

**Title:**

New Zealand Car Rental - Things You Should Know

**Word Count:**

818

**Summary:**

New Zealand is a fantastic country to visit and a rental car is the ideal option for independent travelers who want the flexibility and freedom to experience everything New Zealand has to offer. This article provides overseas visitors with useful information about New Zealand car rental options, driving in NZ, drivers license requirements and road rules.

**Keywords:**

New Zealand car rental, New Zealand car rental firms, driving in New Zealand, New Zealand road rules, New Zealand driving license, New Zealand independent travel

**Article Body:**

**New Zealand Car Rental**

If you're visiting New Zealand a rental car is one of the best ways to get around. New Zealand is a small country but has the astounding geographic diversity of a major continent squeezed into its small size. For example, within 3- 4 hours drive of Auckland, New Zealand's biggest city, are sub-tropical beaches, volcanic mountains with ski fields, boiling mud pools, ancient forests, unspoiled trout fishing rivers and world class golf courses.

Having a rental car gives you the freedom and flexibility to go where you want and when you want.

**Driving in New Zealand**

For most overseas visitors driving in New Zealand is a breeze because, compared to what they are used to, there is surprisingly little traffic on the roads - especially in the South Island. Whilst New Zealand is about the size of UK its population is only 4 million - UK by comparison has over 60 million.

Another difference is the limited number of motorways and freeways. Roads are generally only 2-laned and frequently windy due to the ever changing landscape. In New Zealand we drive on the left, as in UK. If you're from America or another country that drives on the right then you might feel apprehensive about having to drive on the "wrong side of the road". Don't be - it's straight-forward and

tens of thousands of foreign visitors happily do it every year.

New Zealanders typically show a little less consideration to other drivers than is seen in UK, Australian, and the US where more cars on the road force people to be more considerate. Having said that, don't be put off - driving in New Zealand is nothing like the harrowing experience of driving in Italy or parts of Asia!

#### **<b>New Zealand Car Rental Firms</b>**

New Zealand car rental firms range from the familiar multi-national big brands through to small local car rental firms. The advantage of the big name rental firms is they can be found throughout New Zealand and offer the biggest and newest range of rental vehicles. The disadvantage is that generally they're the most expensive and often have lots of hidden costs.

At the other end of the scale are the small local operators who typically have older rental cars. Whilst you may not end up driving this year's latest model the advantage is that the smaller car rental firms can be substantially cheaper, so leaving you more money to spend on the many exciting attractions New Zealand offers. Between these extremes you'll find a wide range of NZ car rental firms catering to different needs and budgets.

#### **<b>What Sort of Driving Licenses are Required in New Zealand?</b>**

You can legally drive in New Zealand for up to 12 months if you have either a current driver's license from your home country, or an International Driving Permit.

Most car rental companies require drivers to be over the age of 25 and to have held a full license for at least 3 years. Some firms will rent vehicles to younger drivers. For example, A2B Car Rentals rents vehicles to drivers who are 20 or older and hold a full driver's license. At the manager's discretion, a holder of a license for less than three years is acceptable but may incur a higher insurance excess.

Make sure your overseas driver's license is current. If your license is not in English, you should bring an English translation with you or obtain an International Driving Permit. Contact your local automobile club for further details about obtaining a translation or an International Driving Permit.

In New Zealand it's a legal requirement that all drivers, including overseas visitors, must carry their license or permit when driving. Naturally you will only be able to drive the same types of vehicles you are licensed to drive in your home country.

**<b>What are New Zealand's Road Rules?</b>**

Here's a brief over-view. You can get more details the NZ Government Land Transport Authority website ([www.ltta.govt.nz/roadcode/](http://www.ltta.govt.nz/roadcode/))

- In New Zealand, all vehicles drive on the left-hand side of the road as in UK.
- When turning left, give way (or yield) to traffic crossing or approaching from your right
- When the traffic light is red, you must stop
- Speed limits are strictly enforced by police using radar, speed cameras and un-marked patrol cars. Fines for speeding can be expensive
- The speed limit on the open road is 100 km/h (approx 60 mph)
- In built up areas the speed limit is 50 km/h. (approx 30 mph)
- Drivers and passengers must wear seat belts at all times

**<b>In Summary</b>**

If you're planning to visit New Zealand a rental car is one of the best options, especially for independent travelers who want to experience everything New Zealand has to offer. A rental car gives you the freedom and flexibility to go where you want and when you want to enjoy this wonderful country.