



Car hire in Stockholm, Sweden: our tips and advice

By Floriane

If you're here, you're probably planning a trip to Sweden, and the same question comes up again and again: **where can I rent a car to explore the Stockholm area?**

In this guide, we share everything you need to know to **rent a car in Stockholm without making a mistake**: where to book, when to book, what type of vehicle to choose, how much a **car rental in Stockholm** costs, what mistakes to avoid, and when a car can really make the difference during a stay or **road trip from Stockholm**.

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Why rent a car in Stockholm?

Of course, if you rent a car, it's not to [visit Stockholm](#) with it. In fact, the opposite is true. The Swedish capital can be explored on foot, by metro, streetcar, bus, commuter train and even by ferry. Whether you're visiting Gamla Stan, Södermalm, Djurgården, Norrmalm or taking a trip to [the Stockholm archipelago](#), the transport system is really efficient.

On the other hand, as soon as you move beyond a simple city trip, the car becomes very interesting. During our trip to Sweden, we quickly realized that Stockholm is a great starting point for exploring the country. In just one day, you can reach **Sigtuna** and **Uppsala**, head off to a nature park, discover the quieter spots around Lake Mälaren, or start a longer itinerary to the south, or to Swedish Lapland if you're lucky like us, you might even come across some reindeer along the way.

The car brings 4 things to the table:

- **more freedom** to get out of Stockholm without being tied to a fixed timetable,
- **simpler** to link several stages in the same day, as distances between points of interest are long,
- **more comfort** if you're traveling as a family, with luggage, stroller or equipment for several days.
- It's one of our favorite countries in Europe to drive in, the roads are superbly well maintained, the Swedes drive very respectfully and the scenery is sublime.

It also comes in handy if you're planning a mixed trip: a few days in Stockholm, then several nights elsewhere. In this case, it's often advisable to **visit Stockholm first without a car**, and only collect the vehicle when you leave the capital. This is often the most logical solution, and also the most economical if you take parking and congestion charges into account.

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□ In summary: as is often the case, the car offers **total freedom**, find our itineraries after 1 and a half months spent in Sweden during our [road trip in Scandinavia](#):

- to discover [Stockholm's surroundings](#),
- to visit [Uppsala and Sigtuna](#) in the same day,
- to [visit Sweden](#) with our favorite places
- for a [road trip in southwest Sweden](#)

Sweden is one of our favorite countries for a European road trip!

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Where to rent a car in Stockholm

Rent a car at Stockholm-Arlanda airport

As is often the case, we recommend **renting a car at the airport**.

This is generally where you'll be landing and departing from, and it's also where you'll find the widest choice, and the most availability, especially in high season.

Specifically, if you arrive at Arlanda airport, the agencies are grouped together in the **P2 Long Term Beta** zone.

Another advantage: at the airport, you'll find all types of vehicles more easily. Whether you're looking for a small car, a luggage wagon, a family SUV, an automatic gearbox or an electric car, Arlanda airport generally offers the widest choice.

Why rent a car directly from the airport?

- simpler restitution before the return flight,
- greater choice of vehicles,
- often longer hours,
- immediate care on arrival,
- rates often more attractive than in the city center.

Another practical point: there's a shuttle bus between the terminals and the rental area. So even if the agencies aren't right next to the terminal exits, it's still very easy to manage.

➔ [View Stockholm-Arlanda airport car rentals](#)

Which is the best car rental company in Stockholm?

We prefer to be transparent: for us, there's no **universal "best rental company" in Stockholm**. Above all, there **is a better offer at the right time**. An agency

that's very well placed one day may be more expensive or less well covered a few weeks later. That's why, instead of focusing on a single brand, we recommend **comparing offers** in detail.

What really counts when booking is not just the name of the agency. Above all, it's :

- the final price,
- the amount of the deductible,
- the requested security deposit,
- cancellation conditions,
- insurance actually included,
- fuel policy,
- and, above all, **recent advice** on care and return.

For our part, we always find it more convenient to use the [Discovercars](#) comparator to see all this information in one place, rather than opening ten different agency websites. It also allows us to quickly spot offers that seem attractive at first, but become much less attractive once insurance or deductibles have been taken into account.

What we always look at first:

- **price with insurance**,
- **local agency reviews** to avoid unpleasant surprises,
- bank card conditions,
- and management of automatic charges such as **congestion tax**.

□ [Compare car rental rates in Stockholm](#)

How much does a car rental in Stockholm cost?

The budget for **car hire in Stockholm** varies greatly depending on the season, the pick-up location and when you book. It's much the same as in northern Europe: the longer you wait, the higher the price, especially in summer.

In the comparisons we see on a regular basis, we often have to count :

- **around €35 to €45 per day** in quieter periods for a small car,
- **60 to 80 € per day** in summer, sometimes more depending on the dates,
- more for an automatic gearbox, an SUV or a family car,

For example, here is a simulation for 6 days in June:

- **Classic car**: with **Europcar**, for less than €40 / day
- **Electric car**: with the agency **Europcar** 50€ / day

Insurance: what you really need to check in Sweden

As always with a [car rental](#), the least exciting part is often the most important. And in Stockholm, as elsewhere, this is often where you avoid unpleasant surprises.

