

SPEED LIMITS and CAMERAS:

The UK has a very good road safety record. But speed cameras still save lives. And the UK government has given local authorities a great deal of freedom to put speed cameras where they wish. They're not yet everywhere. But almost!

The speed limits are usually as follows:

- 20 mph is common in heavily residential areas
- 30 mph is normal in towns
- 60 mph is normal on major roads and dual carriageways
- 70 mph is normal on motorways

There should be early warning of all fixed speed cameras. And historically they should be painted yellow. But some cameras are not yellow. Some are hidden. The UK police also use mobile systems (commonly on motorway bridges). These include cameras in vans and on tripods, and hand-held 'speed-guns'. There are also new sensors on motorways. Some of these photograph number-plates and calculate average speeds for a whole journey. And there are also cameras on some traffic-light systems (triggered by driving through the lights at red).



If you are caught speeding the following may happen:

- You will be stopped immediately and warned.
- You will not know anything until you get a letter from the police.
- You will be followed by a police vehicle, which may be unmarked, and it may stop you.
- You will be required to identify the driver of the vehicle at the time of the offence.
- You will be given an opportunity to attend a 'speeding school' which may take ½ day.
- There may be an on-the-spot fine.
- You will have to attend court. Normally that will mean a minimum £60 fine and 3 penalty points for each offence.
- Maximum penalties for speeding are £1000 (and £2500 for speeding on motorways) with 3-6 penalty points.
- Some speeding fines are much higher, depending on the offence.
- You may be forced to take your driving test again!

- You risk collecting several such fines before you know it. Some people collect 4 or more 3-point offences in the space of 24 hours for minor speeding offences, but 12 points means an automatic ban in most cases.
- For very serious speeding offences imprisonment is a possibility.
- Being stopped for speeding will usually mean you have to produce all of your driving and car documents.
- When stopped the police will want to know if you have a valid driving licence and insurance, and they will want to ensure that the vehicle is taxed and has a current MOT test certificate. Further checks are also entirely possible.
- Being stopped for speeding also invites breathalysers (to stop drink-driving).
- Being stopped for speeding also invites random searches of vehicles.
- Any speeding offence may well affect your insurance and the ability to hire vehicles.