



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- ❑ Driving is on the left.
- ❑ Drivers are required to carry a valid national driver's license, vehicle registration and proof of insurance; US driving licenses are valid for one year from entry.
- ❑ In addition to these documents, drivers from some countries may be required to carry an International Driving Permit (IDP).
- ❑ Official currency is the Pound Sterling (GBP).
- ❑ Pedestrians account for about 24% of all traffic deaths. Many fatalities are attributed to pedestrians from right-driving countries who are unfamiliar with the direction of approaching traffic.
- ❑ E-scooters are popular. E-scooters are classified as PLEVs (Personal Light Electric Vehicles). Drivers must have a driver's license and insurance.
- ❑ E-scooter drivers often disregard traffic laws and the presence of pedestrians. Though illegal, be alert to e-scooter drivers riding on sidewalks, bike lanes and park paths.
- ❑ Cars are generally standard transmission. Arrange in advance if an automatic rental car is required.
- ❑ Legal blood alcohol limit is below 0.05 g/dl. Despite lower legal limits in Scotland than in the rest of the United Kingdom, an estimated 15% of road fatalities involve alcohol use.
- ❑ Drivers found to be operating motorized vehicles while under the influence of alcohol or drugs face prison sentences.
- ❑ Scotland has one of the lower traffic fatality rates. There are 2.8 road deaths per 100,000 people in the United Kingdom, compared to 2.8 in Sweden and 15.08 in Brazil.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

ROAD CULTURE

- **Drivers** frequently exceed speed limits.
- **Tailgating** and aggressive road behaviors are common.
- **Rates of** distracted driving are increasing. Many motorists use mobile devices while driving.
- **There are** many incidences of road rage, particularly on roads in and around Glasgow.
- **Drivers may** fail to yield to existing traffic within a roundabout.
- **Visiting drivers** may mistakenly drive on the wrong side of roads or make illegal turns into traffic.
- **Drivers often** pass cyclists without adequate clearance. Beyond major motorways, roads are generally narrow, adding to dangers for bicycle riders.

ROAD CONDITIONS

- **There are** 247,800 miles (398,795 km) of total roads in the UK; 36,800 miles (59,223 km) are in Scotland.
- **Main roads** are well-maintained. In rural and remote areas, including mountainous zones, road surfaces vary from paved surfaces to dirt and gravel.
- **Roads are** well-signed. Speed limits are posted in miles-per-hour, not kilometers.
- **There are** no toll roads or toll bridges.
- **The majority** of roads are classified as motorways, major routes and minor routes.
- **M roads** are motorways linking major towns and cities. Signs are blue with white text and an "M" prefix before route number. Pedestrians and cyclists are prohibited from M roads.
- **A roads** (also called trunk roads/principal roads) are single- and dual-carriageway major routes connecting regional towns and cities. Signs are green with white text. The letter "A" is followed by route number.
- **B and C roads** are minor roads linking small towns and villages. Roads are single carriageway. Signs are white with black text. Pedestrians and cyclists are allowed on these roads, which generally lack footpaths.
- **Beyond urban** areas, roads are often narrow and may be bordered by stone walls, particularly in rural areas. Drivers may need to pull aside to allow approaching traffic to safely pass.
- **In many** rural areas and small towns, roads may appear to be unmarked dual carriageways, but are wide enough for only one car in each direction.
- **Pedestrian infrastructure** is better developed in cities and large towns than in other areas. In many places, there are no sidewalks, requiring pedestrians to share busy roadways with motorized traffic.



