

Correct as at 26th April 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: Heavy vehicle specialist certification > Vehicle Identification

1 Vehicle Identification

1-1 VIN and chassis number

Important Ensure that the VIN or chassis number is recorded in full on the checksheet.

This number must be:

- the VIN if fitted – not the chassis number (locally allocated VIN)
- the stamped VIN on the VIN plate – not the VIN etched on the glazing.

Also refer to **Figure 1-1-1. Structure of a VIN issued by the NZ Transport Agency** and **Figure 1-1-2. Structure of a VIN issued by the vehicle manufacturer.**

Reasons for rejection

Mandatory requirements

1. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand before 1 April 1994 does not have a VIN or chassis number (Note 1).
2. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand from 1 April 1994 does not have a VIN number (Note 1).
3. A VIN number is not valid (Note 2).

Condition

4. A VIN or chassis number has been (Note 1) (Note 3):
 - a) removed, or
 - b) erased, or
 - c) altered, or
 - d) defaced, or
 - e) obscured, or
 - f) destroyed, or
 - g) obliterated, or
 - h) affixed unlawfully or by unauthorised persons (Note 3).

Note 1

A vehicle must be referred to a VIN issuing agent ([VTNZ](#), [VINZ](#), [NZAA](#)) to have a VIN attached if:

- a) the vehicle does not have a VIN or chassis number, or
- b) the VIN or chassis number has become illegible.

Note 2

A valid VIN is a unique number that has been assigned to the vehicle in the vehicle’s country of origin or by a person appointed by the NZTA. It consists of 17 characters that never contain the letters I, O or Q, and that is capable of being decoded to provide identifying information about the vehicle.

Note 3

The vehicle inspector must advise the local police if there is reason to believe that the VIN or chassis number has been tampered with in any way.

Table 1-1-1. Location of New Zealand VIN numbers

Vehicle	Permitted VIN locations
Vehicles that are not forward controlled (passenger cars and off-road passenger vehicles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the engine compartment on the right-hand side of the firewall • In the engine compartment on the right-hand side adjacent to the front suspension mounting point • In a location inside the engine compartment approved by the NZTA for a specified vehicle or vehicle model • On the firewall or inner guards so it is visible from the front of the vehicle.
Forward-controlled vehicles (passenger vans and off-road vehicles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the passenger compartment, on the top of the right-hand side wheel arch adjacent to the seat cushion • In the passenger compartment, on the inner panel of the right-hand A-pillar, adjacent to where the floor meets the A-pillar • In the passenger compartment on the B-pillar.
Goods vehicles and light omnibuses	<p>Vehicle with a separate chassis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the outside of the chassis adjacent to the right front wheel arch, <p>Vehicle without a separate chassis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As specified for forward-controlled vehicles.

If the vehicle is unfamiliar, and the VIN or chassis number cannot be located, the vehicle inspector should contact the manufacturer’s agent or the local VIN issuing agent.

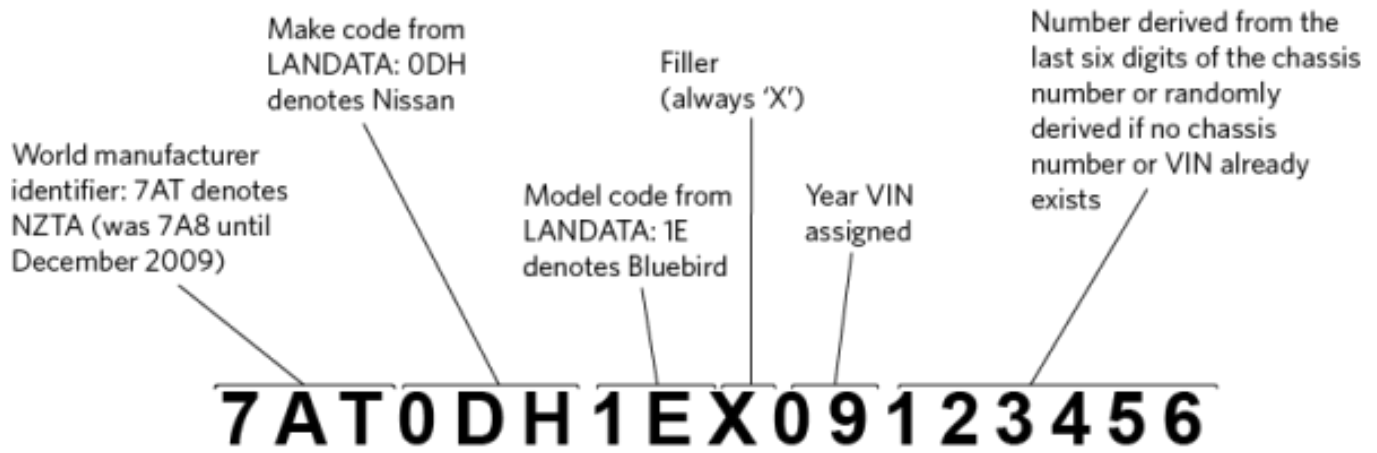


Figure 1-1-1. Structure of a VIN issued by the NZTA

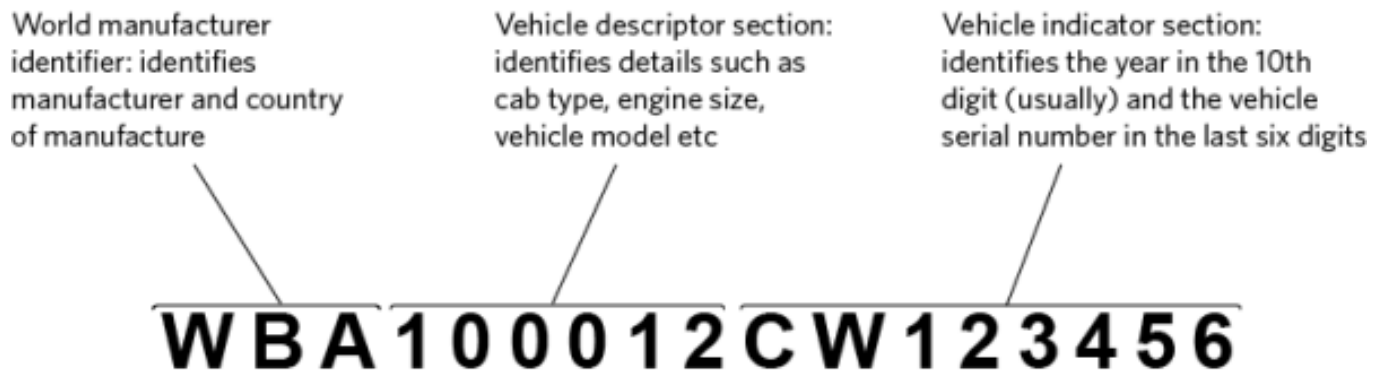


Figure 1-1-2. Structure of a VIN issued by the vehicle manufacturer

Summary of legislation

Applicable legislation

- [Land Transport Rule: Vehicle Standards Compliance 2002](#)

Mandatory requirements

1. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand before 1 April 1994 must have a chassis number or VIN.
2. A vehicle first registered or re-registered in New Zealand from 1 April 1994 must have a VIN.

Condition

3. A VIN or chassis number must not have been removed, erased, altered, defaced, obscured, destroyed, obliterated or affixed unlawfully, or be unauthorised.