

# 21 CAR HIRE PITFALLS



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## 21 Car Hire Pitfalls

The true meaning of a pitfall is a trap or danger for the unwary. This document will provide a generic guide relating to car hire to give a better understanding of what to expect on your next rental.

It is imperative to read the Terms and Conditions for the relevant Car Hire Company in addition to this document.

### Table of Contents

<b>Making a Reservation</b>	
<a href="#">Age Restrictions</a> .....	2
<a href="#">Drivers Licence Requirements</a> .....	2
<a href="#">Credit Card Requirements</a> .....	2
<a href="#">Liability Reduction</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Additional Drivers</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Airport Pick Ups</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Vehicle Suitability</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Vehicle Specifications</a> .....	3
<a href="#">Mileage</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Child Seats</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Amendments &amp; Cancellations</a> .....	4
<a href="#">Terms &amp; Conditions</a> .....	4
<b>During your Rental</b>	
<a href="#">Driving Restrictions</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Inspect your Car</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Renting in Peak Periods</a> .....	5
<a href="#">Extending your Rental</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Infringements, Parking Fines &amp; Tolls</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Tow Bars, Roof Racks &amp; Bike Racks</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Emergency Assistance</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Refuelling</a> .....	6
<a href="#">Returning the Vehicle</a> .....	7

## Making a Reservation

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### ***Age Restrictions***

A minimum age of 21 years old at the time of pick up applies to most companies; however the vehicle type is limited for drivers under the age of 25.

Any driver under the age of 25 years will incur a daily surcharge and in some cases not be permitted to reduce your liability (excess) if you are under the age of 23.

Some companies do not hire to persons aged less than 25 years old.

A maximum age of 75 years may apply. If the driver is 75 years or over, they will be required to provide a Doctor's Certificate at the time of pick up advising that they are fit and healthy to drive.

Failure to advise the correct age at the time of booking may result in being refused a vehicle at pick up or you will be responsible to pay for the under age surcharge.

### ***Drivers Licence Requirements***

The driver and any additional driver must hold a valid non provisional Drivers Licence from their home country. If the licence is not in English a valid International Drivers Licence (IDP) must accompany the original licence.

### ***Credit Card Requirements***

A credit card is required at the time of pick up for the security bond. If you personally do not have a credit card you will be required to have a credit card holder to accompany you to the depot to pick up the vehicle. The credit card holder will be named the main driver and you can sign as an additional driver. Alternatively, the credit card holder may go into a branch with your reservation number and complete the necessary authority to charge their card.

Failure to provide a valid credit card will result in being refused a vehicle.



## ***Liability Reduction***

Liability (commonly referred to as excess) is the agreed amount you will pay in the event of an accident; regardless of who is at fault. The Standard Liability can be reduced by paying an additional amount per day. The Liability Reduction is optional and is discussed with you at the time of pick up.

When making a car hire reservation, ensure you understand your options when it comes to the Standard Liability and your Liability Reduction options.

## ***Additional Drivers***

Additional drivers are added at the time of pick up or at any depot prior to driving the vehicle.

The additional driver must accompany the main driver to the depot to present their valid Driver's Licence. Unless the driver is named on the Rental Agreement they will not be covered by insurance.

## ***Airport Pick Ups***

If the pick up location for the car hire booking is from an airport, ensure that the arrival flight number is entered into the reservation. This will alert car hire staff if a flight has been delayed and the vehicle will be held. If a flight number has not been provided, the vehicle may be released after 29 minutes as it will be considered a 'no show'.

## ***Vehicle Suitability***

When choosing a vehicle, consider the amount of boot space for luggage and the number of passengers that can occupy the vehicle. Also note that vehicles can either be automatic or manual transmission. The transmission is stated in the vehicles details.

## ***Vehicle Specifications***

Vehicle types are based on engine size and in each category there could be many makes and models. Hence, why it is stated 'or similar' when you make your reservation as the make and model cannot be guaranteed.

Special requirements including colour, make & model of the vehicle, may be requested at the time of booking but never guaranteed.

## ***Mileage***

Most rentals include 'unlimited kilometres'. Some remote locations may have 'limited kilometres', so it is best to check and be aware at the time of booking as this can incur extra charges.