Before booking, we strongly advise you to check :

- the **amount of the deductible**,
- the **security deposit** blocked on the card,
- coverage of **tires, windows, rims and rocker panels**,
- exclusions related to misuse of the vehicle,
- and procedures in the event of an accident or minor damage.

In Sweden, the roads are generally in very good condition, the driving is pleasant, and you don't set off with the same stress as in some more chaotic destinations. But that's not to say that nothing can happen. Between a tight parking space in Stockholm, a badly negotiated sidewalk, a small scratch or an impact, the bill can quickly climb if the deductible is high.

Our advice remains the same as for your other destinations: **always compare the final price with a clear cover**, not just the lowest rate displayed at the start. Paying a little more at the time of booking can save a lot of stress at the counter, or worse, when returning the vehicle.

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□ **Our advice:** take the [DiscoverCars full coverage](#) (approx. €11 per day). may seem to represent an additional cost at the time of booking (it's sometimes higher than the rental price), but above all it's a way of traveling with peace of mind. A simple impact on the windscreen or a small fender-bender can quickly become costly, and this kind of detail can ruin a trip.

It's often **far less expensive than over-the-counter insurance**, covering up to several thousand euros in costs.

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What type of car should I rent in Sweden?

Small car, station wagon or SUV?

For Stockholm and the surrounding area, we find that a **compact car** is often the best choice. It's easier to park, consumes less fuel and is more than sufficient for many excursions around the capital.

If you're traveling with the family, with stroller, large suitcases or equipment for several days, or if you're planning a longer road trip, a **station wagon** or **compact SUV** is more comfortable, especially when it comes to trunk space.

□ For example, one road trip idea is to [rent a car in Stockholm](#) and then return it to [Goteborg airport](#). This way you can explore Sweden's west coast and its small fishing villages.

Manual or automatic transmission?

Both are readily available in Stockholm, but **automatic boxes** are often more expensive and go faster in busy periods. If you're so inclined, it's best to book early. If you're comfortable with a manual gearbox, it opens up more options and can sometimes bring the budget down a little.

Electric cars in Sweden: good or bad idea?

Stockholm and Sweden lend themselves well to electric cars. If you're used to driving electric, this is an option worth considering. The recharging network is well developed, the capital and surrounding areas are well equipped, and for excursions around Stockholm, it can be a very good option.

On the other hand, as always with electrics, you have to be honest with your comfort level on the subject. If you've never dealt with recharging on a trip before, or don't want to add another variable to your organization, or you're leaving right away for a long road trip with lots of stages, a classic or hybrid model is sometimes simpler.

If you choose an electric one, remember to check at the counter:

- useful recharge cards or applications,

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- cable supplied,
- return conditions concerning battery level,
- and how fast recharging works.

✂ The most important thing is not just the type of motorization, but above all **the ease of use** depending on your route.

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Driving in Stockholm and Sweden: what you need to know

Driving in Sweden is generally very pleasant. The roads are well maintained, the driving is smoother and calmer than in France in many places, and you quickly feel that you can drive with peace of mind. In Stockholm itself, however, there are a few peculiarities to bear in mind.

In Stockholm

Downtown isn't the most pleasant part of a road trip. Between the traffic, the denser zones, the expensive parking, the congestion charge and the short trips that can be made on foot or by public transport, time is rarely saved by trying to do everything by car.

If you have to drive in Stockholm, it's best to :

- avoid rush hours,
- plan your parking before you arrive,
- check the exact address of your accommodation,
- and don't improvise your parking at the last minute.

Around Stockholm

As soon as you leave the city, driving becomes much more pleasant. This is where we find what we love about Sweden: clean roads, soothing landscapes, a feeling of space, wooded areas, lakes, small harbors, and that feeling that nature is never far away.

For this, the car is really handy. It makes it easy to get to **Sigtuna**, **Uppsala**, more natural areas or road trip destinations without having to juggle several connections.

You' ll find great trails, picnic tables, playgrounds, cabins and, very often, fireplaces.

We found Sweden's public infrastructure incredibly well maintained.

Rules of conduct in Sweden

- We drive **on the right**.
- **Low beam headlights** must be on at all times, even in broad daylight.
- The alcohol limit is **very low**.
- Speed limits are strict and must be respected. We really appreciated the Swedish way of driving and the fact that most drivers respect the rules.
- Outside urban areas, keep an eye out for **animals**, especially early in the morning or at the end of the day.

To put it plainly, driving in Sweden is not particularly difficult, but it does require rigor. You don't "save" time by driving faster, and the general atmosphere is one of calm, respectful driving.

Congestion tax in Stockholm: what you need to know

If there's one subject that many people are discovering a little late, it's this one. In Stockholm, there is a **congestion charge** that applies to certain car passages, particularly in and around the city center. If you rent a car without asking beforehand, this can quickly seem like a small charge out of nowhere on the way back.

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The principle is simple: cameras record passages and the fee is calculated automatically according to the time of day. It applies on weekdays, at specific times, and covers both **central Stockholm** and **Essingeleden**.

