



Fleet.
Wise.

Rental & Mobility Buying Guide

Vehicle rental companies offer a range of services to give fleet managers a high level of flexibility and agility when it comes to keeping their businesses operating at an optimal level



Why use a vehicle rental company?

The best Rental suppliers offer the assurance that they'll deliver the right vehicle, at the right time and the right cost, at short notice, whenever you need it. The very best also offer advice as to the best vehicles for specific tasks, optimising business performance.

Vehicle rental companies offer a wide range of services and benefits to business fleet managers, enhancing operational flexibility and efficiency. By providing short-term and long-term rental options, these companies allow businesses to scale their fleets up or down based on demand, avoiding the financial commitment of purchasing vehicles or taking out long-term leases that come with expensive early-exit clauses.

Key services include maintenance and roadside assistance, ensuring that vehicles are always in optimal condition and minimising downtime due to breakdowns. Rental companies also handle all administrative tasks, such as vehicle registration, insurance and compliance with regulatory requirements, reducing the administrative burden on busy fleet managers.

In addition, rental companies offer diverse vehicle options, from cars and vans to specialised trucks – they have something to meet every business need. This variety allows fleet managers to select the best vehicles for specific tasks, improving overall productivity. Rental can also eliminate the need for an expensive fleet of pool cars, which may not always be required, especially in seasonal industries.

With real-time tracking and telematics systems, rental companies provide insights into vehicle usage and driver behaviour, helping businesses optimise routes and enhance fuel efficiency.

In summary, vehicle rental companies deliver cost-effective, flexible and comprehensive solutions that streamline fleet management and support cost management and business growth.

“The best short-term rental companies have a wide portfolio of vehicles at their disposal, offering flexibility and cost efficiency to fleet managers by addressing immediate or temporary vehicle needs.”



When will I need rental vehicles?

Most fleets will encounter issues that require a short-term rental vehicle to fill a needs gap and keep the business functioning at a high level. Here's a list of situations where company vehicle fleet managers may need to consider short-term rentals to fill a need:

Vehicle breakdown or repair

When fleet vehicles are temporarily out of service due to mechanical issues, routine maintenance or unexpected breakdowns, short-term rentals can help maintain operational continuity.

Seasonal demand fluctuations

During periods of increased demand, such as holidays, sales seasons or harvest periods, businesses may require additional vehicles to accommodate temporary surges in workload without expanding the fleet permanently.

Project-based or contract work

For short-term contracts, projects or one-off jobs that require extra vehicles for a limited time, short-term rentals can be a cost-effective solution without the need for long-term vehicle commitments.

New employee or driver hires

When new drivers or temporary employees are brought on board for short-term work, short-term rentals can be used until the business decides whether to invest in additional permanent vehicles.

Delay in fleet delivery

If there is a delay in the delivery of new fleet vehicles due to manufacturing or logistical issues, short-term rentals can fill the gap and ensure business operations continue uninterrupted.

Unexpected increase in operational demand

If a sudden increase in customer orders or business volume arises unexpectedly, short-term rentals provide immediate fleet expansion to meet short-term needs.

Vehicle upgrading or transitioning

When transitioning to new vehicles (eg: moving to electric vehicles) or upgrading the fleet, short-term rentals can be used to bridge the gap during the switchover period.

Compliance with environmental or regulatory restrictions

For companies operating in areas with low-emission or congestion charges, such as London's ULEZ, short-term rentals of compliant vehicles may be needed if the existing fleet doesn't meet new regulations.

Temporary fleet expansion for special events

Short-term rentals may be necessary to support special events or promotional activities that require additional vehicles, such as trade shows, exhibitions or product launches.

Disaster recovery or emergency situations

In the event of natural disasters, severe weather or other emergencies that damage fleet vehicles or create an immediate need for more vehicles, short-term rentals offer a flexible solution.

Peak construction or infrastructure projects

Construction or infrastructure companies may require extra vehicles for peak periods of activity, such as during specific phases of a project that require more transportation capacity.

