

## Hiring a Car In Northern Ireland? Here's Some Helpful Advice.

➤ **Make sure you know the total price before you book!**

When comparing rental quotes make sure you consider all mandatory charges such as young driver surcharges and one way fees. You should also check the cost of any optional extras such as sat navs or child seats.

➤ **Check the cost of cross-border travel into Republic of Ireland!**

Most car hire companies will charge a fee for driving over the border. If you're intending to travel into Republic of Ireland, make sure you're aware of this cost so you're not taken by surprise at the rental desk.

➤ **Don't get caught out if your flight is delayed!**

If there's a chance you may end up being late to pick up your car then you should be careful about which company you choose. Some companies will hold your car for you but some won't. You should therefore check the terms and conditions before you book as being late might mean you lose your booking. It is also recommended that where possible you contact the hire company to inform them of any delays to help ensure your car is still there when you arrive.

➤ **Bring the correct documentation!**

It's very important to check the terms and conditions of your booking to make sure you bring the correct documents. Depending on which company you use, you may be asked for a combination of documents including: *driving licence, passport, international driver permit, proof of address x 2, credit card statement, proof of return travel, and your booking voucher*. You may be refused your car if you do not bring the correct documentation!

➤ **Choose the insurance cover that's right for you!**

Car hire companies will include insurance cover for third party liability in the rental price, however you will be liable to pay an excess in the event

of theft or damage to the rental car. You can reduce this excess by purchasing optional insurance products directly from the car hire company or from a third party. This extra cover is entirely optional and you should consider whether it is the best deal for you. You can shop around before you travel to ensure you get a good deal as insurance products like this are usually more expensive at the rental desk.

➤ **Be prepared to pre-authorise a charge on your credit card!**

Unless you have taken out extra insurance to reduce your excess to zero, the car hire company usually requires you to pre-authorise an amount on your credit card or to provide a security deposit which will be used to cover any damage charges at the end of the rental. This amount can be a few thousand pounds so you need to make sure you have enough funds on your card to cover this.

➤ **Give the car a thorough check before you drive it away!**

Make sure that every mark, scratch and dent is recorded and signed by a member of staff before you drive the car away. This helps ensure that you're not charged for any pre-existing damage at the end of the rental. When returning the car you should have a staff member inspect it in your presence or if this is not possible you should take photographs to show the condition of the car when you returned it.

➤ **If you book through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party, you will be bound by their terms!**

In many cases car hire will be booked through a comparison site rather than directly with the company itself. In this scenario you will be bound by the terms and conditions in your rental voucher which may differ from the terms and conditions on the supplier's website.

***If you would like further consumer advice or to make a complaint in relation to car rentals, you can contact Consumerline on 0300 123 62 62 or by visiting [www.nidirect.gov.uk/consumerline](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/consumerline).***