



Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency

INF291
Vehicle Services

Trailer registration service guidance



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What is a trailer?

The legislation (Haulage Permits and Trailer Registration Act 2018) states that the definition of trailer is anything on wheels which is intended or adapted to be drawn by a motor vehicle. This includes, but is not limited to, commercial trailers, animal carriers and caravans.

Do I need to register my trailer?

You must register all trailers over 750kg to drive them in most countries in Europe, apart from Ireland, Cyprus, Malta and Spain.

Enforcement action may be taken by foreign authorities if the trailer is not registered and you cannot present the trailer registration certificate if requested. This applies to commercial and non-commercial trailers (for example, caravans and animal carriers).

For non-European countries, you can check if a specific country requires visiting trailers to be registered. Contact either their:

- licensing authority
- embassy in the UK at **www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-embassies-in-the-uk**

You cannot use the trailer registration service for:

- any trailers weighing 750kg or less in gross weight
- A-Frame trailers – this is a frame (shaped like an A) which is attached to the front of a vehicle (for example, a car) to provide an attachment that allows the vehicle to be towed behind another vehicle (for example, a motorhome)

Abnormal load trailers

If you have an abnormal load trailer, as well as registering it with DVLA, you will need to apply to Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) for a keeper's certificate. Some countries measure abnormal loads differently from the UK. Check with each country you are travelling through to find out if the load you are transporting counts as abnormal.

You should check if your trailer qualifies as an abnormal load with DVSA. For any queries regarding abnormal loads or the keeper's certificate, please contact: www.gov.uk/government/publications/get-an-abnormal-load-trailer-keepers-certificate-to-use-it-abroad

Fees

It costs:

- £26 to register a trailer for the first time
- £21 to issue a new registration certificate for a new registered keeper
- £10 to replace a lost, stolen, damaged or destroyed UK trailer registration certificate

You will need to obtain a number plate with the trailer registration number given to your trailer when it is first registered. You can find details of your nearest registered number plate supplier (RNPS) at www.gov.uk/number-plate-supplier

The trailer registration service

The trailer registration service can be found at www.gov.uk/register-trailer-to-take-abroad

You can use this service to:

- create an account to register your trailers
- log in to an existing account (click 'start now')
- manage your registered trailer detail – for example, if you sell or scrap a trailer or change your name or address

How to register a trailer

To register a trailer (which has not been registered previously), you will need the:

- Vehicle Identification Number (VIN), which is 17 characters and cannot include the letters I, O or Q
- chassis number (this can be less than 17 characters)
 - these numbers are usually on a metal plate fitted to the trailer by the manufacturer or stamped into the chassis
 - some caravan manufacturers use a CRIS (Central Registration and Identification Scheme) as a VIN. This can be used providing the letters I, O or Q are not used
 - if your trailer does not have a VIN, chassis or usable CRIS, you will need to obtain a VIN before you can register the caravan. If over 3,500kg, you will need to contact DVSA. If 3,500kg or under, you will need to contact DVLA
 - some trailers have a serial number instead of the above, this can also be used in the chassis field of the service
- trailer manufacturer (if you cannot find your manufacturer, choose 'manufacturer not listed' to enter it manually)
- gross weight in kg – this is specified by the manufacturer, and it means the maximum weight the trailer is allowed to be when fully loaded. It is the unladen weight of the trailer plus the maximum permitted payload, also known as the maximum permissible mass (for caravans, if a gross weight is not specified, the Maximum Technically Permissible Laden Mass (MTPLM) can be used)
- unladen weight in kg – the weight of an empty trailer, including any permanent modifications (for caravans, if an unladen weight is not specified, the Mass In running Order (MIRO) can be used)

- trailer type (for example, box trailer, container trailer, animal carrier or caravan)
- method of payment

If you see the following error message 'VIN matches trailer that has already been registered', you will need to acquire the trailer using its trailer registration number.

How to acquire a trailer

If you are trying to acquire a trailer (which has already been registered with a trailer registration number), you must register the trailer using its trailer registration number issued by DVLA.

To acquire a trailer, you will need a:

- trailer registration number
- VIN number (17 characters) or chassis number (this can be less than 17 characters)

If the trailer registration number is not recognised, you will need to register the trailer for the first time using the VIN or chassis number.

What happens next

Confirmation

Once a trailer has been successfully registered, you will receive a confirmation email immediately. Please check your junk folder.

Trailer number plate authorisation certificate

Your confirmation email will include a 'Trailer number plate authorisation certificate' (eV948/2) which you can use to get trailer number plates produced (for more information, please see section 'How to get a trailer number plate').

Trailer Registration Certificate

You will also receive a physical trailer registration certificate which will be posted to your address within 3 to 5 working days. You must have a trailer registration certificate with the trailer so it can be shown to a foreign authority on request. Your trailer registration certificate is valid for 10 years.

Creating a trailer account

To create a trailer account for the first time, you will need a Government Gateway ID (up to 12 characters). If you do not have a Government Gateway ID, you will be able to create one while using the trailer service.

To create a Government Gateway user ID, you will need:

- your name
- an email address
- a password
- a memorable word, which Government Gateway calls a 'recovery word'

If you have created a Government Gateway ID before for a different service, you can use that to create a trailer account.

It is important to remember your Government Gateway ID as this is required to access your account in the future.

You can create a trailer account for personal use (individual account) or commercial use (company account).

For commercial accounts, consideration should be given when creating an account to avoid losing access to your account due to a change in personnel. We recommend that your company account is created by someone in ownership of the company. The functionality to add users to the account, such as employees, is available within the service – please see section 'Managing a company trailer account'.

