

Content

Changes for motorists in 2024

The start of a new year once again heralds several changes for motorists. The color of the mandatory inspection sticker will change, the process of converting old driver's licenses to a credit card format will continue, and by mid-year, additional driver assistance systems will be required on newly registered vehicles.

112 – the emergency hotline

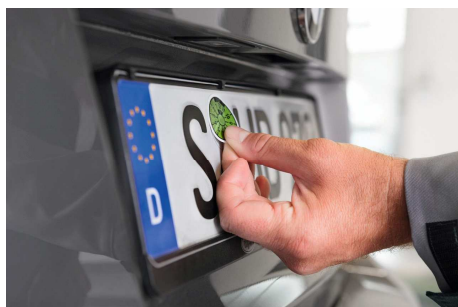
In an emergency, time is of the essence; the faster emergency services can be contacted, the more lives can be saved and damage averted. In an emergency, dial 112 immediately. The European 112 Day aims to raise public awareness of the emergency number.

Smoke detectors now obligatory throughout Germany

Since the beginning of 2024, it has been mandatory to install smoke detectors in private dwellings throughout Germany. The deadline for installation in existing homes in the state of Saxony was December 31, 2023. This means that the obligation to install the warning devices now extends to the whole of Germany.

Other topics

- Car roof boxes: light up top, heavy down below
- Innovation award for DEKRA battery quick test
- Winter cycling: high visibility vest reduces risk of accident



*Vehicles with a green sticker will
be due for inspection in 2024.*

Photo: DEKRA
Reproduction free of charge.
Please mention DEKRA and
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:
The image can be obtained from
the DEKRA Press Office.
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

Changes in 2024

Black box, driver's license and sticker color

The start of a new year once again heralds several changes for motorists. The color of the mandatory inspection sticker will change, the process of converting old driver's licenses to a credit card format will continue, and by mid-year, additional driver assistance systems will be required on newly registered vehicles.

Pink inspection sticker invalid. Drivers should head straight to the nearest test centre if their vehicle has a red inspection sticker on its number plate. The pink stickers became invalid at the turn of the year. In the New Year, all vehicles with a green sticker will be required to undergo testing in 2024 and vehicles with an orange sticker in 2025. Mandatory inspection requires the Part I registration certificate (formerly the vehicle registration document). The mandatory inspection also includes an exhaust analysis, insofar as no relevant certification has been provided by a garage. Any subsequent changes to the vehicle must also be evidenced with the corresponding test certificate. Failure to present the vehicle for inspection within the period of validity of the sticker entails it a fine, which increases from 15 to 60 euros the longer the period extends. It may even result in an endorsement in the owner's driver's license.

Conversion of driver's license. If you have a pink or gray driver's license and were born between 1965 and 1970, you will need to exchange it for a forgery-proof, EU-wide credit-card sized license. In contrast to the old document, the validity of the credit card driver's license is restricted to 15 years. Anybody driving without a valid driver's license, as well as anybody not carrying it on their person when driving can pick up a 10 euro fine if stopped by police.

Black box and emergency brake assist as standard. From July 7th, 2024, cars will be even safer. So far ABS, ESP and tire pressure sensors have been mandatory, but beginning mid-year newly registered vehicles must also be equipped with safety systems such as emergency brake assist, cruise control and fatigue warning sensors. Additionally, an event data recorder (EDR) will be mandatory. The EDR records important information about the vehicle during an accident and can help determine the cause of the accident. (DEKRA Info)



*Emergency number 112: even
children should know how to make
an emergency call*

Photo: DEKRA
Reproduction free of charge.
Please mention DEKRA and
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:
The image can be obtained from
the DEKRA Press Office.
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

February 11 is European Emergency Call Day.

112 – the hotline for emergencies

In an emergency, time is of the essence; the faster emergency services can be contacted, the more lives can be saved and damage averted. In an emergency, dial 112 immediately. The European 112 Day aims to raise public awareness of the emergency number. At the same time, it also recognizes all those belonging to rescue services, the fire brigade and other aid organizations.

Since 2008, people have been able to call the emergency number 112 free of charge, 24 hours a day, from all fixed and mobile networks in all European Union countries. A number of non-EU European countries also participate in the system. 9.5 seconds is the average response time to an emergency call in Germany when doctors, firefighters or police are needed.

Surveys have shown that not everyone in the EU is aware of the 112 emergency number, which can be used anywhere in the participating countries to call the emergency services. "The faster the emergency services arrive, the better the chances of saving lives and minimizing damage," says DEKRA accident expert Markus Egelhaaf, himself a volunteer firefighter. "Everyone should know what to do in an emergency. It also makes sense to familiarize children of kindergarten age with how and when to make an emergency call."

What's important when calling 911?

Only dial the number in a real emergency, such as a serious accident, building fire, or if you need urgent medical attention. Give your name and location as accurately as possible. Describe what has happened and whether anyone is in danger. Stay on the line until all questions have been answered and the operator has terminated the call. If the number was dialed by mistake and was accepted by the operator, don't hang up; tell the operator that you were contacted by mistake and everything is OK. Otherwise, the rescue service may leave as soon as they have located your cell phone, and a real emergency will have to wait unnecessarily. (DEKRA Info)



*Lifesaver with high-pitched beep:
Check monthly, replace after five
to ten years*

Photo: DEKRA
Reproduction free of charge.
Please mention DEKRA and
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:
The image can be obtained from
the DEKRA Press Office.
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

Smoke detectors now mandatory throughout Germany **Experts: check devices monthly**

Since the beginning of 2024, it has been mandatory to install smoke detectors in private dwellings throughout Germany. The deadline for installation in existing homes in the state of Saxony was December 31, 2023. This means that the obligation to install the warning devices now extends to the whole of Germany.

