



# Drivers' Hours: Have you got the time?



Guidance for drivers of vehicles subject to EU drivers' hours and working time regulations





“All quite simple  
– all very vital!”

## Know your responsibilities

**Regulations on drivers' hours are in place to protect us all – you, other road users, your employer and the general public. And they are largely *your* responsibility.**

They are not difficult to follow, but it is vitally important for you that you do so. Failure can result in serious consequences that could

cost you money, your licence, your job and in the very worst case your life. They are all about ensuring you don't put yourself or others at risk by working for too long without breaks.

As with most things nowadays, it is no longer good enough to simply stick to the rules. You have to be able to show clearly that you are doing so. Alongside briefly covering the regulations for you, this booklet also outlines the data recording requirements and practices.

## The three key things you need to do:



### **Manage your own driver hours**

*Details on pages 3 and 4*



### **Understand and track your 'working time'**

*Details on pages 5 and 6*



### **Maintain accurate records**

*Details on pages 7 and 8*

# Your hours

The rules on your hours spent driving are made to help you do your job to best of your ability, while helping to ensure that you stay safe and healthy. Please understand, **these are NOT for guidance, these are your legal requirements**, and it is your duty to yourself and your employer to ensure you abide by them.

## Driving

**Daily driving limit** – 9 hours per day (can be increased to 10 hours twice a week)

**Weekly driving limit** - maximum 56 hours (which applies to a fixed week\*)

**Fortnightly driving limit** - maximum 90 hours

## Breaks

**Maximum number of driving hours allowed before break must be taken** – 4.5 hours

**Break from driving** – 45 minutes after 4.5 hours driving (Break can be split providing 1st break = 15mins and 2nd break = 30mins - this must be completed after 4.5 hours driving)



## Rests

**Daily rest** – 11 hours (reducible to 9 hours 3 times per week) or 12 hours if split into two periods (1st = 3 hours and 2nd = 9 hours)

**Weekly rest** – 45 hours (reducible to 24 hours every other week providing one full weekly rest taken in any fortnight)

**Periods of work between weekly rests** –  
No more than 6 x 24 hours before a weekly rest (45 hours) is required



## The general 'Working Time' rules

**In broad terms, Working Time hours are arranged to help organisations manage their business and for workers to balance their work and home lives.**

Many businesses, especially in transport, are under pressure to satisfy customer demands 24/7, but this has to be balanced with the needs of their work force. In recent years this has started to lead to a more flexible working approach, including features such as flexible start and finish times, shift work and job sharing.

The rules are practical and straight-forward and work happily alongside the Driver's Hours set out on the previous pages.

**In summary, your general Working Time rules are:**

### **Working time** (including driving)

**Average per week** - must not exceed 48 hours' (reference period for average normally 17 weeks)

**Maximum working time per week** - 60 hours (providing average not exceeded)

### **Breaks**

If working more than 6 consecutive hours - 15 min break needed

If working 6-9 hours in total - 30 minute break needed

If working more than 9 hours in total - 45 minute break needed

### **Rests**

Same daily and weekly rest requirements as EU drivers' hours rules

“The rules are there to help us ALL!”

# Managing your records

**Without accurate, consistent recording of your hours and the activity involved, any regulations are meaningless. So what's needed?**

All goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes **MUST** be fitted with a tachograph. Most have the digital version, though some still have older analogue devices requiring a paper disc (chart) for recording. Whichever type your vehicle has, **YOU** are responsible for ensuring it is working properly, if not, report it immediately to your manager.

