

International Drivers on Domestic Roads:

A Reference for Internationals and Officers of the Law

In Summary:

Most international drivers are allowed to travel on US roads for the period of one year; without requiring a US driver's license. An individual, with a valid drivers license, from another signatory nation, with some restrictions, qualifies for this protection. This right is protected by international treaty; namely, the United Nations Resolution "Convention on Road Traffic" signed and ratified, in Geneva, by the United States of America on March 26th, 1952.

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Disclaimer: The information provided on is not intended to be legal advice, but merely conveys general information related to legal issues commonly encountered.

References:

The full text of this resolution can be found in "United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 125, p. 3"

The direct link is <http://treaties.un.org/Pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=080000028005793f>

Note: Although this is a direct link to a UN Resolution, and is likely to be constant, links on the internet change often. Therefore, I cannot guarantee this link will continue to work properly.

However, as of (13 November 2010) this can be found easily using the following procedure:

Goto: <http://treaties.un.org>

Click "Databases" - located on the top, horizontal menu bar.

Click "UNTS Database" - located on the side bar, categorized under "UNTS"

Click "Advanced Search" - located under the top, horizontal menu bar.

Under "Search Objects", select "Treaty"

Under "Attributes", select "Registration Number"

Within the range, type From: "1671" To: "1671"

Click "Add", and text should appear within the "Search Criteria" box.

Click "Search"

You will receive a list of UN Treaties.

The one referred to within this document is:

Title : Convention on Road Traffic

Registration Number : I-1671

Creation Date : 27/10/2004

Treaty Type : Open Multilateral

Registration Date : 26/03/1952

Object Name : LA 41 TR-26031952 - (XI-B-1) - I - 1671

After clicking on the title, a pop-up will contain the details of the Resolution. The text is within the "Text document (s)" heading.

Note: The English/French versions both alternate page numbers. This is because the resolution was written first in English, then the next page contains the French translation. Therefore, most of the even pages are in English, and the odd pages are in French. Downloading the language-specific version will naturally exclude the other language; thereby jumping 2 pages at a time.

CONVENTION¹ ON ROAD TRAFFIC. SIGNED AT GENEVA, ON
19 SEPTEMBER 1949

The Contracting States, desirous of promoting the development and safety
of international road traffic by establishing certain uniform rules,
Have agreed upon the following provisions :

CHAPTER I
General Provisions

ARTICLE 1

1. While reserving its jurisdiction over the use of its own roads, each Contracting State agrees to the use of its roads for international traffic under the conditions set out in this Convention.

2. No Contracting State shall be required to extend the benefit of the provisions of this Convention to any motor vehicle or trailer, or to any driver having remained within its territory for a continuous period exceeding one year.

ARTICLE 2

1. The annexes to this Convention shall be considered as integral parts of the Convention; it being understood, however, that any State may on signature or ratification of, or accession to, the Convention, or at any time thereafter, by declaration² exclude annexes 1 and 2³ from its application of the Convention.

¹ In accordance with article 29 the Convention came into force on 26 March 1952, the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the fifth instrument of ratification or accession. The following States deposited instruments of ratification or accession (a) on the dates indicated :

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 30 August 1950.

In a note accompanying the instrument of ratification, the Government of the United States of America indicated that the provisions of the Convention will be applicable to all of the territories for the international relations of which the United States of America is responsible.

FRANCE 15 September 1950.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA 3 November 1950✓

Excluding, in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 2 of the Convention, annex 2 from the application of the Convention.

MONACO (a) 3 August 1951

With reference to annex 6, section IV (b), the Government of the Principality of Monaco indicates that it will permit only one trailer to be drawn by a vehicle and that it will not permit an articulated vehicle to draw a trailer.

SWEDEN 25 February 1952

Excluding, in accordance with paragraph 1 of article 2 of the Convention, annex 1 from the application of the Convention.

² See pp. 53 to 58 of this volume.

³ See p. 60 of this volume the declarations made at the time of signature.

