



# Requirements for towing trailers in Great Britain

For more information go to  
[www.gov.uk/browse/driving](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving)

# Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	Car driving licences held before 1 January 1997	3
3	Lorry and bus licences held since 1 January 1997	3
4	Driving licences issued since 1 January 1997	3
5	Descriptions of vehicle categories	4
	If test passed before 19 January 2013	4
	If test passed since 19 January 2013	8
6	Upgrading entitlement for trailers	10
7	Provisional trailer entitlement	11
8	Further information	11

## Important note

This leaflet is only about driver licensing. For details about weights and dimensions of trailers, phone **0300 330 3000**.

### *Buying a vehicle?*

*The tax is no longer transferable so you must tax it before you use it.*

**[www.gov.uk/vehicletaxrules](http://www.gov.uk/vehicletaxrules)**



## 1 Introduction

**This leaflet contains information about entitlement to tow trailers.**

## 2 Car driving licences held before 1 January 1997

If you passed your car test before 1 January 1997 you will normally keep your existing entitlements to drive a vehicle with a trailer, with a combined weight of 8.25 tonnes (showing on your licence as C1E (107)) until your licence runs out at age 70. You are also entitled to drive a minibus with a trailer weighing more than 750kg. If you want to keep these entitlements after age 70, you will need to send us an application for a lorry, bus or minibus driving licence (D2) with a 'Medical Examination Report' (D4) filled in and signed by a doctor and an optometrist or optician, and meet the higher medical standards required of bus and lorry drivers.

If you have subcategory C1E (107) on your driving licence and wish to drive a vehicle and trailer with a combined weight of up to 12 tonnes you can apply for provisional subcategory C1+E to take the test. You do not need to get subcategory C1 first, but you have to meet higher medical standards and pass both the category C theory test and the subcategory C1+E practical test.

## 3 Lorry and bus licences held since 1 January 1997

Since 1 January 1997, if you hold category C or D entitlement you are limited to trailers weighing up to 750kg. You must hold Category C+E or D+E to tow trailers weighing more than this.

## 4 Driving licences issued since 1 January 1997

If you passed a car test on or after 1 January 1997 you must pass an extra driving test to get entitlement to drive category B+E and all larger vehicles. (If you hold subcategories C1, C1+E, D1 and D1+E you have to meet the higher medical standards for drivers of larger vehicles.)

## 5 Descriptions of vehicle categories

All weights quoted for the relevant vehicles relate to the 'Maximum Authorised Mass' (MAM). This is the total weight of the vehicle when 'laden' (loaded).

### Descriptions of vehicle categories if test passed before 19 January 2013

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Cars</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motor vehicle with a MAM of up to 3,500kg, no more than eight passenger seats with or without a trailer – weighing no more than 750kg.</li> <li>• As category B but with a trailer weighing more than 750kg. The total weight of the vehicle and trailer together can't weigh more than 3,500kg.</li> </ul>	17	See notes 1, 6 and 7
	<p><b>Automatic cars</b></p> <p><b>As category B with automatic transmission.</b></p>	17	See note 1
<b>BE</b>	<p><b>Cars with trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Combinations of a car in category B and a trailer over 750kg.</li> </ul>	17	
<b>C1</b>	<p><b>Medium-sized vehicles</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles between 3,500kg and 7,500kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver with a trailer up to 750kg.</li> </ul>	18	See note 5

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
<b>C1E</b>	<p><b>Medium sized vehicles and trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles between 3,500kg and 7,500kg with a trailer over 750kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver – combined weight not more than 12,000kg.</li> </ul>	18	See notes 2 and 5
<b>C</b>	<p><b>Large goods vehicles</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles over 3,500kg with a trailer up to 750kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver.</li> </ul>	21	See note 2
<b>CE</b>	<p><b>Large goods vehicles with trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles over 3,500kg, designed and constructed for the carriage of no more than eight passengers in addition to the driver with a trailer over 750kg.</li> </ul>	21	See note 2
<b>D1</b>	<p><b>Minibuses</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding eight metres with a trailer up to 750kg.</li> </ul>	21	See notes 3 and 5
<b>D1E</b>	<p><b>Minibuses with trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 metres with a trailer over 750kg, provided that the MAM of the combination formed does not exceed 12,000kg.</li> </ul>	21	See notes 3 or 5
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Buses</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than eight passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer up to 750kg.</li> </ul>	21	See notes 3 and 4

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
DE	<b>Buses with trailers</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than eight passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer over 750kg.</li> </ul>	21	See notes 3 and 4

### Note 1

Age 16 if you are getting or have applied for Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (mobility component) at the enhanced rate.

