

Changing your UK Driving Licence for a Spanish driving Licence

How to change your Licence

If you need to change your Licence you have two options. You can either do it yourself or you can pay someone to do it for you.

If you choose to do it alone then you can expect to have at least two trips backwards and forwards to Trafico.

First of all you must make an appointment (cita previa) which can be made either on the DGT site www.dgt.es or by calling the free 060 hotline.

Then you must take in the correct paper work.

To renew your Licence you will need

- An official application form which can be downloaded from the Traffic Department and is on the website of the DGT
- Proof of identity (passport)
- Residencia (and copy)
- Padron (proof of your address from the town hall) renewed within the last three months
- Driving Licence card and counterpart
- A recent photograph 32mm x 26mm
- Payment of 23.50€

You may also require a medical examination and must find a designated clinic where you will be tested for eyesight, hearing, pulse and blood pressure, speed of reaction and judgment of speed.

Once you have applied, the Spanish authorities will need to obtain a certificate of entitlement from the DVLA if you are a UK resident, or the equivalent for those holding a licence from another country. This can sometimes hold up the process, but you should still have your original licence which won't be taken from you until a later date. When you do have to submit your licence then you receive a form which authorises you to drive in Spain while waiting for your Spanish licence to arrive.

If you pay someone to do it for you, the process overall is the same but you will need to sign a form giving your representative permission to apply for a Spanish driving licence on your behalf. You will have to pay but it certainly makes things simple to have someone fluent in the language and the legalese to process for you.

Your Spanish driving licence will then be sent out in the post and can take anything from a few weeks to a few months to arrive. Once it does you can at last rest assured that whatever the gossip is about driving licences in Spain, yours is the real deal.

Expats from outside Europe

Citizens of many countries, including the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, will have to take the full Spanish driving test to get a Spanish Licence.

You must apply at the Provincial Traffic Headquarters (Jefatura Provincial de Tráfico). You'll need:

a certificate of mental and physical fitness from the Authorised Drivers' Check Centre (Centro de Reconocimiento de Conductores Autorizado);

- An application form
- Two passport-sized photographs
- Your residence permit
- Proof of address in Spain
- A declaration that there are no suspensions or legal cases preventing you from driving;
- A declaration that you don't already hold a similar Licence.

You must take lessons through a recognised driving school (ie. a family member does not qualify). Look online or in the Paginas Amarillas (Spain's Yellow Pages) under 'autoesceula'.

The test is divided into two: a written theory test and a practical test. Both are usually taken in Spanish although you can take a translator with you and in some areas of Spain there are English-speaking examiners.

For more information visit www.dgt.es