

# Weekly Rest Periods



## Weekly rest periods

A driver must start a weekly rest period no later than at the end of six consecutive 24-hour periods from the end of the last weekly rest period.

WEEK 1				WEEK 2				WEEK 3			
		REST					REST				REST
45 HOURS				144 HOURS				45 HOURS			
								80 HOURS			
								45 HOURS			

A regular weekly rest period is a period of at least **45** consecutive hours.

A weekly rest period is the weekly period during which drivers may freely dispose of their time. It may be either a 'regular weekly rest period' or a 'reduced weekly rest period'.

Note: An actual working week starts at the end of a weekly rest period, and finishes when another weekly rest period is commenced, which may mean that weekly rest is taken in the middle of a fixed (Monday–Sunday) week. This is perfectly acceptable – the working week is not required to be aligned with the 'fixed' week defined in the rules, provided all the relevant limits are complied with.

Alternatively, a driver can take a reduced weekly rest period of a minimum of **24** consecutive hours. If a reduction is taken, it must be compensated for by an equivalent period of rest taken **in one block** before the end of the **third week** following the week in question. The compensating rest must be attached to a period of rest of at least **9 hours** – in effect either a weekly or a daily rest period.

For example, where a driver reduces a weekly rest period to 33 hours in week 1, he must compensate for this by attaching a 12-hour period of rest to another rest period of at least 9 hours before the end of week 4. This compensation cannot be taken in several smaller periods. (See example below.)

	WEEK 1	WEEK 2	WEEK 3	WEEK 4
WEEKLY REST	33 HOURS	45 HOURS	45 HOURS	45 HOURS + 12 HOURS COMPENSTATION



A regular weekly rest is a period of rest of at least 45 hours' duration.  
 A reduced weekly rest is a rest period of at least 24 but less than 45 hours' duration.

In any two consecutive 'fixed' weeks a driver must take at least:

- two regular weekly rests; or
- one regular weekly rest and one reduced weekly rest.

The following tables are examples of how a driver's duties might be organised in compliance with the rules on weekly rest, which allow two reduced weekly rest periods to be taken consecutively. This complies with the rules because at least one regular and one reduced weekly rest period have been taken in two consecutive 'fixed' weeks.

Week 1		Week 2			Week 3	
45 hours' rest		24 hours' rest		27 hours' rest		45 hours' rest

The following table is an example of how the driver's duties might be organised in compliance with the rules on weekly rest, whereby one reduced weekly rest period may be taken in any period of two consecutive weeks under 'normal' circumstances.

Week 1		Week 2			Week 3	
	45 hours' rest		24 hours' rest			45 hours' rest

A weekly rest period that falls in two weeks may be counted in either week but not in both. However, a rest period of at least 69 hours in total may be counted as two back-to-back weekly rests (e.g. a 45-hour weekly rest followed by 24 hours), provided that the driver does not exceed 144 hours' work either before or after the rest period in question. Where reduced weekly rest periods are taken away from base, these may be taken in a vehicle, provided that it has suitable sleeping facilities and is stationary.

**Note:** Operators who utilise a cyclical shift pattern should take care that their shift patterns allow for compliance with the rolling two-weekly requirements for weekly rest and compensation.

### Unforeseen events

Provided that road safety is not jeopardised, and to enable a driver to reach a suitable stopping place, a departure from the EU rules may be permitted to the extent necessary to ensure the safety of persons, the vehicle or its load. Drivers must note all the reasons for doing so on the back of their tachograph record sheets (if using an analogue tachograph), or on a printout or temporary sheet (if using a digital tachograph), at the latest on reaching the suitable stopping place (see relevant sections covering manual entries). Repeated and regular occurrences, however, might indicate to enforcement officers that employers were not in fact scheduling work to enable compliance with the applicable rules.

