

Importing a Car from the UK—Is it Worth It?

Amid all the cries of **Rip Off Ireland**, unfair pricing, and the favourable EUR:GBP exchange rate, an increasing number of Irish car buyers are shunning their local dealer and taking a trip up the M1 to Northern Ireland or a low cost flight to mainland UK in search of a bargain. If you know what you want, it's a straightforward process of finding the right car at the lowest price. Consider the following example:



A couple from Meath are expecting their third child, and need a bigger car to fit the kids, the buggies and the dog. The budget is €25,000. They did a comparison of purchasing the car in the Republic versus Northern Ireland.

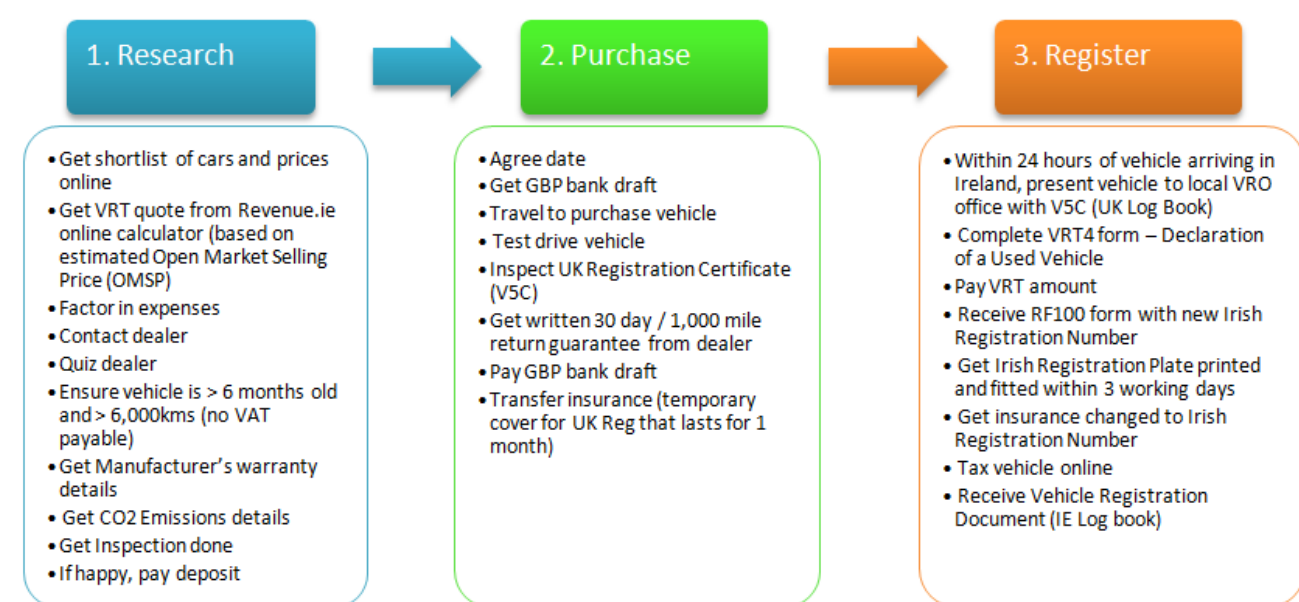
Here's their analysis:

Vehicle: VW Touran TDI 1.9L Diesel
Date of UK Registration: February 2008
Mileage: 3,750miles (6,750kms)
Manufacturer's Warranty: 2.5 years remaining



UK Car Sales Price – GBP	£12,400
UK Car Sales Price – EUR	€15,624 (assume 1.26 EUR/GBP FX rate)
Revenue – Vehicle Registration Tax	€5,728 (see Revenue VRT online calculator)
New Irish number plates	€36
Other Expenses	
Car data check report	€6 (see RAC.co.uk or theAA.com)
Vehicle inspection by engineer	€175 (see RAC.co.uk or theAA.com)
Flights to UK	N/A
Ferry	N/A
Total Cost of UK Car	€21,569
Average List Price of similar Irish car on CBG.ie	€30,166 (assume 9% dealer discount, i.e. €27,451)
Total Estimated Savings	€6,000 circ.

Here's the process:



So, is importing a used car really worth the hassle? Are you better off sticking with a normal Irish dealer? Here are a few key points to consider:

- There are substantial savings to be made on certain makes and models, but do your homework beforehand and get busy with your calculator to make sure the imported car works out cheaper.
- There's a good chance that many imported cars will be to a higher specification than Irish cars which may increase the VRT amount payable.
- Many Irish buyers will shy away from an imported car, so the resale value of your imported car may be reduced when it's time to sell.
- Irish car prices have dropped considerably in recent months (in part due to the confusion over the changes in VRT and Road Tax based on CO2 emissions rather than engine size), so compare prices here carefully with those from the UK, and also compare car specifications closely to make sure they match your expectations. Negotiating a good deal on an Irish car could make importing a car redundant.

"Caveat Emperor" or "Let the Buyer Beware" – All the same caveats apply when purchasing a car in Ireland or the UK – so do your research well, and if the deal seems too good to be true, It generally is.



Do You Track Your Pension?

More than **13 million people** have never reviewed their pension plan and a further 2.2 million haven't done so in the last five years, according to new research in the UK.



Despite recent increases in market volatility, it seems that accessibility to annual statements; apathy and a lack of trust are key hurdles to pension awareness and keeping track of pension performance and investment options. The research also found that, of the 46% of people who have reviewed their pension plans, 18% could not remember if they had chosen the Default investment option for their pension scheme and a further 23% didn't know if they had or not. Some 40% of people had simply chosen the Default option, while only 19% claim to have chosen the fund allocation themselves.

Glenbay Financial advises all their clients to keep a check on how their preparations for the future are progressing and realise at the earliest opportunity when they have got a potential issue – when they are still in a good position to do something about it. Consider the following guidelines for members of defined contribution schemes.

Guidelines for Members of Defined Contribution Schemes

- Plan early in your career for retirement. Members should take ownership of their retirement planning and understand the issues that will affect their retirement savings.
- Members should discuss their retirement plans with their family, spouse, partner and/or dependants as they save for retirement.
- Members should ensure they have access to information and tools that will help them decide on the level of retirement savings and the choice of investment, such as scheme booklets, benefit statements, intranet sites with projection tools and investment manager fund fact sheets. Attending staff presentations on retirement savings is recommended.
- Members should formulate a realistic plan to save for their retirement – how much can they afford to save, what income will that secure at retirement, what level of retirement income they will actually require, what level of contribution is necessary to deliver their requirements and potential retirement benefits from the State.
- Members should know their appetite for investment risk relative to their requirements for capital growth, capital protection, income protection and their length of time before retirement.
- Having decided on a retirement investment plan, members should broadly stick to it. Trying to time their investment decisions during periods of market volatility is difficult and could lead to missed opportunities to achieve their long term retirement saving goal. Members should ensure their long term investment goal is still appropriate at least once a year. If a member is in the scheme's default fund, they should familiarise themselves with the nature and characteristics of that fund and ensure it meets their objectives.
- Members should pay particular attention to their investment portfolio in the ten years prior to retirement, with particular emphasis on the level of risk they are taking over that period and reducing this risk where appropriate.

Contact your Glenbay Financial Pension Adviser today to review your retirement plan and help to secure your long term financial future.