What if I'm a student?
If you're a student who'll be studying in another jurisdiction, you must change the rating territory of your licence and insurance policy before you leave B.C. You should also check with the jurisdiction on their registration and licensing requirements for students.

What insurance can I obtain if I bring my car to B.C. but don't use it here?
If you're a B.C. resident, you can buy a Vehicle in Storage Policy for a vehicle in storage off highway anywhere in Canada or the U.S., including storage at a garage where the vehicle is being sold or is on consignment.

What can I do if I've left B.C. and forgot to cancel my insurance policy?
If you've left our province, you can write us a letter to cancel your insurance. In the letter, make sure you include:

- your signature, licence plate number, new address and new phone number,
- your Owner's Certificate of Insurance and Vehicle Licence (keep the bottom part, the "vehicle registration," because you'll need it to register your vehicle outside of B.C.),
- your B.C. licence plates or a receipt to show that you've handed them into a licensing authority outside B.C., and
- a photocopy of your new registration document if you have already registered your vehicle outside B.C.

Send the letter to:
ICBC—Cancellations
Room 205—151 West Esplanade
North Vancouver BC  V7M 3H9

Statement of Limitation
The information in this publication is intended to provide general information only and is not intended to provide legal or professional advice. We have used plain language to help you understand your optional policy or some of the laws related to the topic of this publication. Information in this document is subject to change without notice. You should follow the more detailed wording and requirements of current applicable statutes and regulations or policy, even if they contradict the wording and requirements set out in this publication.

ICBC.com
Welcome to B.C.

At ICBC, we’re working to keep auto insurance rates low and stable and provide hassle-free service.

We’re here for you. Our Autoplan insurance products and services are available through more than 900 independent brokers. Our driver licensing services are available through approximately 120 offices, including driver licensing offices, expressways, Service BC centres and appointed agents’ offices throughout B.C. And if you have a claim, you can report it any time through our 24-hour telephone claims line.

Find your nearest service location at icbc.com.

About your driver's licence

Now that I’m in B.C., how long can I use my driver’s licence from another place?

If you move to B.C., you can use your valid driver’s licence from another province or country for up to 90 days.

If you’re a tourist or aren’t a resident, you can drive in B.C. for up to six months as long as you have a valid driver’s licence from outside B.C. After that time, you need a valid B.C. driver’s licence to drive here.

If you’re a temporary foreign worker in the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, you can use your valid driver’s licence from another country for up to one year before needing to get a B.C. driver’s licence.

What if I am a student?

You don’t need to get a B.C. driver’s licence if:

- you have a valid driver’s licence from your home jurisdiction and
- are registered as a student and attending one of the B.C. educational institutions listed on icbc.com in the Driver Licensing section.

You need to carry your valid out-of-province licence and your current school ID when driving in B.C.

How do I apply for a B.C. driver’s licence?

It’s best to go to a driver licensing office and apply for your B.C. driver’s licence well within 90 days of moving here.

You need to be at least 16 years old to apply.

Difficulty communicating in English? Please bring someone to help translate for you. You’ll need to provide personal information and be able to understand the driving rules in B.C.

You’ll need to turn in your out-of-province licence. If your current driver’s licence isn’t in English, you’ll need to provide a translation — by an approved translator. To find a translator, check the Yellow Pages. Be sure to ask if they are approved by ICBC to do driver’s licence translations. Pick up the translation forms at any driver licensing office.

You may need to complete a knowledge test, vision screening and a road test in order to get your licence. If you need a road test, you’ll need to make an appointment. If you have a Canadian, American, Australian, Austrian, French, German, Japanese, Netherlands, New Zealand, Swiss, South Korean or United Kingdom licence, you can usually exchange your licence the same day. Knowledge and road testing may not be required.

If you want to find out about driver licence fees, go to icbc.com/driver-licensing/fees.

Will there be any restrictions on my B.C. licence?

