

# 21 CAR HIRE PITFALLS





## 21 Car Hire Pitfalls

A pitfall is a trap or danger for the unwary. This document will create a greater understanding and confidence towards hiring a car.

Find out what your responsibility is as a hirer and the questions to ask before making a reservation and during your rental.

It is imperative to read the Terms and Conditions for the relevant Car Hire Company in addition to this document.

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## Making a Reservation

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### ***Age Restrictions***

Drivers must be at least 21 years old at the time of pick up for most rental companies; however the vehicle type is limited for drivers under the age of 25.

Any driver under the age of 25 years will incur a daily surcharge and in some cases not be permitted to reduce your liability (excess) if you are under the age of 23.

Some companies do not hire to any person under the age of 25.

Drivers over the age of 75 years will be required to provide a Doctor's Certificate. This must be presented at the time of pick up which denotes that they are fit and healthy to drive.

Failure to advise the correct age at the time of booking may result in being refused a vehicle at pick up or you will be responsible to pay for the under age surcharge.

### ***Drivers Licence Requirements***

The driver must carry a non provisional driver's licence from their home country. If the licence is not in English a valid International Driver's Permit (IDP) must accompany the original licence. Photocopies are not permitted.

### ***Credit Card Requirements***

Upon pick up of the vehicle a valid credit card is required with sufficient credit to cover the rental cost and a security bond. If you personally do not have a credit card you will be required to have a credit card holder to accompany you to the depot to pick up the vehicle. The credit card holder will be named the main driver and you can sign as an additional driver. Alternatively, the credit card holder may go into a branch with your reservation number and complete the necessary authority to charge their card.

Failure to provide a valid credit card will result in being refused a vehicle.



## ***Liability Reduction***

When hiring a vehicle the driver agrees to a Liability amount (commonly referred to as excess). This is amount you agree to pay in the event of an accident; regardless of who is at fault. The Standard Liability can be reduced by paying an additional amount per day. The Liability Reduction is optional and is discussed with you upon pick up of the vehicle.

Ensure you understand your options when it comes to the Standard Liability and your Liability Reduction options.

## ***Additional Drivers***

Additional drivers must present their valid driver's licence to any of the respective branches prior to driving the vehicle.

## ***Airport Pick Ups***

When making a reservation for car hire from an airport remember to enter the arrival flight number. This will inform car hire staff if a flight has been delayed and the vehicle will be held. If a flight number has not been provided, the vehicle may be released after 29 minutes as it will be considered a 'no show'.

## ***Vehicle Suitability***

At the time of making a car hire reservation take note of the amount of boot space for luggage and the number of passengers that can occupy the vehicle. Ensure that these features are suitable for your requirements. The vehicle's transmission may be automatic or manual and is stated in the vehicle details.

## ***Vehicle Specifications***

Vehicle categories are based on engine size and due to the number of vehicle types in each category the make and model cannot be guaranteed. This is why it is stated 'or similar' in the vehicle name.

Special requests including colour or make & model of the vehicle may be requested at the time of booking but never guaranteed.



## ***Mileage***

In New Zealand, the majority of vehicles include 'unlimited kilometres'. It is possible that some vehicles have 'limited kilometres', so it is best to check and be aware at the time of booking as this can incur extra charges.

If a rental includes limited kilometres, for example, 100 kilometres per day, over a 5 day rental you will be permitted to drive 500 kilometres without incurring any extra charges. Once the mileage has exceeded 500 kilometres you will be charged an additional amount per kilometre (usually around \$0.30 per kilometre).

## ***Child Seats***

In New Zealand, it is a legal requirement that children under the age of 8 must wear an approved, properly fastened and adjusted child restraint. You can either bring your own child seats with you or hire them from the car hire company for a fee.

It is suggested to pre-book child seats due to availability.

The car hire companies are not obliged to fit seats into any vehicle and it is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that the child seats are fitted correctly.

