Driving and epilepsy
Epilepsy Action aims to improve the quality of life and promote the interests of people living with epilepsy.

Our work...

• We provide information to anyone with an interest in epilepsy
• We improve the understanding of epilepsy in schools and raise educational standards
• We work to give people with epilepsy a fair chance of finding and keeping a job
• We raise standards of care through contact with doctors, nurses, social workers, government and other organisations
• We promote equality of access to quality care

Epilepsy Action has local branches in most parts of the UK. Each branch offers support to local people and raises money to help ensure our work can continue.

Your support

We hope you find this booklet helpful. As a charity, we rely on donations to provide our advice and information. If you would like to make a donation, here are some ways you can do this.

• Visit epilepsy.org.uk/donate
• Text ACT NOW to 70700 (This will cost you £5 plus your usual cost of sending a text. Epilepsy Action will receive £5.)
• Send a cheque payable to Epilepsy Action.

Did you know you can also become a member of Epilepsy Action from as little as £1 a month? To find out more, visit epilepsy.org.uk/join or call 0113 210 8800.
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Introduction

If you live in the UK, and you want to drive, you must tell the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA), or the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA), about your epilepsy.

You have to tell them if:
• You apply for your driving licence for the first time or
• You develop epilepsy when you already have a driving licence

Some people believe that if you have epilepsy, you will never be allowed to hold a driving licence again. But this is not always true. You may be allowed to have a driving licence after a certain period of time, depending on:
• The number of seizures you have had
• The type of seizures you have
• If your seizures happen when you are awake or asleep
• The type of vehicle you want to drive
About the driving agencies

The driving agencies decide if people are allowed to drive. They are also responsible for issuing driving licences.

If you live in England, Scotland or Wales
You need to deal with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

If you live in Northern Ireland
You need to deal with the Driver and Vehicle Agency (DVA).

In this booklet we use the terms ‘driving agency’ and ‘driving agencies’ when the information applies to both DVLA and DVA. Where something applies only to DVLA or only to DVA, we make that clear.

Contact details for the driving agencies

Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in England, Scotland and Wales (DVLA)
Address: Drivers Medical Group, DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1TU
Tel: 0300 790 6806; Tel: 0300 790 6819 Welsh language
Fax: 0845 850 0095
Website: dft.gov.uk/dvla
Email through website.

Driver and Vehicle Agency in Northern Ireland (DVA)
Address: Drivers Medical Section, DVA, Castlerock Road, Waterside, Coleraine BT51 3TB
Tel: 0845 402 4000
Website: nidirect.gov.uk/motoring
Email: dva@doeni.gov.uk
Types of driving licence needed to drive different vehicles

There are two different sets of rules for holding a driving licence, depending on the type of vehicle you want to drive.

The table below shows which driving licence you need for different vehicles, and which set of rules you need to follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vehicle description</th>
<th>Driving licence category</th>
<th>Driving licence group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycles and scooters</td>
<td>A+A1+A2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cars, vehicles up to 3,500kg, vehicles with up to 8 passenger seats</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car plus large trailer</td>
<td>B+E</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles between 3,500kg and 7,500kg</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles with 9-16 passenger seats</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>2*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vehicles with over 16 passenger seats</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>2*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tractors</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Road rollers</td>
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<td>Tracked vehicles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electric vehicles</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mopeds</td>
<td>P+AM+Q</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sit-on lawn mowers; children’s motor scooters</td>
<td>K</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
* If you have a Group 1 driving licence and you got your driving licence before 1 January 1997, and have not had your driving licence renewed since then, you may also be able to drive vehicles in C1 and D1 categories. See DVLA or DVA websites for more information.

By law you don’t need a driving licence to drive any vehicle on private land. However, if your seizures are not well controlled, it could put you or others at risk when you are driving.

Contact the driving agency for further information about vehicle descriptions and driving licence categories.
Rules for driving with a group 1 driving licence

For vehicles you can drive with a group 1 driving licence please see the table on previous page.

