

Department for Transport Guidance

The Blue Badge scheme: rights and responsibilities in England

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A Blue Badge will help you to park close to your destination, either as a passenger or driver. The badge is intended for on-street parking only. Off-street car parks, such as those provided in local authority, hospital or supermarket car parks are governed by separate rules. This guide provides you with more information about where you can and cannot park in the on-street environment.

Please note that when travelling outside England, but within the UK, the concessions may not always be the same. Please check with the relevant authority in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

1. Your responsibilities as a Blue Badge holder

It is down to you to use the Blue Badge properly. The badge and its concessions are for your use only. It is a criminal offence for you or anyone else to misuse the badge, and doing so could lead to a £1,000 fine and confiscation of the badge. Making sure that the scheme is not abused will benefit genuine badge holders, such as yourself.

If you are using the parking concessions as a passenger, it is your responsibility to make sure that the driver is aware of all the rules set out in this guidance.

You must never give the badge to friends or family to allow them to have the benefit of the parking concessions. You must never use a copied badge to park or attempt to alter the details on a badge.

The badge remains the property of the issuing local authority. They can ask for the badge to be returned if it is being misused.

2. Who can use the badge?

The badge is for your use and benefit only. It must only be displayed if you are travelling in the vehicle as a driver or passenger, or if someone is collecting you or dropping you off and needs to park at the place where you are being collected or dropped.

Don't allow other people to use the badge to do something on your behalf, such as shopping or collecting something for you.

- You must never give the badge to friends or family to allow them to park for free, even if they are visiting you.
- You should not use the badge to allow non-disabled people to take advantage of the benefits while you sit in the car.
- It's a criminal offence to misuse a badge. This includes people other than the badge holder taking advantage of the parking concessions provided under the scheme.

3. How to display the badge

When using the parking concessions you must display the badge on the dashboard or facia panel, where it can be clearly read through the front windscreen. If there is no dashboard or facia panel in your vehicle, you must still display the badge in a place where it can be clearly read from outside the vehicle. The front of the badge should face upwards, showing the hologram. The side showing the photograph should not be visible through the windscreen.

You must also ensure that the details on the front of the badge remain legible. If they become unreadable through fading or wear and tear, you must return the badge to your local authority so they can issue you with a new one. Displaying a badge that is illegible may result in a parking fine.

Blind people need to ensure that people displaying the badge or clock on their behalf understand how to display them correctly. Incorrect display of the badge may result in a parking fine or a Penalty Charge Notice.

4. When you need to use a parking clock

When you park on yellow lines or in other places where there is a time restriction, you need to display the blue parking clock to show your time of arrival. The clock should be sent to you together with the Blue Badge. If not, you can get a clock from the same authority that issued the badge.

If you need to use a parking clock, you must display it on the vehicle's dashboard or fascia panel, so that the time can be seen clearly through the front windscreen. The clock should be set to show the quarter hour period during which you arrived. If there is no dashboard or fascia panel in your vehicle, you must still display the clock in a place where it can be clearly read from outside the vehicle.

5. Power to inspect and retain the badge

Police officers, traffic wardens, parking attendants and civil enforcement officers have the power to inspect the badge. These people should produce an identity card with their photograph on it to prove they are who they say they are. However, Civil Enforcement Officers are allowed to operate in plain clothes. If any of these people ask to see the badge, you must show it to them. If you do not, you will be breaking the law and you could be fined up to £1,000. Enforcement officers also have right to retain the badge, without police presence, if they have reasonable grounds to do so.

6. Reapplying for a badge

You should reapply for a new badge from your local authority some weeks before it runs out. You can reapply for a badge online on www.gov.uk. If your local authority has signed up for the renewal letter service a letter could be sent to remind you. If you provide your mobile telephone number or an email address when you apply, reminders could be sent to your email or mobile phone. Do not use an expired badge or you could be fined.

7. Returning the badge

You must return the badge securely to your local authority if:

- the badge has expired
- your medical condition or mobility improves and you are no longer eligible
- a replacement badge has been issued for one that is lost or stolen and the original is found / recovered - then the original badge must be returned
- the badge becomes damaged or faded and is illegible
- the badge is no longer required, for example should you be confined to the house

Please also note that the badge should be returned to the issuing authority on the death of the badge holder. If you continue to display the badge when you no longer need it you may be fined up to £1,000.

8. Drivers who hold a Blue Badge

If you are a driver and your disability is likely to affect your ability to drive (even if your car is adapted), the law says you must [tell the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency \(DVLA\)](#).

