

Driving in France - Checklist

This is a list of what you need to take with you when driving in France from a legal viewpoint. The items on the list carry some pretty hefty on the spot fines if you fail to have them in the car with you at all times. Remember the items shown here are compulsory equipment for driving in France, and the rules are the same whether driving in Paris or on country lanes.

Below the checklist is more detailed information on some of the items and requirements for the documents you need to take.

The Fines for Non-Compliance are payable immediately

 CHECKLIST			Maximum Fine	
Headlamp Converters			€	90
Hi Viz Vest			€	135
GB Sticker			€	90
Warning Triangle			€	135
Spare Bulbs			€	80
Breathalysers			€	NO FINE

Documents You Need to Take

You will obviously take your passport with when travelling abroad : If you are driving your own car you will need to take a few other things.

Passport

Driving Licence

Proof of Ownership (V5 Log book)

Insurance Documents

M.O.T. (If your car is over 3 years old)

Check with your Insurance company that you will be fully covered while driving in France as some "Fully Comprehensive" Insurance policies revert to just offering "3rd Party" cover whilst driving abroad.

Breathalysers

You will notice on the list that breathalysers do not carry a fine, even though they are a legal requirement. It was headlined as the new big road safety initiative by the French Government that an 11 euro fine would be issued for non-compliance, but they have never actually brought the fine into force. They have recently said that the fines for this offence are to be scrapped indefinitely.

Therefore do you want to go to the trouble and expense of taking some? They have a use by date, they are not reliable and will not work if exposed to extreme temperatures, say for example leaving them in a hot car on a summers day or a cold one in winter. The decision is yours, you are technically breaking the law by not having them but the offence carries no fine or endorsement.

Do You Wear Glasses?

It is a legal requirement to have a spare pair of spectacles in the car with you when driving in France.

GB Sticker

If your car is towing a caravan, trailer, boat etc then whatever it is should have a GB sticker on it as well. If you have a new style EU Number plate with the GB and the Euro flag on it then for the most part that "should" be OK. Though

if you read the French regulations very carefully you will see that those are not actually the correct size stipulated as they are not big enough.

Hi Viz Vests

If you breakdown or heaven forbid are involved in an accident you will need to get out of the vehicle and stand at the roadside or on the hard-shoulder if on a motorway. The French authorities are very strict that people stood outside the vehicle on motorways especially are wearing "Hi Visibility" clothing such as a vest that fits over you clothing or a high viz jacket.

That's everyone: you the driver and also all of your passengers. So if a family of four are travelling in the car then you should each have a hi viz. Also these need to be carried inside the cabin of the car not the boot so you can put it on before you get out, though in practical terms I presume most will be putting it on as they are getting out. However the police are strict and if they see you stood with the boot up rummaging round trying to find the vests under all your suitcases and beach balls they will very likely issue you with a fine.



STOP SIGNS AT JUNCTIONS must be obeyed: This means STOP – Slowing down is not sufficient. Police regularly patrol junctions and summarily dish out the €135 fines for failure to bring your vehicle to a complete halt.



Priority to the right – Priorité à droite

This mysterious and ancient law has never been repealed, and, by and large, most road junctions have now been signed or marked to eliminate the need for this law, but for unmarked junctions it does still apply.

The sign on the left indicates that the priority to the right does not apply on that stretch of road, and the sign below indicates when that suspension ends.



RAPPEL

Rappel translates as 'reminder' – so you are already in that speed limit zone
Remember that all road signs in France will be in **KILOMETRES per Hour**



Speed limits are (2015) Motorways & Autoroutes – 130km/hr Dual carriageways – 110km/hr Single carriageway roads – 90km/hr.

In wet weather these reduce to: 110km/hr, 100km/hr and 80km/hr respectively.

In fog and other low visibility conditions, the speed limit on all roads reduces to 50km/hr

Urban speed limits are generally 50km/hr without a wet weather decrease.



*wish you safe motoring in France, but please confirm the status of these and other regulations not included above – And don't forget to drive on the **RIGHT HAND** side of the road.*

We would be grateful for changes to this document, either updates or suggestions for items that should be included: We accept no responsibility for incorrect information here – it is presented to you in good faith as a selection of differences that exist between driving on UK roads and driving on French roads.

Bonne Vacances!!!