangle, reflective jacket, headlamp beam reflectors and spare bulbs.
6. **On the continent:** drivers heading to France need to carry a personal breathalyser kit with two disposable testing units and a special child restraint for children under the age of 10 to sit in the front seat. Drivers travelling to Paris, Lyon and Grenoble are required by law to display a 'clean air' sticker on their car windscreen to identify its emissions levels.
7. **Toll ahead:** many European countries operate toll roads which can be paid for by either cash or card. Make sure you read the signs carefully so you approach the right toll, or have your wallet to hand to make a swift payment by either card or cash.
8. **Auto know better:** some rules may seem obscure to British drivers, but are important to observe. In Spain and Switzerland, you need to carry a spare set of prescription glasses. In Spain you're not allowed to drive in flip-flops. In Italy you're only allowed to park in the direction of the flow of traffic.
9. **Adapt your vehicle:** you'll need to make sure your headlights are modified if you're driving on the other side of the road. An easy way to do this is with a headlamp beam convertor or adapter stickers, which are cheap and widely available.
10. **Avoid road blocks:** Loading the relevant country's maps onto your satnav can help with planning journeys. Check local rules before setting off. In France, it is illegal to use satnavs which alert you where fixed speed cameras are located.

Paul Birkhead, Head of Halifax Motor Insurance, said: "There's still time to make a speedy getaway this summer by taking your car abroad, and enjoying the benefits of being able to explore uncharted territory.

"Despite summer holidays being a time to relax and unwind, driving abroad can be stressful if motorists aren't familiar with local driving rules.

"Taking a few simple steps ahead of your break and reading up on the rules before going away means that you can stay safe behind the wheel and enjoy your end-of-season break."

Ends

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Note to editors:

- Halifax Car Insurance is underwritten by a panel of insurers and is arranged and administered by BISL Limited, an independent intermediary authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered in England No 3231094.
- Halifax Insurance currently offers Halifax Car Extras, a range of benefits for new and existing motor insurance customers. Terms and conditions apply. For more information visit <http://www.halifax.co.uk/insurance/carinsurance.asp>
- Halifax Car Insurance includes 60 days European Driving Cover for EU countries at the same level of cover as in the UK and a 24-hour emergency claims helpline. For more details visit www.halifax.co.uk/insurance

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