## ***Amendments & Cancellations***

### *Amendments*

If a booking is made and there is a requirement to make any changes, including and not limited to, pick up time, pick up location, drop off time, drop off location or vehicle type; you will be subject to the current price on the day of the change.

### *Cancellations*

You may cancel your reservation at any time for no fee.

## ***Terms & Conditions***

It is imperative that you read the Terms & Conditions for the rental.





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## During your Rental

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### ***Driving Restrictions***

Each car hire company will have a policy on where you can and cannot drive a vehicle.

Most vehicles are only permitted to travel on sealed gazetted roads. Even if you have booked a full size 4WD vehicle some companies do not permit these to travel off-road.

You are strictly prohibited to drive on some roads in New Zealand and it is your responsibility to check your intended itinerary at pick up with the depot.

Failure to comply with the restrictions will ultimately make the hirer responsible for any damage.

### ***Inspect your Car***

The hirer will be required to sign a Rental Agreement and a Vehicle Condition Report at the time of pick up which outlines any marks, scratches or damage to the vehicle.

It is important that as the hirer, you check over the vehicle and ensure that you agree with the report prior to driving the vehicle. If you have any discrepancies, return to the car hire counter and advise the staff. Failure to do so will increase the chance that you will be liable for the damage not noted on the Vehicle Condition Report.

### ***Renting in Peak Periods***

Even though you have made a reservation, vehicles types may become unavailable during peak periods. This will result in a vehicle upgrade free of charge or other arrangements will be made.

The availability could be due to late returns, high volumes of bookings for the vehicle class or vehicles taken off the road for repairs from the result of an accident or damage.

Rentals during peak travelling times can result in a queue at the time of vehicle collection, especially at Airport Depots.





### ***Extending your Rental***

If the hirer is considering to extend the vehicle hire and the Rental Agreement has been opened, the hirer will be required to contact the pick up depot. When making the change ensure to ask the daily rate to be charged as it may not be the same daily rate as the initial booking.

### ***Infringements & Parking Fines***

You are responsible for any infringements or parking fines received while the vehicle is in your possession. If the Car Hire Company has to forward the infringement notice to you after the rental has been completed there will be an additional administration fee. The hire company also has the right to supply your personal information to law enforcement agencies, who will in turn issue a fine to your postal address.

We advise if you live overseas that you pay any fines you receive before leaving the country (if you are aware of them). Failure to pay fines received in New Zealand may result in refusal of car hire in the future, refusal of entry into the country or cancellation of a visa on a return visit.

### ***Tow Bars, Roof Racks & Bike Racks***

Towing is not permitted for non-commercial vehicles (the vehicles do not have tow balls); nor is adding roof racks or bike racks.

Failure to comply will result in the hirer paying for the entirety of any damages pertained to the vehicle.

The hirer is permitted to utilise roof racks or luggage carriers if they are provided and fitted by the car hire company.

### ***Emergency Assistance***

In the event of a breakdown or mechanical difficulties call the 24 hour breakdown Roadside Assistance Service. Be aware of your responsibilities and the procedure to follow in the case of an accident.



## ***Refuelling***

Refuelling prior to returning the vehicle is recommended. Ensure that you obtain the receipt for discrepancies in the future.

Choosing not to refill the car will give the car hire company the right to refill the fuel and charge the cost directly to your credit card. The fuel cost is generally higher than that at the service station.

## ***Returning the Vehicle***

If the vehicle is not returned on time it could result in an extra day's hire being charged to your credit card. The designated time of return is stated on the confirmation voucher or the Rental Agreement.

Correctly return the vehicle to the designated car hire company's car park. Deliver the car keys to either the car park staff, at the counter or in the afterhours drop box. Failure to return the keys could result in extra charges to your credit card. If using an afterhours drop box you will be responsible for the vehicle until the depot reopens and the Rental Agreement is closed. Any damage sustained in this time will be your responsibility.