

Overlando Rental Handbook



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Introduction

When you're heading out on an incredible adventure it's always a good idea to prepare properly and become informed on all necessary points, especially when travelling in a new country.

That's why put together this handy guide on everything we could think of to try and make your life on the road easier.

We've tried to anticipate any issues or questions that might happen while overlanding, but as you may know there can always be something which comes up. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with us in such cases, and we'll be more than happy to help in any way we can!

We wish you the best and hope that your journey will be an incredible and unforgettable experience!

📞 Important phone numbers

Police, ambulance, emergencies	112
24/7 hotline	+995 32 2197500



📱 Scan QR-code to text us on Whatsapp

📶 WiFi Internet hotspot

All rentals are provided with a 4G internet hotspot free of charge, with a data pack of 5GB to use in Georgia. The coverage is generally good, even in remote areas.

To connect with your laptop or phone to the network, turn on the hotspot, and log in with the following credentials:

WiFi network name: Overlando Campers

Password: wheretheroadstops

If you run out of data and need more, just contact us—we can top it up for a small fee.

🚗 General driving tips

It's important for us that you feel comfortable driving the car and are familiar with all its features and capabilities. We can't tell how experienced you are just by looking, so feel free to ask us anything. We're more than happy to explain all details, do a test drive, or provide some extra assistance. Better

to ask a few too many questions than to run into trouble later!



⚙️ Braking, gears and clutch

When driving downhill, always use **engine braking** instead of coasting in neutral—using the foot brake too much can overheat the brakes, making them ineffective. It is really important to understand engine braking. More than 80% of the braking should be done by the engine, and your foot should only assist for short periods.

A common mistake is resting your foot on the clutch pedal while driving; this wears out the clutch plates quickly (we're talking within your trip!). Keep your foot off the clutch unless you're actually changing gears. Also, keep your hands off the gear stick when you're not using it.

Avoid slipping the clutch excessively (slipping is when you give a lot of gas with the clutch only half pressed).

If you have a co-driver, let them help keep an eye on these things.

It helps to wear smaller shoes and not hiking boots while driving. It gives you a better feeling of how the car handles and more control.

Fuel

There are plenty of fuel stations around the country, but as you go to more remote areas be sure to fill up early and often.

Most stations accept international cards, though some only take cash—always check before filling up.

To avoid issues with bad fuel, stick to bigger brands like Wissol, Gulf, Rompetrol, and Socar. Small, no-name stations may have poor-quality fuel that can cause engine trouble. It's not worth the risk just to save a few cents.

Off-road driving

Off-road driving can be a lot of fun, but it can also be dangerous. Make sure you are comfortable with the car before you go off-track. Try and feel how the vehicle behaves on easy terrain. Here's some general guidance on off-road driving.



Off-roading is all about **preparation and anticipation**. It's always better to not get stuck, rather than to recover the vehicle.

- Prepare the car: do a quick check of the essentials: fluids, tyres, leaks, etc. (refer to the vehicle-specific information)
- Choose the right gear, driving line and route well in advance. If in doubt, get out of the car and check the track by foot first—off-road driving often involves a bit of walking!
- Be flexible: weather conditions change, there can be other traffic, bad luck - it can all happen and you need to be prepared to change your plans if things get unsafe
- Inform about the state of the road upfront with locals or police
- Do not follow guidebooks blindly, dirt tracks can change in a night
- Don't attempt things you're not comfortable with. Remember, you can always turn around.

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- Avoid wheel spinning: it only gets you deeper in trouble
- Drive slowly and apply the accelerator gently. You're not in a drag race.
- Fill your tanks up before going on a longer off road track, fuel usage is much higher and there are no petrol stations

Off-road rules / etiquette

- Uphill traffic has priority over downhill traffic
- Park or stop off the track and not after blind corners
- Always leave the vehicle in first gear AND use the handbrake when parking, place a stone behind the wheels for extra safety.
- Stay on existing trails—don't create new ones.
- Stay away from (wild) animals
- Get permission from landowners before entering their property



Hikers, bikers, and animals have priority—slow down and give them space

- Read signs and obey them
- Leave no trace: take nothing but photos, leave nothing but footprints

Help others if you can but don't try to be a hero. **You are never obliged to help other vehicles recover!** Recovering cars can be extremely dangerous without proper material or experience.