When you are allowed to drive depends on the type of seizures that you have. Choose from the following list to find out when you would be allowed to drive:

- I only ever have seizures when I am awake, and they affect my consciousness p8
- I only ever have seizures when I am awake, but they do NOT affect my consciousness p9
- I only ever have seizures when I am asleep p9
- I have seizures when I am awake and asleep p10
- I have had an isolated seizure p11
- I have had a provoked seizure p12

I only ever have seizures when I am awake, and they affect my consciousness

If you have seizures while awake that affect your consciousness, you are allowed to drive when you have been seizure free for at least 12 months. The 12 month seizure-free period applies from the date of your most recent seizure.

You must also meet the following conditions:
- As far as you are able, you follow your doctor’s advice about your treatment and check-ups for epilepsy and
- The driving agency is satisfied that as a driver you are not likely to be a source of danger to the public
I only ever have seizures when I am awake, but they do NOT affect my consciousness

You might have heard these called simple partial or focal seizures. They have to be seizures where you remain fully aware of what is going on around you and you are able to react.

The driving agency will need a detailed description of your seizures before they make a decision about when you can drive. However, you may be allowed to drive when:
• You have only been having seizures that do not affect your consciousness for at least 12 months (even if you continue having them) and
• You have only ever had seizures that do not affect your consciousness

Even if you have been diagnosed with simple partial or focal seizures, this does not automatically mean you will meet this particular driving entitlement.

I only ever have seizures when I am asleep

If you only have seizures when you are asleep, you are allowed to drive when:
• You have been seizure free for at least 12 months or
• You have been having sleep seizures only for at least 12 months, and you have never had seizures when awake or
• You have had awake seizures in the past, but you have been having sleep seizures only for at least three years
You must also meet the following conditions:

• As far as you are able, you follow your doctor’s advice about your treatment and check-ups for epilepsy and
• The driving agency is satisfied that as a driver you are not likely to be a source of danger to the public

**I have seizures when I am awake and asleep**

**If you were awake when you had your last seizure**
You are allowed to drive when you have been seizure free for at least 12 months. The 12 months seizure-free period applies from the date of your most recent seizure.

You must also meet the following conditions:

• As far as you are able, you follow your doctor’s advice about your treatment and check-ups for epilepsy and
• The driving agency is satisfied that as a driver you are not likely to be a source of danger to the public
If you were asleep when you had your last seizure
You are allowed to drive when:
• You have been seizure free for at least 12 months or
• You have been having sleep seizures only for at least three years, and any seizures you had when awake were over three years ago

You must also meet the following conditions:
• As far as you are able, you follow your doctor’s advice about your treatment and check-ups for epilepsy and
• The driving agency is satisfied that as a driver you are not likely to be a source of danger to the public

I have had an isolated seizure
If you have a seizure after being seizure free for at least five years, the driving agency may consider this to be an isolated seizure. This can only apply on one occasion.

If you have had an isolated seizure you may be allowed to drive when:
• You have been seizure free for at least six months and
• Your consultant thinks it is unlikely you will have another seizure and
• The driving agency is satisfied that as a driver you are not likely to be a source of danger to the public
I have had a provoked seizure

The circumstances in which the driving agency will define a seizure as provoked are very limited. Here are some examples:

- A seizure at the time of a stroke or mini-stroke, or in the following 24 hours
- A doctor giving someone a medicine that is known possibly to trigger seizures

If you have had seizures in the past, it is much less likely that the driving agency will decide your seizure can be defined as provoked. A seizure caused by alcohol or lack of sleep would not be classed as provoked.

If you think the driving agency may define your seizure as provoked, you should first talk to your doctor. They can contact a medical adviser at the driving agency to find out more on your behalf. If the driving agency believes your seizure could be defined as provoked, they will look at your case individually. Based on a doctor’s advice, the driving agency will tell you when you can start driving again.
Rules for driving with a group 2 driving licence

For vehicles you can drive with a group 2 licence please see the DVLA website.

When you are allowed to drive depends on the type of seizures that you have. Choose from the following list to find out when you would be allowed to drive:

- **I have had two or more seizures**
- **I have had an isolated seizure**
- **I have had a provoked seizure**

**I have had two or more seizures**

You can apply to have group 2 entitlements added to your driving licence when:

- You hold a full car driving licence and
- You have been free of seizures for ten years and
- You have not taken epilepsy medicine during this ten year period and
- If you are in Northern Ireland, you have been declared fit to drive after a medical examination by a consultant nominated by DVA

**I have had an isolated seizure**

To apply or re-apply to have group 2 entitlements added to your driving licence you normally need to be seizure free and off epilepsy medicine for 10 years. But if you had a single seizure at least five years ago, you may still be able to apply for a group 2
driving licence. This is because DVLA may define your seizure as an isolated one. This can only apply on one occasion.

