

If You Get Stopped by the Police While Driving in Your Car

Many Mexican police will use intimidation with those they stop. You need to take control of the situation. So, in a calm voice and with no threatening body language, you need to show him during the conversation that you are not intimidated, because you are calm and you know Mexican law concerning driving your car.

- With a big friendly smile, ask his name (“Como se llamo?”) and for his official identification (“Por favor, su identification?”).
- Documents you should have organized to show pursuant to list in “On the Road”
- If the officer takes your license and starts to put it in his pocket, say, “Senor, no es correcto porque de Articulo 159 (uno, cinco, nueve).” This lets him know that you know the scam he is trying to pull. Reach for the license (Some people only show it to the officer, but will not hand it to him because it is against the law for him to take it).
- If he continues to come on strong take out the “Police or Any Authority Identification Form” and fill it out (see form at the bottom of this section). Once the officer knows that you have his name, badge #, other information and you are going to report him, the intimidation will probably stop, and the entire situation will probably end.
- If he lets you know that he is looking for a bribe (“la mordida”, “the bite”) for a traffic offense that you may or may not have committed, tell him, “No, yo quiero el boleto.” (No, I want the ticket). Law enforcement officials say that you should not give a bribe--- plus the ticket is the cheaper way to go. At this point, he might or might not write a ticket and then let you go. In most instances, it is much cheaper to take the ticket than to pay a bribe. A ticket received in Guadalajara or Lakeside can be paid in Chapala.

Most fines are only 48p. to 200p.

--50% off, if ticket paid within 5 days.

--Pay fine at Chapala Recudadora, 575 D Calle Juarez, Chalala.

- If, however, you decide to end the issue with a bribe, have handy a second wallet or zippered purse with only 100p. Show him, and say, “Yo tengo no otra dinero” (I have no other money). This way you will not be intimidated to give a lot more than you might have in your primary wallet.
- It is also against the law for him to tell you that he will not allow you to drive your car. “Senor, no es correcto. Este es no accidente.” (Mr., this is not correct. This is not an accident.)
- **Under NO circumstance** follow the officer to an alley where you can be robbed and/or hurt, or follow him to an ATM machine. Stay put, say, “Un momento, por favor” (One moment, please). Take your cell phone out and say you are going to call your lawyer (“Mi abogado”) or your insurance agent (“**Mi Agente del Seguro del Carr**”). These phone numbers should be located on the Emergency Info taped to the outside of your car’s glove compartment. Dial him/her---or anyone else you know and in voice the officer can hear, state your location. **If you feel physically threatened start bringing attention to your situation---blow your horn and holler to get others’ attention.**