

Useful Contact Numbers

- AVIS Windhoek (+264) 61 233 166.
- AVIS Breakdowns & Emergencies (+27) 11 923 37 50
- Private Hospitals:
 - Windhoek Medi Clinic 061 222 687
 - Catholic Mission Hospital 061 270 2911
 - Swakopmund Cottage Medi Clinic 064 412 200
- Police: Windhoek (+264) 61 209 3111
- Passports: Home Affairs (+264) 61 292 2111 / 61 292 2179
- Consulates and Embassies:
 - Federal Republic of Germany – 061 273 100
 - United States of America – 061 295 8500
 - France – 061 276 700
 - Italy – 061 228 602
 - Netherlands Consulate – 061 223 733

AVIS BUDGET BRANCHES



DRIVE SAFELY

AVIS Budget

prime press 082016



ENJOY YOUR JOURNEY



TRAVEL GUIDELINES

IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE!



- 1 in 10 tourists visiting Namibia have accidents
- Don't **YOU** become a statistic
- Always keep left
- Speed kills
- 60km per hour is recommended on gravel roads
- Gravel roads offer little traction and are where most accidents occur
- There are no "special tyres" in Namibia

FACTS:

- 87% of Namibian roads are gravel.
 - 95% of accidents in Avis Namibia vehicles are "single vehicle" accidents i.e. not taking due care - no other vehicle, animal or object is involved, just you and the car, miles from the nearest medical emergency help
- SO BE WARNED, NOT SCARED** - we are just asking you to be **AWARE.**

AVIS Budget

In Namibia, 1 in 10 tourists have an accident. This statistic is responsible for a lot of spoilt holidays, serious injury and even deaths. We at Avis have the heart-wrenching task of breaking the tragic news to families.

Despite warnings about our gravel roads being laden with loose stones, our valued customers' think an accident will not happen to them. IT DOES! The car rental industry has an average of 10 totally wrecked vehicles a month.

There are hundreds of Namibian car rental tragedy stories to tell. "We are used to driving on ice in our country" customers say. It is not the same - it is worse here as our gravel roads offer almost no traction and we do not have "special tyres" or the equivalent of snow chains.



Regardless whether you drive one of our 4x4 off road or sport utility vehicles, if you drive too fast - more than our recommended 60km per hour - and you suddenly need to brake because an animal runs across the road, or you see that you will not make that sudden bend, or become fatigued and veer off the road - you will brake suddenly, slide, try and overcorrect your steering, lose control and the vehicle is wrecked and your passengers killed or injured in just a few seconds.

**No vehicles are "damage proof"
- even our 4x2 and 4x4 vehicles,
which most tourists rent, can overturn.**

Never assume that you know everything there is about driving in Namibia. Others take unnecessary chances too, be aware, be patient, a few seconds will not get you to your destination faster.

Adventures are tempting but risky, take time to see the beauty and do not take unnecessary risks.

Maybe you are an excellent driver; Namibian roads are unlike any other that you have experienced before.

Indifference in Namibia can cause serious damage to you and the countryside.

Be aware! Namibia is a paradise, but accidents are always unexpected and sudden!

In your own interest it is recommended that you do not drive faster than 60km per hour on our gravel roads. They are often long and tedious - you will be tempted to increase speed. **DO NOT!** This is when you are most vulnerable and accidents occur. We know it is slow, but better safe than sorry!

Avis cares about your safety. You are on holiday, relax, drive slowly and enjoy our beautiful country.

**REMEMBER - BY LAW ALL OCCUPANTS MUST WEAR THEIR SEATBELTS
AND WE DRIVE ON THE LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE ROAD IN NAMIBIA;**

do not be tempted to drive on the right hand side because that part of the gravel road is better, or that you see that there is nobody for miles coming in the opposite direction.

Useful information:

* Gravel Roads

Namibia's infrastructure includes a major road network consisting of only 13% tarred or sealed road surfaces. The rest is made up of graded gravel roads. Most of the country's attractions can only be reached by gravel roads. Gravel roads are made by scraping the road surface and compacting stones (gravel) onto this surface.



* Stones (Gravel) on Gravel Roads

The compacting of stones on gravel roads does not last and you will see tracks forming where the vehicles drive. On the edges of these tracks is where you would encounter stones, which can cause damage to the vehicle's tyres. There are also stones in the tracks, but in most cases these are small and would not cause damage to tyres. They could, however, be thrown up by a car in front and damage your windscreen, so keep your distance from the vehicle in front of you. Remember, a stone that is thrown up by a vehicle in front of you could be cast a distance of 100 meters. You will not be able to see these stones because of the dust cloud created by the vehicle in front of you.

