

DRIVING IN FRANCE

PART 1

(OTHER ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE)

THE OBLIGATION TO EXCHANGE A FOREIGN DRIVING LICENCE WITHIN ONE YEAR*

French Highway Code requires for everyone living in France to have a French Driving Licence.

This means that as you are arriving in France with a foreign Driving Licence, ***within twelve months of your official date of arrival in France***, you will need to do the necessary to obtain the French Driving Licence.

This will depend on either the actual Driving Licence comes from a country/state that has a reciprocity agreement in France or not.

A. ***If your actual foreign Driving Licence comes from a country/state that has a reciprocity agreement***, once you have received your Residence Permit you need to make the necessary steps with the *Préfecture*.

This can take several months as the *Préfecture* has the right to check with the authorities that provided the Driving Licence to authenticate it.

You will need among other documents:

- your actual Driving Licence translated by a Sworn translator in France
- a document of non-suspension from the authorities which edited your driving licence (this is not done by the Consulate in France), translated by a Sworn translator in France

Upon departure from France, you can ask to be returned your original foreign Driving Licence. This may also take a few days. If you do not do this because your old foreign license is not valid anymore, you can have your French Driving Licence exchanged in your home country with the condition that you have obtained from the *Préfecture* in France this «document of non-suspension» for your «French Driving Licence».

**for general information only*

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PART 2

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- B. ***If your actual foreign Driving Licence comes from a country/state that has NO reciprocity agreement***, once you have received your Residence Permit you need to make the necessary steps to pass a French Driving Test ***before the end of your first twelve months in France.***

This can also take several months as you need to:

- Register with a Driving School in France
- Study the French Highway Code
- Pass both the Written test and the Driving test
- Obtain your French Driving Licence
- Upon presentation of your actual foreign Driving Licence you should be able not to be considered a “young driver”. This will be important for your Insurance and for any other driving restrictions.

○ VERY IMPORTANT REMINDER

Note that the French Driving License needs to be obtained within the first twelve months in France. An extension will most probably not be accepted since a new law passed in January 2012. Passing that timing, you will be considered driving with no Driving License. The consequences of that is that the Insurance will not cover any situations they need to be involved and if you are stopped by the Police you can have a 15 000 Euros fine and be forbidden to obtain a French Driving License for 5 years.

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PART 3

(OTHER ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE)

- DRIVING LICENCES THAT CAN BE EXCHANGED (official May 24 2012 list):
Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Armenia (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Azerbaijan** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Bahamas, Bahrain, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil** (except Para, Lalagos and Fernando du Noronha Island, Piaui, Rio Grande de Norte, Sergipe), **British Virgin Islands, Brunei, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussia** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Canada** (except: North West Territories, Nova Scotia, Nunavut Territory, Saskatchewan, Yukon Territories), **Cape Verde, Chad, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, European Union, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iran, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Kenya, Kirghizstan** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Kuwait, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Macau** (if delivered before 31/12/1999), **Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Moldova** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Russia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Salvador, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, St Vincent and the Grenadines, Sudan, Surinam, Swaziland, Switzerland, Syria, Taiwan, Tajikistan** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Ukraine** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **United Arab Emirates, United States** (except: Alabama, Alaska, American Virgin Islands, Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New-York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Porto Rico, Rhodes Island, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming), **Uzbekistan** (if delivered before 01/01/1992), **Vanuatu, Vietnam.**