

A GUIDE FOR YOUR MOVE TO INDIA

Driving & Your *Licence*

When you can drive on your home licence, the exact steps to get an Indian one, or the route many assignees choose, a driver. Honest, practical, and step-by-step.

~1 yr on a foreign licence

3 ways to get around

Where expertise meets empathy.

Prepared for assignees relocating to India.

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Getting around India behind the wheel has three honest answers: **drive on your foreign licence** at first, **get an Indian licence** if you'll stay and drive, or do what many assignees do given the traffic, **hire a driver**. None is wrong; it depends on your city, commute and comfort. Here's each, with the exact licence process and what it costs.

~1 _{yr} DRIVE ON A VALID FOREIGN LICENCE	~₹1,000 IDP, FROM YOUR HOME COUNTRY	₹15-30k FULL-TIME DRIVER, PER MONTH	₹150-300 A 10 KM RIDE-HAIL
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DO THIS BEFORE YOU FLY

Get an **International Driving Permit (IDP)** in your home country if your licence isn't in English, it's issued where your licence is and **cannot easily be obtained once you've left**. With it (plus your home licence), you can drive in India for roughly your first year. Carry both, plus your passport.

YOUR THREE OPTIONS



1 · Your foreign licence

Drive on it (with an IDP if needed) for up to about a year



2 · An Indian licence

Apply at your local RTO if you will stay and drive yourself



3 · Hire a driver

The popular choice, affordable, and far less stressful



Or skip it

Uber, Ola, Rapido and metros cover most daily trips

OPTION 1 · AT FIRST

Driving on your foreign licence

For your first months you can usually drive on your **valid foreign licence**, provided it's in English, otherwise carry an **IDP** alongside it. This generally holds for up to **about a year** from arrival (or until your visa expires, whichever is first). India drives on the **left**; traffic is fast, busy and improvisational, so give yourself time before city-centre driving.

OPTION 2 · THE STEP-BY-STEP

Getting an Indian licence

It's done at the **RTO** (Regional Transport Office) for where you live, through the national [Sarathi \(Parivahan\)](#) portal. How a valid foreign licence is treated, and whether the driving test is waived, **varies by state**, so your consultant confirms the local route. The general path:

- 1

Gather your documents
Passport & visa, FRRO/Residential Permit or address proof, your valid foreign licence (a translation/embassy attestation may be asked for), a medical certificate (Form 1 self-declaration, or Form 1A from a doctor if you're 40+ or applying for a transport licence), and passport photos.
- 2

Apply for a Learner's Licence
On [Sarathi](#): submit the learner's application (Form 2) with your documents, pay the fee, book a slot, and pass the computer test on road signs & rules, your learner's licence is then issued.
- 3

Apply for the permanent licence & take the test
After the learner's period, apply for the permanent licence (Form 4) and pass the driving test of competence. Some states recognise a valid foreign licence and simplify or waive the test, confirm locally.
- 4

Receive your Indian licence
On passing, your permanent licence is issued (often a smart card by post). It's valid across India.

Your IKAN consultant can guide you through the local RTO and the documents, the process and test requirement genuinely vary by state, so confirm the current route for your city.

OPTION 3 · THE EASY LIFE

Hiring a driver, or riding

It's why so many assignees never drive here: a full-time driver turns a stressful commute into desk-time. Hire through a reputable agency or by referral, we'll help you find someone vetted. Prefer flexibility? Uber, Ola and Rapido are everywhere, and the metros are excellent. Typical 2026 costs:

Full-time personal driver		₹15-30k/mo
Ride-hail (per 10 km)		₹150-300
Auto-rickshaw (per 10 km)		₹100-180
Metro day (smart card)		₹30-80

Uber

Cars & autos, app-based, cashless

Widest in metros

Ola

Local rival; cars, autos, bikes

Strong coverage

Rapido

Bike & auto taxis, beat the traffic

Fast & cheap

BEFORE YOU SET OFF

Road basics worth knowing



Drive on the left

Right-hand-drive cars; overtaking on the right



Carry your papers

Licence, RC, insurance & PUC (emissions) certificate



FASTag for tolls

A windscreen tag auto-pays highway tolls



Expect the unexpected

Horns, two-wheelers, animals, drive defensively



Buying, leasing or a company car? Many assignees lease or use a company car with a driver, often simplest. Buying makes sense only for longer stays. Either way, at least third-party **insurance is required by law**; comprehensive is strongly advised, and a driver should be covered too.

OFFICIAL RESOURCES

Sarathi (Parivahan)

Learner's & driving licence, all states

Parivahan Sewa

RTO services, IDP, vehicle & FASTag

Uber · Ola · Rapido

Ride-hailing apps (cars, autos, bikes)

How IKAN helps

- ✓ We advise whether a **licence or a driver** suits your city, commute and stay
- ✓ We guide you through the **local RTO process** and the documents it needs
- ✓ We help you **find a vetted, reliable driver**, or set up car-lease options
- ✓ We point you to **insurance, FASTag and the apps** that make daily travel easy

Driving · quick checklist

- ☐ Get an **IDP before you leave home** (if your licence isn't in English)
- ☐ Decide: **drive yourself** or **hire a driver** for your city
- ☐ If driving, start your **Learner's Licence** on Sarathi
- ☐ Install **Uber, Ola & Rapido**; set up **FASTag** if you'll drive
- ☐ Confirm **insurance** covers you and any driver

Whether you drive or hire, we'll set you up to get around safely from day one. Questions any time.

Your IKAN Relocations team

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