

Correct as at 16th May 2026. It may be superseded at any time.

Extract taken from: Entry certification > Introduction > The inspection and certification process > Identifying the vehicle class

5-5 Identifying the vehicle class

A vehicle inspector or inspecting organisation can only inspect and certify vehicles for entry into service which belong to the classes for which they have been appointed by the NZTA, and for which they have a current driver licence.

- Refer to [Technical bulletin 3](#) for guidance when determining the vehicle class for a modified vehicle.

Note 1

Because vehicles are defined by class in vehicle related rules, but not in other legislation, an LE class motor tricycle **must be entry certified** as an LE vehicle in relation to vehicle standards and VIRM requirements, but **may be registered and licenced** as either:

- a motorcar (no helmet required, drive on car licence), or
- a motorcycle, provided it is declared a motorcycle by the NZTA (helmet required, motorcycle driver licence required).

Vehicle equipment standards classifications

Class	Description
AA (Pedal cycle)	A vehicle designed to be propelled through a mechanism solely by human power.
AB (Power-assisted pedal cycle)	<p>A pedal cycle to which is attached one or more auxiliary propulsion motors having a combined maximum power output not exceeding 300 watts.</p> <p>For further information go to the NZTA website:</p> <p>Low powered vehicles – more information</p>
LA (Moped with two wheels)*	<p>A motor vehicle (other than a power-assisted pedal cycle) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has two wheels; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has an engine cylinder capacity not exceeding 50ml and a maximum speed not exceeding 50km/h; or ◦ has a power source other than a piston engine and a maximum speed not exceeding 50km/h.
LB (Moped with three wheels)	<p>A motor vehicle (other than a power-assisted pedal cycle) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has three wheels; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has an engine cylinder capacity not exceeding 50ml and a maximum speed not exceeding 50km/h; or ◦ has a power source other than a piston engine and a maximum speed not exceeding 50km/h. <p>An LB 1 motor vehicle has one wheel at the front and two wheels at the rear. An LB 2 motor vehicle has two wheels at the front and one wheel at the rear.</p>
LC (Motorcycle)	<p>A motor vehicle that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has two wheels; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has an engine cylinder capacity exceeding 50ml; or ◦ has a maximum speed exceeding 50km/h.
LD (Motorcycle and side-car)	<p>A motor vehicle that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has three wheels asymmetrically arranged in relation to the longitudinal median axis; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has an engine cylinder capacity exceeding 50ml; or ◦ has a maximum speed exceeding 50km/h.

Class	Description
DEFINITION: Side-car	A car, box or other receptacle attached to the side of a motorcycle and supported by a wheel.
LE (Motor tri-cycle)	<p>A motor vehicle that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has three wheels symmetrically arranged in relation to the longitudinal median axis; and • has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding one tonne; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has an engine cylinder capacity exceeding 50ml; or ◦ has a maximum speed exceeding 50km/h. <p>An LE 1 motor vehicle has one wheel at the front and two wheels at the rear. An LE 2 motor vehicle has two wheels at the front and one wheel at the rear.</p>
DEFINITION: Passenger vehicle (Note 2)	<p>A motor vehicle that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is constructed primarily for the carriage of passengers; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has at least four wheels; or ◦ has three wheels and a gross vehicle mass exceeding one tonne.
MA (Passenger car)	A passenger vehicle (other than a class MB or class MC vehicle) that has not more than nine seating positions (including the driver's seating position).
MB (Forward control passenger vehicle) (Note 3)	<p>A passenger vehicle (other than a class MC vehicle):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that has not more than nine seating positions (including the driver's seating position); and • in which the centre of the steering wheel is in the forward quarter of the vehicle's total length.
MC (Off-road passenger vehicle)	<p>A passenger vehicle, designed with special features for off-road operation, that has not more than nine seating positions (including the driver's seating position), and that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has four-wheel drive; and • has at least four of the following characteristics when the vehicle is unladen on a level surface and the front wheels are parallel to the vehicle's longitudinal centre-line and the tyres are inflated to the vehicle manufacturer's recommended pressure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ an approach angle of not less than 28 degrees; ◦ a breakover angle of not less than 14 degrees; ◦ a departure angle of not less than 20 degrees; ◦ a running clearance of not less than 200mm; ◦ a front-axle clearance, rear-axle clearance or suspension clearance of not less than 175mm.