"In addition, many smoke detectors will have to be replaced again this year because they have reached their maximum service life," warns DEKRA fire safety expert Lars Inderthal. However, there are devices in use that need to be replaced after only eight or five years. A look at the replacement date, which can be found on the device's rating plate, shows whether the device is due for replacement.

Greatest danger from poisonous fumes

"Every year, several hundred people die in house fires. The biggest danger is not the flames, but the toxic fumes," warns Inderthal. These are often caused by smoldering fires, such as an unattended hob or a faulty electrical appliance. When people are surprised in their sleep, they are usually helplessly exposed to the toxic gases without any warning devices. Carbon monoxide in the air we breathe is fatal within minutes.

Smoke detectors are mandatory throughout Germany and must be installed in at least all bedrooms and corridors used as escape routes. In Berlin and Brandenburg, the devices are also required in living areas such as living rooms and studies. Property owners are responsible for installing and replacing the devices. Tenants must inform their landlords if a smoke detector is not working or needs to be installed.

DEKRA fire protection experts recommend prioritizing quality when buying smoke detectors. High-quality devices are marked with a "Q". To make sure that the devices offer constant protection, their function should also be checked monthly by means of the test button. If the battery is almost empty, the smoke detector emits a brief peeping sound in the space of several seconds as a warning. This is a sign that an exchange of the device is essential – or in the case of simple models – that the battery needs replacing. (DEKRA Info)



*What can I put in the roof box?
The permitted roof load
is the most important*

Photo: DEKRA
Reproduction free of charge.
Please mention DEKRA and
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:
The image can be obtained from
the DEKRA Press Office.
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

Roof boxes: loading cars correctly

Light at the top, heavy at the bottom

When taking a winter vacation by car, storage space can often be limited. In such cases, a roof box can be a practical solution. They are particularly suitable for storing bulky and not too heavy items of luggage such as skis, sticks, snowboards or winter clothing. According to DEKRA experts, boxes must be securely fastened to the car roof to ensure that the items on the top floor reach their destination safely. Otherwise, they could become unstable at high speeds on the highway and cause an accident.

As regards the mounts for supports and the box, it is highly recommended to rely on original parts and, if possible, to use the tools provided by the manufacturer so that nothing can go wrong during fitting. "Do-it-yourself solutions do you no favors. The mounts must be configured so that they resist the vibrations of lengthy journeys and provide sufficient resistance to high gusts of wind," says DEKRA accident expert Martin Kugele.

Box changes driving behavior

The weight capacity of the newly acquired storage space depends on the maximum roof load of the vehicle. For instance, the owner's manual for the VW Golf Sportsvan specifies a maximum of 75 kilograms, while for the Passat, it is 100 kilograms. Therefore, the combined weight of the basic rack, the box, and the load should not exceed the respective maximum limits.

When loading, it is important to pack lighter luggage on top and heavier items at the bottom. This is because placing heavier luggage at the top will shift the vehicle's center of gravity upwards, negatively impacting its driving behavior. Additionally, it is advisable to distribute the luggage uniformly in the box and secure it against slippage using lashing straps and anti-slip mats. A final check will ensure that the box is secure and locked. And don't forget: The vehicle's handling changes with the box: it leans more to one side when cornering, the braking distance increases and the vehicle reacts more sensitively to side winds. (DEKRA Info)



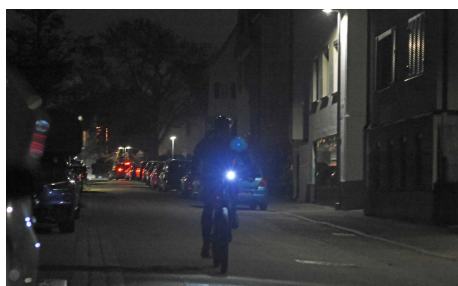
*Battery quick test by DEKRA:
15 minutes for clarity*

Photo: DEKRA
Reproduction free of charge.
Please mention DEKRA and
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:
The image can be obtained from
the DEKRA Press Office.
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

Innovation award for DEKRA battery quick test **Battery fitness on the test bench**

The DEKRA battery quick test for electric vehicles has been awarded the Innovation Prize of the German Mobility Industry. The German Association of Transport Sciences (DVWG) presented the award in the presence of Federal Transport Minister Volker Wissing. The test, which was introduced in spring 2022, provides a reliable assessment of the traction battery's 'state of health'. It is currently the only solution for quickly measuring the health of traction batteries using AI. The process has been validated by the RWTH University in Aachen and has an international patent. During the award ceremony, DVWG President Prof. Dr. Jan Ninnemann stated that the DEKRA battery test not only benefits consumers but also creates a foundation for a functional used market for electric vehicles. (DEKRA Info)



*Cycling in the dark:
Working lights and bright clothing
are a must*

Photo: DEKRA
Reproduction free of charge.
Please mention DEKRA and
send reference copy.

Editorial offices please note:
The image can be obtained from
the DEKRA Press Office.
Tel. +49 711 7861-2122

Cycling in winter

High visibility vest reduces accident risk

DEKRA accident experts report that cycling without functioning lights at night or in twilight is a significant risk. It is crucial to be visible to other road users, not just what the cyclist can see. In addition to working front and rear lights, experts recommend wearing bright, conspicuous clothing with reflective elements during darker months. To increase visibility and safety while cycling, it is recommended to wear a neon yellow cycle jacket or high visibility vest, similar to those used in motor vehicles. This will make cyclists easily visible in vehicle headlights. (DEKRA Info)