ARTICLE 21

Every motor vehicle and trailer shall carry the identification marks set out in annex 5.¹

ARTICLE 22

1. Every motor vehicle and trailer shall be in good working order and in such safe mechanical condition as not to endanger the driver, other occupants of the vehicle or any person upon the road, or cause damage to public or private property.

2. In addition, every motor vehicle, or trailer, and its equipment shall conform to the provisions of annex 6¹ and the driver of every motor vehicle shall observe the rules set out therein.

3. The provisions of this article shall apply to trolleybuses.

ARTICLE 23

1. The maximum dimensions and weights of vehicles permitted to travel on the roads of each Contracting State or subdivision thereof shall be matters for domestic legislation. On certain roads designated by States Parties to regional agreements or, in the absence of such agreements, by a Contracting State, the permissible maximum dimensions and weights shall be those set out in annex 7.²

2. The provisions of this article shall apply to trolleybuses.

CHAPTER V

Drivers of motor vehicles in international traffic

ARTICLE 24

1. Each Contracting State shall allow any driver admitted to its territory who fulfils the conditions which are set out in annex 8³ and who holds a valid driving permit issued to him, after he has given proof of his competence, by the competent authority of another Contracting State or sub-division thereof, or by an association duly empowered by such authority, to drive on its roads without further examination motor vehicles of the category or categories defined in annexes 9⁴ and 10⁵ for which the permit has been issued.

¹ See p. 66 of this volume.

² See p. 78 of this volume.

³ See p. 84 of this volume.

⁴ See p. 86 of this volume.

⁵ See p. 90 of this volume.

ANNEX 8

CONDITIONS TO BE FULFILLED BY DRIVERS OF MOTOR VEHICLES
IN INTERNATIONAL TRAFFIC

The minimum age for driving a motor vehicle under the conditions set out in article 24 of the Convention shall be eighteen years.

Any Contracting State or subdivision thereof may, however, recognize the driving permits issued by other Contracting States to drivers of motor cycles and invalid carriages of a lower age than eighteen years.


ANNEX 9

MODEL DRIVING PERMIT — DIMENSIONS : 74 × 105 mm

Colour: pink

1. The permit will be drawn up in the language(s) prescribed by the legislation of the State.
2. The title of the document "Driving Permit" will be written in the language(s) prescribed in 1. above and will be followed by the translation in French "*Permis de conduire*".
3. The inscriptions should be written (or at least repeated) in Latin characters or in so-called English script.
4. The additional remarks, if any, by the competent authorities of the issuing country will not apply to international traffic.
5. The distinguishing sign as defined in annex 4 shall be inscribed in the oval.

OUTSIDE PAGES

Reserved for endorsements by the competent authorities of the issuing country and including periodic renewal.		Name of country <div style="text-align: center;">  DRIVING PERMIT </div>
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INSIDE PAGES

1 Surname.....	Changes of address		Vehicles for which the permit is valid
2 Other names*.....	A	overlaid
3 Date** & place*** of birth		
4 Permanent place of residence	Date:.....	B	enlarged
	Signature:.....		
		
.....	Date:.....	C	separately
	Signature:.....		
		
5 Issued by.....	Additional remarks if any by the competent authorities of the issuing country.	D	Shown
6 at.....on.....			
7 Valid until.....			
No		E	
Signature of authority			

* Father's or husband's name may be inserted.
 ** Or approximate age on date of issue

*** If known.
 **** Or thumb impression of holder.

Vehicles for which the permit is valid:		
A	Motor cycles with or without a sidecar, invalid carriages and three-wheeled motor vehicles with an unladen weight not exceeding 400 kg (900 lbs.).	Seal or stamp of authority
B	Motor vehicles used for the transport of passengers and comprising in addition to the driver's seat, at most 8 seats, or those used for the transport of goods and having a permissible maximum weight not exceeding 3,500 kg (7,700 lbs.). Vehicles in this category may be coupled with a light trailer.	Seal or stamp of authority
C	Motor vehicles, used for the transport of goods and of which the permissible maximum weight exceeds 3,500 kg (7,700 lbs.). Vehicles in this category may be coupled with a light trailer.	Seal or stamp of authority
D	Motor vehicles, used for the transport of passengers comprising, in addition to the driver's seat, more than 8 seats. Vehicles in this category may be coupled with a light trailer.	Seal or stamp of authority
E	Motor vehicles of categories B, C or D for which the driver is licensed, with other than a light trailer.	Seal or stamp of authority

"Permissible maximum weight" of a vehicle means the weight of the vehicle and its maximum load when the vehicle is ready for the road.