Or you can write to them at:

DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1TU
Phone - 0300 790 6806
Email - eftd@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

Holding a Blue Badge does not in itself mean that you do not have to pay road tax, but you may be exempt if you meet certain set criteria.

For more information, pick up the leaflet 'Exemption from vehicle tax for disabled people' (V188) from your local DVLA office.

See <https://www.gov.uk/contact-the-dvla> for details.

9. Further advice and information

You should always tell your local authority if your circumstances change, such as when

- the badge is nearing expiry
- the badge is lost, stolen or damaged
- you change address
- your name changes (e.g. by marriage, civil partnership, deed poll)

The Blue Badge scheme is administered and enforced by your local authority and you should always [contact them first for further information](#). You will also be able to update your details on www.gov.uk.

10. Where can I park?

If you do not drive yourself, it is important that you share this information with anyone who will be carrying you as a passenger.

These are the parking concessions available to you as a Blue Badge holder. However, you must always check signs to see what the rules are when parking.

10.1 Yellow lines

Badge holders may park on single or double yellow lines for up to 3 hours, but in general not where there are restrictions on loading or unloading – indicated by yellow kerb dashes and / or signs on plates. You may wish to [check whether a particular local authority](#) has chosen to exempt Blue Badge holders from this restriction.

Where local schemes apply, such as those that apply in parts of central London, you should check the rules for that area. You are not entitled to park on yellow lines in off-street car parks.

You must display the Blue Badge and the blue parking clock showing the quarter hour period during which you arrived. You must wait for at least one hour after a previous period of parking before you can park the same vehicle in the same road or part of a road on the same day.

10.2 ‘On-street’ parking meters and pay-and-display machines

Badge holders may park for free and for as long as they need to. You must display the Blue Badge.

10.3 ‘On-street’ disabled parking bays - signs have a blue wheelchair symbol

You may park for free. Unless signs say otherwise, you may park without time limit. You must display the Blue Badge (and the blue parking clock if the bay is time limited). Always try to use these bays instead of parking on yellow lines.

11. Places you need to check before parking

There are a number of restrictions and local parking schemes which you need to be aware of. Here is a list of those places and the parking restrictions in force. If in doubt, ask the relevant authority before you travel.

11.1 Off-street car parks (such as supermarket, hospital or local authority car parks)

Off-street car park operators should provide parking spaces for disabled people. However, it is up to the car park owner to decide whether badge holders can park free of charge.

Do not assume you can always park for free.

11.2 The London boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea, the City of Westminster, the City of London and part of the London Borough of Camden

Please see [Travelling in London](#) below for further details.

11.3 Town centres where local schemes are in operation

Check local signs for information.

11.4 On-street parking areas where all motorists can park for free but only for a limited time

Badge holders may park for free and generally without time limit. However, if signs show there is also a time limit for badge holders, you must comply with the time limit shown and display your parking clock set to show the quarter hour period when you arrived at the bay.

11.5 Road systems at airports

Contact the airport in advance to check the parking arrangements.

11.6 Private roads

Do not park unless you have permission from the owner.

11.7 Red Routes (major roads in Greater London which are marked with a single or double red line)

Transport for London has general information on concessions for Blue Badge holders on roads that have priority (red) route controls. You can obtain this information by ringing them on 0845 305 1234 or by visiting their [website](#).

There are a small number of red routes outside of London. Contact the [relevant local authority](#) for advice on parking restrictions on these routes.

12. Places where you cannot park

The Blue Badge is not a licence to park anywhere. Like other road users, you must obey the rules of the road, as laid out in the Highway Code. Here is a list of places where you must not park.

Places where a ban on loading or unloading is in force, as indicated above by kerb markings. You may wish to check whether a [particular local](#)

[authority](#) has, exceptionally, chosen to allow Blue Badge holders to park where there are loading restrictions.

Parking places reserved for specific users such as resident's bays or loading bays. You may wish to check whether a [particular local authority](#) has chosen to exempt Blue Badge holders from these restrictions.

Pedestrian crossings (zebra, pelican, toucan and puffin crossings), including areas marked by zig-zag lines.

Clearways (no stopping).

A bus stop clearway during its hours of operation.

An urban clearway within its hours of operation. You may pick up or drop off passengers. All parking is forbidden.

School 'keep clear' markings during the hours shown on a yellow no-stopping plate.

Bus, tram or cycle lanes or cycle tracks. Badge holders are not entitled to drive in bus lanes during their hours of operation.

