

Mobility

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Train and Bus

Public transportation in Switzerland is very well organized. Almost all locations are accessible by train and bus. Public transportation is punctual and operates on a regular schedule.

Public Transportation

Public transportation (ÖV) is very important in Switzerland. Almost all locations are accessible several times per hour. This encourages many travellers to use the train and bus. Fares are relatively expensive, but there are various ways to save money. It may be worthwhile purchasing a season pass or reduced fare pass. The relatively inexpensive half-fare pass (Halbtaxabo) allows the holder to purchase tickets at half price anywhere in Switzerland.

Tickets and Passes

Before boarding a train one must buy a ticket (Billett). Tickets cannot be purchased on board. Buses manage this differently. Every train station and most bus stops have ticket automats. There are staffed ticket counters in the bigger train stations. Tickets can also be purchased online or via mobile phone. Frequent travellers can benefit from various special passes. These are available for specific routes, regions, or the entire Swiss public transportation system (Generalabonnement). Children under the age of 6 ride without charge. Under the age of 16 travelling with parents or grandparents is almost free of charge with a junior or grandchild's pass (Junior- oder Enkelkarte). Information on tickets and passes is available through the Swiss Federal Railways (SBB) or bus companies.

Saver Day Pass

Anyone planning a longer trip within Switzerland can obtain a Saver Day Pass at a reduced price. The offer is limited, so the ticket must be reserved in advance, up to one day before travel. The tickets are personalized and can be obtained from the local municipality or via SBB.

Community Day Pass

Persons planning a longer trip within Switzerland can purchase a day pass which is offered by many communities at a reduced price (Gemeindetageskarte). The offer is limited and the pass must be reserved in advance. Additional information is provided by the community administration.

Nighttime Network

In Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden week-end busses and trains run until late at night. Please note that a special additional fee must be paid for the nighttime network.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/mobility/train-and-bus

Bicycle / On Foot

Due to a well developed network of bikepaths, riding a bicycle is very comfortable. Many people ride a bicycle to work. There are special hiking trails for pedestrians and hikers.

On the Go on Foot or by Bicycle (Velo)

The municipalities of Appenzell Ausserrhoden are attractive and relatively safe for cyclists and pedestrians. Special bicycle paths or bicycle lanes are widespread. Pedestrians always have the right of way at pedestrian crossings (unless there is a traffic light). Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden has many beautiful walking and hiking trails to discover. Hiking trails are marked with yellow signs.

Rules for Cyclists

A special license or exam is not required to ride a bicycle in Switzerland. In general, the same traffic rules apply to cyclists as they do to motorists. If special bike paths or lanes are available these must be used. Bicycles must be fully functional (two working brakes, a bell, reflectors in front and back and on pedals, and lights in front and back). A helmet is not compulsory, but recommended. Private liability insurance is strongly advised for cyclists. They are responsible for damages to persons or objects.

Transporting a Bicycle

Persons wishing to board a train or bus with a bicycle must buy a special ticket. It is not possible to take a bicycle on all trains or buses. Sometimes a place must be reserved in advance.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/mobility/bicycle-on-foot

Car / Motorcycle

Switzerland has a well developed road system. Using most roads is free of charge. Traffic rules are very important. Not following the rules results in high fines.

Traffic rules

Traffic rules are important for motorists in Switzerland. Fines are high compared to other countries. A serious violation of traffic rules can result in one's driver's licence being withdrawn.

Several important rules:

- Maximum speed in urban areas: 50 km/h; in rural areas: 80 km/h, on highways: 120 km/h
- Passing on the right is illegal on highways.
- Lights must also be on in daylight.
- All passengers must wear a seatbelt.
- Children must use in a child's seat (under age 12 or height of 150 cm).
- Talking on the phone while driving is only allowed via a hands-free system.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is punishable (limit 0.5 per mille).
- Pedestrians at pedestrian crossings always have the right of way (unless there is a traffic light).

Road Tolls

Roads are funded by the confederation, cantons, and communities. Using roads is free of charge. Highways are the exception: Persons wishing to use the highway must purchase a toll sticker (Vignette) every year. There are adhesive vignettes and e-vignettes. The adhesive vignette is affixed to the windshield and is available at gas stations, post offices, or road traffic offices. The e-vignette can be purchased online.

Insurance

Motor vehicles that are in use must be insured in Switzerland. Motor vehicle liability insurance (Motorfahrzeug-Haftpflichtversicherung) is offered by many private insurance companies. Insurance pays for damages to objects and persons which were caused by a motor vehicle. Damages to persons' own cars are covered by optional comprehensive insurance (Kaskoversicherung). Caution: insurance may not cover damages caused by gross negligence (e.g. driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs). Motor vehicle liability insurance is not included in private liability insurance.

Importing a Motor Vehicle

Persons wishing to permanently import a vehicle to Switzerland must register and declare it at the customs office. The vehicle must also be technically inspected. Motor vehicle liability insurance, a driver's licence, and a Swiss license plate are necessary. Further information is provided by the Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden traffic office (Strassenverkehrsamt). Check before importing whether the vehicle can be registered in Switzerland – this will help you avoid problems and delays.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/mobility/car-motorcycle

Driver's License

In order to drive a car or motorcycle in Switzerland one is required to have a license. Foreign licences must be converted after moving to Switzerland.

Foreign License

Persons moving to Switzerland who are in possession of a driver's license (Führerausweis) must have it converted to a Swiss driver's license within 12 months. In order to do so a request must be submitted to the cantonal traffic office (Strassenverkehrsamt). Depending on the country of origin different rules may apply. A driving test or theory exam may be necessary. For higher categories such as trucks (C, C1), buses (D, D1), or professional passenger transport (BPT), a medical examination must be carried out before exchanging a foreign driver's license. The Canton Appenzell Ausserrhoden traffic office will provide further information.

Driving Exam

An exam is required in order to obtain a driver's license in Switzerland. The exam includes theory and practice. One must be at least 17 years old to take the exam. The theoretical exam can be taken in the canton of Appenzell Ausserrhoden in German, French, Italian, and English. Information regarding requirements and procedures will be provided by the traffic office. Operating trucks, buses, and taxis requires special exams.

Additional information (links, addresses, information sheets, brochures)

www.hallo-ar.ch/en/mobility/drivers-license