



## The 10 silliest excuses for not buying a tax disc:

While researching a query from a reader your editor found this list on the DVLA website in the UK. Luckily we in France do not have to pay road tax, unless it is a commercial vehicle.

1. My accountant told me I'm due a tax rebate so I didn't think I needed to pay again this year.
2. I was on my way to the Post Office to tax the car and called into the betting shop - there was a horse running at Doncaster called 'Don't Do It' so I bet on that with my car tax money instead - it lost.
3. My mate said that if the cost of the tax is more than what the car is worth you haven't got to pay it - it's not, so I didn't.
4. I fell out of a tree picking plums and broke both my arms.
5. I took too much Viagra and couldn't leave the house.
6. I'd forgotten the motorbike was in my garage - it was hidden behind the BBQ so it's not my fault.
7. I had man flu and couldn't go to the Post Office.
8. I've been out of the country for four months and I forgot where I parked my car.
9. My dog ate the reminder.
10. My reminder on my phone didn't work so it's not my fault

## Importing a motor car and registering it in France

Under EU law, a private car may be temporarily imported and used on French roads for up to six months without registering it. Any car belonging to people staying in France for more than six months must be registered. The *immatriculation* is a car's registration. The details of a vehicle's registration are carried in the *Certificate d'Immatriculation* (previously called the *Carte Grise* or grey card).

Before being able to register a foreign vehicle in France and receive the *Certificate d'Immatriculation* registration document, the vehicle must conform to the French road standards. The simplicity of the process can vary depending on the make, age and country of origin of the vehicle. The process is different (and can be simpler) for classic and collectable vehicles but it can be far more complicated for modified vehicles.

### New Vehicles

For a new vehicle bought in another EU member state, the TVA must be paid in France unless the French Fiscal Services are provided with the original receipt stating that VAT has been paid and there is proof of a valid foreign registration of the vehicle.

### Used Vehicles

No duty is charged on a used vehicle imported for personal use, provided that VAT has been paid in the EU country where it was bought, that the vehicle is at least six months old (date since first registration) *and* has driven at least 6,000 Km prior to entry into France.

You apply for the *carte grise* through your local *préfecture* (or in some cases, at the local *sous-préfecture*) by completing a *Demande de certificat d'immatriculation* and producing the documents listed below:

1. Passport
2. Proof of address, eg utility bill.
3. Vehicle registration document (for UK registered vehicles)

If the vehicle registration document is in your name, then no further proof is required. If you have bought the vehicle from someone else to import here, then you will need to produce an invoice/receipt issued by the person named on the registration document.

4. Import tax certificate - If your vehicle is currently registered in another EU member state, then you will need a '*quittus fiscal*' which you can obtain from your local tax office on production of a copy your current vehicle registration document and proof of address.

5. *Contrôle technique* certificate less than 6 months old for cars over four years old.
6. Certificate of conformity, which need not be in French but can be in the language of origin of the car.

#### Car dating from 1998:

You obtain an EU certificate of conformity from the manufacturer/importer's head office in the country where the vehicle is currently registered.

#### Prior to 1998:

You obtain an *attestation d'identification* from the manufacturer/importer's French head office.

Once you have all the above documents take them to the local prefecture, having first checked their opening times for this service. The fees are based on where you live (i.e PACA), the CV (power) of your engine and the emissions of the vehicle which may incur extra charges if above 200gm. Sadly PACA is the most expensive in France at 51.20 euros per CV! thus 10 CV will cost at least 520 euros, but is a one-off payment. If all is in order you are immediately issued with your new *Certificate d'Immatriculation* which you take to the local shop (eg. shoe repairer/key cutter or motor accessory shop) who use it to make up the new number plates which need riveting on. If you get your paperwork in order the whole process can be done in a morning.

Finally, if the vehicle was registered in the UK, you must notify the DVLA that the vehicle has been permanently exported by sending them the tear-off export slip from the V5C registration document.

## **Two-way speed cameras launched**

New mobile speed cameras are being introduced across the roads network which will be able to catch speeding vehicles in two directions. Launched just before the *Toussaint* holiday – which last year cost 32 deaths in four days – the new generation radars are fitted in 12 non-marked Renault Méganes and seven Peugeot 208s being used in 18 departments. They are modified versions of the mobile radars that were introduced in March. They will only be used on *routes nationales*, where the majority of accidents take place, as the central barrier on motorways prevents them from working in two directions. On main roads they can catch vehicles in the same lane as the police car and those approaching. The previous models, of which there are 46 on the

roads, could only catch drivers overtaking the unmarked police car.

Officers in the car will be in uniform but, apart from a large camera unit on the dashboard, the vehicles are scarcely noticeable on the road. The speed detector is mounted behind the front number-plate and the first drivers will know about them is when they receive the speeding ticket through the post a couple of days later. A 10% margin of error is used for levying fines – with a 10kph error allowed for speeds below 100kph. That means a driver travelling at 58kph in a 50kph zone will escape as his speed will be registered as 48kph.

## **WALK – FREJUS** ***Le Barrage de Malpasset***

Undemanding walk with no shade, about 1 hour. Do not attempt this at times of heavy rain. Map IGN 3544 ET

#### Car access:

*From the roundabout at Fréjus accessing the A8 to Nice, take the D37 signed "Site de Malpasset" and follow this for 3.9km until you reach a dirt road which fords the Reyran river and ends up in a parking area under the motorway 800m further on.*

From the parking area, take the road which follows the left bank of the river. When you arrive at a fork take the right-hand path, signed "Site de Malpasset", which descends to the river bed and which leads to the remains of the dam, crossing the river on stepping stones. Enormous blocks of concrete can be seen where they were left after the force of the water carried them away.

When you reach the dam, if you are energetic and sure-footed, you can climb up the rocks on the right for access to the top and rear of the dam.

Retrace your steps to the car park.

#### Malpasset Dam

The Malpasset Dam burst on 2 December 1959, killing 423 people, destroying 951 buildings and ravaging 1350 hectares of agricultural land in the Fréjus area. A memorial was erected on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and this can be seen in Fréjus between the Roman Arena and the N7.