Where there are double white lines in the centre of the road, even if one of the lines is broken.

Suspended meter bays or when use of the meter is not allowed.

Where temporary parking restrictions are in force, as shown for example by no-waiting cones.

13. Safe and responsible parking

The Blue Badge is not a licence to park anywhere. If you park where it would cause an obstruction or danger to other road users you could be fined or receive a Penalty Charge Notice or have your vehicle removed.

Do not park where it would endanger, inconvenience or obstruct pedestrians or other road users. Examples of dangerous or obstructive parking include the following, although there are others:

- school entrances, bus stops, on a bend, or near the brow of a hill or hump bridge
- parking opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space

- where it would make the road narrow, such as by a traffic island or roadworks
- where it would hold up traffic, such as in narrow stretches of road or blocking vehicle entrances
- where emergency vehicles stop or go in and out, such as hospital entrances
- where the kerb has been lowered or the road raised to help wheelchair users
- on a pavement, unless signs permit it

If you do not drive yourself, you should share the information in this guidance with the person who will be carrying you as a passenger.

You cannot legally be wheelclamped on the public highway ('on-street') for parking offences, provided you correctly display a valid Blue Badge according to the rules of the scheme.

Parking in forbidden areas or where it would endanger or obstruct other road users is an offence, which could result in you receiving a parking fine. You could also be prosecuted, have your car towed away and the badge withdrawn.

14. Badges for organisations

Organisations that both care for and transport disabled people who would qualify for a Blue Badge in their own right may apply for an organisational Blue Badge through their [local authority](#). This badge may be used by the organisation when transporting disabled people who would be eligible for a Blue Badge in their own right. The badge is not allowed to be used at other times.

The parking concessions available for users of organisational Blue Badges are the same as those for Blue Badges issued to individuals. Please read the rest of this guidance for information on what parking concessions you are entitled to and how to use the badge.

15. Rules that apply to organisations

15.1 What badge do I need for an organisation?

An organisational badge will have the stamp or logo of the organisation on the reverse of the badge, rather than a photograph. This side should be hidden from view when the badge is on display.

Organisational badges may only be used when people who would qualify for a Blue Badge in their own right are being transported. The badge should only be displayed when employees of the organisation are dropping off or picking up eligible disabled people from the place where the vehicle is parked.

You must never use a copied badge to park or attempt to alter the details on a badge. The badge remains the property of the issuing local authority. They can ask for the badge to be returned if it is being misused.

All employees of the organisation who are responsible for transporting disabled people need to be made aware of the rules of the scheme.

It's a criminal offence for anyone to misuse a badge, and doing so could lead to a £1,000 fine and confiscation of the badge.

15.2 Special rules for returning an organisational badge

In addition to the advice contained in [section 7 above](#), an organisational badge must be returned to the issuing authority if:

- the organisation has ceased to exist
- the organisation no longer cares for people who would qualify for a Blue Badge in their own right

16. Travelling in London

The Blue Badge scheme does not fully apply in certain parts of Central London. Please check the following information before travelling.

16.1 Travelling in Central London

The Blue Badge scheme does not fully apply in 4 central London boroughs due to specific traffic management concerns that exist in these areas. These are the City of Westminster, the City of London, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and part of the London Borough of Camden (see map below for boundaries).

These 4 boroughs offer their own individual parking concessions to disabled people who live or work in their areas. They do, however, provide a number of bays for Blue Badge holders. Information on where these bays are located can be found by contacting the relevant borough:

- [City of London](#)
- [City of Westminster](#)
- [London Borough of Camden](#)
- [Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea](#)

17. Central London congestion charge scheme

As a badge holder you don't have to pay the congestion charge.

To qualify for the 100% discount from the charge, you must first [register with Transport for London](#) and pay a registration fee of £10.

You don't need to own or drive a vehicle to register for this concession. You can register up to 2 vehicles that you normally use for travelling in Central London.

You can also get a registration form by writing to:

Congestion Charging
PO Box 4782
Worthing
BN11 9PS

Phone - 0845 900 1234
Textphone - 020 7649 9123

18. Travelling abroad

You can use your badge when travelling in the [European Union but concessions vary](#). You should always check locally before travelling somewhere new.

There are no current arrangements for you to use the badge outside the European Union, in countries such as the USA, Canada, Australia or New Zealand, although they may be prepared to recognise the Blue Badge. We

advise you to check what concessions are available before travelling to non-EU countries.

19. Toll concessions

Blue Badge holders may be exempt from payment of tolls at [certain river crossings and toll roads](#).