### Note 2

You can drive at age 17 if you are a member of the armed forces.

You can drive at age 18 if one of the following applies:

- you passed your driving test and Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (Driver CPC) Initial Qualification
- you are learning to drive or taking a driving test for this category or Driver CPC Initial Qualification
- you are taking a national vocational training course to get a Driver CPC Initial Qualification
- since 10 September 2009 you must take the CPC periodic training every 5 years.

### Note 3

You can drive at age 17 if you are a member of the armed forces.

You can drive these vehicles at age 18 if one of the following apply:

- (i) If you are learning to either:
  - take your Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) driving test or
  - get your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)
- (ii) If you have passed a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification, you can drive if:
  - carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles or
  - not engaged in the carriage of passengers, or
  - driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
  - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad.

(iii) Since 10 September 2008, drivers passing a PCV test and driving under a bus operator's licence, or minibus permit or community bus permit, you can drive if:

- carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles or
- not engaged in the carriage of passengers, or
- driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
- you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad.

You can drive at age 20 after passing a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification.

For further advice on driving tests and the Driver CPC, contact the DVSA by phoning **0300 200 1122** or by email at **drivercpc@dvsa.gov.uk**

#### **Note 4**

You need category D entitlement to drive an articulated bus (for example, a 'bendy bus'). You can get more details from **[www.gov.uk/browse/driving](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving)** or by phoning us on 0300 790 6801.

#### **Note 5**

If you passed your test for category B or B automatic before 1 January 1997, your licence will already show entitlement to drive C1, C1E (8.25 tonnes), D1, D1E (not for hire or reward).

- If you want to drive medium or large vehicles, minibuses or buses in the EU or EEA, you must apply for the appropriate provisional entitlement.
- You must not apply for theory or practical tests until the provisional entitlement is shown on your licence.

#### **Note 6**

This applies to all category B licence holders, regardless of the test pass date.

## Note 7

An exemption exists for the holders of category B, to drive large motor tricycles in category A provided they are over 21.

## Descriptions of vehicle categories if test passed since 19 January 2013

The table below only shows the vehicle categories that have changed since 19 January 2013. For the vehicle categories that have not changed see table 'Descriptions of vehicle categories before 19 January 2013'.

Category	Description	Minimum age	Notes
<b>BE</b>	<p><b>Cars with trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combinations of vehicles consisting of a vehicle in category B and trailer, where the combination does not come within category B, and the MAM of the trailer or semi-trailer does not exceed 3,500kg.</li> </ul>	17	
<b>D1</b>	<p><b>Minibuses</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding eight metres with a trailer up to 750kg.</li> </ul>	21	See notes 1 and 2
<b>D</b>	<p><b>Buses</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than eight passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer up to 750kg.</li> </ul>	24	See note 1
<b>D1E</b>	<p><b>Minibuses with trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vehicles with no more than 16 passenger seats in addition to the driver and with a maximum length not exceeding 8 metres with a trailer over 750kg, provided that the MAM of the combination formed does not exceed 12,000kg.</li> </ul>	21	See notes 1 and 2
<b>DE</b>	<p><b>Buses with trailers</b></p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any bus designed and constructed for the carriage of more than eight passengers in addition to the driver, with a trailer over 750kg.</li> </ul>	24	See note 1

## Note 1

You can drive at age 17 if you are a member of the armed forces.

