

What size limousines are there?

Generally, there are 6 types of limousines.

- 1) Luxury sedans - Usually standard Lincoln Town Cars or Cadillac's
- 2) Stretch Sedans - Stretched to allow more legroom or for additional features
- 3) 6-passenger stretch limousines - fits 1-6 people, depending on design.
- 4) 8-passenger stretch limousines - fits 1-8 people, depending on design.
- 5) 10-passenger super stretch limousines - fits 1-10 people, depending on design.
- 6) 12-18 passenger super stretch limousines and stretch specialty vehicles (SUV's) - these limousines rent at a premium due to limited availability, where SUV's would normally cost more than a standard limousine.

Generally speaking, if you are renting a 10-passenger limousine, the vehicle seating can accommodate 10-people of smaller or average size tightly depending on how the vehicle interior was designed. Please be advised that most vehicles cannot accommodate 10 larger people. You may want to seek a larger vehicle in such cases. Generally speaking, you should subtract 1-2 from the vehicle rating for average sized people for maximum comfort.

How much does it cost to rent a limousine?

Limousine rentals run in the neighborhood of \$50 - \$300 per hour (SUV's) with a MINIMUM of two or three hours booked. Most companies require a minimum of 2 or 3 hours to provide service, with exception to standard airport service.

Generally speaking, renting a limousine can be compared to renting a hotel room. There is a large span of quality and service levels to choose from, and the difference in price is usually determined by what you get or don't get. You will usually find that "you get what you pay for" and special attention should be paid to what you Don't Get in a limousine company.

What is included with limousine service?

It is very important to ask about the 'all-inclusive price' when reserving a limousine. Unfortunately, some companies are unscrupulous in their billing methods and will tack on extra charges such as non-existent highway taxes, fuel surcharges, beverages, waiting time, travel times, tolls, and other miscellaneous charges. While such cases are rare, it is a good idea to get the all-inclusive price, which should include the TOTAL FARE. (Usually does not include sales tax) This is especially important when renting a limousine for a third party such as a wedding couple or younger kids celebrating prom or homecoming.

Why can't I find a limousine for only a one hour rental?

Most companies require a minimum 2 or 3 hour booking to rent the vehicle. This is due to the large expense and cost involved in securing and maintaining the vehicles. The average limousine can run around \$70,000-\$110,000 new! A one-hour rental is simply not cost effective because the vehicle is only in 'paid-service' for one hour; however actual vehicle run time may be more than 2 hours. Other costs that make a 1-hour rental not possible are vehicle preparation time and driver salary.

In addition, during prom or other high demand season, minimum hourly booking requirements may increase to 5-8 hours due to the overwhelming demand for limousines. You are more likely to get struck by lightning than getting a limousine rental for 1 or 2 hours during prom or special event season. Some companies may offer special exceptions to this rule depending on fleet availability and their current scheduling considerations.

Do I Have to tip the driver, and if so, how much?

YES! Your driver is working in the service industry just like a waiter or bartender, but assumes a much more responsible role. The standard tip is 20% of the total fare. If you feel your driver has performed in an exceeding manner, you can tip more. Some companies will AUTOMATICALLY include the gratuity (tip) in their total price quote. When making reservations, always ask if GRATUITY is included in the total price. If not, you should budget an extra twenty percent towards your total bill for driver gratuity.

Can I drink alcohol in the limousine?

Typically "yes" if it is legal in your area. The laws vary from state to state so ask when you book the limousine. Underage drinking in a limousine is ILLEGAL, no matter what state you live in and a reputable company WILL NOT allow it, so you risk losing your total fare and being arrested if you violate the law.

**We want to rent a limousine to take us to a concert.
Do we have to pay for the time while we are at the
Concert even though we are not using the limousine?**

In such cases where you are not occupying the limousine during your rental (such as bar-hopping, dinner reservations, concerts, sporting events, etc.) *you still have to pay for the rental time*, even though you aren't physically inside the vehicle. Even though you are not using the vehicle while at a concert, the vehicle cannot be used elsewhere; even when there are 2 or 3 hours in between drop-off and pickup.

