

VEHICLE REGISTRATION MARKS including marks offered for sale and purchased through DVA's Sales Scheme must be displayed in accordance with The Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001 (obtainable from HMSO).

The Regulations specify the typeface, the size, colouring and the British Standard that number plates must conform to (the alternative provisions for motorcycles, tricycles and traditional plates are also shown below).

### Normal requirements

All vehicles manufactured after 1.1.73 must display number plates of reflex-reflecting material, white at the front and yellow at the rear, the characters must be black. In addition, the characters on number plates purchased from 1.9.01 will need to conform to the following specifications.



|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Character height                                  | 79 mm |
| Character width (except the figure 1 or letter I) | 50 mm |
| Character stroke                                  | 14 mm |
| Space between characters                          | 11 mm |
| Space between groups                              | 33 mm |
| Top, bottom and side margins (minimum)            | 11 mm |
| Space between vertical lines                      | 19 mm |

### Motorcycles and Tricycles

There are separate provisions for motorcycles and tricycles. Basically motorcycles and tricycles registered after 1.9.2001 must only display a number plate at the rear of the vehicle. Motorcycles and tricycles registered before 1.9.2001 can display a number plate at the front but are not required to. Additionally the characters may be smaller e.g.



|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Character height                                  | 64 mm |
| Character width (except the figure 1 or letter I) | 44 mm |
| Character stroke                                  | 10 mm |
| Space between characters                          | 10 mm |
| Space between groups                              | 30 mm |
| Top, bottom and side margins (minimum)            | 11 mm |
| Space between vertical lines                      | 13 mm |

### Traditional plates for vehicles constructed before 1 January 1973

Vehicles constructed before 1.1.73 may display traditional style "black and white" plate's i.e. white, silver or grey characters on a black plate.

### Number plates fitted before 1 September 2001

Number plates fitted before 1 September 2001 must display characters that meet the dimensions shown in one of the two groups below:

|   | Group 1 | Group 2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Character height                                  | 89 mm   | 79 mm   |
| Character width (except the figure 1 or letter I) | 64 mm   | 57 mm   |
| Character stroke                                  | 16 mm   | 14 mm   |
| Space between characters                          | 13 mm   | 11 mm   |
| Space between groups                              | 38 mm   | 33 mm   |
| Side margins (minimum)                            | 13 mm   | 11 mm   |
| Top and bottom margins (minimum)                  | 13 mm   | 11 mm   |
| Space between vertical lines                      | 19 mm   | 19 mm   |



## The Euro-symbol

Motorists may, if they wish, display the Euro symbol and GB national identifier on the number plate. This will dispense with the need for a separate GB sticker when travelling within the EU.

The symbol must conform to the EC Council Regulation 2411/98 which states the height must be a minimum of 98mm, the width must be a minimum of 40mm, maximum of 50mm. The background must be of retro-reflecting blue with 12 retro-reflecting yellow stars at the top and the distinguishing sign of the Member State (GB) in retro-reflecting white or yellow. An example is shown below:



## The Mandatory Typeface

All number plates made after 31.8.01 must display the mandatory typeface. Number plates made prior to this date must be *substantially* the same. An example of the typeface is shown below.

**I23456789  
ABCDEFGHI  
JKLMNOPQ  
RSTUVWXYZ**

## The British Standard

The British Standard sets out the physical characteristics of the number plate. This includes visibility, strength and reflectivity. The British Standard also requires each number plate to be permanently and legibly marked with the following information:-

1. The British Standard number (currently BS AU 145d).
2. The name, trade mark or other means of identification of the manufacturer or component supplier.
3. Name and postcode of the supplying outlet.

## Offences

It is an offence to alter, rearrange or misrepresent letter or numbers in order to form names or words or in such a way that makes it difficult to read the registration number. Characters must not be moved from one block to the other e.g. ABC2 424. Vehicles with illegally displayed number plates may FAIL the MoT test. The police can also issue fixed penalty fines for illegally displayed number plates. Offenders are liable to a MAXIMUM FINE of £1,000 and in some cases the mark may be withdrawn.

For vehicles with new or replacement number plates fitted after 31.8.01, "3-line" number plates are no longer permitted.