Road Conditions, continued

- **Frequent** demonstrations occur in cities. Avoid gatherings; even peaceful demonstrations may become violent.
- **Strikes involving** transportation regularly take place, and affect ambulance services and public transportation.
- **Slow-moving** agricultural equipment is common on rural roads, particularly in The Borders region.
- **Be alert** to loose animals on roads, especially in rural areas. Farmers may use roads to move their cattle and sheep.
- **The following roads** may present particular challenges to motorists:
 - » **The A9** connecting Inverness and Perth is regarded as the most dangerous road in the country. There are high numbers of serious and fatal crashes along the 112-mile (180 km) stretch. The road is paved, but many sections are undergoing maintenance. Beyond Perth, the road narrows suddenly from two lanes to one lane in each direction. This road is subject to speeding. Weather conditions include heavy rains and snow.
 - » **The A82** linking Glasgow and the Highlands is considered a dangerous route, particularly the section along Loch Lomond. The road is single carriageway, but has high levels of visitor traffic. Drivers may be unfamiliar with road rules and traffic orientation. Many sections are narrow. When a vehicle is approaching from the opposite direction, the driver who has access to a traffic pullout must pull over and allow the approaching vehicle to pass.
 - » **The intersection of St. Vincent Street and Douglas St.** in Glasgow is the site of many crashes. There is a steep incline on Douglas St. leading to the intersection, limiting driver visibility. Use caution.

REGIONAL AND SEASONAL CONDITIONS

- **Scotland** is subject to strong wind and rain storms, flooding, mudslides, landslides, fog, wildfires and snow.
- **Flooding** and mudslides may follow heavy rains, particularly in coastal and riverside locations.
- **Standing water** may obscure potholes or other road hazards. Do not drive or step into floodwaters. Currents may be strong enough to move large vehicles.
- **Severe weather** conditions, including heavy fog and snow, frequently impact transportation services. Fog may be especially heavy near lakes and rivers in mountainous areas.
- **Wildfires** may occur, particularly during summer months. Smoke from fires may reduce driver visibility.
- **There is** a risk of avalanches in mountainous areas, especially after heavy rain or snowfall.
- **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, motorcycles, buses, trams, subways, bicycles, e-scooters, trains and boats.
- **Driving may** not be the most efficient option in cities. Road congestion is common.
- **Public transportation** is extensive. Trains and buses connect most areas of the country.
- **Bus networks** link all main cities. There are local, regional and long distance routes.
- **In addition** to National Express and Megabus, many bus companies offer private coach services.
- **Regional bus** operators may have apps that allow users to download maps, tickets and route planners.

Maximum Speed Limits

Type of road	Maximum speed
Urban areas	30 mph (48 kph)
Rural roads	60 mph (96 kph)
Highways	70 mph (112 kph)

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

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

Motorized vehicles prohibited	With-flow cycle lane ahead	Extra traffic lane joining from the left	Dual carriageway ends	Crossroads on curve	No through road for vehicles	No overtaking allowed	Steps to pedestrian bridge	Priority over oncoming traffic

Transportation, continued

- **“Black cab”** taxis are highly regulated and are generally regarded as safe. Use only officially licensed taxis.
- **Taxi ranks** are generally located outside train and bus stations, and in popular tourist areas. Phone taxis are also available.
- **Most towns** and cities have minicabs in addition to black cabs. Minicabs often require pre-booking and cannot be found at taxi queues.
- **There is** a metro/subway system in Glasgow.
- **Edinburgh** has a light rail/tram network.
- **Tram tickets** can be purchased onboard, or from ticket machines at tram stops.
- **The rail network** serves most areas of Scotland, with connections to England.
- **Trains are** overseen by National Rail.
- **Privately-owned** and heritage railways for scenic routes may connect to National Rail tracks.
- **Cycling** is popular. Some cities have dedicated bicycle traffic lights and cycling lanes. In many areas, cyclists must share busy, narrow roads with motorized traffic.
- **E-scooter** rentals are popular, but are illegal in many locations. Drivers often engage in reckless behavior, and disregard traffic laws and pedestrians.
- **Rideshares** are available in cities. Use only services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver’s name. Verify all information before entering vehicle.
- **Limited** ferry service is available. Most routes cover travel between the mainland and islands near the northern and western coasts. There is a foot passenger ferry in Glasgow.
- **Boat and ferry** safety records vary by company. When traveling by ferry, ensure that adequate life boats and life-saving equipment are available. Consider bringing your own life preserver.

TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

- **Drivers must** be at least 17 years old to drive and a minimum of 21 to rent a vehicle. Some rental agencies may have other restrictions.
- **Seat belts** are mandatory for drivers and passengers.
- **Children may** ride in front seats provided they are secured in an appropriate child restraint. Restraints are compulsory for children up to 12 years of age.
- **Motorcycle drivers** and passengers must wear fastened helmets. Enforcement is high.
- **Bicyclists** are not legally required to wear helmets. For safety, cyclists should wear fastened helmets.

- **Cyclists must** use arm signals to alert other road users of turns or stops.
- **Bicycles** must be equipped with front and rear lights and a red rear reflector. Lights must be used at night and during poor visibility including rain and fog. Bells are not required but are recommended.
- **Many areas** lack dedicated bicycle lanes. Cyclists must use sidewalks or paths along roads where available.
- **Where paths** are not available, cyclists must ride on right-hand side of roadways.
- **Pedestrian crossings** with lights may include a central island separating traffic approaching from opposing directions, or staggered crossing areas. Check for separate crossing signals before crossing second half of road from central island.
- **It is illegal** for pedestrians to cross zigzag markings painted on streets, or walk along motorways.
- **Pedestrians should** be alert to pedestrian zone signs that carry information about restricted times.
- **When** pedestrians are present, drivers must stop at broken “give way” lines located about three feet in front of crossing.
- **Drivers may not** enter yellow “box junctions” (marked with crisscross lines) at intersections if it is clear that they will be unable to cross before the light changes.
- **On motorways**, signals positioned on the central lane reservation area apply to all lanes.
- **Drivers** entering motorways must yield to traffic already present on road.
- **Drivers must** remain in left-hand lane of motorways unless overtaking.
- **Overtaking** on the left is permitted on motorways when traffic congestion keeps traffic moving at similar speeds in right and left lanes.
- **On non-motorways**, drivers may pass on the left only if the car ahead has signaled it is making a right turn and there is sufficient room to overtake safely.
- **At roundabouts**, traffic approaching from the right has priority.
- **Double roundabouts** or a series of roundabouts are common. Treat each roundabout separately.
- **On urban** and rural roads, signs depicting small mammals such as hedgehogs and rabbits are in place to help prevent collisions with animals.
- **Police may** carry out random breath tests.
- **Drivers stopped** for traffic offences must be able to provide a UK address (such as a hotel), for receipt of a court subpoena; failure to do so may result in detainment or arrest.

Edinburgh (Capital)

