



Mobility

Train, Bus and Tram

Bicycle / On Foot

Car / Motorcycle

Driver's Licence

Train, Bus and Tram

Public transportation in Switzerland is very well organized. Almost all locations are accessible by train, bus and tram. Public transportation is punctual and operates on a regular schedule.

Public Transportation

Public transportation (ÖV) is very important in Switzerland. Almost all locations are accessible several times per hour. This encourages many travellers to use the train and bus. Fares are relatively expensive, but there are various ways to save money. It may be worthwhile purchasing a season pass or reduced fare pass. The relatively inexpensive half-fare pass (Halbtaxabonnement) allows the holder to purchase tickets at half price anywhere in Switzerland.

Tickets and Passes

Before boarding a train one must buy a ticket (Billett). Tickets cannot be purchased on board. Buses and trams manage this differently. Every train station and most bus stops have ticket automats. There are staffed ticket counters in the bigger train stations. Tickets can also be purchased online or via mobile phone. Frequent travellers can benefit from various special passes. These are available for specific routes, regions, or the entire Swiss public transportation system (Generalabonnement). Children under the age of 6 ride without charge. Under the age of 16 travelling with parents or grandparents is almost free of charge with a junior or children's pass (Junior- oder Kinder-Mitfahrkarte). Information on tickets and passes is available through the Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) or bus companies.

Tarifverbund Nordschweiz TNW

The transport network Tarifverbund Nordwestschweiz TNW offers special fares for tickets, subscriptions and day passes in Basel and the surrounding region. The region is divided into multiple zones. People who travel often by tram, bus, and train in north-western Switzerland can benefit from the subscription U-Abo. It is valid throughout the TNW network and in areas just over the border. A separate ticket is required for travel beyond the region.

Community Day Pass

Persons planning a longer trip within Switzerland can purchase a day pass which is offered by many communities at a reduced price (Gemeindetageskarte). The offer is limited and the pass must be reserved in advance. Additional information is provided by the registry office (Einwohneramt) or the commune administration.

Nighttime Network

In Canton Basel-Stadt and the local region, trams, buses and trains run until late at night on weekends (in the nights of Friday to Saturday and Saturday to Sunday). No supplement is charged for the TNW night-time network.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/mobility/train-and-bus

Bicycle / On Foot

Due to a well developed network of bike paths, riding a bicycle in Canton Basel-Stadt is very convenient. Many people ride a bicycle to work. There are special walking and hiking trails for pedestrians and hikers.

Getting about on Foot or by Bicycle (Velo)

Basel-Stadt is attractive and safe for cyclists and pedestrians. Few people use a car for short distances. Special bicycle paths or bike lanes are widespread. Pedestrians always have the right of way at pedestrian crossings (unless there is a traffic light). Canton Basel-Stadt has many beautiful walking and hiking trails to discover. Hiking trails are marked with yellow signs.

Rules for Cyclists

A special license or exam is not required to ride a bicycle in Switzerland. In general, the same traffic rules apply to cyclists as they do to motorists. If special bike paths or lanes are available these must be used. Bicycles must be fully functional (two working brakes, a bell, reflectors in front and back and on pedals, and lights in front and back). A helmet is not compulsory, but recommended. Private liability insurance is strongly advised for cyclists. They are responsible for damages to persons or objects.

Learning How to Ride a Bicycle

People wishing to learn how to ride a bicycle can take a class. These are offered by the Pro Velo Association (Pro Velo). Special classes are sometimes available for immigrants. Inexpensive used bicycles can be purchased at bicycle markets (Velobörsen).

Transporting a Bicycle

Persons wishing to board a train or bus with a bicycle must buy a special ticket. It is not possible to take a bicycle on all trains or buses. Sometimes a place must be reserved in advance.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/mobility/bicycle--on-foot

Car / Motorcycle

Switzerland has a well developed road system. Using most roads is free of charge. Traffic rules are very important. Not following the rules results in high fines.

Traffic rules

Traffic rules are important for motorists in Switzerland. Fines are high compared to other countries. A serious violation of traffic rules can result in a driver's licence being withdrawn.

Several important rules:

- Maximum speed in urban areas: 50 km/h; in rural areas: 80 km/h; on main roads: 100 km/h; on highways: 120 km/h
- Overtaking on the right is illegal on highways; passing on the right is permitted with the necessary caution if a column of traffic has formed on the left or centre lane.
- Lights must also be on in daylight.
- All passengers must wear a seatbelt.
- Children must use in a child's seat (under age 12 or height of 150 cm).
- Talking on the phone while driving is only allowed via a hands-free system.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is punishable (limit 0.5 mg/ml).
- Pedestrians at pedestrian crossings always have the right of way (unless there is a traffic light).

Road Tolls

Roads are funded by the confederation, cantons, and communities. Using roads is free of charge. Highways are the exception: Persons wishing to use the highway must purchase a toll sticker (Vignette) every year. The toll sticker is to be applied to the windshield. Toll stickers are available at service stations, post offices, and traffic offices.

Insurance

Motor vehicles that are in use must be insured in Switzerland. Motor vehicle liability insurance (Motorfahrzeug-Haftpflichtversicherung) is offered by many private insurance companies. Insurance pays for damages to objects and persons which were caused by a motor vehicle. Damages to persons' own cars are covered by optional comprehensive insurance (Kaskoversicherung). Caution: insurance may not cover damages caused by gross negligence (e.g. driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs). Motor vehicle liability insurance is not included in private liability insurance.

Importing a Motor Vehicle

People wishing to permanently import a vehicle to Switzerland must register and declare it at the customs office. The vehicle must also be technically inspected. Motor vehicle liability insurance, a driver's licence, and a Swiss licence plate are necessary. Further information is provided by the Basel-Stadt vehicle inspection department (Motorfahrzeugkontrolle).

Carsharing

Carsharing is when multiple people share one or more cars together. The vehicles of a carsharing organisation are usually available at dedicated parking spaces and are booked in advance online or using an app. The locations are typically found at important hubs of public transport (e.g. train stations, tram stations and terminal bus stops). In contrast to car rental, it is also possible to use a vehicle for short periods of time (e.g. by the hour).

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/mobility/car--motorcycle

Driver's Licence

In order to drive a car or motorcycle in Switzerland, you are required to have a licence. Foreign licences must be converted after moving to Switzerland.

Foreign Licence

People moving to Switzerland who are in possession of a driver's licence (Führerausweis) must have it converted to a Swiss driver's licence within 12 months. In order to do so, a request must be submitted to the Basel-Stadt vehicle inspection department (Motorfahrzeugkontrolle). Depending on the country of origin, different rules may apply. A driving test or theory exam may be necessary. The Basel-Stadt vehicle inspection department provides further information.

Driving Exam

An exam is required in order to obtain a driver's licence in Switzerland. The exam includes theory and practice. You must be at least 17 years old to take the exam. Information regarding requirements and procedures is provided by the vehicle inspection department. Operating trucks, buses, and taxis requires special exams.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-baselstadt.ch/en/mobility/drivers-license