

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ❑ Driving is on the right.
- ❑ Drivers are required to carry a valid national driving license from their home country, passport, vehicle registration and proof of insurance. Depending upon country where a license was issued, an International Driving Permit (IDP) may also be required.
- ❑ The New Israeli Shekel (NIS or ILS) is the official currency.
- ❑ Pedestrians account for an estimated 29% of all traffic deaths. Pedestrians should exercise extreme caution at intersections, as both those on foot and motorized traffic may have a green light at the same time.
- ❑ Legal blood alcohol limit is below 0.01 g/dl for novice drivers, and below 0.05 g/dl for all other drivers. Despite legal limits, many serious and fatal crashes involve alcohol.
- ❑ Legal alcohol limit for drivers is zero in Gaza and the West Bank.
- ❑ E-bikes and electric scooters are common. Many drivers of E-vehicles and delivery drivers on two-wheeled vehicles weave through traffic and behave recklessly.
- ❑ There are 3.9 road deaths per 100,000 people in Israel, compared to 2.2 in Sweden and 2.3 in the UK.

ROAD CULTURE

- **Drivers may** overtake at high speeds under dangerous conditions, including on undivided two-lane roads.
- **Aggressive** road behavior is common.
- **An increasing** number of drivers use mobile electronic devices while behind the wheel; distracted drivers account for a growing number of serious and fatal crashes.
- **Few drivers** signal before turning or changing lanes. Drivers often cut suddenly in front of other vehicles with no regard to safety.
- **Motorists**, including drivers of large transport vehicles, frequently tailgate and follow at unsafe distances behind other drivers.
- **Drivers often** stop suddenly without warning on roads, particularly in right-hand lanes.
- **Drivers are** often impatient at stop lights and may blast horns at drivers who do not immediately pull away when lights change.
- **Distracted pedestrians** may not adhere to traffic rules. Many pedestrians walk while using a handheld mobile device.

ROAD CONDITIONS

- **There are** 19,555 km (12,150 miles) of roads; 19,555 km (12,150 miles) are paved, including 449 km (279 miles) of expressways.
- **Highways** running north–south are even-numbered; east–west highways have odd numbers.
- **Roads are** generally crowded. Large traffic jams are common in Tel Aviv and urban areas, particularly at twice-daily rush hours.
- **Heavy traffic** is commonplace in Gaza and the West Bank. During politically tense periods, protestors often target motorists by throwing rocks, incendiary devices or other items.
- **Narrow streets** are common, especially in historic city centers including Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.
- **There are** many roundabouts.
- **Some** desert roads may have potholes.
- **Roads are** well signed. Most road signs are in Hebrew, Arabic and English.
- **Speed limit** signs may be long distances from one another. Be familiar with general speed limit guidelines.
- **The following** are toll roads: Highway 6, the Carmel Tunnels beneath Haifa and the section of Highway 1 from the Ben Gurion Junction to Tel Aviv.
- **Tolls may** be paid in cash with local currency at toll booths except on Highway 6, which is electronically operated with license plate scanners. Rental cars may be fitted with electronic readers.
- **Pedestrian** infrastructure is better developed in urban areas than in rural areas.
- **Pedestrians in** Tel Aviv should exercise caution, as traffic lights may signal green for both pedestrians and traffic at the same time.
- **Bike paths** are well-developed in Tel Aviv, Jerusalem and in many other areas.
- **For safety**, avoid travel to: Gaza, the Sheba's Farms and Ghajjar; the border with Lebanon (known as the "Blue



Source: CIA Factbook

Road Conditions, continued

Line”) east of Metula; and the border with Syria (known as the “Alpha Line”).