The most important thing to remember:

- the amount varies according to the time of day,
- there is a **daily ceiling**,
- operation is **automatic**,
- and with a [rental car](#), the rental company can **charge** you this tax.

In practice, this means that poorly-placed accommodation, several unnecessary round-trips or a car taken too early in the trip can push up the bill without you really realizing it at the time.

Our advice is simple: **ask the question clearly at the counter**. Ask how the congestion tax is managed, when it is debited, if there are any administrative charges, and how it will appear on your final bill.

It's not a complicated subject, but it's clearly one to anticipate. Our advice: pick up your car at the airport to avoid the tax zone.

Parking in Stockholm: the real point of vigilance

If there's one expense that often comes as a surprise in Stockholm, it's **parking**. In the city center, parking can be expensive, and above all requires a bit of organization.

If you are staying in Stockholm itself, we strongly advise you to check this point before booking your car:

- Does your hotel have a parking lot?
- is this parking lot private or public?
- how much does it cost for 24 hours?
- do I need to reserve a place in advance?

On a short stay, parking can sometimes weigh almost as much as the car itself. That's why it often makes more sense to pick up the vehicle only when leaving the city.

If you still have to park in Stockholm, it's best to aim for a clearly marked **garage** or parking lot, rather than driving around for a long time. You'll waste less time, and often less money too. Parking apps are very useful, and take a lot of the stress out of parking.

Another interesting solution: if you're sleeping outside the city center or returning to Stockholm after a day out, **park-and-ride** may be a good option. This allows you to leave your car outside the city center and then finish the journey by public transport, which is very much in keeping with the way the city works.

Winter conditions, winter tires and winter driving

In Sweden, winter is not a detail. And even if Stockholm doesn't always have the most extreme conditions in the country, it's still an essential point when it comes to **car hire in Stockholm in winter**.

The first thing you need to know is that **winter tires** are compulsory on light cars when there are winter conditions on the road between December 1 and March 31. This also applies to vehicles registered abroad. To put it plainly: if you rent a car during this period, this point must be handled properly by the rental company.

We still advise you to check it out in black and white, especially if you're traveling at the beginning or end of the season. Better one question too many at the counter than a doubt once you've left.

Studded tires are also permitted at certain times, but may be restricted on certain streets in cities like Stockholm. If you're not really leaving the capital, this won't make much difference to you. If you're going further afield, or if conditions are really wintry, the subject may become more important.

In winter, our advice is simple:

- take a car that's easy to drive,
- avoid unnecessary journeys in central Stockholm,
- leave more room for maneuvering,
- and really adapt your driving to the weather.

The good news is that Sweden is used to winter. The roads are well maintained, the drivers are well trained, and the organization is generally very good. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't drive carefully.

Mistakes to avoid when renting a car in Sweden

- **Taking the car too early:** if you stay in Stockholm first, you risk adding parking and tax congestion to your budget.
- **Book at the last minute in summer:** good prices and the most practical models go fast.
- **Choosing a car that's too big:** more stress for parking, more budget, and not necessarily more useful.
- **Don't check the security deposit:** some deposits are really high.
- **Don't look at what your insurance actually covers:** tires, rims, glazing or rocker panels may be excluded.
- **Forget the congestion tax:** it's better to know from the outset how it will be charged.
- **Underestimating the cost of parking:** this is one of the real pitfalls of a stay with a car in Stockholm.
- **Don't take photos:** even a micro-scratch can make all the difference.
- **Don't ask any questions about an electric car:** cable, badge, app, battery level on the return journey – all these things need to be clear.

Checklist to be completed before collecting your rental car in Stockholm

Before you hit the road, we really recommend that you take two minutes to check these points before setting off with your [rental car in Stockholm](#):

Please check

✓ /
Notes

- Driver's license, credit card, booking confirmation
- Name of main driver identical to that on bank card
- Exact amount of blocked security deposit
- Insurances included and excluded (tires, windows, rims, rocker panels)
- Fuel policy or battery level on departure and return
- Unlimited or limited mileage
- Vehicle condition: photos/video taken before departure
- Presence of useful equipment (triangle, vest, recharging cable if electric)
- Tax congestion management in Stockholm and possible administrative costs
- Parking instructions and possible restrictions if studded tires in winter
- Assistance number and procedure in the event of breakdown or collision

Please check

✓ /
Notes

Exact time and place of return

☐ [Compare car rental rates in Stockholm](#)

Before you leave, take a look at our other articles to help you organize the rest of your stay:

- [What to do in Stockholm](#)
- [How many days will it take to visit Stockholm?](#)
- [What to do around Stockholm](#)
- [Visiting Uppsala and Sigtuna](#)
- [How to visit the Stockholm archipelago?](#)
- [Our road trip in southwest Sweden](#)

Don't hesitate to leave us a **note** or **5 stars** below, to let us know if you're planning this trip, to ask any questions you may have, below we'll answer you with great pleasure. You can check out our [Instagram stories from our trip to Sweden](#), to give you a taste of what's in store!

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