You can apply to have group 2 entitlements added to your driving licence when:
• You had a single seizure at least five years ago and
• You have taken no epilepsy medicine in the last five years and
• A neurologist has recently assessed you as fit to drive and
• You hold a current valid driving licence or the driving agency has received your completed application form

**I have had a provoked seizure**

The circumstances in which the driving agency will define a seizure as provoked are very limited. Here are some examples:
• A seizure at the time of a stroke or mini-stroke, or in the following 24 hours
• A doctor giving someone a medicine that is known possibly to trigger seizures

If you have had seizures in the past, it is much less likely that the driving agency will define your seizure as provoked. A seizure caused by alcohol or lack of sleep would not be classed as provoked.

If you think the driving agency may class your seizure as provoked, you should first talk to your doctor. They can contact a medical adviser at the driving agency to find out more on your behalf. If the driving agency believes your seizure could be classed as provoked, they will look at your case individually. Based on a doctor’s advice, the driving agency will advise you when you can start driving again.
**Reporting seizures to the driving agency**

I have had a seizure. Do I need to stop driving and inform the driving agency?

If you have a suspected seizure at any time, the law says you must stop driving and inform the driving agency. There are two exceptions to this. You are allowed to continue driving if:

- You already hold a driving licence that has been issued on the understanding that you have seizures while asleep, and the seizure you have just had was when you were asleep or
- You already hold a driving licence that has been issued on the understanding that you have only ever had seizures that don’t affect your consciousness, and the seizure you have just had didn’t affect your consciousness

Why should I stop driving and inform the driving agency that I have had a seizure?

It’s important to stop driving when you’ve had a seizure because:

- A seizure could affect your ability to drive safely
- If you continue driving, you will be breaking the law and could face prosecution
- Your motor insurance will not cover you

It is your responsibility to inform the driving agency. If you don’t do this and you carry on driving, anyone could report this to them. Your doctor may also inform the driving agency if you drive when you shouldn’t. Although doctors have a duty to protect their patients’ confidentiality, over and above this, they have a duty of care to protect the public.
How do I inform the driving agency that I have had a seizure?

There are two forms you need to complete:

- You can download a medical form to fill in from bit.ly/1cZkZOf
- You will also need to complete the declaration of voluntary surrender form: bit.ly/1aRAUMO and return your licence with this.

Or you can write to, or telephone the driving agency, telling them the date of your most recent seizure.

You may choose to send your driving licence back voluntarily to the driving agency, with your letter. If you do, it’s a good idea to either take a photocopy of your driving licence, or to make a note of your driving licence number. This information will be helpful if you reapply for your driving licence at a later date.

Advantages of sending your driving licence back voluntarily

There are two advantages of sending your driving licence back voluntarily. The first is that you can start the process of reapplying for your driving licence 10 months after your last seizure. The other advantage is that you may be able to start
driving again after 12 months, even if you haven’t got your driving licence back yet. This will be possible if:

- The driving agency has received your application and
- You meet the epilepsy and driving laws and
- There are no other medical or legal reasons why you should not be driving

Full Information about this is available in the leaflet INF188/6
– Can I drive while my application is with DVLA?
DVLA website: bit.ly/1zLq8hV
If you decide not to send your driving licence back voluntarily

If the driving agency learns that you need to stop driving they will send you a form to complete and ask your permission to contact your doctor for a medical report. In some cases they may ask for you to be examined by one of their nominated medical practitioners. The driving agency will then write and tell you whether or not your driving licence is formally withdrawn and, if so, for how long. They will also ask you to send your driving licence back. This is known as ‘revoking’ your driving licence.

There are particular disadvantages to having your driving licence revoked. The driving agency can only start processing your application 12 months after your last seizure, and you can only start driving again when you meet the epilepsy driving regulations (see page 8). You also have to have your new driving licence.
Particular information on reporting seizures to DVA in Northern Ireland

How do I inform the driving agency that I have had a seizure?