- **Motorists should** avoid all but essential travel to the following areas, which are regarded as highly volatile:
 - » Areas north of and including Jenin City, Burqin and Arranah in the north of the West Bank, including the Jenin refugee camp and all areas north of this point until the Jalamah checkpoint.
 - » The city of Nablus, Joseph’s Tomb, and the Balata and New Askar refugee camps near Nablus.
 - » The village of Huwara, located south of Nablus.
 - » Route 60 (particularly junctions near Nablus), Route 443 and other West Bank arterial roads used by both Palestinians and Israelis.
- **Visiting drivers** should use caution when traveling to the West Bank due to possible clashes between security forces. This includes Bethlehem, Jericho and Hebron. During times of unrest, curfews may be imposed and transportation restricted.
- **Avoid borders** with the Gaza Strip, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt, which are unstable and subject to rocket and mortar launches, gunfire and military activity. The border with Egypt remains a volatile area and should be avoided. Use care when driving Route 10 on the border, which is subject to sudden closures.
- **The risk** of kidnapping in the Gaza Strip is high and may target foreign motorists.
- **Live landmines** exist in areas including parts of the West Bank and along Israeli borders. Minefields may not be fenced or clearly marked.
- **There are** frequent demonstrations and protests; many occur on politically significant holidays, during world events, or in response to political or economic issues. Avoid all demonstrations. Even peaceful protests may become violent.
- **Demonstrations** may include road closures, affecting road travel and public transportation.
- **Large, loose animals** including camels may wander onto roadways in the desert.
- **The following roads** may present particular challenges to motorists:
 - » **Route 90**, including **The Dead Sea Highway**, connects the border with Lebanon to Eilat along the boundary of Jordan, and is regarded as a highly dangerous road. It is the location of many severe and fatal crashes. Southern stretches are narrow and winding, and follow the cliffs of the Arava Desert. There is regular heavy traffic, including large trucks. Road curves limit visibility in many areas. Aggressive and speeding drivers are common. Road widening work is underway. Motorists should be alert to construction zones.
 - » **The Ma’ale HaAtzmaut road**, part of **Highway 40**, runs through the Negev desert in the south. This road includes four long switchbacks with hairpin turns, and descends into the Ramon Crater en route to Mitzpe Ramon. The road is subject to flash floods during winter months, and may become impassable in low areas due to standing water.
 - » **The Ramot Intersection on Golda Meir Boulevard** in Jerusalem is the location of multiple road fatalities. Speeding is common. Motorists traveling at high rates of speed may disregard pedestrians and other drivers, including emergency vehicles.

Maximum Speed Limits

Type of road	Maximum speed
Urban areas	50 kph (30 mph)
Rural roads	80 kph (50 mph)
Highways	110 kph (68 mph)

Always adjust speed according to signage, hazards and weather conditions.

REGIONAL AND SEASONAL CONDITIONS

- **During** the religious month of Ramadan, fasting can result in driver dehydration and reduced alertness.
- **There are** sand storms, dust storms, severe heat and heavy rains.

Signs are generally pictorial and may not follow European Union conventions.

								
Stop	Pedestrian bridge	Tolls required on this route	Pedestrians and bicyclists only	Be alert to camels on roadways	Winding road	Left U-turn ahead	Cars prohibited	No right turn



Regional and Seasonal Conditions, continued

- **Strong** hot, dry desert winds called hamsin (also known as khamsin, khamaseen and chamsin) carry sand and dust debris and may last for hours or days. Wind speeds may reach up to 100 kph (62 mph).
- **Sand and dust** storms during spring and summer may result in low visibility. Storms occur frequently in the southern areas of the country and may continue until late autumn.
- **During winter**, flash floods are common and may cause roads to be closed. This includes desert areas, particularly the Negev. Standing water may obscure road obstacles.
- **Seasonal snow** may occur in some areas including the Golan Heights and Safed.
- **Be familiar with emergency procedures.** The Red Cross provides a website and free, downloadable emergency app: <http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies>

TRANSPORTATION

- **Transportation** options include cars, taxis, shared taxis/service taxis (sherut), buses, bicycles, electric scooters, light rail and trains.
- **Reloadable** Rav Kav public transportation cards are good on buses, intercity trains and light rail. A downloadable Rav Kav phone app is available.
- **Buses are** the main form of public transportation, and are operated by multiple companies.
- **Bus service** generally ends at midnight. There are limited night bus routes.
- **Direct bus** routes connect Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, and from these cities to all areas of the country.
- **Buses and trains** do not run from Friday afternoon to Saturday evening (Shabbat).
- **Maintenance** of public buses varies greatly.
- **There are** frequent serious and fatal crashes involving buses and taxis in the West Bank.
- **Some taxis** are available on Saturdays.
- **Insist** that driver activate taxi meter, or agree on fare prior to travel.
- **Taxi surcharges** apply at night and for luggage.
- **Taxis may** be pre-ordered via the GETT-Taxi app. A booking fee is charged.
- **Sherut taxis**, also called service taxis, are generally yellow-and-white vans or minibuses that seat up to ten passengers.
- **Sherut** taxis follow some of the same routes as buses, and run on weekends and on Jewish holidays.
- **Sherut fares** may be paid in local currency (shekels).

