Welcome on France’s roads!
This document gives you a brief overview of some of the rules that apply to driving in France—and a few handy tips for safe motoring.

**Motoring rules and regulations**

To drive in France you must have a community driving licence, i.e. a licence issued by a member state of the European Union or the European Economic Area.

> **Seatbelts**
  - As passengers not wearing a seatbelt are two times more likely to die in the event of an accident, French law requires that seatbelts be worn. This rule applies to all passengers, whether seated in the front or the back, both on the open road and in built-up areas.
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A few helpful hints

> Risk prevention

Before setting out
- Check your brakes, steering, lights, battery and windscreen wipers.
- Check tire pressure and wear.
- Top up oil, water, etc., if necessary.
- Clean your head and tail lights.

Avoid driver fatigue

Driver fatigue is insidious and occurs without warning. On the motorway, one out of every four fatal accidents is caused by a tired driver. Be aware of the warning signs of fatigue.
- Keep both hands on the steering wheel.
- Stop at least once every two hours. Have a short nap, stretch, or take a walk, for at least fifteen minutes.
- Some medication can reduce concentration: this will be indicated on the box or leaflet by the logo shown here.

Make sure people see you

- Don’t overheat the vehicle interior, and air it regularly.
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Take a break!

Warning:

- Do not smoke near the site of the accident, you could cause a fire.

Call for help

Call from an emergency phone (direct line): there is one every two kilometres. If there is no emergency phone available, dial 112 from a landline, phone box or mobile. This emergency number is free and is used in all European Union countries.

Assistance:

- Do not move the injured, unless there is an imminent danger (e.g. fire).
- Do not remove a biker’s helmet.
- Do not give an injured person anything to eat or drink.
- Do not try to remove clothing from a burnt person.

Penalties

> Non-compliance with the law

If you break a road rule, you will be liable to pay a fine and, if applicable, be banned from driving in France. In addition, in serious cases, you might face court charges and risk a prison sentence.

- In 2004, new and more stringent penalties were introduced.
- Non-resident drivers who commit a violation while in France and don’t pay their fines, could have their cars taken away and, if the case arises, their car will be towed away, until the fines are paid.

> In the event of an accident

- Switch on your warning lights.
- Park safely and avoid blocking emergency vehicle access.
- On a motorway, keep behind the safety barrier, or at least keep a safe distance from the carriageway, and make your way immediately to the nearest emergency phone.
- On ordinary roads, providing it is possible to do so safely, place a warning triangle 200 m ahead of the site of the accident.

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Main driving offences and corresponding penalties (in force since July 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fine</th>
<th>Ban from driving in France</th>
<th>Prison</th>
<th>Seizure or immobilisation of the vehicle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>€125</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€25</td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€125</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€108</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€125</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€45.00</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€4.750</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€4.500</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€4.500</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>€75.000</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Standard-rate fine, reduced to €18 if paid on the spot. (2) Standard-rate fine, reduced to €22 if paid on the spot.

Pour en savoir plus : www.securite-routiere.gouv.fr

The information contained in this document is provided as a guide only.