

Correct as at 6th June 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 It may be superseded at any time.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"> <li>• In the engine compartment on the right-hand side of the firewall</li> <li>• In the engine compartment on the right-hand side adjacent to the front suspension mounting point</li> <li>• In a location inside the engine compartment approved by the NZTA for a specified vehicle or vehicle model</li> <li>• On the firewall or inner guards so it is visible from the front of the vehicle.</li> </ul>
Forward-controlled vehicles (passenger vans and off-road vehicles)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the passenger compartment, on the top of the right-hand side wheel arch adjacent to the seat cushion</li> <li>• In the passenger compartment, on the inner panel of the right-hand A-pillar, adjacent to where the floor meets the A-pillar</li> <li>• In the passenger compartment on the B-pillar.</li> </ul>
Goods vehicles and light omnibuses	<p>Vehicle with a separate chassis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the outside of the chassis adjacent to the right front wheel arch,</li> </ul> <p>Vehicle without a separate chassis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As specified for forward-controlled vehicles.</li> </ul>

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.

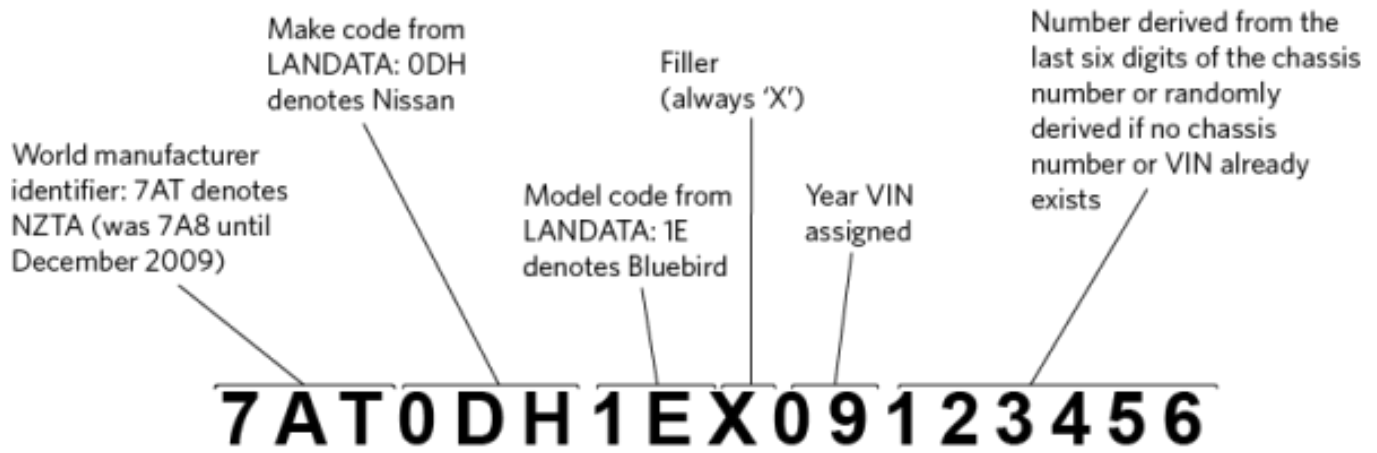


Figure 1-1-1. Structure of a VIN issued by the NZTA

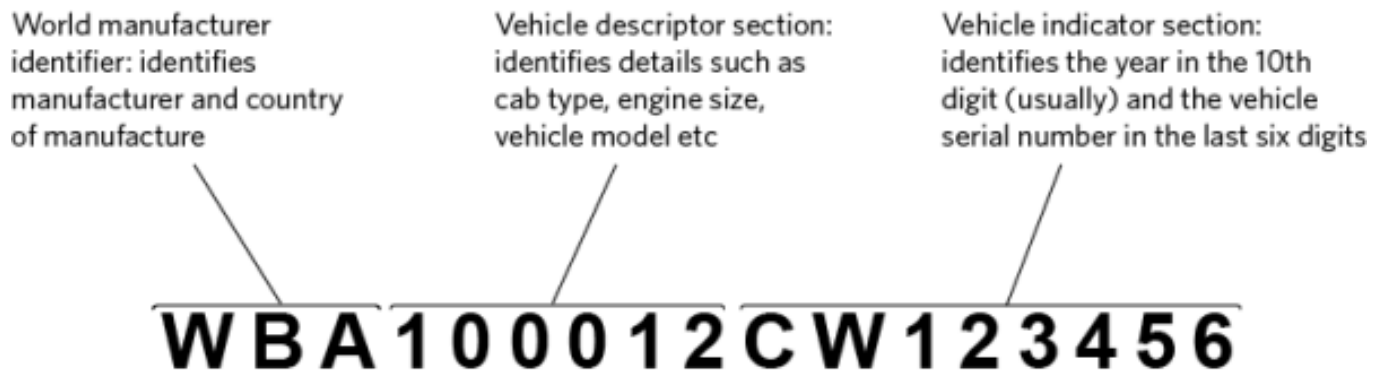


Figure 1-1-2. Structure of a VIN issued by the vehicle manufacturer

## 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.