Try and stay clear of these dust clouds.

* Speed on Gravel Roads

Experience has taught us that a safe speed on gravel is 60km per hour. At this speed, you will be able to control most dangerous driving situations. Remember, you are on holiday and at this speed you can take in the surrounding countryside and see many things that you might miss at a higher speed. We recommend you plan your daily routing to be no further than 400km. This distance would take around 6 hours to complete.

As our roads are fairly deserted you may not encounter oncoming traffic for a long time. This could increase your confidence and your speed. Be very aware, speed is the number one killer on our roads; also the road surface can change rapidly from a hard surface to soft sand. This causes a vehicle travelling fast to become very difficult to control.

You may encounter locals who are carrying on their normal day-to-day business life on these roads, travelling at much higher speeds than the recommended speed. Do not get drawn into going faster because they are driving faster than you. Do not assume that local drivers know the safe speed to travel at. Local accident statistics in Namibia are horrendous (deaths per number of vehicles are well over fifty times higher than European statistics). Please also keep in mind that when other drivers overtake you, their poor driving is a major contributor to those statistics.

At any point while driving in Namibia you are in a much higher risk situation than, say, bungee jumping or parachuting (and you are not wearing a helmet). Just remember to keep your speed at our recommended maximum.

* Dust

It is dangerous to travel in a vehicle's dust cloud for various reasons, the most obvious being that you cannot see. The dust cloud could obscure corners, oncoming traffic, people, animals and a variety of other obstacles.

* Overtaking

If you need to overtake a vehicle, before you change lanes and overtake, ensure that:

- there is excellent visibility;
- there is no oncoming traffic for at least 1 kilometre; and
- you can see a straight road in front of you.

If you ever have to overtake another car in Namibia, you are probably going too fast and, unwittingly, putting yourself and your fellow travellers in a life-threatening situation.

60km

**Be alert and ensure that there is no vehicle busy overtaking you!
Get back onto the left-hand side of the road after having overtaken the other vehicle.**

* Tracks

You must stay in the tracks, wherever possible, while driving on gravel roads to avoid damaging the tyres. As previously mentioned the stones on the side of the tracks are generally sharp and can damage the sidewalls of the tyres.

* Distances

Distances are great and you need to remember that it does not pay to speed to a destination, as this can expose you to unnecessary danger.

Statistics show that most accidents occur between 14h00 and 17h00 in the afternoon, due to people wanting to get to their destination. Watch out for loss of concentration and keep your speed down to 60km per hour. Remember, rather get to your destination late than not at all. Do not let the empty roads fool you.

* Keep Left

When you have been on the road for a while you could be drawn to the right side of the road:

- maybe this is the side you drive on at home; or
- maybe the gravel surface on the right side of the road looks more stable, and you do not see oncoming traffic.

KEEP LEFT! You do not know when something could happen.

* Tarred Roads

Distance between towns, even on tarred roads, can be very tedious and tiring - especially when driving into the rising or setting sun. It also becomes tedious when you have been on the road for a while, so take regular breaks to stay awake and alert. Remember that you could come across an animal or end up in an uncontrollable situation at any moment.

The tarred roads are in excellent condition but conditions are very different to most other countries due to the wildlife and vastness of our country.

* Speed on Tarred Roads

As distances are far and traffic is light, drivers are easily tempted to exceed the speed limit. The speed limit on tarred roads in Namibia is 120km per hour; however a speed of 100km per hour is recommended until you are familiar with the tarred roads and local traffic conditions.

* Animals

Namibia is a large game park and farming country with poor or non-existent roadside fencing. You can be assured of seeing wild and domestic animals on your journey through our country. Most of these animals traverse roads, crossing from one grazing spot to another. Wildlife is still abundant and is largely unpredictable, so if you do see animals, slow down and approach them carefully. Keep a sharp look out and enjoy the sight of animals in their natural surroundings. Do not swerve to avoid the animal - a lot of rollovers occur when drivers are trying to avoid animals.

* Kudu

A large buck-like animal, very shy and easily frightened. They graze next to the road (at night) because of the better quality of the grazing. Therefore be especially cautious at sunset and night. The kudu's skin does not reflect light making them difficult to see, even with headlights on full. Headlights tend to blind them, and the shadows cast, frightens them. This makes the kudu run and jump unpredictably - often into the road.