If you currently have any of the medical conditions or disabilities listed on the DVA website, you will need to tell DVA about these. To do this you will need to complete a DL1 application form. You should then forward it to DVA who will send you the appropriate medical questionnaires to complete. DL1 forms are available from main post office branches, MOT test centres and DVA.

If you receive a medical questionnaire as a result of telling DVA of a condition, you will need to arrange for your doctor to complete the form. Your questionnaire will include a consent form that must be signed. This allows DVA to make medical enquiries into your fitness to drive.

With your medical questionnaire you will also receive a GP claim form. If your GP wants paying for the completion of the medical questionnaire, they have to complete the claim form and return it to DVA.
Applying and reapplying for your driving licence

How can I apply for a driving licence for the first time?

Before you can start driving you will need a provisional driving licence. To be allowed a provisional driving licence you will have to meet the epilepsy driving rules. You can apply for your driving licence online, or you can complete an application form, available from most post offices.

I am allowed to drive again. How do I get my driving licence back?

To reapply for your driving licence you will need to complete two forms – a D1 and a medical questionnaire. The D1 application form is available from post office branches (or you can order a D1 pack from the DVLA website). The medical questionnaire is available online from: bit.ly/1cZkZOf. If you can’t download the medical form, DVLA will send it to you when they receive your application. You can send the forms to DVLA up to eight weeks before you can legally drive again.

What information will DVLA need?

On the medical questionnaire, you will need to give details about your last seizure. You will also have to give DVLA consent for a medical enquiry and give them the name of a doctor who can provide a medical report.
DVLA have advised us that lots of applications are delayed because people don’t complete every box in the questionnaire. So in order for your application to go through as quickly and smoothly as possible, make sure you complete every single box. If you then feel extra explanation is needed, you can enclose a covering letter as well as completing all the boxes. You can also enclose the letter from your doctor about when you last had a seizure.

There is no cost for reapplying for your driving licence if you surrendered it because of your epilepsy.

**When should I apply for my driving licence again?**

Check that your doctor agrees you are fit to start driving again before you apply to get your driving licence back. This will avoid the risk of getting your licence revoked. (See p18 for information on revoking of driving licences.)

When you apply to get your licence back, the driving agency has to make medical enquiries into your fitness to drive. If your doctor and/or the driving agency feels you can’t meet the required standards, your driving licence will be revoked. If this happens you will need to wait until all medical enquiries are complete and your driving licence issued before you can start driving again.

When you surrender your driving licence, post both parts of your driving licence, along with a covering letter detailing the nature of your condition.
When will I be able to start driving again?

When you can start driving again depends on whether you sent back your driving licence voluntarily, or whether it was formally withdrawn (revoked) by the driving agency.

If you sent your driving licence back voluntarily

If you sent your driving licence back voluntarily you can start the process of reapplying for your driving licence 10 months after your last seizure. And, you may be able to start driving again after 12 months, even if you haven’t got your driving licence back yet. This would be possible if:

- The driving agency has received your application and
- You meet the epilepsy and driving laws and
- There are no other medical or legal reasons why you should not be driving

Full Information about this is available in the leaflet INF188/6 – Can I drive while my application is with DVLA?
DVLA website: bit.ly/1zLq8hV

If your driving licence was revoked

If your driving licence was revoked by DVLA you will have to wait until all medical enquiries are complete. You will also need to have your driving licence back before you are able to start driving again.
How long will my driving licence be issued for?

When you get your driving licence back, it will be medically restricted. Medically restricted driving licences are usually for one, two or three years. Three years is the most common.

If you live in England, Scotland and Wales
Once you have been seizure free for a total of five years, and your doctor supports this fact, you can apply for a long-term (till 70) driving licence.

If you live in Northern Ireland
You can apply for a five-year driving licence, but not for a till 70 one.

In England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the rules change when you get to 70.
Driving rules if you change or withdraw your epilepsy medicines

I am changing my epilepsy medicine. Do I need to stop driving?

If you live in England, Scotland or Wales
Your doctor will advise you if you need to stop driving and for how long. You don’t need to tell DVLA or return your driving licence.

If you live in Northern Ireland
You must stop driving and tell DVA when your epilepsy medicine is changed. Six months after the change-over is complete, you should apply for a medical form to DVA. DVA will advise you if you can start driving again.