If you get stuck - you can call 112 - they have a special team to help get vehicles unstuck, and if you're lucky they will come out to help.

Lowering your tyre pressure can make a day and night change, both in terms of comfort, vibrations and getting out of slippery situations.

Give the car a quick wash when you're back in civilization to get the mud and dirt off. If you keep it dirty, it may lead to weird noises or it may cover up damages to essential parts.

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On the road

Traffic rules

Driving is on the right side of the road. On multi-lane roads, the left lane is the fast lane, but expect overtaking from anywhere.

Speed limits:

- 60 km/h in cities and villages
- 90 km/h on the open road
- 110 km/h on major highways

Always follow the posted speed limit and adapt to the road conditions.

Always wear seat belts, and use the proper car seats.

There is a zero-tolerance policy on alcohol and drug usage while driving. Not only is this illegal, but the insurance will not be valid. Getting caught means the end of your trip, as your license will be taken.



Georgian traffic

Georgian traffic may look chaotic at first sight, but you will get used to it, don't worry. Especially in the bigger cities, drivers are impatient and somewhat aggressive.

Outside the cities things are much calmer. A few tips:

- Keep your own pace, **go with the flow** and don't bother too much about other cars doing weird stuff.
- **Expect the unexpected.** Do not expect anyone to follow the rules. Cars may stop suddenly, overtake on a crossing, and show up out of nowhere. Unfortunately drivers are often distracted by their phones.
- Watch out for animals on the road, even on the highways. Cows can be very stubborn, and pigs have no idea what is going on!

The police

Generally, the police don't bother tourists, but as you are driving with local licence plates, you may

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occasionally be stopped at traffic checkpoints or after breaking a traffic rule.

If stopped, do not get out of the car, but wait till the officer comes to your door. Road Police officers usually speak some English, have body cams and are friendly and professional.

Police corruption is not an issue, so you don't have to worry about that. Never try to bribe or 'negotiate' with an officer. This is a criminal offence.

Fines

Traffic violations are monitored by smart cameras in cities and on highways. If you get a fine, we will receive a notification and inform you.

Common fines are for crossing or overtaking on a solid line, turning a forbidden direction or driving in the bus lane.

Some road signs and rules can be unclear, so focus more on driving safely than avoiding minor fines. If fined by police, they will issue a receipt. You cannot pay fines on the spot—they must be paid within 30

days. Keep the receipt and contact us for assistance with paying.



Parking

Finding a parking spot in Tbilisi city center can be a challenge. There are several parking garages and car parks around the city which you can use for a small fee - but keep in mind the *height of the vehicle*.

Street parking is free in most areas, but in some city centres, there is a paid parking system. When you see a blue P on a sign you can park.

Some of these parking signs will show that you need to pay an additional 1 GEL/hr that you park there, which you have to pay with the app 'Tbilisi Parking'. The apps don't really work well for foreigners, so it's easier to use the private parking spots.

There will be 'unofficial' parking guards in reflective vests that will help you with parking. Although not required, it is nice to give them some change (usually 1-2 lari) when you leave.

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 **Accidents**

Safety comes first: make sure you and all persons involved are ok. Call **112** if you need medical assistance.

Do not move the vehicle from the accident location, even in the middle of the road. This will void the insurance. Only move the vehicle when our team, the police or insurance company, instructs you to do so or to bring people to safety.

Please call or text us immediately so we can assess the situation and inform the police, insurance agency and/or roadside assistance. At this point, we will give you further instructions on what to do based on the situation and our experience.

Keep calm and stay polite. Do not argue with the police, even if you feel things are not fair. This will backfire.

All accidents, no matter how small, must be reported in this way. Doing otherwise will leave you financially responsible for all the damages.

