

Can I downrate my Motorhome?

The importance of any downrating process is to ensure that, after downrating, you still have a sufficient payload allowance remaining.

[The start of the downrating process requires you obtain a weight ticket for your vehicle.](#)

This can be in any loaded/unloaded condition, but you should record what loaded state the vehicle was in at time of weighing. i.e. unladen – no driver, full fuel, no water, no personal belongings; part laden – driver of 75kg, ½ tank water, ½ tank of fuel, some pots/pans/food etc., or fully laden - all people on-board and full fuel, full water, all personal items.

There is no right or wrong way to have the vehicle loaded at time of weighing, as you are only looking to obtain a guide weight to know how much payload allowance you will have remaining.

The likelihood is that as a new purchase from a dealer's forecourt, the vehicle will be in the unladen condition.

We recommend that you **do not** work to the brochure figures to obtain your unladen weight/payload allowance, as the brochure may not include all of the optional extras added and can have a declared weight tolerance of ±5% of the figure stated.

Although the best condition for weighing off is the fully laden condition, unless you're set up ready for a holiday break, the full laden condition means having to fill the vehicle to then have it sit on the driveway until your next trip.

The part laden condition is the more likely setup to weigh-off in, and consideration needs to be given to any addition items you may wish to carry. If you're unsure of the weight of these extra items, put them in and get them weighed. Small bikes, chairs and other light items can probably be checked using your bathroom scales. Heavier items such as electric bikes, may be better being weighed with the motorhome.

As the owner/operator of the vehicle is the only person to know what else will be carried, it is down to you to check this weight, not the dealer!

[Got your weight ticket?](#)

Once you have your weight ticket, the difference between the overall weight recorded, to the required GVW (i.e. 3500kg) will be your payload allowance.

e.g. Required GVW (MAM) weight = 3500kg, weight recorded from weighbridge = 3100kg.

Payload allowance = 3500 – 3100 = 400kg.

This payload figure is the total amount to include any items/people/animals etc. that weren't on the motorhome when it was weighed.

When fully loaded you **must not** exceed the GVW rating (MTPLM).

[Minimum weight allowance](#)

What is an acceptable unladen weight to allow for a downrate to 3500kg?

It is our recommendation that the unladen weight of a motorhome shouldn't exceed 3100kg to be suitable for operating at 3500kg. Yes, it can be heavier, but serious consideration for what gets carried need to be taken in to account!

We have calculated this figure on the basis of occupancy of x2 adults @ 75kg, ½ tank water 30-40kg, full tank of fuel 80-90kg, and the personal items two people would ideally need for a short term break.

This is a **guide weight** only and any additional people, items etc. would immediately impact upon the required unladen weight.

Remember! Overloading your vehicle can invalidate your insurance and, if operating under a restricted driving licence, is the same as operating a vehicle without a valid driving licence.

Each offence carries a potential 3-6 penalty points, a fine of up to £1000, and a possible ban from driving. Not something to take lightly, so always check your weights.

For more information, please contact us. 01772 621800

SvTech Ltd., Chandler House, Talbot Road, Leyland, Lancs. PR25 2ZF

Tel. +44 (0) 1772 621800 Fax. +44 (0) 1772 621647

Web Page: www.svtech.co.uk

Common questions of downrating

- I have a 4.5T motorhome. Can I downrate this to 3500kg?
 - Subject to the physical weight being light enough and that you have a sufficient payload allowance remaining, then you should be able to downrate.
- My motorhome weighs 3600kg empty, can I still downrate?
 - If the physical weight of the motorhome is over 3500kg, then you could not downrate your vehicle. Downrating does not make the vehicle lighter, it reduces the amount of weight you can carry on/in the vehicle. If the weight of 3600kg was the fully loaded condition, then you may be able to shed 100kg of weight to bring it under the 3500kg threshold.
- Can I uprate the weight back up again at a later date.
 - Absolutely and this happens quite regularly at the time of a sale of a motorhome. The benefits being that you can advertise the motorhome as being available at both weights, which gives you a large audience for the sale.
- If I downrate my vehicle then get stopped and found overload, will I receive a penalty?
 - Firstly, we do not condone overloading a vehicle. Whether that be a downrated vehicle or otherwise. There is a common misconception that if the vehicle was previously capable of a higher weight, then there is no issue in overloading. This is incorrect, and any degree of overloading is an offence.
 - In the UK we have a penalty scheme to deal with overloaded vehicles – “graduated fixed penalty scheme”. This details the fine you will receive for overloading your vehicle, against the percentage of overload.
 - If your licence restricts your vehicle weight. (i.e. Licence after 1997 with B category only, or over 70 without medical.) and you are found to be exceeding your vehicle weight, the offence commit is two- fold, a vehicle overload and a driver licencing issue. The later offence being far more serious, as this will carry penalty points in addition to a fine. Where a driver is exceeding his driving licence entitlement, it is treated the same as driving a vehicle without the appropriate licence i.e. Driving without a licence. This carries a 3 to 6 penalty points endorsements and up to £1000 fine. In addition to this, the police can pursue the offence of your insurance being invalidated. This would be through contact with your insurer and if your car insurance is deemed invalid, this will result in an extra 6 to 8 penalty points placed on your licence (on top of the 3 to 6 for driving without a licence) plus an increased fine.
- The brochure states the vehicle has an unladen weight of ‘X’ and a mass in running order of ‘Y’. Why do SvTech need a weight ticket for the vehicle when this information is available?
 - Quite simply put, the brochure may be wrong. What is often missed from the brochure is the added weights of “extras” supplied by the dealer. The brochure will usually state a tolerance in the weights issued of $\pm 5\%$. Given a brochure unladen weight of 3050kg, this could actually be nearer 3200kg, leaving very little allowance for a driver+passenger, small quantity of water and personal possessions, i.e. pots, pans, clothes, etc.
 - We will always request a current weight ticket and the brochure weight cannot be used. We always recommend that a buyer obtain a weight ticket in advance of purchase, to check the actual vehicle weight.