- **Passengers** in shared taxis may request that driver stop anywhere along the route.
- **Many people** travel by bicycle. There are several bike sharing services in urban areas.
- **Electric scooters** are popular. Drivers may weave among pedestrians or behave recklessly.
- **Trains are** operated by Israel Railways.
- **Most trains** are modern and airconditioned. Many train stations are new.
- **Train lines** include service from Ben Gurion Airport, commuter lines to areas including Be'er Sheva in the Negev Desert, Ashkelon and Nahariya; and high-speed service between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.
- **Limited** rideshare services are available in some urban areas. Use only rideshare services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

- **Drivers must** be at least 17 years old, and a minimum of 21 to rent a vehicle. Some rental car agencies may have other restrictions.
- **On intercity** highways, headlights must be on at all times from Nov. 1 to March 31.
- **Vehicles registered** in Israel have yellow plates; West Bank plates are white. Controls limit travel of vehicles carrying Israeli plates to Zones A and B.
- **Pedestrians** have right-of-way at crosswalks, but drivers may disregard traffic rules.
- **Right turns** are prohibited at red lights unless there is a separate lane, an arrow or signal.
- **Flashing green** traffic lights act as a warning that the light is about to turn yellow.
- **U-turns** are allowed unless signs indicate otherwise.
- **Fluorescent vests** and safety triangles must be carried in cars. Drivers are required to put on safety vest or jacket when exiting a vehicle onto a road shoulder.
- **Seat belt use** is mandatory for driver and all occupants.
- **Children** younger than one year must be seated in a rear-facing child seat; children from one to three or under 145 cm (57 inches) in height must be secured in a child restraint; children from three to eight must be seated in a child seat or restraint appropriate to size.
- **Helmet use** is compulsory for motorcycle drivers and passengers. Helmets must be fastened.
- **Children are** not restricted from being passengers on motorcycles. If possible, children should not be motorcycle passengers.



Traffic Regulations, continued

- **Parking** is prohibited within 2 meters (6.5 feet) of a fire hydrant, or 12 meters (40 feet) in front of a road crossing or stop line.
- **Curbs painted** red and white indicate parking is not allowed; blue and white markings designate paid parking zones. Red and yellow lines designate parking reserved for public transportation.

DESERT DRIVING TIPS

- **Avoid traveling** alone in the desert.
- **Long, straight** roads contribute to driver fatigue. Take frequent breaks and change drivers. Avoid driving at sunrise, sunset and when sun glare hampers the ability to focus properly on the road.
- **Bring tools** (jumper cables, road flares, lug wrench, jack and flashlight), spare gasoline, extra windshield wiper fluid, a comprehensive first aid kit, spare eyeglasses and sunglasses, and supplies of food and water.
- **High risk** of dehydration exists in desert conditions. A minimum of 3.7 liters (15.5 cups) of water per person per day is necessary. Bring at least double that amount.
- **Never add** cold water to a hot engine, which may severely damage the vehicle. Check engine fluid levels several times a day.
- **Bring spare** tires. Tire punctures and blowouts are common. Monitor air pressure frequently.
- **Carry spare** phone batteries and chargers.
- **For personal** comfort and to reduce driver distraction due to physical stress, ensure that the vehicle's air conditioner unit is functioning. Small, plug-in fans that can be affixed to the dashboard may be useful.
- **Stay on** paved surfaces. Driving on sand surfaces may result in your transmission being blocked by dust and sand. Vehicles may become stuck in heavy sand.
- **When** braking and accelerating, use care. Braking or accelerating too quickly can result in skidding, spinning and loss of control. Severe heat can soften paved surfaces, resulting in "bleeding tar" that may cause skidding similar to icy or wet surfaces.
- **Sand and dust** storms may occur with little time for preparation. If possible, pull over and turn on hazard lights to warn other motorists of your location. Keep windows closed. Never attempt to overtake when driving in dust cloud conditions as road hazards will be obscured.
- **The danger** of crosswinds exists in desert landscapes. High-profile and boxy vehicles may be more vulnerable to the effects of crosswinds. If you feel your vehicle being affected by a crosswind, slowly steer into the wind to regain control. Do not make sudden movements or turns.
- **Should your** vehicle break down, stay inside and call for help.
- **Deserts are** subject to rainstorms and flash floods. Do not enter standing water. Currents in standing water may be strong enough to sweep away a vehicle.
- **Temperature** fluctuations in the desert can be extreme. When using an air conditioner, extreme day-to-night temperature differentials mean that heavy moisture may develop on the interior and exterior of car windows as temperatures drop at night; this may obstruct driver vision. Night temperatures may be very low. Carry blankets and warm clothing.
- **Rollovers** occur when drivers fall asleep at the wheel, become distracted or are less alert and drift on the roadway. If uneven pavement or loose material such as sand is present, or if the verge is soft or made of sand, the possibility of a rollover is high.