Temporary relocation or expansion of operations

When opening a new location or expanding operations to a different region on a trial basis, short-term rentals can be used to support local vehicle needs until a decision is made on permanent fleet expansion.

Testing or evaluation of vehicle types

If fleet managers are evaluating different vehicle types, such as electric vehicles or hybrid vans, short-term rentals allow for real-world testing before committing to long-term acquisitions.

Driver training and familiarisation

When new drivers need to familiarise themselves with particular types of vehicles, short-term rentals can be used for training and onboarding purposes before assigning permanent vehicles.

Temporary fleet reduction for cost management

In periods of reduced demand or when a company is undergoing cost-cutting measures, short-term rentals provide flexibility by allowing for the temporary reduction of the fleet, with the option to scale back up when needed.

Unexpected vehicle accidents

In cases where vehicles are involved in accidents and temporarily unavailable, short-term rentals can ensure there is no disruption to fleet operations while repairs are being carried out.

Specialised vehicle needs

For short-term or specialised tasks (eg: refrigerated vans, heavy-duty trucks or vehicles with specific modifications), rentals can provide access to the required equipment without the need for long-term investment.

The best short-term rental companies have a portfolio of vehicles at their disposal, offering flexibility and cost efficiency to fleet managers by addressing immediate or temporary vehicle needs.



Considerations when choosing a rental supplier

When UK fleet managers are choosing a rental company as a supplier, they need to consider several key factors to ensure they partner with a reliable, cost-effective and flexible provider. Here are the most important considerations.

Fleet availability and range

Ensure the rental company offers a wide variety of vehicles to meet your business needs, including cars, vans, trucks and any specialty vehicles like electric vehicles or refrigerated vans. Verify that the rental company can supply vehicles even during high-demand periods or unexpected surges in need, such as seasonal spikes or emergencies.

Cost and pricing flexibility

Assess the rental company's pricing structure to ensure it is competitive within the market. Consider both daily and long-term rental rates, and enquire about discounts for extended rentals or bulk orders. Look for transparency in the rental company's pricing model, ensuring there are no hidden charges, such as fees for excess mileage, late returns or unexpected maintenance costs. Evaluate whether the rental company offers flexible payment terms, including invoicing options, credit facilities or lease-to-rent arrangements.

Rental terms and flexibility

Choose a rental company that offers both short-term and long-term rental options, giving you the flexibility to rent for days, weeks or months depending on your operational needs. Look for a supplier that doesn't lock you into long-term contracts if you only need vehicles for a limited time. Flexibility is key for fluctuating demand or project-based vehicle needs. Ensure the company allows for easy contract adjustments if your needs change, such as extending the rental period or switching to different vehicle types.

Service and support

Check that the rental company offers reliable customer service and support, especially during emergencies. Ideally, they should provide a 24/7 helpline for breakdowns, accidents or other urgent issues. Ensure the supplier has provisions for offering replacement vehicles if any of the rented vehicles experience a breakdown, accident or are otherwise unavailable during the rental period.

Vehicle maintenance and condition

Verify that the rental company conducts regular servicing and maintenance of their vehicles, ensuring they are roadworthy and meet UK safety and compliance standards. Ask about the age and condition of the rental fleet. Newer vehicles typically provide better fuel efficiency, reliability and comfort for drivers. Ensure the rental company includes breakdown cover as part of the rental agreement, with fast-response roadside assistance and recovery options to minimise any downtime.

Insurance and compliance

Check if the rental company offers comprehensive insurance cover for rental vehicles, or if you need to arrange your own. Be sure to understand any excess charges in the event of an accident. Ensure the rental vehicles meet all UK legal requirements, including valid MOT certification, vehicle excise duty (VED) and proper documentation for emissions regulations such as ULEZ compliance for London. Enquire whether the rental company assists with verifying that your drivers meet legal and policy requirements to drive the rented vehicles, such as appropriate licence categories for larger vehicles.

