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Converting a Foreign Führerschein — When and How

When you must convert your foreign Führerschein, which tests are required, and important deadlines. As of March 2026.

Deutsche Begriffe: Führerschein | Umschreibung | Fahrerlaubnis | Führerscheinstelle | EU-Führerschein

Converting a Foreign Führerschein — When and How

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EU Führerschein

If you have a Führerschein from an **EU/EEA country**:

- It is **valid indefinitely** in Germany
- No conversion needed
- You only need to **exchange** it when validity expires (EU-wide exchange until 2033)

Non-EU Führerschein

6-Month Rule:

- You may drive with your foreign Führerschein for **6 months** (from registration in Germany)
- After that, you must **convert** it or obtain a German Führerschein

- Extension for another 6 months possible (application at the Führerscheinstelle)

Conversion — 3 Categories:

Category 1: Without Test Countries with **recognition agreements** (e.g., Japan, South Korea, some US states, Canada, Australia, Israel, etc.):

- Only application + documents + possible vision test and first aid course

Category 2: Practical Test Only Some countries (e.g., some US states):

- Theoretical test waived, practical test required

Category 3: Theory + Practice All other countries (e.g., Turkey, Ukraine, Russia, Arab countries, etc.):

- **Theoretical test** — available in 12 languages (including Turkish, Arabic, Russian)
- **Practical test** — mandatory driving school hours recommended

Required Documents

1. Valid **passport/ID card**
2. **Residence registration certificate**
3. Foreign **Führerschein** (original + certified translation)
4. **Biometric passport photo**
5. **Vision test** (optician, approx. 7 €)
6. **First aid course** (approx. 30-50 €, 1 day)
7. If necessary, certificate of authenticity of foreign Führerschein (via embassy)

Costs

Item	Cost
Application fee	approx. 35-45 €
Theoretical test	approx. 25 €
Practical test	approx. 120 €
Driving lessons (if needed)	50-80 €/hour
Vision test	approx. 7 €
First aid course	30-50 €
Führerschein translation	50-150 €

Tips

- **Start early** — the 6 months pass quickly
- Theoretical test can be taken in **12 languages**
- The **ADAC app** "Führerschein" has free practice questions
- Driving schools often offer **intensive courses** for converts (cheaper than individual lessons)
- You get your old Führerschein back (after conversion)