 **Navigation**

There are several apps that can help you navigate in the cities and the countryside. Below are a few which we recommend based on experience.

The road network is rapidly expanding and improving, and apps do not always have the latest data. Be aware that they might suggest odd routes, direct you to make illegal turns, or lead you down difficult dirt roads. Use common sense and don't follow them blindly!

Maps.me and OSMAnd - Great for offline maps, hiking trails, and off-road navigation based on OpenStreetMaps. You can download maps in advance and do basic route planning. However, it's not the best for long-distance route planning and its time estimates can be inaccurate. It usually has the most up-to-date small road and track information.

Google Maps - Google has the most listings of locations, businesses, attractions, and so on. It's functional for route-planning and in general works great to plan longer distances. Add about 25-30% to the travel time estimates.

 **Driving at night**

We strongly discourage driving at night, especially in the countryside where the roads are in bad condition and other cars drive without proper lights. If you find yourself in a situation where you are, we recommend driving at a much slower pace than the posted speed limit. **Never drive off-road tracks in the dark**, it is very dangerous. And remember—there's no scenery to enjoy at night!



Camping

Wild camping

Finding a perfect wild camp spot in Georgia is easy. The country offers incredible locations in the mountains, by rivers, in meadows, and deep in forests. A big part of the adventure is discovering a great place to set up for the night and enjoying nature.

To make sure that areas don't get overrun and overused we prefer to give you tips on how to find spots, opposed to telling you exactly where to go. Once you know what to look for, you'll never run out of incredible locations to set up for the night!

Wild camping is not forbidden by law, and is considered safe. But always remember to keep common sense, don't disturb nature or locals, and leave the place better than you found it. Avoid staying on lands that are clearly someone's property, or ask a local when in doubt.



We strongly recommend finding a camp spot before sunset—it's significantly harder to find a good place in the dark.

[iOverlander](#) and [Park4Night](#) are excellent apps for locating both wild camp spots as well as more established campgrounds. The points are shared by fellow travelers. This is a community-maintained database and a must-have for overlanders. It's very useful to do some research or just to have as a backup plan.

Campsites

Although not widespread, there are some small campsites in the region. We've listed a few on our website, and will add to this list. If you discover any new ones, let us know so we can share them with future travelers!

Georgia

www.overlando.com/georgia/campings-in-georgia/

Armenia

www.overlando.com/armenia/campings-in-armenia/

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Some national parks have dedicated camping areas, sometimes requiring a small fee. Look for marked spots on maps or ask a park ranger.

Additionally, it is common to ask at a hostel/guest house if you can stay in their yard or parking lot overnight.

Responsible travel

Drinking water

Tap water in most Georgian cities and many rural areas is safe to drink, often sourced from nearby mountain springs. However, if you have a sensitive stomach or are unsure, or for young children, take precautions. Even safe water can cause minor stomach upset if your system isn't used to it.

If in doubt, consider using a water filtration device or a bottle with a built-in filter.

Avoid purchasing bottled water when possible—help protect the environment by using refillable bottles.



You will find water taps along roads, providing fresh mountain water, or ask at a gas station or carwash. They are usually happy to provide some water.

Be considerate

Please pay attention to your surroundings wherever you are and be respectful to local communities. If someone allows you to camp on their land, be respectful and don't make too much noise late into the night. You'll find Georgians to be incredibly generous, warm and friendly people, especially out in the countryside, so please don't ever give them any reason to change their mind. Don't be surprised if you set up for the night and you have a surprise guest bringing over a bottle of chacha, a type of local moonshine!

Wildlife and animals

As cute as they sometimes are, don't feed the wildlife. Leave food within the car overnight as well, to prevent any unwelcome overnight visitors from straying into camp. Be aware of where you set up camp - if there are traces of livestock having been nearby, consider an alternate location or risk waking

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up being surrounded by a herd of cattle, or a flock of sheep.

