

Travelling in Austria

General info:

Population: 8,2m

Area: 83 870 sq. km

Currency: Euro (100 cents) - EUR (€)

Top 10 popular attractions: Melk Abbey
Vienna State Opera
Seefeld, Tyrol
Hohensalzburg Castle
Hofburg Imperial Palace
Innsbruck Altstadt
St Anton am Arlberg
Grossglockner Alpine Road
Hallstatt
Schönbrunn Palace

The Essentials:

Driving licence:

Visitors riding or driving in Austria must have reached the minimum age required to drive/ride a vehicle of equivalent category even if they are qualified to drive at a lower age in their country of residence. You must be 18 or over to drive a private vehicle in Austria.

A pink format or photocard UK licence is accepted. Otherwise a UK licence accepted only if accompanied by identity document carrying a photograph e.g. passport.

Important documents:

Vehicles from the UK may be imported into Austria for up to 6 months in any period of 12 months. When driving in Austria the following documents should be carried:

- Full, valid driving licence* (with paper counterpart)
- Proof of Insurance (third party or above)
- Proof of ID (Passport)
- Proof of ownership (V5C Certificate)

While driving in Austria you are required by law to carry the following items. Hefty on-the-spot fines can be issued for failing to carry specific items:

- Headlamp beam deflectors (Depending on your car, you will either need deflector stickers or have to adjust the beam manually)
- Reflective jackets (To be used in the case of a breakdown or accident outside built-up areas, on expressways and on motorways)
- Warning triangle (All vehicles with more than two wheels registered in Austria or abroad must be equipped with a warning triangle which conforms with EC Regulation 27)
- First aid kits are compulsory when travelling in Austria
- Motorcyclists (Safety helmets are compulsory for drivers and passengers of mopeds and motorcycles)

Are you covered?

Don't forget to buy your RAC European Breakdown cover & Travel Insurance before you leave. Call RAC European Breakdown Sales on: 0800 015 6000. Call RAC Travel Insurance on: 0870 333 2784

Useful Numbers:

Emergency Services: 112 (SMS 114)
RAC Breakdown Europe: 00 33 472 43 52 44

Useful Links:

- <http://www.rac.co.uk/breakdown-cover/european-breakdown-cover/>
- <http://www.rac.co.uk/insurance/travel-insurance/>
- <http://www.racshop.co.uk/driving-in-europe.html>

Rules of the road & regulations:

Rules of the road:

- **Overtaking & passing**

Drive on the right, overtake on the left.

The intention to overtake or to change lanes must be shown by means of indicators.

- **Priority**

Where the approach to an intersection is marked with the international "give way" or a "STOP" sign, every road user must yield right of way to vehicles on the priority road.

Where no such sign is erected, every road user must yield right of way at an intersection to all vehicles approaching from the right. Exceptions are:

- Vehicles on rails which have priority even when they approach from the left
- Emergency vehicles (police cars, fire engines, ambulances, etc.) which always have priority.

- **Warning of approach**

The horn should be used only in case of danger. Its use is generally prohibited in Vienna and in the vicinity of hospitals.

Towing:

Caravans, camper vans, luggage and boat trailers may be temporarily imported into Austria without formality.

No inventory of the contents is required unless the camper van, caravan or trailer contains unusual or valuable items of equipment.

Snow chains:

The use of snow chains is permitted in Austria. The maximum speed recommended is generally 50 km/h (depends on the manufacturer's advice).

In the winter months, winter tyres are recommended but for cars with summer tyres the authorities can require cars to be fitted with snow chains on the driving wheels when road conditions are bad. The international road sign is used.

Motorists can hire or buy snow chains from OeAMTC offices. Chains can also be hired at all major border crossings.

Seat belts:

Occupants of all seats equipped with a seat belt (including rear seats) must wear that belt.

Persons found not wearing the seat belt when stopped by an officer of the law can either be warned, or receive a fine on-the-spot of €35. If the fine is not paid immediately or in due course, it can be increased to €72 and even lead to 24 hours detention.

Travelling with children:

Children under 14 years old and less than 1,50m in height travelling in vehicles registered in Austria or abroad must use special seat belts adapted to their size or special child restraints, both at the front and at the rear of the vehicle.

