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# Car Registration — Kfz-Zulassung Step by Step

How to register your car at the vehicle registration office: documents, eVB number, costs, and registration procedure.

**Deutsche Begriffe:** Zulassungsstelle | Kfz-Zulassung | Kennzeichen | eVB-Nummer | HU | Fahrzeugbrief | Fahrzeugschein

## Why does the car need to be registered?

In Germany, every vehicle that participates in **road traffic** must be registered at the **Zulassungsstelle** (vehicle registration office). Without registration, you are not permitted to drive or park on public roads.

## What types of registration are there?

| Type | When? |
|---|---|
| **Neuzulassung** | New car, first registered in Germany |
| **Umschreibung** | Used car, change of owner |
| **Wiederzulassung** | Car was deregistered, to be registered again |
| **Umzug/Umkennzeichnung** | Moving to a different registration district (optional since 2015) |

## Required documents

For all registrations

- **ID card or passport** (with registration certificate)
- **eVB-Nummer** (electronic insurance confirmation) — from your car insurer
- **SEPA direct debit mandate** for vehicle tax (bank details)
- **Valid HU certificate** (main inspection / TÜV) — for used cars

### For used cars (Umschreibung)

- **Zulassungsbescheinigung Teil I** (Fahrzeugschein) — from previous owner
- **Zulassungsbescheinigung Teil II** (Fahrzeugbrief) — from previous owner
- **Old license plates** (if new ones desired)
- **Purchase contract** (recommended, not always mandatory)

### For new cars

- **Zulassungsbescheinigung Teil II** (from dealer)
- **COC document** (Certificate of Conformity) — for EU imports

## Step-by-step guide

### 1. Conclude vehicle insurance

Before going to the registration office, you need **motor liability insurance**:

- Compare online (Check24, Verivox, HUK24)
- Conclude contract
- Receive **eVB-Nummer** (7-digit, via email/SMS)

### 2. Appointment at the registration office

- In most cities you need an **appointment** (book online!)
- In smaller cities sometimes possible without appointment
- **Wait times** in large cities: 1–4 weeks for an appointment

### 3. At the registration office

**1.** Submit all **documents**

**2. Vehicle tax:** Sign SEPA mandate

**3.** Receive **license plates** — either keep existing or choose new ones

**4. Custom license plates** possible (e.g., HH-AB 1234) — reserve online, surcharge approx. 10–13 €

**5.** Receive **Zulassungsbescheinigung Teil I** (new Fahrzeugschein)

**6.** Have **stickers** affixed to license plates

### 4. License plates engraved

• Sign shops are often located **directly next to the registration office**

• Cost: approx. **20–35 € per pair**

• Online ordering is often cheaper (from approx. 15 €)

### 5. HU sticker and stamp

• The **HU sticker** (TÜV) is affixed to the rear license plate

• The **registration sticker** is affixed to both license plates

## Costs of vehicle registration

| Item | Cost |
|---|---|
| Registration (Umschreibung) | approx. **30 €** |
| New registration | approx. **30 €** |
| Custom license plates | approx. **10–13 €** |
| License plate signs (pair) | approx. **20–35 €** |
| Custom license plate reservation (online) | approx. **2.60 €** |
| **Total (typical)** | **approx. 60–80 €** |

**Additional:** Vehicle tax (depends on engine capacity/$CO_2$) and insurance premium.

## Vehicle tax (Kfz-Steuer)

**Vehicle tax** is collected by the **customs authority** (not by the tax office):

| Vehicle type | Calculation |
|---|---|
| Petrol | Engine displacement + $CO_2$ emissions |
| Diesel | Engine displacement (higher rate) + $CO_2$ emissions |

| Vehicle type | Calculation |
|---|---|
| Electric car | **Tax-free** until 2030 (for first registration until 31.12.2025) |

**Example:** Petrol, 1,400 cc, 130 g $CO_2$/km → approx. **120–180 €/year**

## Online registration (i-Kfz)

Since 2023 you can register vehicles **online**:

• **Requirement:** ID card with activated **online authentication function** (eID)

• Possible for: New registration, change of owner, deregistration, re-registration

• Portal: varies by state/city (e.g., berlin.de, hamburg.de)

• **Advantage:** No appointment at registration office needed

• **Disadvantage:** Technically not yet seamless everywhere

## Important for foreigners

### Driver's license

• **EU driver's license:** Valid indefinitely in Germany

• **Non-EU driver's license:** Valid only **6 months** after entry, then exchange required (often with exam)

• International driver's permit: In combination with original license also 6 months

### Bringing a car from abroad

If you bring your car from abroad:

• **EU vehicle:** Relatively straightforward — COC document, possibly conversion (e.g., headlights)

• **Non-EU vehicle:** More complex — individual inspection by TÜV/DEKRA required (cost: 300–1,000 €)

• **Customs:** For imports from non-EU: 10% tariff + 19% import VAT

• **Deadline:** You must register the vehicle within **1 month** after entry

### Deregistering a vehicle

If you leave Germany or sell the car:

• Visit the **registration office** (in person or online)

• Bring license plates and Fahrzeugschein

• Insurance and vehicle tax are **refunded proportionally**

• **Important:** Do not deregister the car **before selling** — the buyer needs the registration for the transfer

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