

Best car hire rewards programmes: Which one should you choose?



Car hire rewards programmes offer perks like free upgrades, faster pick-ups and free hire days, but how do you know which is best for you?

Good to know:

 Avis Preferred and Enterprise Plus are top-rated loyalty schemes for UK drivers, offering flexible redemption and fast-track perks that'll have you cruising past those endless airport queues.

 Skyscanner makes it easy to compare top car hire deals and loyalty perks all in one place, helping UK travellers save time and money.

 Pairing a rewards credit card with your car hire programme can unlock even more benefits, which is especially important for frequent or international travellers.

This guide will help you compare popular car hire programmes available in the UK, explain how to earn and redeem rewards points, and share expert tips for getting the most from your rewards.

What is the best car hire rewards programme?

"The best" depends on what benefits you value most and your travel style. If you represent a business that hires across Europe, you'll have different needs than a family on holiday.

- If you travel often, Avis Preferred or Enterprise Plus may offer better long-term value through free hire days, priority service and special discounts.
- Infrequent users might prefer programmes with longer point expiry windows or perks that start right away, like vehicle upgrades to a higher vehicle class.

All major car hire companies operating in the UK offer free-to-join loyalty rewards programmes, and many offer perks from your very first

...major car hire companies operating in the UK, most of which have loyalty reward programmes, allowing their points members to enjoy fast booking.

Here's the insider scoop on the UK's car hire loyalty space:

- **Avis Preferred**: Known for priority perks and business-friendly benefits
- **Enterprise Plus**: Points never expire (with activity), perfect for occasional hirers
- **Hertz Gold Plus Rewards**: Speed and flexibility with global partnerships
- **SIXT Loyalty**: Express service with a premium European flair
- **Europcar Privilege**: Four-tier system with impressive upgrade potential

Programme	Best For	Key Perks	Points Expire after	Notes
Avis Preferred	Business travellers	Priority service, upgrades, bonus points	36 months	Three tiers with £-based earnings
Enterprise Plus	Infrequent travellers	Points never expire, tiered perks	No expiry with activity every three years	Free hire days, no blackout dates
Hertz Gold Plus Rewards	Frequent travellers	Free upgrades, skip-the-counter pickup, airline partners	12 months of inactivity	Global programme with UK earnings
SIXT Loyalty	Style-conscious hirers	Express service, vehicle choice, premium fleet	Three years	Upgrades are available even with low booking volume
Europcar Privilege	European travellers	Four-tier system, hotel partnerships, Priority Pass (VIP)	12 months of inactivity	Strong European network

How does Avis Preferred Rewards work?

Avis Preferred is a good option for busy business travellers who need speed and efficiency. The Avis Preferred programme is free to join, gives you access to premium upgrades and reward multipliers, and allows you to bypass the car hire counter at most UK airport locations, letting you go straight to your car.

As you hire, points will be automatically earned at a rate of about 1 point per pound spent, and can be redeemed for free hire days, upgrades and accessories like GPS devices. Frequent promotions allow you to earn bonus points more quickly. And unlike some other programmes, Avis Preferred points don't expire as long as you remain active in the programme.

Get more in our guide to [Car Hire Deals, Discounts, Loyalty Programmes, and Tips](#).

How do Enterprise rewards points work?

The Enterprise loyalty programme, known as Enterprise Plus, is a flexible choice for both occasional and frequent travellers. Enterprise points never expire as long as your membership remains active, and as long as you hire a car at least once every three years.

The Enterprise rewards programme offers Silver, Gold and Platinum reward tiers, with bonus points and a few extra perks for qualifying users, making it a flexible choice for both occasional and frequent travellers.

Enterprise points value can be traded in for free hire days, with some restrictions, but no blackout dates. One hire day typically starts at 400 Enterprise rewards points, but the total needed can vary depending on your car hire type, location and hire duration. Taxes, fees and optional extras are not covered by points.

How do Hertz Gold Plus Rewards work?

