

HOW LONG CAN I DRIVE on FOREIGN NUMBERPLATES? TEMPORARILY IMPORTING a FOREIGN VEHICLE:

Don't panic!

You can usually only drive a European vehicle in the UK for 6 months on foreign number-plates if it is fully taxed in your home country. If the police stop the vehicle the user has to prove they can use it in the UK without registering and taxing it. To do this you will usually be expected to show your ferry tickets. After that 6 months, which is occasionally extended by HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs), the vehicle must be registered with the DVLA.

If the car is not European, then HMRC will decide if you can use the vehicle on a temporary basis. If that happens, they issue an HMRC Notice 3. If it doesn't happen, they issue forms C&E 386 or C&E 388 and the vehicle must then be registered with the DVLA.

More information is available at:

http://direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/BuyingAndSellingAVehicle/RegisteringAVehicle/DG_4022316

IMPORTING a VEHICLE for LONG-TERM USE:

You must import your vehicle if you are here in the UK for more than 6 months. That means you have to register it and tax it. Until then the vehicle should not be kept on public roads. You can still drive it to the MOT (Ministry of Transport) test-site for a pre-arranged appointment. Registration usually takes 23 days.

There is a distinction between new and 'previously used' vehicles. Previously used vehicles usually have to be less than 10 years old and have a SVA (Single Vehicle Approval) certificate from the Mutual Recognition Scheme.

REGISTERING YOUR VEHICLE:

You will need the following original documents for the DVLA or Post Office, and they may wish to see the vehicle too:

- A completed application form V55/4 (for new vehicles) or V55/5 (for used vehicles) a
- £55.00 registration fee (if applicable)
- The required fee for the licence cheques or postal orders are payable to the DVLA
- A current British certificate of insurance
- A foreign registration document and any other papers you have relating to the vehicle
- Evidence showing the date the vehicle was collected (normally the invoice from the supplier)
- Evidence of type approval
- The appropriate HM Revenue and Customs form HM Revenue and Customs forms required to register an imported vehicle (either HMRC Notice 3 or C&E 386 or C&E 388)
- A current British MOT test certificate (if applicable)
- A declaration of newness V267 (if applicable). The V267 is available for download from the vehicle forms link below or the DVLA (or Post Office).
- Documentation confirming your name and address

You can order the forms you need at http://www.dft.gov.uk/dvla/online services/order_forms.aspx?ext=dg