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Can I drive in France with a foreigner licence?

Verified 01 juillet 2021 - Legal and Administrative Information Directorate (Prime Minister)

It depends on the State that issued you the driving licence.

Permit issued in Europe (EEA)

You are concerned if you have obtained a driving licence in a State **European**.

You can drive in France with your licence **European** as long as **valid**.

Exchanging your European driving licence for a French one (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1758?lang=en>) is not necessary to drive in France.

This is only mandatory in the following 2 cases:

- You are requesting a new licence category (extension)
- In France, you commit a traffic violation, resulting in a loss of points, restriction, suspension or cancellation of your licence

Permit issued in another State

You can drive in France with your licence issued by a state **no European** during a short stay or during your studies under conditions (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1459?lang=en>).

If you settle in France, you must apply to exchange your licence for a french one (except for a british one issued before 2021) (<https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F1460?lang=en>).

Statute and miscellaneous references

- Order of 8 February 1999 laying down the conditions for the recognition and exchange of driving licences issued by the States belonging to the EU and the EEA [↗](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000005627531) (<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=LEGITEXT000005627531>)
- Decision of 12 January 2012 laying down the conditions for the recognition and exchange of driving licences issued by States outside the European Economic Area [↗](http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000025175223) (<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000025175223>)
- Circular of 3 August 2012 on the conditions for the recognition and exchange of driving licences issued by non-EEA countries (PDF - 272.8 KB) [↗](http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2012/10/cir_35951.pdf) (http://circulaire.legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2012/10/cir_35951.pdf)

For more information, please contact

- **Brexit, where do we stand?** [↗](https://brexit.gouv.fr/sites/brexit/accueil/le-brexit-cest-quoi.html) (<https://brexit.gouv.fr/sites/brexit/accueil/le-brexit-cest-quoi.html>)
Prime Minister