

Driving a minibus abroad: faqs

Many groups would like to be able to hire and drive minibuses to give young people amazing adventures in the UK and abroad.

However, the rules around who can or can't drive minibuses can vary according to different circumstances, vehicle size, location or organisation.

Please remember that if you are driving a minibus on behalf of Scouting, you will need to follow The Scout Association's guidance, as they may differ from rules you are familiar with for other organisations.

Also, if you are driving a minibus overseas, you may need to check that you are eligible to do so, even if you are permitted to in the UK. The Scout Association says that "All visits [abroad] with minibuses must follow the advice of the Community Transport Association (CTA)." We've summarised some of the main questions below.

Checking your eligibility

What do I need on my driver's license to drive a minibus?

A D1 on your driver's license permits you to drive a minibus (defined as having more than 9 but less than 17 seats, including the driver) in the UK and abroad. Anyone who passed their test before 1 January 1997 automatically has a D1 (known as Grandfather Rights) but in this case, the D1 comes with restrictions, which may prevent you from driving a minibus for Scouting.

What do I need to drive a minibus for Scouting?

If you have a D1, check that you don't have a 'Not for Hire and Reward' restriction. As a membership organisation, the Scout Association falls under the 'Hire and Reward' category within and outside the United Kingdom, so you **cannot** drive a minibus for Scouting with this restriction.

You can do a simple check. In column 12 against your D1 (see image below), check for the number 101. If you have this code, you can't drive for 'Hire and Reward' in the UK or abroad.

As a member of Scouting you can apply for a Section 19 permit through UK Scouting at a reduced rate. This permit will let you drive a minibus for Scouting use in the **UK only**.

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BE		29.10.79	04.01.26	
C1E		29.10.79	04.01.26	107
CE				
D1E		29.10.79	04.01.26	101,119
DE				
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1. Name 2. First name 3. Date and place of birth
4a. Date of issue 4b. Date of expiry 5. Issued by
6. Licence number 10. Valid from 11. Valid to 12. Codes

I have a 101 restriction, and I need to drive abroad. What can I do?

You can't drive a minibus abroad for Scouting in a country outside of the UK with the 101 restriction. **The Section 19 permit only covers you for the UK.**

To obtain an unrestricted D1 license and drive a minibus abroad for Scouting the driver will need to undertake a medical, apply for a provisional license, have successfully completed both parts of the DVSA theory test and passed the DVSA practical test.

This is the same process, whether you have the 101 restriction or have no minibus entitlement on your license.

I've been told UK rules apply in the countries I'm driving through, surely that means I don't need to do the additional training?

The Section 19 Permit **cannot** be used abroad. [Section 5.3](#) of the UK government website explicitly states "The permit system only applies to journeys wholly within GB and Northern Ireland. Permits aren't valid outside of GB and Northern Ireland." This means you still will need to complete additional training

- www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport

I drive a minibus for the school I work for, do I need to do additional training?

Schools have their own guidance, which should be followed if you are driving for them. However when driving a minibus for Scouting purposes, Scouting rules must be followed.

I am an experienced minibus driver in the UK, could I not risk it abroad?

No, by not following the minibus rules and guidance you would be in breach of Scouting's POR. This would lead to a formal investigation. In the majority of cases where POR has not been followed your insurance for the entire trip would be null and void.

In addition to this there are significant on the spot fines for those driving without the correct license. These fines can be applied to the driver, anyone who instructs the driver, for example the trip leader, and the person (or people) who authorised the driver to use the vehicle, such as the Group Executive Committee.

Documents

What documents do I need for driving a minibus abroad?

To drive a minibus abroad you must carry the following documentation.

Per person

- Current driving licence with appropriate entitlement
- International Driving Permit or translation of licence (if needed)
- Full passport
- Letter of authority to drive the vehicle
- Certificate of experience (old style paper driving licences only)
- Tachograph charts or cards (not in ROI)

Per vehicle

- Vehicle registration document
- Current MOT Certificate (if required)
- Insurance certificate

If you are taking your own minibus and the trip is less than 90 days and you are staying in the EU you will need an **Own Account Certificate**.

If you are borrowing the vehicle (either hire or from another group) OR going outside the EU at any point you will need an: **Occasional Service Waybill**.

See CTAUK website for details on how to obtain an Own Account Certificate or Occasional Services Waybill.

- <http://www.ctauk.org/>

What is a tachograph and do I need one?

Minibuses abroad are covered by the rules governing international bus and coach journeys. This means that drivers must follow European laws on driver rest and driving hours (which are recorded using a tachograph) exactly as coach and HGV drivers do. The tachograph must be used from the start of the journey **in the UK**. If you are driving in the Republic of Ireland you are exempt from this.

What else should I take?

Check the driving laws of the country you are visiting. In some countries, the following can be compulsory:

- first aid kits
- hi-vis vests
- breathalyser kits
- keeping lights on at all times
- warning triangles
- a deeper tread depth on tyres than the UK minimum
- snow chains & fire extinguishers.

Planning your trip

All this sounds very complicated does this mean I shouldn't go abroad?

Trips abroad can be a life-changing opportunity for many young people, and worth the extra planning and preparation. You could use this as an excuse to upskill your leadership team.

There is funding available from Gilwell and Scouts Scotland to assist leaders who don't have an unrestricted D1 on their license to obtain one. This is something that would benefit not only the trip and local Scouting long term, but is also a good practical demonstration of how being a leader can benefit our volunteers.

- www.scouts.scot/members/funding/
- members.scouts.org.uk

I don't think we have time to get people trained before our summer trip?

If upskilling leaders is not practical, remember that the license restrictions only apply to minibuses of 9 or more seats, so consider vehicles with 9 or less seats (including the driver's seat). Please note that a 16-seater vehicle with seats removed is still regarded as a 16 seater.

While you will need more vehicles (and will bear the associated costs that come with that), you are likely to have access to a bigger pool of potential drivers for your trip (anyone with a B1 car license).

We don't have any suitable drivers for our trip, what can we do?

You could hire a vehicle that comes with a driver, either in the country you are visiting (which then gives you the added benefit of having a passenger door that doesn't open into oncoming traffic) or through a UK-based firm.

Also, don't forget public transport! It's good for the environment and gives your young people additional life experiences.

More information

- visitabroad@scouts.scot
- Community Transport Association: www.ctauk.org

Sources

- Hire and Reward - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport/section-19-and-22-permits-not-for-profit-passenger-transport>
- To check for a section 19 permit - <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/dbb935fdaa3b4a038921aa7723b3575f>
- Scouts UK minibus permits - <http://members.scouts.org.uk/supportresources/3413/minibus-permits>
- UK funding - <http://members.scouts.org.uk/supportresources/search/?cat=55,400,787>