- » Transportation options include cars, buses, taxis, trams, bicycles, e-scooters and trains.
- » The city is connected to Glasgow via the M8 Motorway, and to London by way of the M1 Motorway.
- » Driving is challenging. Streets are narrow and winding, particularly in the medieval city center. Many roads are inaccessible to motorists. There is little public parking.
- » Princes Street is the main city thoroughfare. It is closed to private cars and is open only to buses, trams and taxis.
- » Edinburgh Bus Station is the central bus station.
- » Local buses are operated by city-run Lothian Buses, and privately-owned “First” buses.
- » Lothian buses are red and yellow/cream and mainly serve city locations. Tickets may be purchased on board. Exact change is required.
- » Buses run throughout the night on main routes. Night tickets carry a surcharge. “Edinbus” and “My Bus Edinburgh” apps are available with real time service information.
- » Lothian bus stops can be confusing. Stops may have different names depending upon direction of travel.
- » “First” buses generally serve areas to the west of the city.
- » Both First and Lothian bus companies share the same bus stops. Route numbers are different. Tickets are not interchangeable.
- » There are regular long-distance bus routes to cities in England and throughout Scotland.
- » Buses to and from England are mainly operated by National Express.
- » Buses connecting Edinburgh to other locations in Scotland are generally run by Citylink.
- » A tram system connects Newhaven and Leith via St. Andrew Square, and onward to Edinburgh Airport. There is one route, running east–west.
- » Main tram lines run through New Town along Princes Street and Shandwick Place to Haymarket.
- » There are no tram routes in the south/Old Town district.
- » Tram tickets must be purchased prior to boarding. Ticket machines are located at trams stops, and accept credit cards and coins.
- » Official city taxis (“black cabs”) are generally regarded as safe and reliable. Drivers are required to pass strict testing before being licensed.
- » Minicab taxis are also available, but must be pre-booked.
- » Taxi ranks can be found throughout the city near bus and train stations, tourist sites and hotels.
- » Orange lights above the windscreen of black cabs indicate availability.
- » Rideshares are available. Use only services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver’s name. Verify information before entering vehicle.
- » Edinburgh Waverly is the main railway station. On the National Rail website, the station name appears as “Edinburgh.”
- » There is regular train service to Glasgow, London, Manchester and towns in the region of South West England.
- » A second rail station is Edinburgh Haymarket, one mile west of Waverly.
- » Pedestrian infrastructure is well-developed. Pedestrians signals are present at most major intersections and on main roads.
- » The central city is small and compact, but many streets are steep and have uneven brick surfaces.
- » Cycling is popular. The network of cycling paths is called the Innertube.
- » The city is connected to the National Cycle Network, but there is no citywide bike sharing program. Independently operated bike rental shops can be found around the city.
- » E-scooters can be rented in many areas but are illegal on sidewalks, cycling paths and park footpaths. Drivers must be licensed and insured.
- » Edinburgh International Airport is 8 miles (13 km) from city center.
- » Bright blue double-decker Airlink buses connect the airport to city center at Waverly Bridge next to Waverly Train

Edinburgh, continued

- Station. Fares may be paid in local currency or contactless credit/debit cards.
- » Long-distance Citylink Air buses are available to Glasgow Buchanan Bus Station.
- » There is a tram line connecting the airport to the city. Tickets must be purchased prior to travel from ticket machines at the airport or at tram stops.
- » Most major car rental agencies are represented at the airport.

Glasgow

- » Largest city in Scotland.
- » Transportation options include cars, buses, taxis, subway, trams, bicycles, e-scooters, trains and ferries.
- » Driving is not recommended. There are many roundabouts. Road networks can be confusing.
- » City center is a low-emission zone. High penalty fees apply to driving non-compliant vehicles into the city.
- » Buses provide the main form of public transport.
- » Buchanan Bus Station is located north of Queen Street railway station. It is the main hub for all intercity buses and long-distance buses, including Megabus and National Express.
- » Many buses are parked on the street in front of the station.
- » Ember Electric Buses have day and night routes between Buchanan Bus Station and the town of Dundee.
- » Local and city buses are operated by First Glasgow. Service is less frequent in the evening and on Sundays.
- » At bus stops, passengers must signal to bus driver to stop by waving.
- » Bus fares may be paid in cash at onboard machines. Change is not given.
- » Debit and credit cards with an electronic “tap” option may be used onboard buses to pay fare.
- » Buses serving routes outside of the city are operated by multiple companies.
- » There is an underground metro system called “The Subway.” There is one loop with stops in city center, the West End and inner suburbs.
- » The Subway runs Monday through Saturday from 6:30 am to 11:30 pm, and on Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Trains run approximately every 4 to 8 minutes. Tickets can be purchased at all metro stations.
- » Commuter trains are operated by National Rail and serve areas beyond city center.
- » There is rail service to other areas of Scotland, and to destinations in England. Regular connections to London and Manchester are available.
- » Central Station is the main train station.
- » Queen Street Station has regular routes to Edinburgh, and northern cities including Aberdeen and Inverness.
- » Overnight rail service is available to select destinations.
- » Taxis are readily available. Official “black cab” city taxis are generally regarded as safe. Drivers must pass rigorous testing before being licensed.
- » Licensed city taxis can be found outside of Buchanan Bus Station and both railway stations. Other taxi ranks are located near George Square and at the southern end of Queen Street.
- » Availability of taxis is displayed by orange lights above vehicle windscreen.
- » At night, many unlicensed taxis can be found near bars and clubs. Avoid these taxis.
- » Minicab taxis must be pre-booked.
- » Rideshares are available. Use only services that have a dispatch app providing vehicle description, license plate number and driver’s name. Verify information before entering vehicle.
- » Pedestrian infrastructure is well-developed. Major intersections have pedestrian crossings.
- » There are many pedestrian-only zones within the downtown area.
- » Pedestrian foot bridges are in place over the River Clyde.
- » There is a citywide bike sharing program called OVO Bikes that includes traditional and e-bikes. Rental stations are located throughout the city.