Jerusalem (Capital)

- » Transportation options include cars, taxis, shared taxis (sherut), buses, bicycles, electric scooters, light rail and trains.
- » Road networks are confusing. Driving is not recommended.
- » One-way roads and narrow streets are common. Many roads are reserved for public transportation vehicles.
- » Parking spaces are difficult to find.
- » Private vehicles in communities adjacent to Jerusalem may be restricted from use by drivers from Friday night to Saturday night (Shabbat).
- » Public transport cards called Rav Kav are required for buses, intercity trains and light rail. A downloadable Rav Kav phone app is available.
- » The primary form of public transportation is the bus network. Buses are operated by multiple companies. Separate networks serve Jewish and Arab neighborhoods.
- » Most bus service ceases at midnight. Limited night routes are available.

Jerusalem, continued

- » Frequent, direct bus routes link the city to Tel Aviv and other locations throughout the country.
- » Service for buses and trains is suspended from Friday afternoon to Saturday evening.
- » Upkeep and repair of public buses varies between companies.
- » Instruct taxi drivers to activate meters, or agree on fare prior to travel.
- » Surcharges apply for nighttime taxi travel, and may be higher on Friday nights and Saturdays.
- » The GETT-Taxi app allows taxis to be pre-ordered; a booking fee is added to fare.
- » Shared/service taxis (sherut taxis) are usually yellow-and-white vans or minibuses.
- » Routes for sherut taxis and buses are generally the same.
- » Many sherut taxis are available on weekends and on Jewish holidays. Fares may be paid in local currency.
- » Sherut passengers may request drivers to stop at any point along the route.
- » Jerusalem Light Rail connects the northeastern and southeastern areas of the city and suburbs, passing through city center.
- » Light Rail runs from approximately 5:30 am to midnight, except on Friday nights and on Saturdays.
- » Pedestrian infrastructure is well developed. Motorists may not always observe pedestrian right-of-way laws, even at marked crossings.
- » Many people use bicycles for transportation. There are well-developed bike paths.
- » Jerufun is a bike sharing program that includes electric bikes (E-bikes).
- » Many motorists do not respect cyclists' rights and may block bike paths with vehicles.
- » Ben Gurion International Airport is 55 km (34 miles) from the city.
- » Taxis, sherut taxis, a train and direct shuttle buses operate between the airport and Central Bus Station in city center.
- » Trains from the airport arrive at Jerusalem-Yitzhak Navon Station next to Central Bus Station.
- » Train and bus service to and from the airport is not available on Saturdays.
- » Major car rental agencies are represented at the airport.

Tel Aviv (Tel Aviv-Yafo)

- » Second largest city.
- » Transportation options include cars, taxis, shared taxis (sherut), buses, bicycles, electric scooters, light rail and trains.
- » Driving is not advised. Traffic is heavy, especially during rush hours, Sunday mornings and on Thursday afternoons.
- » There are many one-way streets. Parking is difficult.
- » AutoTel is a city car-sharing program. Parking for shared vehicles is free in green AutoTel parking spaces.
- » Fares for buses, intercity trains and light rail can be paid with reloadable Rav Kav public transportation cards; a mobile Rav Kav phone app is available.
- » Rav Kav cards may be purchased from bus drivers.
- » Buses provide the main form of public transportation. Maintenance levels of public buses varies greatly.
- » The main stations are Central Bus Station in the south part of the city, and 2000 Bus Terminal next to Tel Aviv Merkaz/Savidor Train Station.
- » The main bus companies are Dan, Egged and Metropolitan.
- » The bus network is extensive. Most routes end at midnight. There are limited night bus routes.
- » There is a direct bus route between the city and Jerusalem.
- » Buses and trains do not run from Friday afternoon to Saturday evening (Shabbat).
- » Israel Railways operates rail services.
- » There are four train stations: Tel Aviv University, Tel Aviv Savidor Central, Tel Aviv HaShalom (near Azrieli Center)

