

## DRIVING IN NORTHERN FRANCE

If you are a temporary visitor to France (less than 90 days), you may drive with a valid U.S. driver's license. In addition to having your U.S. driver's license, visitors are strongly advised to carry an International Driving permit, or attach a French translation to their U.S. driver's license. If you are a resident of France (holder of a carte de séjour or carte de residence), you may drive in France with a valid U.S. driver's license for a one-year recognition period, beginning on the date of validity of the first carte de séjour. Students are allowed to use their driver's licenses for the duration of their studies. In addition to having your U.S. driver's license, you must have an International Driver's license, or a sworn translation by an officially recognized translator (traducteur expert-juré).

**NOTE :** Persons with valid driver's licenses, issued prior to their first entry into France as a resident from the states of **Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia** may directly "exchange" their state driver's licenses for French permits. This is because these 14 states offer a reciprocal privilege of exchange for French citizens holding French permits in the U.S.

### Obtaining a French Driver's License:

If you have a driver's license from one of these 14 states: **Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia** you may apply for the French driver's license (permis de conduire) in your city of residence at least three months before the expiration of your first year of residency to allow sufficient time for the required formalities. The exchange must be made at the Prefecture. It cannot be made at the Sous-Prefectures.

If residing in the department of Nord, apply in person to:

Préfecture du Nord  
Service des Permis de Conduire  
5 bis rue Gustave Delory  
59000 Lille

Switchboard : 03 20 30 59 59  
Driver's Licenses : 03 20 30 57 50

Hours:  
Mon – Thurs 8:30 am - 11:30 am ; 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Friday 8:30 am - 11:30 am ; 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm

For the exchange of foreign driver's licenses, hours are Monday through Thursday from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm.

Guide for U.S. Citizens Residing in Northern France – American Presence Post, Lille, France 1/4



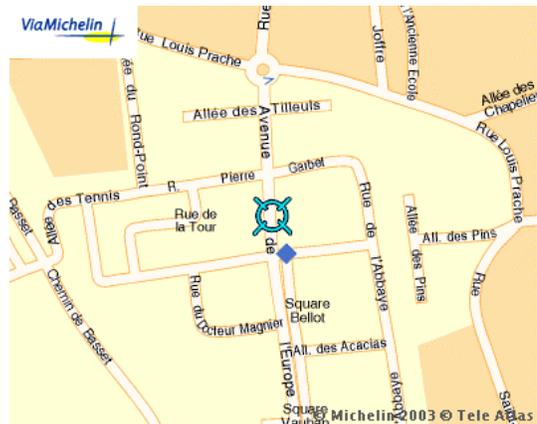
If residing in the Pas de Calais, apply in person to:

Préfecture du Pas-de-Calais  
rue Ferdinand Buisson  
62000 Arras  
Switchboard : 03 21 21 20 00  
Driver's Licenses : 03 21 21 22 07  
Hours: Mon – Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm



If residing in the Oise department, apply in person to :

Espace Europe  
avenue de l'Europe  
60022 Beauvais Cedex  
Switchboard : 03 44 06 12 34  
Driver's Licenses : 03 44 06 10 04  
Hours: Mon – Friday 8:30 am – 4:15 pm



If residing in the Aisne department, apply in person to :

Prefecture de l'Aisne  
2 rue Paul Doumer  
02000 Laon  
Switchboard : 03 23 21 82 82  
Hours:  
Mon – Friday 8:45 am - 12:00 pm  
1:30 pm - 4:15 pm

If residing in the Somme department, apply in person to :

Prefecture de la Somme

51 rue de la République

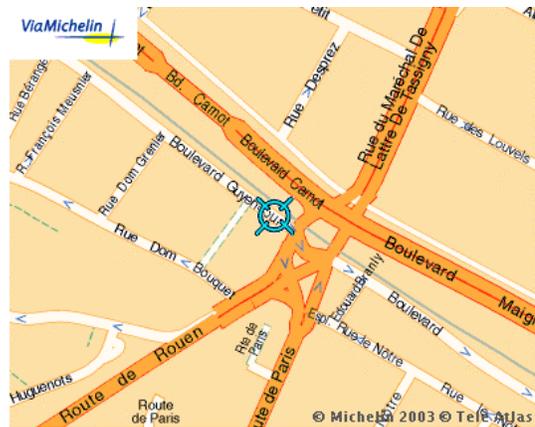
80000 Amiens

Driver's Licenses : 03 22 89 10 65

Hours:

Mon – Friday 8:15 am – 4:00 pm

All applicants for exchange must furnish the following documents (before the end of the first year of residence, otherwise the driver is no longer insured) :



- Form to request the driver's license (available at the Prefecture)
- The U.S. Driver's license with sworn translation in French
- For married women, if either the maiden name or the married does not appear on the driver's license, a statement or official document showing both names is required. Some prefectures may also require a "notarized translation".
- Proof of current address : Statement of domicile or electricity bill or rent receipt
- Carte de séjour with photocopy of both sides
- Two (2) passport size photographs
- This service is free of charge.

**If you do not have a driver's license from one of the 14 states with reciprocity agreements: Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, New Hampshire, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Virginia.**

If you do not have a driver's license from one of the 14 states with reciprocity agreements, you must take the written and driving portions of the French licensing examination before you have resided in France for one year. Once the file is approved by the Prefecture, there is a one month required waiting period before the applicant is eligible to sit for the written test. Once the written test is passed, there is another required waiting period of two weeks before the applicant is permitted to take the driving test. Taking into account the waiting periods, the application process should be started well before the end of the first year of residence. Although there is no required number of lesson hours, the driving exam must be completed with a dual command car. As a consequence, you will have to go through a driving school. Special sessions may be organized for people who do not speak French well. In order to make the written test easier for non-French speakers, you may request to be assisted by a translator, who may be a friend or relative.

## **Replacing expired, lost or stolen U.S. driver's licenses:**

Neither the Embassy nor the Consulate is authorized to replace expired, lost or stolen U.S. driver's licenses. Only the Department of Motor Vehicles in the driver's home state can perform that service.

If you had your driver's license stolen in France, immediately report it to the commissariat of police having jurisdiction over the area where the theft occurred. The commissariat will issue a Receptissé de Declaration de Perte ou de Vol de Pieces d'Identite ("Acknowledgement of Declaration of Theft of Identity Documents"). No report will be made for lost driver's licenses.

This receptissé will generally substitute for a driver's license for a few weeks while a replacement is being obtained. The receptissé is good for this purpose only in France. If your state requires a sworn affidavit or a notarized application for a replacement license, the Embassy's Office of American Services can notarize the application. Please consult the Embassy website for hours and costs at <http://france.usembassy.gov/service.html>