In addition, if there are more than 6-7 hours between drop-off and pick-up and you remain local, some companies may offer a "split" - just a rental to-and-from your destination with no charge for waiting time in between, however this option offers inconveniences such as unavailability to leave things in the limo, leaving earlier than expected, or having the same chauffeur or car upon return. Ask your service provider if they offer a package to accommodate your needs.

If I rent a limousine, when do my rental charges start?

This varies by company and location. Most companies begin rental charges at your designated pickup time location. If you say, "Our first pickup is at 6pm at 123 Main St", then this will be the beginning of your rental charge. Some companies begin rental charges on portal-to-portal basis and charge 'travel-time'.

Specifically, your rental time may begin the moment the limousine *begins* its journey to your first pickup location. Ask your limousine company specifically how they charge as this might explain price differences. Charges for travel time are usual in remote areas where the closest limousine service may be many miles away.

Wedding rental tips

Wedding rates are usually quoted at a 'package' price, ask your limousine company what comes included in the package price. ALL or SOME of the following may be included in the price:

- * Standard chauffeur gratuity
- * Non-alcoholic beverages
- * Red carpet rolled out
- * Glassware in limousine
- * "Just Married" sign
- * Professionally attired chauffeur
- * Limo decorations and napkins
- * Any other amenities included?

Since a limousine on your wedding day is going to be seen by your entire circle of family and friends and recorded forever in the picture books, make absolutely sure that you know what you are getting. This is not the time to find the cheapest price!

When booking a limousine, always make sure you know exactly what you are getting. In any competitive market, varying prices between providers usually means a significant difference in the product, a company's overhead, service levels, insurance coverage, or any combination. In essence, you usually "get what you pay for."

Simply being told a "10-passenger limousine" is not enough ask for *current pictures or better yet, see the car in person*. Make sure you know what you are getting!

If you are looking for a wedding limousine for only 1 hour, you will have to do some searching. Many successful companies simply will not do it because of high cost considerations, vehicle prep time, and driver salaries. Keep other considerations in mind such as a late ceremony ending, pictures with the vehicle, etc. that will lead to costly overtime!

Many companies will also require a cash deposit or credit card guarantee to hold your reservation. This deposit is usually lost if you cancel your reservation. Ask your service what their cancellation policy is for your booking and get it in writing!

Lastly, it is important to ask your provider questions about how they do business to make sure that you are dealing with a professional and legitimate organization. Here are some questions that we may suggest:

- 1) What is the chauffeur uniform policy for your event?
- 2) What are the company's office hours and how can they be reached after hours in the event of a last minute change, etc.?
- 3) Can they provide references relevant to your event?
- 4) What type of organization are you dealing with? Are they an established company? Do they have a current business license? Commercial Insurance? A rental contract?

5) Make sure you ask your service provider questions about the car that is relevant to the event. For instance in an August wedding you may want to verify that the limousine's air conditioning is properly working or that you will get a white car.

And finally.....

DO NOT MAKE THESE MISTAKES!

Make absolutely sure to verify that the service provider is properly LICENSED and INSURED COMMERCIALY. Here are the three things to verify to assure that your operator is a legitimate commercial limousine operator and that your transportation will go smoothly and safely.

1) A limousine must be properly registered as a livery or commercial vehicle to carry passengers for Transportation. To verify this, there will be state sticker showing as a registered limousine. If it does not, the vehicle is probably not properly registered and regulated as it should be and could indicate a "gypsy" operator that is conducting business illegally.

2) By law, any limousine must have MINIMUM commercial insurance coverage of \$1,000,000.00. Without this, an operator cannot get proper livery or commercial licensing in the State. Insurance that is not designed for commercial vehicles, or Heaven forbid, no commercial insurance at all could leave you and your guests in deep trouble in the event of an accident. Do not be afraid to ask your limousine service for proof of commercial insurance coverage or present it upon pickup. If your operator cannot provide proof of COMMERCIAL insurance, DO NOT RENT!

3) Make sure your operator uses a contract or rental agreement. A legitimate limousine operator will be keeping records in their State. If you are not presented with a contract or rental agreement upon pickup, you may not be dealing with a legitimate operator.

That's everything! Start shopping around and have fun! Limousines are no longer considered only for the rich and famous! They are a safe and economical way for groups to celebrate any event or enjoy a night out with a guaranteed safe return home for you and your guests!