

HOW TO EXCHANGE YOUR DRIVING LICENCE

Depending upon the country where your driving licence was issued and your status in France, you may need to exchange your driving licence for a French licence in order to drive legally in France.

Driving licence obtained in an EU/EEA country or in the UK

If you have a driving licence issued by an EU/EEA country, you can drive in France for an unlimited period of time provided all of the following criteria are met:

- the licence is **valid** and does not have any endorsements, restrictions, suspensions etc.;
- you are above the French minimum age for driving the vehicle category (eg. 18 for cars);
- you are in compliance with any legal medical restrictions (eg. prescription glasses).

If your licence is not in French, you must get it translated into French by a [sworn translator](#).

You can choose to exchange your licence for a French one if you wish. However, if you commit a driving offence and get points on your licence, you are required to exchange it for a French driving licence.

Whilst it is not an obligation for EU/EEA licence holders to exchange their driving licence for a French one, for very long stays, we advise you to do so. The procedure for exchanging a driving licence obtained in a EU/EEA country or in the United Kingdom is online :

<https://permisdeconduire.ants.gouv.fr/Actualites/Demande-d-echange-de-permis-europeen>

Driving licence issued outside the EU/EEA area and the UK

If you hold a non-European licence, you can drive in France for up to one year without needing a French licence, provided certain conditions are met:

- the licence is **valid** and does not have any endorsements, restrictions, suspensions etc.;
- if it was issued in your previous country of residence and you must have lived there for at least six months and be able to prove it.
- If it is not in French, it must be accompanied by an official translation of the licence into French.
- you are above the French minimum age for driving the vehicle category (e.g. 18 for cars);
- you are in compliance with any legal medical restrictions (e.g. prescription glasses).

Within your first year of residence in France, you have to get a French licence, **unless you are a student**. We advise you to start the exchange procedure when you have been a resident in France for six months.

PhD students holding a student residence permit do not have to exchange their foreign driving licence. They can drive in France with their original driving licence. However, if their licence is not in French, they must get it translated into French by a [sworn translator](#).

If you hold a *passport talent chercheur/ scientifique* residence permit and your driving licence is not exchanged for a French licence by the end of your first year of residence, you will not be allowed to drive in France unless you pass a driving test in France.

France has reciprocal arrangements with a large number of countries. These arrangements allow citizens of these countries who have lived in France for less than one year to exchange their driving licence for a French licence, without having to pass a driving test in France.

If your country doesn't have an agreement with France, you will have to get a French licence after 12 months by passing both the practical and theoretical French driving tests. To check the list of countries with reciprocal agreements, click [here](#)

Procedure for exchanging a non-EU/EEA driver's licence

To exchange your driving licence for a French licence, you must print off in colour, fill in, date and sign both the forms cerfa 14879*01 'demande d'échange de permis de conduire étranger »

- (www.formulaires.service-public.fr/gf/cerfa_14879.do)

and cerfa 14948*01 Réf 06 « demande de permis de conduire – format de l'Union européenne »

- (www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/R32666)

and submit the following documents:

- a double-sided copy of the driving licence to be exchanged
- a copy of your passport ID page
- a copy of a recent utility bill as proof of address (less than 6 months old)
- a copy of documents showing that you have been in France for a minimum of 185 days: work contract, residence permit, social security insurance certificate
- a copy of a supporting document showing your date of entry in France: a copy of passport page with entry stamp or copies of inbound flight/ train ticket
- If your driving licence is not in French, a [sworn translation](#) of the licence is required.
- a copy of an official document issued by the state authority where you obtained your licence showing your driving record. This document must be less than 3 months ago and if it is not written in French, it must be translated into French by a sworn translator (see link above)
- if your driving licence was not issued in your country of birth, you must provide evidence that you lived for more than 6 months in the country that issued your driving licence.
- 4 recent passport photographs including 2 for the cerfa forms. Please write your full name and date of birth at the back of the other two photos.
- 1 pre-stamped envelope "prêt à poster" lettre suivie 50 g, addressed to your name and address

Once you have gathered all the documents, take them to the sous-préfecture in Brest.

It may take **several months** for your application to be processed. Once your application has been processed, you will be required to send in your original foreign driving licence before you are issued with a French one. You will be given a receipt (Attestation de Dépôt Sécurisée - ADS) to enable you to continue driving while awaiting delivery of your new licence. If your request is approved, your French driving licence will be sent to you by post.