

ARE ALL FOREIGN LICENCES EQUALLY VALID to USE in the UK?

The short answer is 'no'!

It is much easier for you if you have a European licence (one from the EU/EEA). Otherwise you will ordinarily have to take a UK test.

The following are notable exceptions.

- Isle of Man and Channel Islands licenses are acceptable for exchange (for a UK licence) if issued after 01/04/91.
- EU or EEA licences may be valid for exchange even if they have expired.
- International driving permits are not exchangeable.
- Northern Ireland and Gibraltar test pass certificates are exchangeable when the test was passed within two years of the date of the licence application.
- Japanese licences must be accompanied by an official translation, available for a fee from the Consulate General of Japan at 101-104 Piccadilly, London W1V 9FN or 2 Melville Crescent, Edinburgh EH3 7HW.
- Republic of Korea licences must be accompanied by an official translation from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea at 60 Buckingham Gate, London SW1E 6AJ.
- Republic of Korea and Faroe Islands motorcycle licences are not exchangeable.
- South African 'Book of Life' driving licences are stamped but it has to be accompanied by a letter of authority from the South African licensing authority.
- South African photocard licences are returned to the South African licensing authority
- Canadian licences are exchanged for British licences enabling only cars with automatic gearboxes to be driven until the driver has passed a UK test with a manual gearbox.

For other queries contact the DVLA:

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