"Maximum load" means the weight of the load declared permissible by the competent authority of the country of registration of the vehicle.

"Light trailers" shall be of a permissible maximum weight not exceeding 750 kg (1,650 lbs.):

ANNEX 10

MODEL INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT

DIMENSIONS : 105 × 148 mm

*Colours: cover: grey**pages: white*

Pages 1 and 2 shall be drawn up in the national language or languages.

The entire last page shall be drawn up in French.

Additional pages of the International Driving Permit shall repeat in other languages the text of part I of the last page. They shall be drawn up in the following languages :

- (a) Language(s) prescribed by the legislation of the issuing State,
- (b) The official languages of the United Nations,
- (c) At the most six other languages, chosen at the discretion of the issuing State.

The authoritative translation of the text of the permit in the different languages shall be communicated to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by Governments, each one in the language which concerns it.

The written remarks shall be written in Latin characters or in so-called English script.

PAGE 1
(Cover)

(Name of Country)


INTERNATIONAL MOTOR TRAFFIC
INTERNATIONAL DRIVING PERMIT

Convention on International Road Traffic of.....
.....

Issued at
.....

Date
.....

1



Seal
or stamp
of
authority

¹ Signature or seal of authority
or
Signature or seal of the Association empowered by
the authority.

PAGE 2
(Inside cover)

This permit is valid in the territory of all the Contracting States with the exception of the territory of the Contracting State where issued, for the period of one year from the date of issue, for the driving of vehicles included in the category or categories mentioned on the last page of this permit.

[Space reserved for a list of the Contracting States (optional)]

It is understood that this permit shall in no way affect the obligation of the holder to conform strictly to the laws and regulations relating to residence or to the exercise of a profession which are in force in each country through which he travels.

LAST PAGE

Part I

Part II

Particulars concerning the Driver: Surname 1 Other names* 2 Place of birth** 3 Date of birth*** 4 Permanent place of residence 5		1..... 2..... 3..... 4..... 5.....	
Vehicles for which the permit is valid:		Photograph	
Motor cycles, with or without a sidecar, invalid carriages and three-wheeled motor vehicles with an unladen weight not exceeding 400 kg (900 lbs.).	A	A	
Motor vehicles used for the transport of passengers and comprising, in addition to the driver's seat, at most eight seats, or those used for the transport of goods and having a permissible maximum weight not exceeding 3,500 kg (7,700 lbs.). Vehicles in this category may be coupled with a light trailer.	B	B	
Motor vehicles used for the transport of goods and of which the permissible maximum weight exceeds 3,500 kg (7,700 lbs.). Vehicles in this category may be coupled with a light trailer.	C	C	
Motor vehicles used for the transport of passengers and comprising, in addition to the driver's seat, more than eight seats. Vehicles in this category may be coupled with a light trailer.	D	D	
Motor vehicles of categories B, C or D, as authorized above, with other than a light trailer.	E	E	
"Permissible maximum weight" of a vehicle means the weight of the vehicle and its maximum load when the vehicle is ready for the road. "Maximum load" means the weight of the load declared permissible by the competent authority of the country of registration of the vehicle. "Light trailers" shall be those of a permissible maximum weight not exceeding 750 kg (1,650 lbs.).		Signature of holder****	
EXCLUSION Holder of this permit is deprived of the right to drive in (country) by reason of Seal or stamp of authority Place Date Signature Should the above space be already filled, use any other space provided for "Exclusion"		EXCLUSIONS (countries) I..... V..... II..... VI..... III..... VII..... IV..... VIII.....	

- * Father's or husband's name may be inserted.
 ** If known.
 *** Or approximate age on date of issue.
 **** Or thumb impression.

