

Summary of Requirements for Mirrors on Motor Vehicles

Statement

This document provides general guidance and advice on the legislative requirements in Great Britain relating to rear-view mirrors in buses, cars, dual-purpose vehicles and goods vehicles used on the road - these requirements are set out in full in regulation 33 of *The Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986 (SI 1986 No. 1078)*.

Every effort has been made to ensure that it is factually correct but recipients should check with the producers of this document if they are unsure about the validity of a particular regulation after the date of publication or if they have reason to believe any part is not correct or is now out of date.

Where a vehicle has received Individual Vehicle Approval (for example, because it is imported or amateur built), other standards may be permitted which provide an equivalent level of safety.

General requirements

The tables below summarise the number, type and standard of mirror required to be fitted to various types of vehicle. In addition, the following requirements should also be met:

- i) each mirror must be fixed to the vehicle in such a way that it remains steady under normal driving conditions;
- ii) each exterior mirror on a vehicle fitted with windows and a windscreen shall be visible to the driver, when in his driving position, through a side window or through the portion of the windscreen which is swept by the windscreen wiper;
- iii) where the bottom edge of an exterior mirror is less than 2m above the road surface when the vehicle is laden, that mirror shall not project more than 20cm beyond the overall width of the vehicle or, if the vehicle is drawing a trailer which is wider than the drawing vehicle, more than 20cm beyond the overall width of the trailer;
- iv) each interior mirror shall be capable of being adjusted by the driver when in his driving position;
- v) except in the case of a mirror which, if knocked out of its alignment can be returned to its former position without needing to be adjusted, each exterior mirror on the driver's side of the vehicle shall be capable of being adjusted by the driver when in his driving position.

This requirement does not prevent such a mirror from being locked into position from the outside of the vehicle.

- vi) when drawing a trailer (or caravan) the references to a vehicle in the definitions in paragraph (7) of regulation 33 of *The Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986* shall be construed as including references to that trailer.

Buses

Motor vehicles constructed or adapted to carry more than eight seated passengers in addition to the driver; includes minibuses and coaches

Mirror Requirements for Buses				
Date first used:	External (Offside)	External (Nearside)	Internal	Mirror Standard
Before 01/06/1978	✓	✓	✓	A
		1 external (ns) or 1 internal ¹		
On or after 01/06/1978	✓	✓		B
On or after 26/01/2007	✓	✓		D

¹ At least one mirror fitted externally on the nearside unless a mirror which gives the driver an adequate view to the rear is fitted internally.

Cars

Vehicles constructed solely to carry 8 or less seated passengers (excluding the driver) and their effects

Dual purpose vehicles

Those with an unladen weight not exceeding 2040kg constructed or adapted to carry both passengers and goods, but there are also other detailed conditions set out in regulation 3 of *The Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986*

Mirror Requirements for Cars and Dual Purpose Vehicles				
Vehicle – Date first used:	External (Offside)	External (Nearside)	Internal	Mirror Standard
Cars - Before 01/06/1978	✓	✓	✓	A
		1 external (ns) or 1 internal ¹		
Dual Purpose Vehicles - Before 01/06/1978	✓	✓	✓	A
		1 external (ns) or 1 internal ¹		
Cars and Dual Purpose Vehicles - After 01/06/1978	✓	✓	✓	B
		1 external (ns) or 1 internal ¹		
Cars and Dual Purpose Vehicles - After 26/01/2010	✓	✓	✓ ²	D

¹ At least one mirror fitted externally on the nearside unless a mirror which gives the driver an adequate view to the rear is fitted internally.

² Unless the internal mirror cannot provide an adequate view to the rear.

Goods Vehicle

A motor vehicle or trailer constructed or adapted for use for the carriage or haulage of goods or burden of any description

Mirror Requirements for Goods Vehicles					
Weight – Date first used:	External (Offside)	External (Nearside)	Internal	Additional External	Mirror Standard
All weights - First used before 01/06/1978	✓	✓ 1 external (ns) or 1 internal ¹			A
Not exceeding 3500kg - First used on or after 01/06/1978	✓	✓			B
Greater than 3500kg - First used on or after 01/06/1978 but before 01/04/1985	✓	✓			B
Greater than 3500kg but not exceeding 12000kg - First used on or after 01/04/1985	✓	✓			B
Greater than 12000kg - First used on or after 01/04/1985 but before 01/10/1988	✓	✓			B
Greater than 12,000kg - First used after 01/10/1988	✓	✓		✓ ³	C
Greater than 3,500kg - First used on or after 01/01/2000	✓	✓		✓ ⁴	E
Greater than 7,500kg - First used on or after 26/01/2007	✓	✓		✓ ⁵	D

¹ At least one mirror fitted externally on the nearside unless a mirror which gives the driver an adequate view to the rear is fitted internally.

³ A close-proximity mirror required on the nearside. If the vehicle is articulated, it must also have a wide-angle mirror.

⁴ A close-proximity and a wide angle mirror required on the nearside where the cab height permits the close-proximity mirror to be fitted at least 2m above the ground.

⁵ A close-proximity and a wide angle mirror required on the nearside and a front view mirror above the windscreen.

Key:

A - Internal mirrors must be surrounded by some material so that it is unlikely that severe cuts will be caused should the mirror be struck by any occupant of the vehicle.

B - Mirrors must comply with the requirements set out in item 2 of Annex I to Community Directive 71/127 or 79/795; or Annex II to Community Directive 86/562 or 88/321; or paragraphs 4 to 8 of ECE Regulation 46.01.

C - Mirrors must comply with the requirements set out in Annex II to Community Directive 86/562 or 88/321; or paragraphs 4 to 8 of ECE Regulation 46.01.

D - Mirrors must comply with the requirements set out in Annex II to Community Directive 2003/97 or 2005/27; or paragraphs 4, 5 and 6.1 of ECE Regulation 46.02.

E - Mirrors must comply with the requirements set out in Article 3 to Community Directive 2007/38.

Further information

Consolidated versions of National regulations can be found in Sweet and Maxwell's *Encyclopaedia of Road Traffic Law and Practice (Construction and Use)* which should be available at most main reference libraries.

Copies of National regulations can also be purchased from TSO Orders/Post Cash Department, PO Box 29, Norwich, NR3 1GN; telephone: 0870 600 5522; fax: 0870 600 5533; email: customer.services@tso.co.uk; website: <http://www.tso.co.uk/>

The Community Directives may be downloaded free of charge from the European Commission; website: www.ec.europa.eu

UNECE Regulation 46 may be downloaded free of charge from the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe; website: www.unece.org

If you require any further information regarding the content of this information sheet, please contact the DfT at the address below:

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NOTE: The information in this document is a summary of the Departments understanding of what the law requires. However, ultimately the interpretation of the law is a matter for the courts based on individual facts of any particular case. You are therefore advised to consult the relevant legislation and, if necessary, seek independent advice.