If a rental includes limited kilometres, for example, 100 kilometres per day, over a 5 day rental you will be permitted to drive 500 kilometres without incurring any extra charges. Once the mileage has exceeded 500 kilometres you will be charged an additional amount per kilometre (usually around \$0.30 per kilometre).

## ***Child Seats***

In Australia, it is a legal requirement that children under the age of 8 must wear an approved, properly fastened and adjusted child restraint. You can either bring your own child seats with you or hire them from the car hire company for a fee.

It is suggested to pre-book child seats due to availability.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the hirer to ensure that the child seats are fitted correctly to the vehicle. The car hire company is under no obligation to fit child seats.

## ***Amendments & Cancellations***

### ***Amendments***

If a booking is made and there is a requirement to make any changes, including and not limited to, pick up time, pick up location, drop off time, drop off location or vehicle type; you will be subject to the current price on the day of the change.

### ***Cancellations***

You may cancel your reservation at any time for no fee.

## ***Terms & Conditions***

It is imperative that you read the Terms & Conditions for the rental.

## **During your Rental**

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### ***Driving Restrictions***

Each car hire company will have a policy on where you can and cannot drive a vehicle.

The vehicle you have booked may not be permitted to travel on unsealed roads. Even if you have booked a full size 4WD vehicle some companies do not permit these to travel off-road.

It is your responsibility to check YOUR intended itinerary at pick up with the depot if you suspect there could be a dirt road involved OR you are travelling to remote places in Australia.

### ***Inspect your Car***

At the time of pick up you will be asked to sign a Rental Agreement and a Vehicle Condition Report which outlines any marks, scratches or damage to the vehicle.

It is important that you check over the vehicle and ensure that you agree with the report. If you have any discrepancies, return to the counter and advise the staff prior to driving the vehicle. Failure to do so will increase the chance that you will be liable for the damage not noted on the Vehicle Condition Report.

### ***Renting in Peak Periods***

Rentals during peak periods may result in vehicle types becoming not available. Generally speaking you will be upgraded to the next vehicle class free of charge or another arrangement will be made.

The availability could be due to late returns, high volumes of bookings for the vehicle class or vehicles taken off the road for repairs from the result of an accident or damage.

During peak travelling times it is possible that there is a queue at the time of vehicle collection, especially at Airport Depots.

### ***Extending your Rental***

Once the Rental Agreement has been opened it is a requirement to contact the pick up depot if you choose to extend your rental. When making the change ensure to ask the daily rate to be charged as it may not be the same daily rate on the initial booking.

### ***Infringements, Parking Fines & Tolls***

Any infringements or parking fines will be forwarded to you after the Rental has taken place and the contract has been closed. Please note that the hire company will charge an administration fee in addition to the infringement.

Tolls are your responsibility. You can organise with the depot the best way to pay for the toll, however failure to pay will result in a fine by the Toll Authority and an additional administration fee from the car hire company.

### ***Tow Bars, Roof Racks & Bike Racks***

Towing is not permitted for non-commercial vehicles (the vehicles do not have tow balls); nor is adding roof racks or bike racks.

Failure to comply will result in the hirer paying for the entirety of any damages pertained to the vehicle.

### ***Emergency Assistance***

In the event of a breakdown or mechanical difficulties call the 24 hour breakdown Roadside Assistance Service. Be aware of your responsibilities and the procedure to follow in the case of an accident.

### ***Refuelling***

It is recommended that you refill the vehicle with fuel on the return of the vehicle. Keep the receipt for any future discrepancies.

If you choose not to refill the car it will be done by the car hire company at a higher rate than the service station and charged directly to your credit card.

## ***Returning the Vehicle***

Ensure the vehicle is returned on time. Failure to return the vehicle at the said time on the Rental Agreement and confirmation voucher could result in an extra day's hire being charged to your credit card.

Correctly return the vehicle to the designated car hire company's car park. Deliver the car keys to either the car park staff, at the counter or in the afterhours drop box. Failure to return the keys could result in extra charges to your credit card. If using an afterhours drop box you will be responsible for the vehicle until the depot reopens and the Rental Agreement is closed. Any damage sustained in this time will be your responsibility.