

## Customs Info

Tourist traffic

# Clearing vehicles through Swiss Customs



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Finance FDF  
**Federal Customs Administration**

# Importation of vehicles by private individuals living in Switzerland

## Principle

Fundamentally, people who live in Switzerland are not allowed to use a foreign vehicle registered abroad in Switzerland. This also applies to cars which relatives or friends from abroad lend to you or allow you to use for a short time, for example.

There are special regulations for instance for vehicles which are occasionally hired abroad privately and for foreign company vehicles. In each case a customs declaration is required.

## Customs declaration

When crossing the border, vehicles on which duty has not been paid must be declared for customs clearance spontaneously and without delay (principle of self-assessment). Depending on the reason for importation of the vehicle, the customs office can give its approval for temporary importation. However, if the vehicle is to be definitively taxed and cleared through customs, the following conditions must be taken into account.

## Customs and free trade

The rates of duty are the same for used and new cars. Depending on the cubic capacity and weight of the vehicle, they range from CHF 12 to CHF 15 per 100 kg gross weight. For motorbikes, the rate is CHF 37 per 100 kg gross weight. Vehicles from the EU, EFTA and countries which have concluded a Free Trade Agreement with Switzerland are duty-free if you can submit a certificate of origin; e.g. a EUR. 1 form.

## Automobile duty and VAT

The importation of cars and certain delivery vans and minibuses is subject to automobile duty. The tax rate amounts to 4% of the value of the vehicle (customs duties included).

VAT is calculated based on the value of the vehicle (including customs duties and automobile duty) and is levied at the normal rate.

## Documents

Please submit the following documents when making the declaration:

- e-dec electronic customs declaration
- Invoice and/or contract of sale
- Vehicle registration document/certificate (even if already cancelled)
- Passport or identity card
- Certificate of origin, if available
- Cash as it is not possible to pay with credit card at all customs offices

## Customs office opening hours

Please note the customs office opening hours for the declaration (vehicle clearance). Declarations can be made from Monday to Friday; some customs offices are also open on Saturday mornings. The detailed customs office opening hours can be found at: [www.ezv.admin.ch](http://www.ezv.admin.ch) > Contact > Border crossings and customs offices, opening hours.

## CO<sub>2</sub> emission regulations for new passenger vehicles

When new passenger vehicles are registered for the first time, a fine (sanction) will have to be paid if they do not reach a specific CO<sub>2</sub> target value. This sanction will not be imposed at the import customs clearance but will be imposed subsequently by the Federal Roads Office (FEDRO): [www.astra.admin.ch](http://www.astra.admin.ch).

## Registration in Switzerland

In order to be registered in Switzerland, vehicles must meet the technical requirements. An EC certificate of conformity facilitates matters when putting the vehicle into circulation (no noise or exhaust emission test). Information on the registration of vehicles in Switzerland is available from cantonal vehicle licensing offices: [www.asa.ch](http://www.asa.ch).

# Vehicles of people living abroad

## Customs declaration

Foreign tourists can cross the border in their car without formally declaring it so long as it is exclusively for their own use. If the vehicle is used for any other purpose (e.g. to be sold), it must be declared for customs clearance spontaneously and without delay (principle of self-assessment) when crossing the border.

Foreign workers, students and interns may use their uncleared vehicle for two years in Switzerland with customs authorisation (form 15.30). Under certain conditions, this authorisation can be extended.

Those who do not declare their vehicle for the stipulated import clearance will be liable to prosecution.

## Moving to Switzerland

When moving to Switzerland, the vehicles of immigrants can be admitted duty-free as part of one's personal effects. The prerequisites for this are that the person concerned has used

the vehicle for at least six months abroad before the change of place of residence and intends to continue using the vehicle in Switzerland.

If the vehicle was used for less than six months abroad, the vehicle can be used undeclared with a customs permit (form 15.30) for a maximum of two years from the day of first entry into Switzerland. When the two-year period expires, the vehicle must either be declared (collection of duties and taxes: customs and automobile duties and VAT) or exported.

These provisions are also applicable to the vehicles of people returning to Switzerland who have been living abroad for at least one year without relinquishing their Swiss domicile.