Vehicles without such protection (e.g. two seat sports cars or lorries) may not be used at all to transport children under 14 years of age.

Speed limits:

There is a speed limit of 50 km/h in built-up areas for all types of motor vehicles, unless otherwise indicated by road signs. A built-up area starts from the place name shown at the beginning of a town or village.

A number of towns (e.g. Graz) have a general speed limit of 30 km/h (except where a higher speed limit is indicated). Mopeds must not exceed a speed of 45 km/h in or outside built-up areas.

Motorists are required to exercise great care when in the vicinity of children, disabled or old people; they must drive in such a way that they can stop without danger at any time.

Outside built-up areas

	Motorways	Other roads
Motorcycles Private cars Goods vehicles up to 3,500 kg	130 km/h	100 km/h

The minimum speed limit on motorways and roads for motor vehicles indicated by a rectangular blue sign bearing a white car is now 60km/h. Vehicles that are not capable of sustaining 60km/h are not allowed on motorways.

A car navigation system with maps indicating the location of fixed speed cameras is permitted but equipment which actively searches for speed cameras or interferes with police equipment is prohibited.

Penalties:

- **On-the-spot fines**

The Austrian police are empowered to impose and collect fines of up to €90 on the spot from drivers who violate traffic regulations. The police officer collecting the fine is required to issue an official receipt. In the event of a higher fine, the police officer may ask the motorist to pay a deposit, the remainder of the fine must be paid within two weeks of the offence.

Parking:

- **Parking regulations**

No vehicle may be parked so as to cause an obstruction and the driver must not leave the vehicle before he has done everything to prevent accidents. Standing and parking regulations follow the provisions of the Convention on Road Traffic (Vienna, 1968).

In places where there is a "No parking" sign, vehicles are allowed to stand for up to 10 minutes or for loading.

- **Enforcement of parking regulations**

Parked vehicles which obstruct the traffic may be towed away. This applies to vehicles registered in Austria and abroad. Wheel clamps are used on illegally parked coaches in Vienna.

- **Disabled parking access**

In public parking areas, spaces reserved for disabled drivers are marked.

Traffic lights:

- **Traffic lights**

A flashing green light indicates the approach of the end of the green phase; vehicles close to the traffic lights should proceed. Those which are still some distance away should prepare to stop.

An orange light combined with the red light means that the green phase is imminent.

Drink/drug driving:

- **Legal limit**

The maximum level of alcohol in the blood is 0.49%.

- **Alcohol**

If a person who drives or takes charge of a vehicle is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol he must undergo a breath test. If the test is positive, the suspect will be examined by a police physician. A blood test is also taken if someone has been killed or seriously injured by a driver or a pedestrian suspected of having caused the accident when under the influence of alcohol.

The offence of driving under the influence of alcohol has serious legal consequences, with fines ranging from 300 to 5,900 EUR. Visitors may be forbidden to drive in Austria.

Roads & fuel

All motor vehicles must pay a toll "Mautvignette" to use motorways and express roads.

Availability of fuel

Most petrol stations are open from 0800 to 2000 hours. In large cities some are open 24 hours a day; service stations on the motorways are generally open 24 hours a day.

- **Price of fuel**
(April 2014)

Unleaded petrol (95 octane)	1.347 EUR per litre
Unleaded petrol (98 octane)	1.485 EUR per litre
Diesel	1.311 EUR per litre
Diesel	0.848 EUR per litre

- **Means of payment**
Credit cards are accepted by larger petrol stations.
- **Automatic petrol pumps**
There are no automatic petrol pumps.

What RAC can do for you

RAC offers great value, flexible RAC European breakdown (<http://www.rac.co.uk/breakdown-cover/european-breakdown-cover/>) cover tailored to meet your needs. We also offer comprehensive travel insurance (<http://www.rac.co.uk/insurance/travel-insurance/>), including cover for medical expenses, baggage, personal money and belongings *. Whilst away, use our Route Planner (<http://www.rac.co.uk/route-planner>) for all your driving directions.

RAC can cover you against vehicle break down in Europe, with options available to suit your travelling requirements.

RAC European breakdown cover Basic and Comprehensive cover provides you with a wide range of benefits.

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