We have a Graduated Licensing Program (GLP), which means it takes new drivers about three years to earn our full-privilege driver’s licence. When you apply for a full-privilege driver’s licence, you need to prove you’ve held a non-learner licence for more than 24 months.

Your out-of-province driver’s licence will often be enough to prove your driving experience. We use the issue date shown on your licence to figure out the length of time you’ve been eligible to drive. If you renewed your licence within the last two years, you may also need to get a driving record or letter of experience from the licensing authority where your licence came from.

If your driving privileges were previously suspended, that time doesn’t count as credit for driving experience.
How do I apply for my discount?

You need to provide a letter from your previous insurance company (not your previous insurance broker). The letter must be on the insurance company's letterhead and include:

- name of the vehicle owner or principal operator
- policy number
- dates of coverage
- details of any claims paid by that insurance company.

If you can’t provide this letter when you go to your Autoplan broker, you’ll pay the base rate (no discount or surcharge) for your insurance.

If you can provide the information within six months from the time you get your vehicle licence and insurance, we’ll give you the discount that applies to you and you’ll get a refund. But there is a $20 non-refundable application fee per vehicle. See your local Autoplan broker to apply for this discount.

What is the maximum discount on my insurance?

The maximum discount for new residents is 40 per cent off your Basic insurance premiums, if you have provided us with a claim-free record for at least eight years. If you continue to drive claim free in B.C., you’ll qualify for further discounts and benefits.

Can my B.C. plates and insurance be transferred to another vehicle?

In B.C., your licence plates are assigned to you for use on a specific vehicle. If you sell or dispose of your vehicle, you may transfer your licence plates to a replacement vehicle that you have just purchased, provided it’s the same type of vehicle as the one it’s replacing (e.g., passenger vehicle replacing a passenger vehicle, pick-up truck replacing a pick-up truck) and provided that neither vehicle is of a type that use restricted plates (i.e., golf carts, snowmobiles, snow vehicles, riding mowers, trucksters and ATVs).

You must see your Autoplan broker to have the transfer validated within 10 days of buying the replacement vehicle. If you wish to cancel your insurance, you must return your plates to an Autoplan broker.

Front and rear licence plates must be displayed on all vehicles except motorcycles, trailers, and vehicles that use restricted plates. For all of these vehicles, only a rear licence plate is required to be displayed.

B.C. plates may not be attached to a vehicle that is not yet registered in B.C. Carry the plates inside the vehicle along with the new vehicle’s bill of sale, proof that you sold or disposed of your old vehicle and a temporary licence from the other jurisdiction. Your Autoplan policy will provide insurance coverage for up to 10 days from the date of purchase.

To complete a transfer of ownership, you need to take:

- the signed seller’s copy of the Vehicle Registration,
- a signed Transfer/Tax Form, and
- your licence and insurance to an Autoplan broker within 10 days of the date of purchase.

What if I’m only in B.C. for a short time?

If you license and insure a vehicle here and leave B.C. with it before the insurance expires, you can cancel the licence and insurance and you may be eligible for a refund.

There are special provisions for full-time students and members of the armed forces. If you’re a full-time student enrolled in an institution recognized in British Columbia’s Motor Vehicle Act (see What if I am a student?), or if you’re a member of the armed forces in B.C. for training purposes, you’ll need a non-resident permit. You’ll need to contact ICBC’s Specialty Licensing/Insurance Department at 604-443-4624 or 1-800-665-4336 within 30 days of arriving in B.C.

Tourists don’t have to register and license their vehicles if they’re only using them for touring purposes for less than six months. But if you become a resident, or are working here, you must insure and license your vehicle here within 30 days.

How long is my Autoplan insurance in effect if I move outside B.C.?

Your Autoplan policy will remain in effect until its expiry date, as long as your policy reflects that you’ll be operating the vehicle outside of B.C. Talk to your Autoplan broker to change the rating territory of your licence and insurance policy before you leave the province.