Sadly, there are a lot of street dogs and cats - and sometimes they may (seem to) be abandoned in nature. Don't try to 'rescue' these animals. This is a big region wide problem that you can't solve as a tourist. There are almost no shelters that accept new animals, and unless you are planning to take the animal back with you - it's very unlikely to find a safe new home. Instead, if you want to help, give them some food and attention.

Fire safety

- Only use fallen branches and dead wood for fires—do not cut live trees or bushes.
- Collect dry firewood during the day so you're prepared when setting up camp.
- Clear flammable debris (leaves, sticks, etc.) before lighting a fire.
- Always extinguish fires completely before leaving. Do not bury coals in sand or dirt—this traps heat and can start wildfires.



Nature's bathroom

When you've gotta go, you've gotta go. Just make sure you go well away from the camping area, places that would generally have foot traffic, as well as near any sources of water. We've supplied you with a shovel, so dig a deep hole so that animals don't go digging around after you've left.

Disposal of waste

Trash disposal is easy in most villages, where large bins are available. Recycling is still rare in Georgia, but you'll find bins in larger cities.

At our garage, we collect clean plastic for recycling—only PP(5), HDPE(2), and PET(1) plastics are accepted. Other materials cannot be recycled locally.

In remote mountain areas (e.g., Svaneti, Tusheti), waste collection is a major issue. Unfortunately, even when you place trash in containers, it may end up dumped in nature. Consider bringing your trash back to lower-altitude areas for proper disposal.

Leave no trace

Whether it's a quick pit stop or somewhere you set up camp, **please do everything you can to leave the area better than you found it.** Pick up any rubbish you find, whether it was yours or not and dispose of it correctly. If you're taking a bath out in lakes or rivers, please use biodegradable and eco-friendly soaps.

Read up about the 7 principles of 'Leave no trace' <https://lnt.org/why/7-principles/>





- 01 PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE**
- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
 - Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
 - Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
 - Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.
 - Repackage food to minimize waste.
 - Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.
- 02 TRAVEL AND CAMP ON DURABLE SURFACES**
- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
 - Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
 - Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
 - In popular areas:
 - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
 - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
 - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
 - In pristine areas:
 - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
 - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.
- 03 DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY**
- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.
 - Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
 - Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
 - To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.
- 04 LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND**
- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
 - Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
 - Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
 - Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.
- 05 MINIMIZE CAMPFIRE IMPACTS**
- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the environment. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
 - Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
 - Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
 - Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.
- 06 RESPECT WILDLIFE**
- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
 - Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
 - Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
 - Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
 - Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.
- 07 BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHER VISITORS**
- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
 - Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
 - Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
 - Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
 - Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

© Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. Leave No Trace is an international nonprofit organization and educational program dedicated to protecting the outdoors. We are committed to providing education and research to millions of people across the country every year. Learn more at www.LNT.org.

✓ Packing list

Must-haves

- Drivers licence
- Bank/credit cards (ATMs and exchange offices are widespread)
- Passport
- Travel insurance

Handy to have

- Notebook and pen/pencil
- Refillable water bottles
- Ziplock bags
- Swiss knife
- Duct tape and zip ties
- Rope or paracord

Personal care

- Toiletries
- Hairbrush
- Painkillers (don't bring anything with codeine)
- Sunscreen
- Wet wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Eco-friendly biodegradable soaps
- First aid supplies (we provide a kit, but better be safe than sorry)

Entertainment & Electronics

- A good book or e-reader
- An even better playlist (tip: <https://spotify.link/esS3MbX7Gyb>)
- Playing cards
- Phone & charger

- Camera & charger
- Laptop & charger
- Power bank
- Travel adapter (Georgia uses 220V standard Euro/Schuko outlets)
- Torch, headtorch & extra batteries
- Travel Guides, Off-Road guides

Clothing & Gear

We're not going to start by telling you what to wear, but here are a few things that we think you should definitely bring along with you!

