

HIRING A CAR IN NEW ZEALAND



With so much misinformation and confusion attached to hiring a car in New Zealand, or any country for that matter, we have endeavoured to give you the essential facts in plain English.

It is important you understand the terminology and what exactly you are paying for. If in doubt, do ask us before you leave for New Zealand.

Budget New Zealand

Silver Fern Holidays has had a commercial agreement with Budget New Zealand through our inbound operator for 15 years. They offer attractive terms for our travellers and have a good record for resolving issues during the course of a hire and after hire.



However, they are not perfect, and as with many rentals the effectiveness of the service depends very much on whom is at the Reservations desk when you arrive to take the car. Hence the necessity to check all the paperwork and to know their terms and conditions.

All prices based on exchange rates at the time of printing 08.10.2025

1 The Budget/Avis Car Fleet

All cars in the Budget Fleet are now automatic- with so many American and Chinese travellers in the country it doesn't make sense for the main brand companies to hold manual vehicles. Unless you specify otherwise, the vehicle type we would usually assign you is a "Compact Hatch" - a Toyota Corolla or similar 1.6, 5 Door Hatch, which is most suitable for two people and drives well on New Zealand roads.

If you do wish to upgrade to a larger vehicle, this would be a compact SUV, a Toyota Corolla or Mitsubishi ASX or similar at extra cost.

Models change on a regular basis and we cannot guarantee a specific model. Bluetooth and USB are included in all cars. There is a 100% smoke free policy for the whole fleet.

2 Driving Licence Requirement

All drivers must hold a full current non probationary licence. At present the British paper licence is acceptable (but this may change) or the standard issued licence with photograph. Additional Authorised drivers have to be registered on the rental agreement. We can request an additional driver be added to the hire. Payment is made on collection of your vehicle and costs may vary depending on location, the age of the driver and the vehicle that is hired.



3 GPS Hire

We can only request a GPS for your vehicle and there is no guarantee that one will be available or that an in-built one will be in your vehicle. A smart phone with recourse to Google Maps is a useful piece of equipment!



4 Airport/ Ferry Fees

An Airport/ Wharf fee of \$54.00 (£27.00 approx) applies for all hires commencing or terminating at an airport or ferry location.

So this means if your trip finishes at Christchurch Airport you will pay this surcharge directly to Budget at the time of rental.

5 One Way Fees

These will rarely apply to your hire – since in most cases they only apply to hires of less than 7 days -and if a vehicle is collected from one location and dropped at another.

6 Continuous Hire

If your hire does not have a 24 hour break in it from first collection in Auckland to final drop at Christchurch Airport, then this is considered a continuous hire and follows the same contract that you signed in Auckland (so you do need to keep hold of the contract).

For example, if you're returning your vehicle to the Christchurch City depot after your journey through the North Island and top of the South Island; you may have one day in Christchurch before you catch the TransAlpine train at 8.00 am to Greymouth the next day – this would be treated as a continuous hire because you arrive into Greymouth at 12.00 (less than 24 hours since your previous hire).

However, if you have two days in Christchurch – which we suggest – unless you hold onto the car for at least a day in Christchurch, this will be treated as two separate hires and you will need to fill out a separate contract hire in Greymouth.

You have to balance this slight inconvenience against the smoothness of your travel plans.

7 Excess Reduction

This is where most travellers are either confused or switch off – so hang on in there! Budget does cover what they call "Standard Motor Vehicle Damage Waiver". This means they will cover damage to the vehicle regardless of the party at fault up to a certain amount- but you are liable to pay an "excess" of \$5,350 (approx £2,500) or for a larger vehicle \$6,150 (approx £2,795.00). You can reduce this excess by paying an Excess Reduction charge.

Budget also offer Roadside Assistance Plus at \$12.00 (approx £7.00 a day) which covers

Out Of Fuel, Key Replacement, Flat Tyre Assistance, Tyre Replacement, Flat Battery, Windscreen Replacement.

These charges are all included in your contract if you request them.

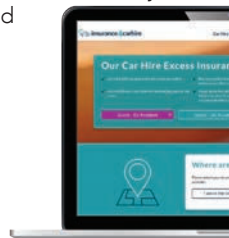
The alternative is to purchase Annual Excess Insurance in the UK.

An Annual Excess Reimbursement policy covers all the above (ie both "Excess" and Roadside Assistance) and the policy is annual which means it will apply to any rentals you may have abroad in addition to your New Zealand car hire.

There are now a number of companies that offer this type of insurance – one, which many Silver Fern Travellers have used and have recommended is

Insurance4carhire
www.insurance4carhire.com

Please note Silver Fern Holidays has no commercial contract or interest in this company.



8 Credit Card Requirement

A Credit card issued in your name must be provided at the time you collect the vehicle. A minimum of \$100 (Approx £55.00) pre-authorisation will be charged plus the total value of the optional extras – Airport/Wharf Fees; Excess (if you want it); Fuel and any extensions to your hire.

If no optional extras are taken the initial pre-authorisation will be refunded on completion of the hire.

A Card transaction Fee of 2-3 % may apply.

9 Fueling the car at the end of your rental period

It is always more cost effective to fill up your vehicle with fuel from a nearby garage before you return it to the airport or depot. There are garages close by in Auckland and Christchurch – don't be afraid to ask the reservations assistant where they are!

10 Remove all your possessions from the vehicle

And finally do remember to take everything out of the car when you have completed your journey – Budget have a good record at retrieving lost property but there are no guarantees!

Enjoy the Drive!