



Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency

Requirements for towing trailers in Great Britain

For more information go to
www.gov.uk/dvla



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Important note

This leaflet is only about driver licensing. For details about weights and dimensions of trailers, please call **0300 330 3000**.

1 Introduction

This leaflet contains information about entitlement to tow trailers.

2 Car driving licences held before 1 January 1997

If you passed your car test before 1 January 1997, you will normally keep your existing entitlements to drive a vehicle with a trailer, with a combined weight of 8.25 tonnes (showing on your licence as C1E (107)) until your licence runs out at age 70. You are also entitled to drive a minibus with a trailer weighing more than 750kg. If you want to keep these entitlements after age 70, you will need to send us an application for a lorry, bus or minibus driving licence (D2) with a 'Medical Examination Report' (D4) filled in and signed by a doctor and an optometrist or optician, and meet the higher medical standards required of bus and lorry drivers.

If you have subcategory C1E (107) on your driving licence and wish to drive a vehicle and trailer with a combined weight of up to 12 tonnes, you can apply for provisional subcategory C1+E to take the test. You do not need to get subcategory C1 first, but you have to meet higher medical standards and pass both the category C theory test and the subcategory C1+E practical test.

3 Lorry and bus licences held since 1 January 1997

Since 1 January 1997, if you hold category C or D entitlement you are limited to trailers weighing up to 750kg. You must hold Category C+E or D+E to tow trailers weighing more than this.

4 Driving licences issued since 1 January 1997

If you passed a car test on or after 1 January 1997, you must pass an extra driving test to get entitlement to drive categories C1, C1E, C, CE, D1, D1E, D, DE.

Since 16 December 2021, if you have passed a car test (B) you can automatically drive a car with a trailer (BE).

5 Descriptions of vehicle categories

All weights quoted for the relevant vehicles relate to the 'Maximum Authorised Mass' (MAM). This is the total weight of the vehicle when 'laden' (loaded).

Descriptions of vehicle categories if test passed before 19 January 2013

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
B	Cars  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motor vehicle with a MAM of up to 3,500kg, no more than 8 passenger seats with or without a trailer – weighing no more than 750kg. As category B but with a trailer weighing more than 750kg. The total weight of the vehicle and trailer together can't weigh more than 3,500kg. 	17	See notes 1, 6 and 7
	Automatic cars As category B with automatic transmission.	17	See note 1
BE	Cars with trailers  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combinations of a car in category B and a trailer over 750kg. 	17	
C1	Medium-sized vehicles  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles between 3,500kg and 7,500kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver with a trailer up to 750kg. 	18	See note 5

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
C1E	Medium-sized vehicles and trailers  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles between 3,500kg and 7,500kg with a trailer over 750kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver – combined weight not more than 12,000kg. 	18	See notes 2 and 5
C	Large goods vehicles  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles over 3,500kg with a trailer up to 750kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver. 	21	See note 2
CE	Large goods vehicles with trailers  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles over 3,500kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver with a trailer over 750kg. 	21	See note 2
D1	Minibuses  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 metres with a trailer up to 750kg. 	21	See notes 3 and 5
D1E	Minibuses with trailers  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 metres with a trailer over 750kg, provided that the MAM of the combination formed does not exceed 12,000kg. 	21	See notes 3 or 5
D	Buses  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer up to 750kg. 	21	See notes 3 and 4

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
DE	Buses with trailers  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer over 750kg. 	21	See notes 3 and 4

Note 1

Age 16 if you are getting the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Adult Disability Payment (ADP) at the enhanced rate, the mobility component of Child Disability Payment (CDP) at the higher rate or have applied for PIP having previously received the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) at the higher rate.

Note 2

You can drive at age 17 if you are a member of the armed forces.

You can drive at age 18 if one of the following applies:

- you passed your driving test and Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (Driver CPC) Initial Qualification
- you are learning to drive or taking a driving test for this category or Driver CPC Initial Qualification
- you are taking a national vocational training course to get a Driver CPC Initial Qualification
- since 10 September 2009, you must take CPC periodic training every 5 years

Note 3

You can drive at age 17 if you are a member of the armed forces.

You can drive these vehicles at age 18 if one of the following apply:

- If you are learning to either:
 - take your Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) driving test or
 - get your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)
- If you have passed a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification, you can drive if:
 - carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles
 - not engaged in the carriage of passengers

- driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
 - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad
- (iii) Since 10 September 2008, drivers passing a PCV test and driving under a bus operator's licence, minibus permit or community bus permit, can drive if:
- carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles
 - not engaged in the carriage of passengers
 - driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
 - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad

You can drive at age 20 after passing a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification.

For further advice on driving tests and the Driver CPC, contact the Driver and Vehicles Standard Agency (DVSA) by calling **0300 200 1122** or by email at **drivercpc@dvsa.gov.uk**

Note 4

You need category D entitlement to drive an articulated bus (for example, a 'bendy bus'). You can get more details from **www.gov.uk/browse/driving** or by calling us on 0300 790 6801.

Note 5

If you passed your test for category B or B automatic before 1 January 1997, your licence will already show entitlement to drive C1, C1E (8.25 tonnes), D1 or D1E (not for hire or reward).