Glasgow, continued

- » E-scooters are prevalent, but illegal to operate on sidewalks, bike paths, park footpaths or on city streets.
- » The Yoker-Renfrew ferry operates approximately every half hour, connecting the north and south banks of the River Clyde. The ferry accommodates only foot and bicycle traffic.
- » Glasgow Airport is about 9 miles (14.5 km) from the city.
- » Buses provide transport between the airport and Buchanan Bus Station in city center. The bus stop is located directly outside of the arrivals terminal.
- » Glasgow Airport Express Bus 500 connects the airport directly to and from Queen Street Station and Glasgow Central Train station.
- » The nearest train station to the airport is Paisley Gilmour Street, located one mile from the terminal.
- » Official airport taxis are white, and can be found in queues outside of the arrivals hall.
- » Private Holiday Taxis may be prebooked for airport transfers.
- » Most major car rental agencies are represented at the airport.

ACCOMMODATIONS AND INCLUSIONS FOR MOBILITY CHALLENGED

- **Laws require** public service providers to make “reasonable adjustments” to make sure access is available to persons with mobility or other physical and sensory challenges. This does not apply to the transportation sector.
- **Code exemptions** allow many older buildings to have steps leading from streets to doors.
- **Sidewalks** are often narrow or steep with uneven surfaces, particularly in historic city areas.
- **Many parts** of Edinburgh city center are connected by narrow, vertical stairs linking sidewalks. Steps may be cracked or uneven and lack handrails.
- **Wheelchair users** must adhere to the following rules: When using roadways, obey rules for vehicles; on sidewalks, follow rules that apply to pedestrians.
- **Most** UK National Rail System stations are not easily accessible to persons with mobility challenges, and may not have elevators. Many stations have stairways and long corridors which must be navigated to change trains or to exit onto the street.
- **Some buses** have lowering platforms for persons with limited mobility or other physical challenges.
- **Visit Scotland** provides information on accessible sites at <https://www.visitscotland.com/inspiration/accessible>
- **Parking permits** called “blue badges” are issued by local government councils to persons with mobility challenges. To obtain a blue badge, visit <https://www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge>. Some councils may not offer permits to visitors.
- **The Assisted Travel** page at the National Rail website provides information for passengers with mobility or other challenges: <https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/on-the-train/accessible-train-travel-and-facilities/>

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

- **Pre-program** emergency numbers into your phone before departure.
 - » Police, ambulance and fire: 999 or 112
- **Good medical care** is available throughout the country.
- **Advance payment** for medical services may be required.
- **SOS emergency phones** are located at half-mile intervals from one another along motorways, and are connected directly to emergency services. White and blue poles indicate where the nearest phone is in some areas. In some remote areas, emergency phone boxes are wooden and are painted black with yellow trim.
- **It may take** first responders longer to reach patients and provide life-saving care in mountainous and remote areas, including the Highlands and small offshore islands.
- **If involved in a crash:**
 - » Stop vehicle and activate warning/hazard lights.
 - » Call emergency services.
 - » Move uninjured persons to safety; do not move anyone who is injured.
 - » Collect contact information from other driver(s) and any witnesses.



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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