But even though your Autoplan coverage remains in effect, your new jurisdiction’s registration and licensing requirements take priority. Before leaving B.C., you should contact your new jurisdiction and confirm their registration and licensing requirements.

If you need to cancel your Autoplan policy, you can apply for a refund for the remaining time on your policy.
If you have an out-of-province learner’s licence, you can apply for a GLP learner’s licence. To find out more about GLP, go to icbc.com or our nearest driver licensing office.

What identification do I need?

Bring in two pieces of identification, one primary and one secondary. You can find out more about acceptable identification at icbc.com/driver licensing.

If your full legal name’s different from the name on either of your identification documents, you must also show us a legal name change certificate or marriage certificate. If you’ve had more than one name change, you’ll need to bring all the documentation related to these changes.

I’m a commercial driver. What happens when I move to B.C.?

If you’ve already held a commercial driver’s licence in Canada for more than 24 months and you meet our age requirements, you can exchange your current commercial driver’s licence for a B.C. equivalent. You’ll need to have your vision tested and get a medical report, but knowledge and road testing may not be required.

If you’re from outside Canada and want to get a B.C. commercial driver’s licence, you’ll have to:
• meet our age requirement for the class of licence,
• prove at least 24 months’ non-learner driving experience, and
• pass all applicable written, medical and road tests.

About your vehicle registration and insurance

How do I register and insure my vehicle?

If you move here with a vehicle (or if you’re a returning B.C. resident), you need to register, license and insure the vehicle within 30 days of arriving. If you’re driving a commercial motor vehicle, it must be registered, licensed and insured in B.C. immediately.

Passenger vehicles and most other vehicles will need to pass a mechanical safety inspection at a B.C. designated inspection facility before they can be registered, licensed and insured. These facilities are listed in the Yellow Pages under “Vehicle Inspection Service” or visit www.th.gov.bc.ca/cvse.

When your vehicle has passed the inspection, take the vehicle, the inspection report and the Vehicle Registration to any Autoplan broker to register, license and insure it. You’ll need to hand in your out-of-province plates. Make sure you bring valid primary ID and one piece of secondary ID. Go to icbc.com to confirm acceptable ID.

If you move to Vancouver, the Lower Mainland or the Fraser Valley, your vehicle may have to go through an AirCare test— basically, a test to measure how much pollution your vehicle produces. If you fail AirCare, you will need to repair your vehicle so it pollutes less. Although your vehicle won’t have to go through AirCare if you’re registering it for the first time, it may still have to pass an emissions test before its first insurance renewal.

All vehicles that fail an AirCare inspection must be repaired to comply with AirCare emissions standards (The government of B.C. has announced that light-duty vehicles will no longer require emissions testing after Dec. 31, 2014). Vehicle owners have the option of performing the repairs themselves, having repairs performed by a non-certified repair technician or by one of the AirCare Certified Repair Centres. As long as the vehicle passes re-inspection, it doesn’t matter who did the repairs. Contact AirCare at 604-930-5633 or visit www.aircare.ca for more information.

If you’re importing a vehicle into B.C. from the United States, you’ll need to contact the Registrar of Imported Vehicles at 1-888-848-8240 or visit www.riv.ca.

The Motor Vehicle Safety Act and Regulations require that all vehicles imported into Canada must comply with the Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. Please contact Transport Canada, Road Safety and Motor Vehicle Regulation Directorate at 1-800-333-0371 for further information or visit their website www.tc.gc.ca/roadsafety/importation/menu.htm to make sure your vehicle meets Canadian standards.

As a new resident, am I entitled to a discount on my insurance?

Yes, depending on your insurance and claims history for all policies and all drivers named. ICBC rewards claim-free motorists with discounts and adds surcharges for motorists who have caused crashes or other damage. Ask your local Autoplan broker where you fit into this plan.

Discounts or surcharges are calculated on a yearly basis and take effect when you buy or renew your insurance.