PROTOCOL CONCERNING COUNTRIES OR TERRITORIES AT
PRESENT OCCUPIED. SIGNED AT GENEVA, ON 19 SEPTEMBER
1949

It is agreed that nothing in chapter VII of the Convention on Road Traffic shall be deemed to prevent the Economic and Social Council from addressing invitations to any country or territory at present occupied to accede to the Convention, or to prevent accession to the Convention by or on behalf of such country or territory.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the undersigned representatives have signed this Protocol.

DONE at Geneva this nineteenth day of September 1949 in a single copy in the English and French languages, both texts authentic. The original will be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations who will send certified copies to each of the Governments invited to send representatives to the Conference.

AFGHANISTAN
AFGHANISTAN

ALBANIA
ALBANIE

ARGENTINA
ARGENTINE

AUSTRALIA
AUSTRALIE

AUSTRIA
AUTRICHE

BELGIUM
BELGIQUE

F. BLONDEEL

BOLIVIA
BOLIVIE

BRAZIL
BRÉSIL

BULGARIA
BULGARIE

BURMA
BIRMANIE

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC
RÉPUBLIQUE SOCIALISTE SOVIÉTIQUE DE BIÉLORUSSIE

CANADA
CANADA

CHILE
CHILI

CHINA
CHINE

COLOMBIA
COLOMBIE

No. 1671

COSTA RICA
COSTA-RICA

CUBA
CUBA

CZECHOSLOVAKIA
TCHÉCOSLOVAQUIE

DENMARK
DANEMARK

K. BANG
A. BLOM-ANDERSEN

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
RÉPUBLIQUE DOMINICAINE
T. F. FRANCO

ECUADOR
EQUATEUR

EGYPT
ÉGYPTE
A. K. SAFWAT

EL SALVADOR
SALVADOR

ETHIOPIA
ETHIOPIE

FINLAND
FINLANDE

FRANCE
FRANCE
Lucien HUBERT

GREECE
GRÈCE

GUATEMALA
GUATEMALA

HAITI
HAÏTI

HONDURAS
HONDURAS

HUNGARY
HONGRIE

ICELAND
ISLANDE

INDIA
INDE

N. RAGHAVAN PILLAI

IRAN
IRAN

IRAQ
IRAK

IRELAND
IRLANDE

ISRAEL
ISRAËL

ITALY
ITALIE

M. ENRICO MELLINI

LEBANON
LIBAN

Sous réserve de ratification*
J. MIKAOUÏ

LIBERIA
LIBÉRIA

Translation by the Secretariat of the United Nations:

* Subject to ratification.

No. 1671

LUXEMBOURG
LUXEMBOURG

R. LOGELIN

MEXICO
MEXIQUE

NETHERLANDS
PAYS-BAS

J. J. OYEVAAR

NEW ZEALAND
NOUVELLE-ZÉLANDE

NICARAGUA
NICARAGUA

NORWAY
NORVÈGE

Axel RONNING

PAKISTAN
PAKISTAN

PANAMA
PANAMA

PARAGUAY
PARAGUAY

PERU
PÉROU

PHILIPPINES
PHILIPPINES

Rodolfo MASLOG

POLAND
POLOGNE

PORTUGAL
PORTUGAL

ROMANIA
ROUMANIE

SAUDI ARABIA
ARABIE SAOUDITE

SWEDEN
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SUISSE

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SYRIA
SYRIE

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THAÏLANDE

TRANSJORDAN
TRANSJORDANIE

TURKEY
TURQUIE

UKRAINIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC
RÉPUBLIQUE SOCIALISTE SOVIÉTIQUE D'UKRAINE

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
UNION SUD-AFICAINE

H. BRUNE

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
UNION DES RÉPUBLIQUES SOCIALISTES SOVIÉTIQUES

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
ROYAUME-UNI DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET D'IRLANDE DU NORD

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URUGUAY
URUGUAY

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VENEZUELA

YEMEN
YÉMEN

YUGOSLAVIA
YUGOSLAVIE