I am withdrawing my epilepsy medicine. Do I need to stop driving?

If you live in England, Scotland or Wales
DVLA recommends that for safety, you should stop driving during the period of medicine withdrawal, and for six months after withdrawal is complete. You don’t need to inform DVLA or return your driving licence. Your doctor can decide if it is possible for you to start driving earlier than this, but make sure you check you would still have insurance cover.
If you live in Northern Ireland

You must stop driving and inform DVA when your epilepsy medicine is withdrawn. Six months after withdrawal is complete, you should apply for a medical form to DVA. DVA will advise you if you can start driving again.

What happens if I have a seizure while I am changing or withdrawing my epilepsy medicine?

Some people already have a driving licence based on having sleep seizures only, or on only having seizures which involve no loss of consciousness. If this is you, and you have another seizure of the same type as your driving licence allows, you will not need to stop driving.

If you have a driving licence based on being at least 12 months seizure free, you will need to stop driving and tell the driving agency.

You may be able to reapply for your driving licence after six months of being seizure free again. This is if:

• You were seizure free before the medicine change started and
• You have written advice from your doctor approving the withdrawal and
• You go back to the dose of epilepsy medicine on which you were seizure free
Appealing against decisions made by the driving agencies

DVLA encourages people who have had a driving licence revoked or refused to forward any additional evidence they may have to Drivers Medical Group for consideration. An appeal may be unnecessary if:

• You have relevant medical evidence or information that had not previously been made available to DVLA and
• This may have an effect on the Medical Advisor’s licensing decision

The driving agency has refused my application for a driving licence, but I don’t agree. What can I do?

You can write to the driving agency asking them to review your case. You will need to explain why you believe their decision is wrong, and send with your letter, a letter of support from your GP or epilepsy specialist. If your request isn’t successful, and you believe the driving agency is acting unlawfully, you can make a formal appeal.

Reasons why the driving agency may review their decision

A possible wrong diagnosis
If you think you have been wrongly diagnosed with epilepsy, you should first talk to your doctor. If necessary, ask to have another opinion from an epilepsy specialist. If your diagnosis changes, write to the driving agency, telling them you would like them to
review their decision, and why. The driving agency will decide whether you can have a driving licence based on the information they get from you and your doctor.

**A possible misunderstanding of your case**
If you think the driving agency has misunderstood your case, you, or ideally your doctor, should write to the driving agency with further details. You can also send them copies of any new, relevant, medical information that comes to light. This information may show that your diagnosis has changed, or that your case is, in some way, exceptional.

**A possible administrative error**
If you think the driving agency has made an administrative error, you should contact the driving agency, telling them what error you believe they have made. If this doesn’t resolve the issue, you may then want to seek legal advice.

**Reasons why the driving agency will not review their decision**
The driving agency will not review their decision if you don’t meet the epilepsy driving rules. In this situation it is not legally possible for them to issue you with a driving licence. There are no exceptions to this, even if you feel you really need a driving licence.
How can I make an appeal against the driving agency’s decision?

If your request for a review of the driving agency’s decision isn’t successful, and you still believe their decision is unlawful, you can make a formal appeal. The driving agency should send you details of the appeals process at the time of the driving licence decision. If you decide to go ahead with an appeal, it’s really important to get legal advice first. People very rarely win appeals around epilepsy regulations. If you don’t win, you have to pay the driving agency’s costs.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Your country</th>
<th>Who to appeal to</th>
<th>Time you have to appeal</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>England or Wales</td>
<td>Your local Magistrates’ Court</td>
<td>Six months from the date of DVLA’s decision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Sheriff Court</td>
<td>21 days from the date of DVLA’s decision</td>
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<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>Departmental Solicitors Office</td>
<td>Three months from the date of issue of the decision letter</td>
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<td>Centre House</td>
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<td>79 Chichester Street</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Belfast BT1 4JE</td>
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Help with transport costs

I am not allowed to drive because of my epilepsy. Can I get any help with transport costs?

Bus and rail fares
If you have epilepsy and would be refused a driving licence, you may be able to get help with bus and train fares.

Contact Epilepsy Action for more information.

Access to work
If you can’t drive because of your epilepsy, you might be able to get help with the additional costs of travel to and from work, and also travelling while at work.