Hertz is one of the largest car hire companies in the world, so you won't have trouble finding them in major cities and airports. The Hertz loyalty programme, known as Hertz Gold Plus Rewards, is free to join and partners with major airlines and hotel chains.

With this programme, your Hertz points value can be spent on free car hire, partner airline rewards and free hotel stays, essentially turning your rental receipts into travel currency.

Hertz Gold Plus Rewards is worth considering if you travel often, though the value can vary depending on factors like hiring premium cars or booking during peak times.

Reward members can often pick up their cars without ever visiting the hire counter, which can be a huge time-saver. The "points cost" for one hire day starts at 950 points off-peak, or 1,900 points during peak periods. Points expire after 12 months of inactivity, but can be transferred to a family member once per year.

How does SIXT Loyalty work?

SIXT brings a touch of German precision to car hire, with a strong presence across Europe and growing operations in the UK. Unlike some other programmes, SIXT is all about style—think BMW 3 Series instead of basic economy cars. SIXT Loyalty is free to join and members get things like priority service and expedited pick-up at participating branches.

You earn points on every hire and you can redeem those points for free days or an upgrade to a higher class of vehicle. SIXT is big on luxury and style, so you'll have access to everything from sporty convertibles to high-end SUVs. For UK travellers who want to add a bit of European flair to their journeys, whether that's a weekend in the Cotswolds or a European road trip, SIXT Loyalty might be your ticket to an upgrade.

What's the Europcar Privilege programme?

Europcar's Privilege programme has four membership tiers and works across Europe's extensive Europcar network. The programme offers Discoverer, Traveller, Adventurer and Navigator levels, each with escalating perks that'll make your European adventures smoother.

All members get a '10% off of vehicle hire' all year round, plus partnerships with Accor hotels for accommodation savings. Here's the insider trick: you can earn points on business rentals but can redeem them on personal trips, making it perfect for mixing work and leisure travel.

The programme's sweet spot is its European focus. If you're planning to explore beyond the UK, this could be your golden ticket to consistent upgrades and savings.



Which credit cards have the best car hire benefits?

Pairing a good travel credit card with your loyalty programme can unlock even more value. Most credit cards bearing the Visa or Mastercard logo offer some degree of rewards.

Whilst availability varies, here are some UK cards known for having the best car hire benefits:

- **American Express® Preferred Rewards Gold Card**: Great for frequent travel; includes car hire insurance and Membership Rewards.
- **Barclaycard Avios Plus**: Ideal if you collect Avios across flights, hotels, and car hire.
- **Virgin Atlantic Reward+**: Good for converting points to car hire via partners.
- **HSBC Premier World Elite**: Premium travel perks and strong international coverage.

Top tip

When hiring abroad, check that your card includes collision damage waiver (CDW) cover to avoid costly extras.

Is it worth using credit cards or airline points on car hires?

In many cases, yes, especially if you're redeeming directly through the car hire company's own loyalty programme and you use the car hire benefits you've accrued. Generally speaking, you're likely to get better value compared to redeeming airline miles or credit card points. However, blackout dates, vehicle restrictions, taxes and surcharges may apply, so make sure to always read the fine print.

Choose the best rewards scheme for you

Now that you know how the top car hire rewards programmes compare, the right choice depends on your needs:

- **Travelling often?** Choose a programme that rewards frequency and offers time-saving perks.
- **Travelling occasionally?** Look for programmes with flexible expiry and low redemption thresholds.
- **European adventures planned?** Consider Europcar or SIXT for continental coverage.
- **Booking through Skyscanner?** Use filters to find loyalty-friendly hires and stack rewards with your credit card perks.

How to get the best rate when hiring a car?

There are three things you can do to lower the price you pay for car hire:

- Use comparison tools like Skyscanner to search across car hire brands, locations, and promotions.
- Avoid high-cost add-ons like excess insurance. Compare third-party options, which are often cheaper.
- Pay with a credit card that offers hire coverage and earns bonus points. These cards can also help enforce terms in case of disputes.

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