Information on the customs clearance of vehicles and on special cases can be found online at [www.ezv.admin.ch](http://www.ezv.admin.ch)  
> Information individuals > Road vehicles and watercraft.

## Obligation to exchange foreign registration documents, number plates and driving licences

As a rule, vehicles with foreign number plates are required to have Swiss registration documents and Swiss number plates at the latest one year after importation.

A Swiss driving licence is required by anybody

- who has been living in Switzerland for 12 months and who has not spent more than three consecutive months abroad during that time;
- who is working on a professional basis as a driver of motor vehicles registered in Switzerland of the C or D driving licence categories or the C1 and D1 subcategories or require authorisation for the transportation of people on a professional basis.
- whose foreign driving licence has expired.

Further information can be obtained from cantonal vehicle licensing offices: [www.asa.ch](http://www.asa.ch).



# Motorway charge sticker

A fee is payable for using motor vehicles and trailers of up to 3.5 tonnes each on Swiss motorways.

## Points of sale

### Switzerland

In Switzerland, the motorway charge sticker can be obtained at post offices, petrol stations, garages and cantonal vehicle licensing offices. At the border, it can be purchased at all manned customs offices during opening times.

### Abroad

The motorway charge sticker is obtainable abroad from the majority of motoring organisations; in the vicinity of the Swiss border, it is also available in motorway service areas, various kiosks and "Trafiken" in Austria.

## Selling price

The selling price is CHF 40. If you purchase the motorway charge sticker from a customs office, it can be paid for using foreign currency notes (EUR, GBP, USD; notes only). Change will always be given in CHF. Most customs offices accept credit/debit cards.

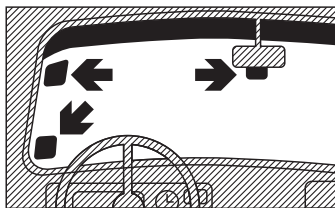
The motorway charge sticker backing paper serves as proof of payment (receipt).

## Affixing the motorway charge sticker

The motorway charge sticker is valid only if it is affixed on the vehicle according to the instructions:

- In the case of motor vehicles, on the inside of the windscreen
- In the case of trailers and motor bikes, on an easily accessible and non-replaceable part.

When affixing the motorway charge sticker, please ensure that it is stuck directly onto the windscreen (but not behind the tinted section). Motorway charge stickers which have only been affixed using tape, film or any other aids will not be permitted and are regarded as having been tampered with.



## Returns/refunds and exchanges

Do not stockpile motorway charge stickers. Surplus unused motorway charge stickers cannot be returned. There is also no entitlement to a refund or a replacement in the case of inappropriate handling, destruction or loss of a motorway charge sticker.

## Detached motorway charge stickers will cease to be valid.

In the case of foreign vehicles, customs offices will replace motorway charge stickers free of charge providing that the windscreen had to be replaced due to damage and the cost of a replacement motorway charge sticker was not paid for by the insurance company. The damaged motorway charge sticker and the bill for the replacement windscreen must be submitted. A replacement sticker is organised by the insurance company in the case of Swiss vehicles.

**Please note:** Driving on Swiss motorways without a valid motorway charge sticker or with one that has been affixed in the wrong place is a punishable offence and incurs a fine of CHF 200. Anyone who manipulates or misuses the motorway charge sticker will be reported to the Office of the Attorney General, which may result in a higher fine.

Further information on the motorway charge sticker and an overview of the roads subject to the obligatory motorway charge and the foreign sales points can be found online at [www.vignette.ch](http://www.vignette.ch).



This fact sheet is not intended to be all inclusive and contains merely general information. It does not give rise to legal entitlement.

**Do you require further information?**

Other fact sheets on travelling and shopping abroad can be obtained on our website [www.zoll.admin.ch](http://www.zoll.admin.ch) and from all customs offices which are open.

**Contact**

**Customs Information Office**

Tel. +41 58 467 15 15  
[www.customsinfo.admin.ch](http://www.customsinfo.admin.ch)  
Monday to Friday  
8 to 11.30 am and 1.30 to 5 pm



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