Tel Aviv, continued

- and Tel Aviv HaHagana (located near Central Bus Station). Many stations are new.
- » Most trains are modern and air-conditioned.
 - » A high-speed train line connects Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Other routes include commuter lines to areas including Be'er Sheva, Ashkelon and Nahariya.
 - » A new light rail system is in the process of launching. The first route is the 15-km (9.3-mile) Red Line with 34 stops connecting the central city with five municipalities.
 - » Pedestrian infrastructure is well developed.
 - » Some crossing lights are improperly programmed to coincide with green lights for vehicles. Pedestrians should exercise caution, even at marked crosswalks or where electronic crossing signals are in place.
 - » Motorists may disregard those on foot.
 - » Bicycle transportation is popular. Bike paths exist in many areas.
 - » The city's bike-sharing service is Tel-O-Fun. Daily and weekly rentals are available. Payment is made via credit card at bike docking stations throughout the city.
 - » There are many electric scooters. Rentals through various companies can be found throughout the city. Rental apps include Bird and Lime.
 - » Bicyclists and scooter riders often ride on sidewalks and may behave aggressively toward pedestrians.
 - » Taxis and some sherut taxis are available on Saturdays. Taxis are metered. Check that driver has activated meter, or agree on fare prior to travel. Surcharges apply at night.
 - » Taxis may be hailed on the street or pre-ordered via the GETT-Taxi app. A fee applies to phone bookings.
 - » Sherut taxis, also called service taxis, are generally yellow-and-white vans or minibuses.
 - » Routes for sherut taxis are often the same as bus routes. Some sherut taxis run on weekends and Jewish holidays.
 - » Passengers may pay sherut taxi fares in local currency (shekels).
 - » Passengers in shared taxis may request that driver stop anywhere along the route.
 - » Rideshare services are available. Use only services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver's name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
 - » Ben Gurion International Airport is 26 km (16 miles) from the city.
 - » Transportation to the city includes cars, taxis, sherut taxis, buses and a train. Train and bus services are not available on Saturdays, and taxi lines may be long.
 - » Taxis can be found at ranks in the arrivals areas. There are fixed rates to Tel Aviv and multiple other cities; rates increase for more than two passengers. Passengers may request use of a meter rather than agreeing to fixed rates.
 - » The train station is located at Terminal 3.
 - » Many major car rental agencies are represented at the airport.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND INCLUSIONS FOR MOBILITY CHALLENGED

- **Laws mandate** access to buildings, transportation and accommodations for persons with mobility or other physical or sensory challenges. Laws are not always adequately enforced.
- **Laws stipulate** accessibility to urban public transportation, but not intercity buses.
- **Footpaths** and public transportation are generally less accessible than in the United States.
- **Most train** stations are accessible for persons with mobility challenges.
- **Many buses** have not been fitted with lifts or other accessible features.
- **Palestinian Authority** law prohibits discrimination based on disability, but does not require access to buildings, information or communications.
- **Societal discrimination** against persons with mobility or other challenges exists in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- **Pre-program** emergency numbers into your phone before departure.
- **Responders to emergency numbers** in remote areas may not speak English.
 - » Police: 100
 - » Ambulance: 101
 - » Fire: 102
 - » General emergency: Dial 112 and you will be connected to the police.
- **Responses** to emergency situations may be slower in sparsely populated desert areas. Medical professionals may take longer to reach a patient and provide life-saving care.
- **Ambulance services** are widely available, but training and availability of emergency responders may be below western standards in the West Bank.
- **The Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS)** provides emergency care in the West Bank and Gaza.
- **Appropriate medical care** is available throughout Israel. Some hospitals, including most hospitals in the West Bank and Gaza, are below western standards; medical staff may speak little or no English.
- **Counterfeit medications** are an issue in many areas. Obtain pharmaceutical medications only from trusted medical professionals.
- **Hospitals** may require payment in advance of care, or take action to delay departure from Israel until medical bills are fully paid.
- **If involved in a crash:**
 - » Call police.
 - » Wait for police to arrive before moving vehicle, unless it poses a danger to other road users.
 - » Collect contact information from other driver(s).
 - » Take photos of crash scene if possible.



ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR SAFE INTERNATIONAL ROAD TRAVEL (ASIRT)

ASIRT is a non-profit humanitarian organization established in memory of Aron Sobel, age 25, who was killed along with 22 other passengers in a Pamukkale Bus Company crash on the roads of Turkey.

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