More information about Access to Work is available from gov.uk Websites: gov.uk/access-to-work (for England, Scotland or Wales); nidirect.gov.uk (for Northern Ireland). Access to work information for employers: gov.uk
Motor insurance

Will having epilepsy affect my motor insurance?

You will need to inform your motor insurers about your epilepsy for your motor insurance to be valid. If your insurers want to raise your premium, we suggest you shop around to see if you can find a better offer.

Epilepsy Action is working towards finding a new epilepsy-friendly motor insurance company.

Driving for a living

Am I allowed to drive a taxi?

To drive a taxi you will need to have held a full driving licence for at least 12 months (three years in London) and hold a taxi operator’s driving licence. You can apply for a taxi operator’s driving licence at the licensing unit of your local authority. In London you should apply to the Public Carriage Office. In Northern Ireland, you should apply to DVA, Road Transport Licensing Division, Taxi Licensing Section, 148-158 Corporation Street, Town Parks, Belfast BT1 3DH.

Each taxi licensing unit has its own driving licence requirements. Some impose the extra health requirements that are needed to hold a category C or D driving licence. See page 6 for the table of which licences are required for which vehicles. Contact your local licensing unit for the licensing requirements in your area.
Am I allowed to drive a forklift truck or farm machinery?

To drive a forklift truck or farm machinery on the public highway, you will need a full driving licence. The type of driving licence required will depend on the size of vehicle involved.

Am I allowed to drive on private land?

By law you don’t need a driving licence to drive any vehicle on private land. However, if your seizures are not well controlled, it could put you or others at risk when you are driving. In this case, you could face some restrictions under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

Driving in other countries if you have a UK driving licence

You may use your UK driving licence for driving in all other European Community (EC) or European Economic Area (EEA) member states. You may need to check what the minimum age for driving a car is. In Great Britain and Northern Ireland it is 17, but other countries have their own rules.

Check with your local motoring organisation such as the AA or the RAC if you want to drive in a non EC/EEA country. They will tell you if you need an International Driving Permit, and issue one if needed. You must be resident in the UK, have passed a driving test and be over 18.
Driving in the UK if you have an overseas driving licence

Anyone holding a current, valid driving licence issued outside the UK can drive in the UK. If the driving licence is issued within the European Union (EU) you can drive until the driving licence expires or you become 70, whichever is the sooner.

If you hold a driving licence issued outside the EU, you can drive in the UK for a maximum period of 12 months.

There may be additional requirements, or medical questions or restrictions by car hire or insurance companies, which impose their own terms and conditions. These may include the requirement to hold an International Driving Permit in addition to your driving licence.

For more information on both these topics see the government website for Great Britain: gov.uk/driving-abroad or the government website for Northern Ireland: nidirect.gov.uk/driving-in-other-countries-on-a-ni-licence
About this publication

This booklet is written by Epilepsy Action’s advice and information team, with guidance and input from people living with epilepsy, and experts at DVLA. If you would like to know where our information is from, or there is anything you would like to say about this booklet, please contact us.

Epilepsy Action makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of information in its publications, but cannot be held liable for any actions taken based on this information.

Date: April 2015
Due for review: April 2018
Code: B005.04

Our thanks

Epilepsy Action would like to thank Edward Foxell at DVLA for his contribution to this information. Edward Foxell has declared no conflict of interest.
First aid for tonic-clonic seizures

The person goes stiff, loses consciousness and falls to the floor.

Do...

• Protect the person from injury (remove harmful objects from nearby)
• Cushion their head
• Aid breathing by gently placing the person on their side (in the recovery position) when the seizure has finished (see picture)
• Stay with them until recovery is complete
• Be calmly reassuring

Don’t...

• Restrain the person’s movements
• Put anything in their mouth
• Try to move them unless they are in danger
• Give them anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered
• Attempt to bring them round

Call 999 for an ambulance if...

• You know it is the person’s first seizure or
• The seizure continues for more than five minutes or
• One seizure follows another without the person regaining consciousness between seizures or
• The person is injured or
• You believe the person needs urgent medical attention
First aid for focal (partial) seizures

The person is not aware of their surroundings or of what they are doing. They may pluck at their clothes, smack their lips, swallow repeatedly or wander around.

Do...

