

Highway Code in English

Many times I have read or heard people asking if the Spanish Highway Code is available in English. I guess the reason for this is that we gurus want to try and fathom why the use of indicators seem an optional extra; if the natives really do not understand the purpose of roundabouts or maybe how many drinks are permitted before being over the top

Well help is at hand! If you follow the link below you can download all 968 pages of the code for free. This is an adobe PDF file which is indexed allowing you to browse the sections that you are interested in; this download is in Spanish. "Oh cheers Graham but you implied that we could get it in English".

Well if you have information in Spanish it can be translated via Google or a similar programme. The file is locked so it cannot be copied direct, but I saved the files as text (left click on "file", select "save as text" and there you have it). You can now copy whichever section you are interested in or indeed the entire document and then paste it into the translation programme. Maybe some computer techie reading this will come up with an alternative, but this works for me. The code can also be ordered on line at a cost of €35 or you could just print it all off

http://boe.es/legislacion/codigos/codigo.php?id=020_Codigo_de_Trafico_y_Seguridad_Vial&modo=1

Whilst looking at the DGT (Trafico) website as we all do of course, I came across the 5 most recently asked questions from Spanish motorists

How to circulate roundabouts, so it is not just we foreigners that are confused over this issue, but the rules really are simple in that the roundabout should be treated as if the road were straight and only use the left hand lane for overtaking

How do I get an appointment at Trafico? Well firstly learn Spanish or have a translator to hand, prepare a packed lunch and thermos flask, take along "War and Peace" or some other large tome. You should also have to hand every piece of paper that you have acquired in Spain because whatever you take they will always ask for another document

How to determine your driving licence points balance. In Spain each driver starts off with 12 points, but this is not an automatic ban because the system works in the opposite way to the UK in that you lose points when an offence is committed so zero points means no licence. Here you can check if your Spanish licence has been sanctioned

Want to know if you have fines? Fines can be sent in the post, for example when you have screamed past a speed camera. Sometimes these do not arrive, especially if you live in one of those areas where Correos can't be bothered to deliver and non-payment

results in further sanctions, so if you think you have been pinged you can check on line

Driving tests. A recent press article suggested that many driving schools are going bust or struggling to make ends meet. Many are making incredibly cheap offers in order to attract more business, so now is the time to consider learning to drive if it has been on your mind to do so. Some schools will teach you in English. There is one school however that I and a friend have contacted on numerous occasions via email in both Spanish and English, but they must be doing really well as they never bother to reply. Maybe they only teach racing drivers as they share their name with a famous Spanish F1 driver

There are some interesting sections in the code and one of significant interest to expats covers the wearing of flip-flops! Well not exactly, but it does say that footwear should be light and flexible as well as being bound to the feet

Well have a good read and if you come across some odd quirks, please share them with me

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