* Warthog

Members of the wild pig family, these smaller cousins are very prevalent in Namibia. Due to their small size, these animals are often hidden by the long grass on the roadside and are therefore only spotted at the last moment. This can cause you to swerve, resulting in an accident. Be constantly aware of this danger and be prepared to show down quickly.

* Guinea Fowl

These chicken-like birds are often found pecking at the roadside and are easily frightened by oncoming traffic. As they are heavy birds they are not nimble and take a while to get airborne, or move out of the way. Therefore they often cross the roads by flying at low altitude and end up hitting windscreens. Locals refer to these birds as flying bricks - so be aware!

* Domestic Animals

Domestic animals are often left to wander unattended and they become hazards on the roads. Most often these include cows, sheep, goats, horses, dogs and donkeys. They are most prevalent in the rural areas where fences are poorly kept and/or totally absent. Most of these animals are accustomed to vehicles and do not move out of the way. So be alert, slow down and give them a chance to get out of your way.

* Tyres

It is your responsibility to always check the condition of the tyres. You should inspect them when first collecting the vehicle and then at every opportunity thereafter. The tyres must be good condition before you start a trip. It is also your responsibility to look after the tyres while you are enjoying your holiday. The air pressure of the tyres plays the most important role in the road handling ability of your vehicle. Please check the recommended air pressure and the condition of the tyres regularly. Tyre maintenance is critical for a safe journey, so please inspect the following regularly:

- **Tyre Tread** - Ensure that the tyre tread is running off evenly and that the tyre tread has a profile of at least 3mm.
- **Bulges and cuts** - Ensure that there are no bulges or cuts on the sidewalls of the tyre as these substantially weaken the structure of the tyre.
- **Pressure** - Ensure that your tyres are inflated to the recommended pressure; as per the tables in the vehicle manual, or stuck in the driver's door, or inside the fuel flap. Please remember to reduce the tyre pressure by 20% (1/5) for driving on gravel roads. This is the most important thing that you should check before you start driving in the morning or afternoon - even if you have just stopped for a short rest stop. Be aware that we supply the vehicle to you with the tyres inflated for the normal weight load.
- **Side walls** - As already mentioned, ensure that the sidewalls do not have any cuts or bulges in them. The sidewalls are the weakest part of any tyre, even though they are reinforced to strengthen them. If the tyre is under inflated, more of the sidewall is exposed to the sharp stones on the roads due to the tyre profile bulging out.



* Vehicles

The vehicle supplied to you has gone through a rigorous checking process to ensure that it is in peak condition for your journey. Ensure that you know what fuel it uses:

- unleaded petrol; or
- diesel.

Ensure that you know where the vehicles fuel filter is situated, that you fully understand the controls of the vehicle and that you know where the spare tyre and tools are kept.

* Off Road

Normal sedan type vehicles are not suited to off road conditions, so avoid damage by keeping to the roads. Bear in mind that if damage occurs while driving a vehicle in conditions that are not suitable for the vehicle you may be held responsible for any damage.

Gravel roads are suitable for sedan type vehicles, but conditions sometimes change and roads become impassable. You would normally be advised of these at the start of your journey; however, there may be roads which are impassable for your vehicle. Do not attempt to negotiate these roads, you will get stuck and damage the vehicle.

* Seasonal rain and rivers

When it rains in Namibia, it pours, and rivers and flash floods quickly develop. Do not attempt to cross a river that has formed across a gravel road. Get out of your car and use your good judgment regarding crossing - if in doubt do not cross as you do not know how strong the current is, or what holes have developed, or what rocks have been exposed.

Many people underestimate the power of what looks like a small river - we have seen this all too often in the heart of our country's capital, Windhoek, where a flash flood develops after a heavy downpour and a river runs across a tar road. People attempt to drive through and are either swept away or stall their vehicle, which quickly fills up with water preventing the occupants from getting out. Instances like these are also commonplace throughout our country too.

* Theft

Although Namibia has a relatively low crime rate, tourists are often targeted, as in any part of the world, because of their inexperience, or ignorance of the criminal aspects. Do not tempt passersby to steal your belongings by leaving them where they are visible, even small change can cause them to break in. Always secure your belongings by placing them in the trunk or in the cubbyhole. Always lock your vehicle, even while driving. Always keep your travel documents on your person.

Be aware of city centres, as cameras, jewellery, purses, etc. are favourite targets for muggers.

These are but a few hints that we have gained from experience. If you do come across any facts not discussed please let us know, so future customers may avoid the same issues.

**None of the above is meant to scare you:
it is intended to help you to not become part of Namibia's road accident statistics.**

Enjoy your Holiday but be careful out there!