- Day pack
- Sunglasses
- Hiking boots or a good pair of shoes
- Raincoat
- Flip flops
- Wide brim hat
- Light jacket
- Swimsuit or bathers

- Thermo clothing, warm sweater for chilly nights
- Towels

Don't bring

We'll provide the following items with every rental, so you don't have to bring it yourself

- Pillows
- Blankets
- Bed sheets
- Cooking utensils, cutlery, pots and pans
- Coffee maker
- Bluetooth speaker

Returning the car

While you don't need to deep-clean the car, please take a moment to tidy up the interior before returning it. Remove any mud, sand, garbage, and throw away any leftover food.

You don't need to wash the exterior—we'll take care of that.

The drop-off time is no later than 16:00 on the last rental day, unless agreed otherwise.

Please fill up the fuel tank again before you return the car to the same level as you received it.

⚠️ Returning the car with excessive mud, grease or dirt will lead to the charge of a cleaning fee.

Return checklist

- Clean up the interior of the camper
- Fill up the (left) fuel tank
- Check the car for personal belongings, especially next to and behind the front seats, glovebox and cupboards
- Throw away any prepared food items
- Throw away your garbage
- Send us (and your friends) photos of your trip 📸

The DON'TS

We tried to make this handbook fun, useful and not full of strict rules. However, some things absolutely shouldn't be done—these rules protect you, the vehicle, and future travelers.

Vehicle Handling

- **Do not walk or stand on the roof(bars) of the car or the tent**
We know it makes for a nice photo - but it also dents the roof or damages the tent - it is not designed for the weight
- **Do not continue driving with a known problem**
If you notice any technical issue, a strange noise, a warning light, etc. do not continue driving and hope for the best. At least contact us to check if it's fine to continue. A small issue might become a repair of a few thousand euros if left neglected.
Don't leave us with a last-minute surprise, either, by pointing out things

that broke or did not work only when returning the car.

If it's a small thing, a short message is enough, so we can prepare to fix it and not disappoint the next guest.

- If you **smell rubber, the clutch (or brakes) burning** - you're doing something wrong. This is a very particular smell, similar to burning rubber. It should not happen, also not in the mountains, and indicates overheating.
Incidentally, this can of course occur, but not all the time. Unsure about it? Just reach out.

Camping equipment

- **Do not use the mattress, pillows and blankets of the camper outside, do not put it on the grass**
Not only is it very hard to clean, it can attract all kinds of bugs and fleas that you don't want inside the camper. Instead, rent or buy a picnic carpet if you want to lay in the grass.

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- **Don't leave the awning out in heavy wind or rain**, or when you go away. It is made to give some shade or protection for light rain and light wind only.

Gas & Cooking Safety

- **Don't put pans too close or over the stove knobs** - they will melt!
- **Always close gas bottles** when you don't use them, and double check if stove flames are off. Never leave the stove unattended.

Maintenance & Security

- **Don't fill up oil or other fluids without consulting**
Filling the wrong substance or specifications, or at the wrong place, may cause serious damage to the car.
- **Do not leave valuables (phones/speakers/etc) in plain sight**
This is just common sense. Generally

crime isn't an issue - but don't make it too easy.

GPS Monitoring and Security

The vehicles are equipped with advanced GPS tracking devices that monitor not only location but also speed, vibrations, impact, and other driving parameters. These trackers are installed for several reasons:

- **Safety & Emergency Assistance:** If you get lost, stuck, or experience an accident, we can quickly locate you and help coordinate assistance.
- **Insurance & Theft Protection:** In the event of an incident, the data can be used by police or insurance companies in their investigation.
- **Preventing Vehicle Abuse:** The cars are built for adventure but **not for reckless driving**. Excessive speed, harsh off-road abuse, or dangerous driving patterns are logged and monitored.

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 Tampering with the GPS system is strictly prohibited. Any attempt to disable or interfere with the tracker will result in immediate termination of the rental.

 **Respect our babies!** Our campers are designed for adventure, but they are **not indestructible**. Damage caused by reckless driving, ignoring warnings, or intentional abuse will not be tolerated. We strive to keep our fleet in good condition for all guests, and that only works if everyone treats the vehicles fairly.

Drive responsibly, stay safe, and enjoy your adventure the right way!