Geographical coverage

If your operations span multiple regions of the UK, confirm that the rental company can provide vehicles and support across all necessary locations. Ensure they have depots or service locations in key areas. If your fleet operates internationally, ensure the rental company offers support for cross-border rentals, including any insurance and regulatory requirements.

Environmental considerations

As environmental regulations tighten and companies move toward greener operations, consider whether the rental company offers hybrid, electric or other low-emission vehicles. Some rental companies may offer carbon offset programs or sustainable practices that align with your company's environmental goals

Technology and reporting

Check if the rental company offers an online platform or app that provides real-time information about vehicle availability, booking and rental history for easy fleet management. Some rental companies may provide insights into vehicle usage, mileage and costs, which can be helpful for budgeting and operational efficiency.

Reputation and reliability

Research the rental company's reputation by checking customer reviews, testimonials and case studies. Look for signs of reliability, customer satisfaction and trustworthiness. Confirm if the rental company has industry certifications or accreditations, such as from the British Vehicle Rental & Leasing Association (BVRLA), which ensures adherence to high standards in fleet rental and management.

Accident and damage handling

Choose a rental company that provides accident management services, including handling insurance claims, repairs and recovery to minimise disruption. Make sure the rental company has a clear and fair policy for wear and tear, so you won't be charged for minor scuffs or damage that comes with normal use.

Scalability and long-term partnership potential

If your fleet size is expected to grow, ensure the rental company can scale with your business, providing more vehicles as your needs expand. Look for a rental provider willing to develop a long-term partnership, understanding your fleet needs and offering solutions that adapt as your business evolves.

By considering these factors, fleet managers can choose a rental company that meets their operational, financial and service expectations, ensuring they have a reliable partner for their vehicle needs.



Other flexible mobility services

Car share clubs

Car share clubs allow individuals to rent cars on a short-term, pay-as-you-go basis, providing an alternative to private vehicle ownership, rental or leasing. These clubs offer convenient, environmentally-friendly transport options, reducing congestion and emissions. Members access vehicles from designated locations, promoting sustainable travel and cost-effective urban mobility solutions.

Car subscriptions

UK car subscriptions offer a flexible alternative to traditional vehicle ownership and rental, or leasing. Subscribers pay a monthly fee covering the car, insurance, maintenance and tax, with options to switch vehicles or cancel without long-term commitment. This model provides convenience, adaptability and access to new or premium vehicles.

Pool car hiring services

Pool car hiring services provide businesses with access to shared vehicles for employee use. These cars are typically booked for short-term needs, offering a cost-effective alternative to maintaining a larger fleet.

The service helps optimise vehicle utilisation, reduce travel expenses and it supports environmentally-conscious transport management for companies.

Car share

Car share schemes in the UK, as used by business vehicle drivers, offer cost-effective, environmentally-friendly alternatives to private vehicle ownership. These schemes provide access to shared vehicles for short-term use, reducing the need for fleets and lowering expenses. Businesses benefit from reduced fuel, maintenance and parking costs, while promoting sustainability.

Last mile solutions

Last-mile solutions in the UK focus on providing efficient transport options for the final leg of a journey, often from a transport hub to the destination. Common solutions often include electric vans and cars, electric scooters and other small electric vehicles. These methods reduce congestion and emissions while offering convenient, flexible alternatives to traditional transport options.



Rental & Mobility Services summary

Short-term vehicle rental and other non-leasing mobility options offer UK fleet managers flexibility, allowing them to adjust their fleet size based on demand without long-term commitments. It helps reduce costs by avoiding the expense of owning or leasing vehicles that may not be needed year-round.

Rentals can cover seasonal peaks, special projects or when a vehicle is off the road for maintenance. This option provides access to a wide variety of vehicles, ensuring fleet managers can meet diverse needs quickly. In addition, maintenance and servicing are often included, reducing administrative burdens and ensuring vehicles remain roadworthy without extra effort from the fleet team.

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