

Hiring a car

It can be a cheap and practical way to travel around if you do not own a car. It can also sometimes be a cheaper option than taking your own car when travelling abroad.

However, when hiring a car it is essential to know the full terms and conditions of the contract, as well as the costs and implications if there are any problems with the car. It is also essential to make checks at different points.

The point at which you book a car

Check that is a genuine car hire organisation

Check the car is suitable for your needs

Check you hold a licence that allows you to drive it. (You cannot drive a manual car if you only hold an automatic licence.)

Check all the costs involved including fuel policy, maximum mileage, out of hours fees, taxes, premium location fees, additional driver fees.

Check the insurance excess – This is the amount you will have to pay if the car is stolen or damaged. (Cheap hire can often mean high excess)

Check if there is a pre-authorise payment on your credit card and know what this involves

Check what the insurance does and does not cover

The point at which you collect the car

Check the paperwork is what you agreed to – take a copy of the booking confirmation with you.

Check the car is what you booked or at least very similar (as specified in many contracts)

Check there is no damage to the car; if you do see any ask the provider to mark it down on the paperwork. Take photos if possible.

Check the fuel level and the fuel policy

The point at which you return the car

Ensure you have complied with the contract you agreed to

Ensure that you have refilled with the correct fuel if this was required

Ensure that you point out any damage and also be present when the provider does the final check.

Ensure that you have signed copies of the paperwork

www.which.co.uk/consumer-rights//car-hire for more information

Get advice from the Citizens Advice consumer helpline: 03454 04 05 06

Welsh-speaking adviser: 03454 04 05 05