

Driving in Missouri

Although used automobiles may be purchased relatively inexpensive in the U.S., there are many factors that internationals should consider before acquiring a vehicle.

- They should consider the high cost of maintenance that such vehicles require.
- They must be certain that they satisfy all State of Missouri requirements for driving automobiles.
- They must be at least 18 years of age and pass all necessary requirements to qualify for a full Missouri driver's license
 - International driver licenses are valid as long as student status is maintained
- They are required to purchase and maintain at all times adequate automobile insurance (the cost of this insurance can be high)
- License plates must be purchased for vehicles and renewed yearly or every other year. There is a fee associated with both the renewal(s), as well as the first time the license plates are purchased.

Driver's License

You must have a driver's license in order to drive in the State of Missouri. To obtain a Missouri driver's license, you must pass a written test, an eye sight test, and a driving test or road test. An appointment may be necessary to take the driving test. It is highly advisable that you study for your written test and to practice for your road test. **An international license or license from your home country will not be considered valid in the state of Missouri.**

Proof of Lawful Presence

You must present the appropriate United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), which indicate your current status. All documents must be valid at the time of application. All F-1 and J-1 students must present the following documents:

- Passport
- I-94
- A letter from the school showing verification that you are a current student
- Form I-20 for F-1 Student or Form DS-2019 for J-1 students.

Proof of Identity

- Provide Social Security Number, if one has been assigned; or
- If a Social Security Number has not been assigned, you must present a letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) regarding the status of the applicant's Social Security Number or his or her ineligibility.

Proof of Residency

Present one of the following:

- Utility bill, most recent (phone, water, gas, electric, trash or sewer, etc.)
- Bank statement, most recent
- Pay check, most recent
- Housing rental contract of current residence

Automobile Registration

If you buy a car, you must register it. Requirements for registering a car vary depending on whether the car is new or used and how old the car is. Please check with the Missouri Department of Revenue for more information. www.dor.mo.gov

Automobile Insurance

The state of Missouri requires all owners of a vehicle to have automobile insurance. It is essential to have at the very minimum liability insurance that meets the state minimum. You must carry proof of insurance in your vehicle at all times. There are stiff penalties for not having the proof in your car, or for not having insurance on your vehicle.

You should contact several insurance carriers before you purchase a vehicle to see where you can get the best deal.

Seat Belts

The use of seatbelts is mandatory in the state of Missouri. You can be fined for not wearing them.

*The Missouri Driver Guide, published yearly by the Missouri Department of Revenue Motor Vehicle and Driver Licensing Division, contains useful information about the Missouri driver license and the non-driver state ID card, the driver examination, traffic rules, motor vehicle insurance and vehicle inspection, titling and registration. We strongly urge you to read it over BEFORE attempting to get your driver's license.

Other helpful information can be found at <http://dor.mo.gov/driver's/>.

If you have a driver's license from your home country along with an international license or permit, you may drive in the United States for up to one year.