You can drive these vehicles at age 18 if one of the following apply:

- (i) If you are learning to either:
  - take your Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) driving test or
  - get your Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC)
- (ii) If you have passed a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification, you can drive if:
  - carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles or
  - not engaged in the carriage of passengers, or
  - driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
  - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad.
- (iii) Since 10 September 2008, drivers passing a PCV test and driving under a bus operator's licence, or minibus permit or community bus permit, you can drive if:
  - carrying passengers on a regular service where the route doesn't exceed 31 miles or
  - not engaged in the carriage of passengers, or
  - driving a vehicle of a class included in sub-category D1
  - you don't drive a bus or minibus abroad.

Age 20 after passing a PCV driving test and Driver CPC initial qualification.

Age 21 if:

- the vehicle is being used by the fire service or for maintaining public order
- undergoing road tests for repair or maintenance purposes
- if you were entitled to drive the vehicle before 19 January 2013.

For further advice on driving tests and the Driver CPC you can contact the DVSA by phoning **0300 200 1122**.

## Note 2

If you passed your test for category B or B automatic before 1 January 1997 your licence will already show entitlement to C1, C1E (8.25 tonnes), D1 and D1E (not for hire or reward).

## 6 Upgrading entitlement for trailers

In general, drivers need to take an extra driving test for each category or subcategory of entitlement. But there are certain exceptions to this if drivers have already passed a test which gives entitlement for a larger or equivalent-sized vehicle.

For details of driving tests please contact the DVSA on **0300 200 1122**.

Examples	Test pass category	Upgraded entitlement for larger or equivalent sized vehicle
1	C1+E or D1+E	From category B entitlement to B+E
	Note: a test pass for subcategory D1+E does not upgrade subcategory C1 to C1+E because the trailer size for subcategory D1+E is smaller than that for a subcategory C1+E test.	
2	C+E	From B entitlement to B+E and also gives entitlement to subcategories C1 and C1+E and, if category D or subcategory D1 is held, these are upgraded to category D+E or subcategory D1+E.
	Note: CE (102) will not upgrade D to DE but will upgrade any B, C1 and D1 held.	
3	D+E	From category B and subcategory D1 to categories B+E and subcategory D1+E
	Note: Passing D+E does not upgrade category C or subcategory C1 entitlements because the trailer size for a category D+E test is smaller than that for a category C+E or subcategory C1+E.	

## 7 Provisional trailer entitlement

Since 1 January 1997, you can no longer take a test in a heavy vehicle with a trailer (for example, category C+E or D+E) unless you have first passed a test in the relevant vehicle (for example, category C or D).

This means that although you may have been driving a vehicle and trailer combination with 'L' plates, you cannot take a trailer test with that vehicle until you have passed a test in the required category without a trailer attached.

## 8 Further information

More information is available at **[www.gov.uk/browse/driving](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving)** or the following leaflets are available by phoning 0300 790 6801:

- INF28** – Driving a minibus
- INF38** – Driving in Great Britain (GB) as a Visitor or New Resident
- INF52** – Large vehicles you can drive using your car or lorry licence

### If you have any questions

You can get more information on driving licences by phoning Customer Enquiries on 0300 790 6801. The lines are open between 8am and 7pm Monday to Friday, and between 8am and 2pm on Saturdays. You will be answered by an automatic system but will be able to speak to an operator during office hours. We monitor or record some calls for quality purposes.

If you want to send us an email, go to **[www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla](http://www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla)** and choose the option you need.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing and have a textphone, phone us on **0300 123 1278**.

**You can get more information on driving tests by phoning the DVSA on 0300 200 1122.**

**If you have changed your name, address or vehicle, please tell us immediately. If you don't, you may have to pay a £1,000 fine.**



Driver & Vehicle  
Licensing  
Agency



# DVLA's digital services

## Save time - do it online!

- **Personalised registrations** – take a registration number off your vehicle and put a registration number on your vehicle
- **Vehicle registration** – tell us you've bought or sold a vehicle
- **Vehicle licensing** – tax or SORN your vehicle
- **Trailer registration** – register your trailer to take it abroad
- **Driving licences** – from applying for your provisional licence to viewing your driver details.

For all DVLA's secure online services, use the official GOV.UK website at [gov.uk/browse/driving](https://gov.uk/browse/driving)

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