- If you want to drive medium or large vehicles, minibuses or buses in the EU or EEA, you must apply for the appropriate provisional entitlement.

You must not apply for theory or practical tests until the provisional entitlement is shown on your licence.

Note 6

An exemption exists for the holders of category B, to drive large motor tricycles in category A, provided they are over 21.

Note 7

You may drive a zero emission vehicle up to 4,250kg MAM. This additional weight allowance applies to vehicle types you can usually drive using a category B licence. These vehicles can include (but are not limited to) cars, SUVs, vans and small trucks. You may also tow a trailer provided the MAM of the vehicle and trailer combination does not exceed 7,000kg. The MAM of the trailer must never exceed 3,500kg.

Descriptions of vehicle categories if test passed since 19 January 2013

The table below only shows the vehicle categories that have changed since 19 January 2013. For the vehicle categories that have not changed, see table 'Descriptions of vehicle categories before 19 January 2013'.

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
BE	<p>Cars with trailers</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combinations of vehicles consisting of a vehicle in category B and trailer, where the combination does not come within category B, and the MAM of the trailer or semi-trailer does not exceed 3,500kg. 	17	See notes 2 and 3
D1	<p>Minibuses</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 metres with a trailer up to 750kg. 	21	See notes 1 and 2
D	<p>Buses</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer up to 750kg. 	24	See note 1
D1E	<p>Minibuses with trailers</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 metres with a trailer over 750kg, provided that the MAM of the combination formed does not exceed 12,000kg. 	21	See notes 1 and 2
DE	<p>Buses with trailers</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than 8 passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer over 750kg. 	24	See note 1

Note 1

You can drive at age 17 if you are a member of the armed forces.

You can drive these vehicles at age 18 if one of the following apply:

- (i) If you are learning to either:
 - take your Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) driving test
 - get your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)
- (ii) If you have passed a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification, you can drive if:
 - carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles
 - not engaged in the carriage of passengers
 - driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
 - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad
- (iii) Since 10 September 2008, drivers passing a PCV test and driving under a bus operator's licence, minibus permit or community bus permit, can drive if:
 - carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles
 - not engaged in the carriage of passengers
 - driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
 - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad

You can drive at age 20 after passing a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification.

You can drive at age 21 if:

- the vehicle is being used by the fire service or for maintaining public order
- undergoing road tests for repair or maintenance purposes
- if you were entitled to drive the vehicle before 19 January 2013

For further advice on driving tests and the Driver CPC, contact DVSA by calling **0300 200 1122**.

Note 2

If you passed your test for category B, you are automatically entitled to category BE. If you passed your test for category B before 1st January 1997, your licence will already show entitlement to C1, C1E (8.25 tonnes), D1 (not for hire or reward) and D1E (not for hire or reward).

Note 3

You may drive a zero emission vehicle up to 4,250kg MAM. This additional weight allowance applies to vehicle types you can usually drive using a category B licence. These vehicles can include (but are not limited to) cars, SUVs, vans and small trucks. You may also tow a trailer provided the MAM of the vehicle and trailer combination does not exceed 7,000kg. The MAM of the trailer must never exceed 3,500kg.

6 Upgrading entitlement for trailers

In general, drivers need to take an extra driving test for each category or subcategory of entitlement. There are certain exceptions to this if drivers have already passed a test which gives entitlement for a larger or equivalent sized vehicle.

For details of driving tests, please contact DVSA on **0300 200 1122**.

Examples	Test pass category	Upgraded entitlement for larger or equivalent sized vehicle
1	C1+E	From category D1 entitlement to D1+E.
		Note: a test pass for subcategory D1+E does not upgrade subcategory C1 to C1+E because the trailer size for subcategory D1+E is smaller than that for a subcategory C1+E test.
2	C+E	Subcategories C1 to C1E and subcategories C1 and C1+E and, if category D or subcategory D1 is held, these are upgraded to category D+E or subcategory D1+E.
		Note: CE (102) will not upgrade D to DE but will upgrade any C1 and D1 held.
3	D+E	From subcategory D1 to subcategory D1+E.
		Note: Passing D+E does not upgrade category C or subcategory C1 entitlements because the trailer size for a category D+E test is smaller than that for a category C+E or subcategory C1+E.

7 Provisional trailer entitlement

Since December 2021, you no longer need to sit a test in a rigid vehicle (for example C or D) before sitting a test in a heavy vehicle with a trailer (C+E or D+E).

8 Further information

More information is available at www.gov.uk/browse/driving or the following leaflets are available by calling 0300 790 6801:

- INF28** – Driving a minibus
- INF38** – Driving in Great Britain (GB) as a visitor or new resident
- INF52** – Large vehicles you can drive using your car or lorry licence

If you have any questions

You can get more information on driving licences by calling Customer Enquiries on 0300 790 6801. The lines are open between 8am and 7pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 2pm on Saturdays. You will be answered by an automatic system but will be able to speak to an operator during office hours. We monitor or record some calls for quality purposes.

If you want to send us an email, go to www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla and choose the option you need.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and have a textphone, call us on **0300 123 1278**.

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