Class	Description
DEFINITION: Omnibus	A passenger vehicle that has more than nine seating positions (including the driver's seating position). An omnibus comprising two or more non-separable but articulated units shall be considered as a single vehicle.
MD (Light omnibus)	An omnibus that has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding 5 tonnes.
MD 1 (Note 3)	An omnibus that has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes and not more than 12 seats.
MD 2	An omnibus that has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes and more than 12 seats.
MD 3	An omnibus that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 4.5 tonnes.
MD 4	An omnibus that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 4.5 tonnes but not exceeding 5 tonnes.
ME (Heavy omnibus)	An omnibus that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 5 tonnes.
DEFINITION: Goods vehicle (Note 2)	A motor vehicle that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is constructed primarily for the carriage of goods; and • either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ has at least four wheels; or ◦ has three wheels and a gross vehicle mass exceeding one tonne. For the purpose of this description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a vehicle that is constructed for both the carriage of goods and passengers shall be considered primarily for the carriage of goods if the number of seating positions multiplied by 68kg is less than 50 percent of the difference between the gross vehicle mass and the unladen mass • the equipment and installations carried on special purpose vehicles not designed for the carriage of passengers shall be considered to be goods • a goods vehicle that has two or more non-separable but articulated units shall be considered to be a single vehicle.
NA (Light goods vehicle)	A goods vehicle that has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes.

Class	Description
NB (Medium goods vehicle)	A goods vehicle that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 12 tonnes.
NC (Heavy goods vehicle)	A goods vehicle that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 12 tonnes.
DEFINITION: Trailer	A vehicle without motive power that is constructed for the purpose of being drawn behind a motor vehicle.
TA (Very light trailer)	A single-axled trailer that has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding 0.75 tonnes.
TB (Light trailer)	A trailer (other than a class TA trailer) that has a gross vehicle mass not exceeding 3.5 tonnes.
TC (Medium trailer)	A trailer that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 10 tonnes.
TD (Heavy trailer)	A trailer that has a gross vehicle mass exceeding 10 tonnes.

Note 2

For the purpose of determining vehicle class, a dedicated wheelchair position (a seating position for transporting a wheelchair and its occupant that is unavailable for other passengers when it is not occupied by a wheelchair) is included in the total seat count. A seating position that can be used for either a wheelchair or occasional/removable seats, but not both simultaneously, is only to be counted as one seat. If a wheelchair position takes up more than one seating position, the number of seating positions is the highest possible count of seated passengers. In the examples below, Figure 1 has 11 seating positions, Figures 2 and 3 have 10 seating positions and Figure 4 has 9 seating positions.

Figure 1: 11 seating positions (including two occasional/removable seats)