It is important to ensure your email address and trailer details are always up to date, so you never miss important notifications about your trailer. You can update your information at any time if anything changes.

Accessing your trailer account

You can log in to your trailer account by:

- visiting **www.gov.uk/register-trailer-to-take-abroad**
- click 'start now'
- click 'yes' to 'Do you have a trailer account?'
- enter a valid Government Gateway user ID and password

If you are experiencing any problems signing in, such as forgotten password or Government Gateway ID, support links are available on the log in page. See 'problems signing in'.

Managing your trailers

Once you have registered a trailer on your trailer account, you can:

- order a replacement trailer registration certificate for a fee (if it has been lost or damaged)
- change keeper or trailer details
- remove the trailer from the account
- renew the trailer certificate (if applicable)

Disposing of a trailer

You must tell DVLA if your trailer has been:

- sold or transferred
- scrapped or written off
- exported

You can do this in your trailer account, by selecting the relevant trailer and clicking 'remove from trailer account.' You will be prompted to add the date of disposal.

You must also remove the registration plate from the trailer and you should tell any new keeper what the registration number is. This is in case they wish to register as the trailer's keeper so they can use it internationally in the future.

You can also choose to remove a trailer from your account if you are no longer using it outside of the UK. This is because the scheme does not apply to trailers that are only used in the UK. You should also remove the trailer registration plate after you have notified DVLA.

Managing a company trailer account

If you have created a company account, you can manage your team members using the 'manage account' function.

You can:

- view team member details
- add new team members
- update team member details such as name and email address
- reset a password or resend or delete a Government Gateway ID

There are 2 types of user roles. They are:

- administrator – can access services for an organisation and manage its team members
- standard user – can access services for an organisation

We recommend that you have at least 2 team members set up as administrators.

Trailer registration numbers

Once a trailer has been registered with DVLA, it will be allocated a unique registration number that must be displayed on the trailer. These registration numbers are a way of identifying UK-registered trailers that are being driven internationally. This will help to ensure ease of travel while abroad.

Trailer registration number format

The format of the trailer registration number is one letter followed by 7 numbers, which are set out over 2 lines. Here is an example:



**AI23
4567**

Please note that a DVLA issued trailer registration number will never start with the letter 'C'.

Displaying trailer registration numbers

Trailer registration numbers must be correctly displayed on number plates as set out in the Trailer Registration Regulations 2018.

These regulations govern how trailer registration number plates are designed and displayed.

It is an offence for the registration number to be obscured in any way that makes it difficult to read. For example, you should not use fixing bolts to change the letter or any of the numbers. Anyone who has a number plate that does not display the registration number correctly could be fined up to £1,000.

How to get a trailer number plate

To purchase a number plate for your trailer, you must go to a registered number plate supplier (RNPS) who supplies trailer number plates.

You can find details of your nearest RNPS at

www.gov.uk/number-plate-supplier

You will need to present your 'Trailer number plate authorisation certificate' (eV948/2) to the RNPS.

This will have been sent to you by email when you registered your trailer. This email authorisation is valid **for 5 days**.

If this has expired, you will need to present your trailer registration certificate instead.

The supplier will also need to see original documents that prove your name and address. You can use one of the following identity documents:

- driving licence
- utility, council tax, or rates bill from the last 6 months
- bank or building society statement from the last 6 months
- national identity card

The following will confirm your name only:

- passport – does not have to be issued in the UK
- bank or building society debit or credit card
- police warrant card
- armed forces identity card

Trailer plate design specification

A trailer registration plate is the same shape as the standard motorcycle plate and must have solid black characters (the letter and numbers) on a white background.

The characters and the surface of the plate must not contain any designs, patterns, or textures. Also:

- characters must be 64mm tall
- characters (except for the number '1' or the letter 'l') must be 44mm wide
- the number '1' and the letter 'l' must be 10mm wide
- the character stroke (the thickness of the black print) must be 10mm wide
- the space between the characters must be 10mm
- the vertical space between each row of characters must be 5mm
- the width of the margin between the top of the plate and any of the characters must be at least 5mm
- the width of the margin between the bottom of the plate and any of the characters must be at least 13mm

The characters must be in a standard font (style of lettering), for example:

**ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQRST
UVWXYZ
1234567890**

The number plate must only show the registration number and the number plate manufacturer or supplier details (for example, the name, trademark, or other way of identifying the plate's manufacturer or supplier).

Where to display the trailer registration plates

The trailer registration plate must be displayed on the rear of the trailer in a visible and vertical position. It must be displayed as well as the towing vehicle's registration plate and must be fixed as far as reasonably possible from this plate.

If the plate cannot be displayed at the rear of the trailer, a trailer registration plate must be fixed to both sides of the trailer so that they are both clearly visible.

UK stickers

As well as the trailer registration plate, some foreign countries may also require a UK sticker to be displayed on the trailer. To avoid any risk of enforcement action abroad, it is recommended that you display a UK sticker.

The sticker must not be displayed on the trailer registration plate. This should be a separate sticker or sign next to the trailer plate.

What to do if your trailer registration plate is stolen

If your plate is stolen, you should tell the police so that they can investigate.

Useful Information

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

Phone: **0300 123 1350** (821 when prompted)

For trailer registration information please visit

www.gov.uk/guidance/trailer-registration



Should you have any feedback regarding the content of this leaflet, please use the QR code provided to send us an email.

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and services at:**

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Vehicle Services

Trailer registration service guidance

DVLA
Longview Road
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[gov.uk/dvla](https://www.gov.uk/dvla)