## **For an Analogue Tachograph you must:**

1. Ensure it is set to the time of the country of vehicle registration
2. Carry enough charts for your whole journey, including spare charts in case any are damaged/dirty
3. Never use a chart to cover a period longer than 24 hours
4. Return all used charts to your manager within 42 days

5. Never remove charts from tachographs before the end of duty period unless authorised to do so
6. Produce 28 calendar days of chart/s at roadside if required by authorities

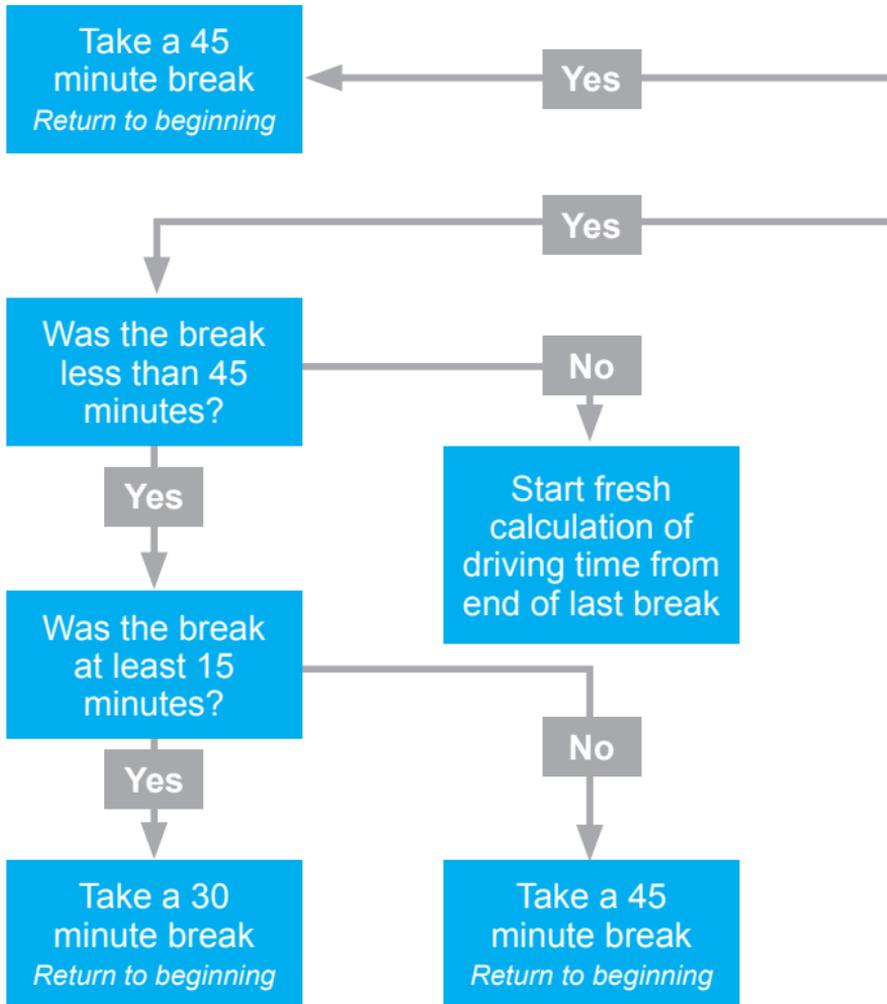
**For a Digital Tachograph you must:**

1. Have your own Driver Card – without this you are NOT permitted to drive
2. Insert your driver card into the correct slot
3. Keep a manual record if there is any fault with your card
4. Carry enough supplies of type-approved print roll
5. Ensure your card is kept safe and undamaged
6. Download card data regularly (preferably weekly)
7. Produce records at roadside if required by authorities

“Keep accurate and consistent records!”

All tachographs will work well, if used correctly. If you have any doubts about the unit in your cab, ask your manager BEFORE setting out.

# Drivers' Hours and Working Time Breaks



Have you driven continuously for 4.5 hours?

Key:

EU Drivers' Hours

Working Time

No

Have you already had any breaks?

Do your total driving hours add up to 4.5 hours?

No

No

Take a 45 minute break  
*Return to beginning*

Yes

Have done 6 – 9 hours work?

Take a 30 minute break  
*Return to beginning*

No

No break required yet  
*Return to beginning*

**Remember** – It's as easy to follow a few simple rules as it is to ignore them. Follow them and you'll be fine. Ignore them and it could cost you your licence and your job!



# Safety Efficiency Environment

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This simplified drivers' hours guide is issued by FORS the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme.

The guide covers the basics of the regulations for drivers of vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gvw. There are many variations and exemptions that are not covered in this guidance. Further guidance is available from: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/faqs/workingtimedirective.htm>

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