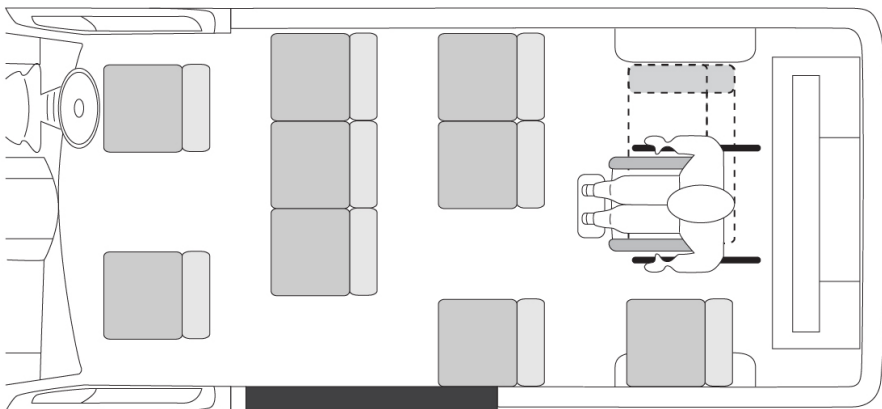


Figure 2: 10 seating positions

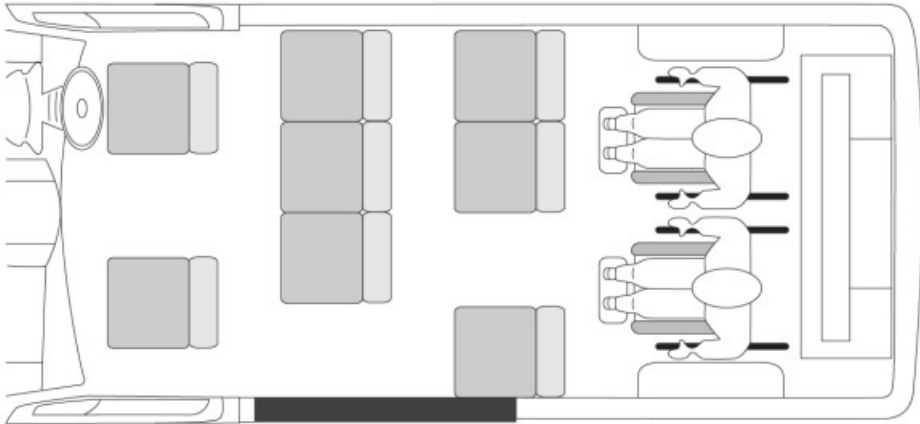


Figure 3: 10 seating positions

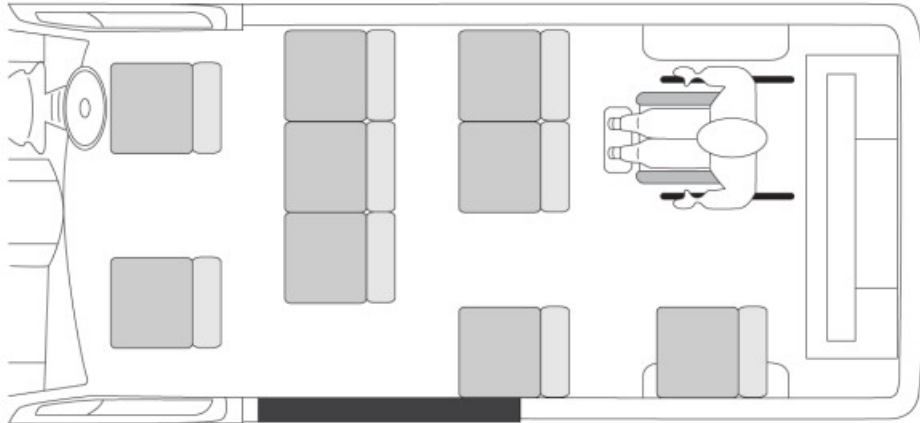
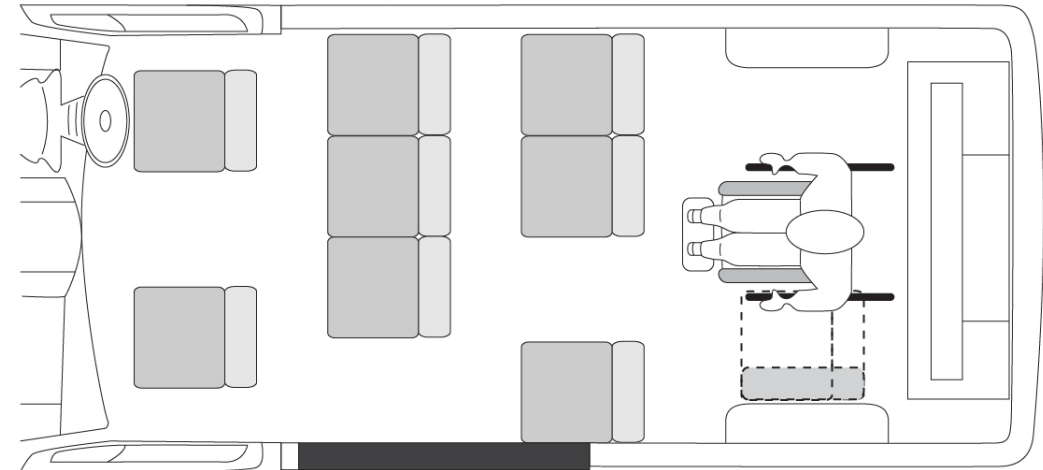


Figure 4: 9 seating positions (including one occasional/removable seat)



Note 3

Some seating positions, as defined on a Japanese deregistration certificate, may be wheelchair positions or occasional seats (also known as dickie seats or jump seats). This may make the seat count more than nine in some cases. Rather

than be class MD1, they can be considered class MB providing that they have nine or fewer seats that meet New Zealand requirements and the seating is original equipment. Wheelchair positions or occasional seats that have been removed are to be excluded from the seat count. See [Technical bulletin: Identifying class MB or MD1 based on seats on Japanese deregistration certificates](#).

Page amended **1 June 2019** (see [amendment details](#)).