

DRIVING AFTER AMPUTATION: Important Points

Licences

Current licence holders who wish to resume driving are **legally obliged to inform the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority) of their amputation** preferably in writing. If you do not you **may invalidate your insurance**. The DVLA will then send you two forms, one requests permission to contact your GP and the other asks you to identify the modifications required to drive safely. Advice about specific requirements can best be obtained for the Scottish Driving Assessment Centre, which offers telephone advice and practical driving assessments, or other accredited mobility centres. Your licence will then be re-issued and may be coded to reflect any changes.

Insurance

You must notify your insurance company of your amputation and any modifications to your vehicle **before** you commence driving. **Failure to declare any disability may invalidate any insurance claim**. Some insurance companies may ask for an increased premium but it is worth “shopping around” as not all do. Details of insurance companies specialising in providing cover for disabled drivers are available from accredited mobility centres.

Your Car

Often using automatic transmission is the safest method of driving following a lower limb amputation. Following an upper limb amputation, automatic transmission and power steering is advised. If you decide to change your car remember the following points:

- Availability and ease of fitting of any modifications that you may require.
- Ease of getting in and out i.e. width of doors, range of seat adjustment and height of doorsill.
- Seat comfort and space for artificial limb.
- Ease of loading/stowing a wheelchair or other mobility aids.
- Convenience of garage for servicing.

Everyone who changes driving technique, however limited, is **strongly** advised to take some lessons with an Approved Driving Instructor to allow them to adjust their driving skills. A list of instructors is available from accredited mobility centres or the Murray Foundation. The driver is legally obliged to ensure that he/she has full control of the vehicle and in the event of a claim the insurance company will want to know that the driver was competent with any adaptations.

Funding

If you are in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) it may be possible to obtain a car through the Motability Scheme. Contact Motability for further information tel. 01279 635 666 or any car showroom with Motability accreditation.

If a new car is permanently adapted for sole use of a disabled person pre-delivery it may be exempt from VAT.

Some dealers offer a discount on the price of a new car on evidence of a disability (e.g. A Blue Badge). Ford reimburses the car dealer with 3% of the purchase price.

Concessions

People in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of DLA may apply for exemption from paying Road Tax providing the car is solely for their own benefit. Contact the Benefit Agency of DLA Unit.

For people with mobility problems, the Blue Badge Schemes operate to allow parking concessions. Applications are made through your Local Authority.

Further information available from [The Murray Foundation](#) tel. 0141 580 8564