



Guidance for Freedom Camping in Campervans and Motorhomes in Scotland

A campervan or motorhome holiday is a great way to explore the vast, rich and varied natural beauty of Scotland. There are plenty of fantastic campsites spread all over Scotland which provide great bases from which to explore.

There are also lots of opportunities to freedom camp with your vehicle (wild parking overnight in non-designated sites without facilities). You'll never find an approved list of these places, as that would direct too many people to the same site and ruin it very quickly. As there are an increasing number of people wanting to enjoy this way of experiencing Scotland, it is important to follow the simple, and common sense guidance below. In doing so, you'll hopefully help support a sustainable way of experiencing Scotland.... and we will all be able to enjoy freedom camping for many years to come.

Access Rights

Scotland is rightly very proud of its access rights; however when you are looking for places to freedom camp in a campervan or motorhome, it is important to bear in mind the following key points:

- Scottish access rights and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code don't apply to motor vehicles.
- The Road Traffic Act 1988 states that you can drive a vehicle up to 15 yards off a public road for the purpose of parking, but this does not confer any right to park the vehicle. Most un-metalled roads, unfenced land and beaches are private property, and you don't have a right to park unless it's authorised by the landowner by verbal agreement or signage.
- In practice, informal off-road parking takes place in many parts of rural Scotland, often in well-established places, without causing undue concern.
- Some communities (e.g. Calgary Bay on Mull and the whole island of Tiree) have established their own guidance for campervans and the use of designated overnight parking spaces... if you're in such a place, follow the guidance!

Common Sense Guidance – Do:

- Use common sense and think whether the spot you have found is suitable for a vehicle.
- Think about the cumulative effect of camping in the 'fantastic secret place which I'm sure no-one else has ever been'...it is very likely that others will use the same spot, not just you!
- Take great care to avoid fragile ground/sensitive habitats, (e.g. wild flower rich machair on the Western Isles) - never drive down to beaches or onto grass verges as it destroys the habitat.
- Avoid overcrowding. If another vehicle is parked in a secluded spot - try not to park right next to them and find your own spot elsewhere.
- Use only biodegradable detergents and drain kitchen waste water tanks in campsites at designated areas. If it has to be emptied in the wild, keep away from water courses and be aware that animals will be attracted to the scent.
- Ensure your vehicle is self-contained with toilet facilities (such as a Porta-potti) and waste water tanks.
- Do a full 'litter-pick' before you leave, taking all of your rubbish, and any you found there already, and disposing of it properly when you're back in 'civilisation'.
- Support a sustainable tourism industry – buy groceries in local shops.

Common Sense Guidance – Don't:

- Park in areas where signs state 'no overnight parking' or where there is a campsite nearby.
- Park overnight within sight of people's houses, even in car park bays.
- Block access tracks to estates and fields.
- Light BBQs or fires unless it is safe to do so, and you can supervise it properly. They should be fully extinguished when finished and no evidence left behind.
- Empty any chemical toilet waste anywhere other than at a designated chemical waste area. Most campsites have facilities for the emptying of a cassette toilet. Public toilets are not suitable places to empty chemical toilets as it upsets the sewage treatment process.