

## **DRIVING IN SPAIN**

- Spain has strict drink driving laws, only allowing 0.5 milligrams of alcohol per millilitre of blood - stricter than the UK where the limit is 0.8. New drivers are effectively forbidden to drink and drive, with a very low 0.1 mg/l limit.
- Seat belts front and rear are obligatory everywhere.
- When approaching a roundabout give way to traffic already on the roundabout, on your left, unless signed otherwise.
- Speed limits, shown below, are implemented rigorously. Radar traps are frequent.
- Remember - Speeding and other traffic offences are subject to on-the-spot fines.

In all countries a full UK driving licence is required. As in the UK, seat belts should be worn front and rear. Below are motoring regulations relating to Spain.

Beware in Spain.

The law operating in Spain regarding the use of indicators on motorways is being strictly enforced. You risk being fined for not indicating before overtaking and again before pulling back to the nearside lane after overtaking. Also, ensure you do not cross the solid white line as you enter the motorway from a slip road, but wait until the line is broken.

### **NEW AND STRICTER TRAFFIC LAWS FROM MAY 9TH 2014 IN SPAIN**

1. Speeding fines apply for exceeding the limit by just 1kph! On some motorways, the speed limit is being increased from 120kph to 130kph, but in many towns, the speed limit is being reduced from 30kph to 20kph.
2. If the Guardia Civil observe a motoring offence and note the vehicle registration number, this provides sufficient evidence to prosecute- no need for them to stop vehicles.
3. A minimum fine of 1,000 Euros will be payable by drivers caught driving whilst double the drink drive limit or above; or in all cases for reoffending drink drivers; and drivers under the influence of drugs.
4. The Guardia Civil can seize any vehicle carrying children without legally compliant child seats.
5. The very specific rules as to where children must sit in the vehicle (according to age/ height) must be observed, otherwise drivers face heavy fines.
6. Cyclists under 16 years of age must wear helmets.
7. Drivers have much higher duties to ensure the safety of cyclists of all ages.
8. Speed camera/ radar detectors are prohibited.
9. An EU Directive is to be implemented so that driving offences committed in one EU country are reported to the EU country of registration of the vehicle in question.
10. Much stricter rules are being implemented for the Spanish registration of foreign registered vehicles kept in Spain.
11. An extra one we've been told about: don't drive in flip-flops or open-backed sandals. Not only is this dangerous but the police have been known to fine people for this, especially in holiday areas.

TO FIND OUT MORE VISIT [http://www.boe.es/diario\\_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2014-3715](http://www.boe.es/diario_boe/txt.php?id=BOE-A-2014-3715) but it's 21 pages in Spanish! Or contact <http://legal4spain.com/new-spanish-traffic-laws-come-in-to-effect-on-9-may-2014/> for more help.

<b>Speed limits</b>	<b>Motorway</b>	<b>Open Road</b>	<b>Town</b>	<b>Alcohol mg/ml</b>
Spain	120 km/h	90-100 km/h	50 km/h	0.5

Bail Bond: a guarantee to be lodged with the police in the event of an accident or major traffic violation - no longer a legal requirement for Spain and most insurance companies have stopped issuing them.

Children in cars: Children under 12 cannot travel in the front unless using a suitably adapted restraint system. In the rear, passengers under 135cm tall must use specially adapted safety devices and restraints.

Documentation: always carry your driving licence, vehicle registration document (V5), and certificate of motor insurance. If your licence does not incorporate a photograph ensure you carry your passport to validate the licence. If the vehicle is not registered in your name, carry a letter from the registered owner giving you permission to drive.

Drinking and driving: Don't do it. Over 0.05 per cent and you could face anything from a severe fine, withdrawal of your licence, up to imprisonment.

**Fines:** On the spot fines are issued. Ensure an official receipt is issued by the officer collecting the fine.

First-aid kit is advised, but not compulsory.

Fuel: All grades of unleaded petrol (benzin), diesel (gasoleo 'A') and LPG are available as well as lead substitute additive. Leaded no longer exists. It is allowed to carry petrol in a can. Credit and debit cards are widely accepted, although they probably won't work at automatic pumps, which are often the only pumps open out-of-hours and at lunch-time (from noon to 3pm) away from the Autoroutes. It's a good idea to let your card issuer know you will be travelling abroad. This ensures they don't suspend your card if they spot it being used in unfamiliar places, which they sometimes do as an anti-fraud measure.

GB sticker: UK registered vehicles displaying Euro-plates (circle of 12 stars above the national identifier on blue background) no longer need a GB sticker when driving in European Union countries.

Glasses (Spectacles): wearers must carry a spare pair in the car at all times.

Headlamp converters are compulsory.

Lights: dipped headlights should be used in poor daytime visibility. Motorcycles must use dipped headlights during the day at all times.

Minimum age for driving, provided you hold a full UK licence, is 18 for a car and for a motorcycle over 75cc. If you've got an old-style all-green licence you might find the police will not understand them, so either get them up-dated or take an International Driving Permit as well.

**Motorcycle** drivers and passengers must wear crash helmets.

**Motor insurance:** third-party insurance is compulsory. A green card is not required but your insurer should be advised of your trip.

**Motorways** are known as Autopista, and a toll motorway is autopista de peajes. Non motorway dual carriageways are Autovia.

Replacement bulb set is recommended.

Seat belts are compulsory for front and rear seat occupants, if fitted.

Snow chains are recommended to be carried in the Spanish Pyrenees and all mountainous regions of Spain during winter, and if you do not carry and fit them when conditions demand the police can prevent you continuing your journey. Click for general [information on winter tyres and snow chains](#).

Visibility Vests are now compulsory in Spain. They are also compulsory in Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Norway and Portugal and (and likely to become compulsory throughout the EU). The rules vary from country to country concerning number of vests required and whether they should be carried in the car or boot. Common sense suggests that there should be a vest for every occupant, and that the

vests should be carried in the car, and put on before getting out. Do this and you will not have a problem.

Warning triangle is compulsory. One only is required for non-Spanish registered vehicles. Two required for Spanish vehicles, but to avoid difficulties with the police we recommend two triangles should be carried.