

Car Rental Terms Explained

When you dream of vacation in some exotic location, does your image include waiting in line for a bus, or hailing a taxi on a crowded city street? Of course not. When you travel, a car rental is a great substitute for other transportation choices. There are countless car rental agencies here at home, and around the world, that are ready to cater to your particular needs and meet your budget.

If you're renting a car for the first time, there are some car rental terms that you must be aware of. Otherwise, you may end up paying additional (and unnecessary) fees and charges. Every car rental agency has its own unique set of terms and conditions that must be stipulated in the rental contract, however many individuals don't take the time to read this fine print. The result is a load of unexpected fees and charges, payable when the vehicle is returned.

To better prepare yourself for your first car rental experience, take the time to become familiar with the various car rental terms:

* Rental Cars

This may seem like a given, but it really is the cornerstone of your agreement. Rental cars are defined as "motorized vehicles that contain at least four wheels, and are used for the purpose of private transportation of persons or goods by the client within a specified period of time". The purpose of rental cars, however, is left entirely to the discretion of the client. He or she is free to use the vehicle to meet his or her individual preferences and requirements, whether for pleasure or business purposes.

There are many different types of car rentals offered by agencies:

- * Luxury cars
- * Pickup trucks
- * Economy cars
- * Sports utility vehicles
- * Premium cars
- * Mini Vans
- * Cargo vans
- * Other vehicles

There are two basic types of rates that are applied when renting a vehicle:

* **Basic rate:** This rate is applied when customers use their credit cards for insurance coverage payments

* **Inclusive rate:** When insurance is provided by the rental agency, the rate is called 'inclusive'.

The following list covers some of the basic terms and conditions required for car rentals. Recognizing and understanding these terms will help you to be better prepared for the rates you'll be asked to pay:

* **Airport access fees:** If you pick your rental car up at the airport, you'll pay a higher rate. The airport access fee may be charged as a flat rate, or as a certain percentage of the entire rental charge. This depends upon the country in which you're traveling. Airport administrators may also charge additional parking fees.

* **Collision damage waiver:** Your car rental firm may charge an additional fee to cover any damages that may occur during your rental term. In most cases, this plan will not cover other parts of the car such as tires, windows, side mirrors, roof and the interior of the vehicle.

* **Personal accident insurance:** This financial compensation is offered to the driver and passengers in the event of an accident involving the rented cars. This additional policy is normally purchased from the car rental firm before the rental car is removed from the lot.

* **Road taxes and fees:** Depending upon the place where you will travel, you may be required to pay road taxes and additional charges to help maintain public roads and highways.

* **Refueling provisions:** Read your agreement carefully to understand your obligations regarding refueling. In most cases, it's your responsibility to return the rented car with a full tank. If the tank is not full, you will be charged an increased rate per every gallon of gas required to fill the tank.

Save time and money by knowing and understanding these basic car rental terms and conditions.