• Guide the person away from danger
• Stay with the person until recovery is complete
• Be calmly reassuring
• Explain anything that they may have missed

Don’t...

• Restrain the person
• Act in a way that could frighten them, such as making abrupt movements or shouting at them
• Assume the person is aware of what is happening, or what has happened
• Give them anything to eat or drink until they are fully recovered
• Attempt to bring them round

Call 999 for an ambulance if...

• You know it is the person’s first seizure or
• The seizure continues for more than five minutes or
• The person is injured or
• You believe the person needs urgent medical attention
Further information
If you have any questions about epilepsy, please contact the Epilepsy Action Helpline.

Epilepsy Action has a wide range of publications about many different aspects of epilepsy. Information is available in the following formats: booklets, e-books, fact sheets, posters, books and DVDs.

Information is also available in large text.

Please contact Epilepsy Action to request your free information catalogue. Or download a copy at epilepsy.org.uk/catalogue

Epilepsy Action’s support services

Local meetings: a number of local branches offer support across England, Northern Ireland and Wales.

Coffee and chat groups: these give people living with epilepsy the chance to meet new people, share experiences and learn more about life with epilepsy.

forum4e: our online community is for people with epilepsy and carers of people with epilepsy aged 16 years or over. Join at forum.epilepsy.org.uk

Epilepsy awareness: Epilepsy Action has a number of trained volunteers who deliver epilepsy awareness sessions to any organisation that would like to learn more about epilepsy. The volunteers are able to offer a comprehensive introduction to epilepsy to a range of audiences.

If you would like more information about any of these services, please contact Epilepsy Action. Contact details are at the back of this booklet.
Driving and epilepsy

We would like to know if this booklet has been helpful to you.

As a result of reading the information, please let us know if you agree with any of the following statements. Tick any boxes that apply to you.

☐ I feel more informed about issues surrounding epilepsy.
☐ I feel more confident about talking to my GP/epilepsy specialist/epilepsy nurse.
☐ I feel more confident about talking about my epilepsy with other people.
☐ I have talked to my employer/colleague/teacher/family and they have improved how well they support me.
☐ I have used other Epilepsy Action services, such as the website, the Epilepsy Action Helpline, support groups or online community (forum4e).
☐ I have used other support services mentioned in the booklet, and found them helpful.

Please tell us how you think we can improve this information

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Please return the completed form to:
FREEPOST RTGS-LEYK-XGCK, Epilepsy Services, Epilepsy Action, New Anstey House, Gate Way Drive, Yeadon, Leeds LS19 7XY

If you would prefer to tell us over the telephone, please contact the Epilepsy Action Helpline, freephone 0808 800 5050.

You can also give us feedback online. This will save us postal costs. Visit epilepsy.org.uk/feedback

Thank you!

Driving and epilepsy
Ways to contact the Epilepsy Action Helpline

**Telephone: freephone 0808 800 5050**
We are usually open 8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday. Our helpline staff are Text Relay trained and we are able to offer advice and information in 150 languages. To ensure the quality of our service, we may monitor calls.

**Email: helpline@epilepsy.org.uk**
Email us your question about epilepsy. We aim to reply within five working days

**Text: 0753 741 0044**
Text us and we will aim to send a text reply back to your phone within 24 hours (on work days)

**Twitter: @epilepsyadvice**
Tweet us with your question and we will tweet back (on work days)

**Post: New Anstey House, Gateway Drive, Leeds, LS19 7XY**
Write to us and we will aim to reply within seven working days

About the Epilepsy Action Helpline

We do:
- Provide confidential advice and information about epilepsy to anyone
- Give general medical information
- Give general information on legal and welfare benefit issues related to epilepsy

We do not:
- Tell people what to do
- Offer a medical diagnosis or suggest treatment
- Take up people’s legal cases on their behalf

If we cannot help you directly with a query, we will do our best to provide details of other organisations that may be able to help. In doing this, Epilepsy Action is not making a recommendation.

We welcome feedback, both positive and negative, about our services.
Epilepsy Action Helpline:
freephone 0808 800 5050
epilepsy.org.uk

Environmental statement
All Epilepsy Action booklets are printed on environmentally friendly, low-chlorine bleached paper. All paper used to make this booklet is from well-managed forests.

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A company limited by guarantee (registered in England No. 797997)
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