



State of South Carolina

Department of Motor Vehicles

All plates are registered for a two-year period. That means that every two years when you pay your property taxes, you also pay your registration fees; the amount depends on the type of vehicle. On passenger cars, the two-year registration is \$24.00 (\$12.00 per year), plus any special plate fee for that particular plate. When you exchange one plate for another, DMV checks when you paid your registration fees, and whether you are in the first year or second year of your "biennial" cycle.

This is how DMV calculates fees due for any plate that is exchanged for another plate.

1) If the plate has a special plate fee, it is always paid in full. For example, if the plate you are requesting has a special plate fee of \$30.00, you would always pay the full \$30.00, regardless of where you are in your registration cycle.

2) If your current plate is in the first year of the biennial registration period, no additional registration fees are due. You would pay only the \$30.00 special plate fee, and would receive a full two-year credit on your registration fees.

Example: You have a car for which you paid \$24.00 registration fee in September 2008. You would pay \$30.00 special plate fee only. You would get the same expiration month and year decal as you had on your former plate.

3) If your current plate is in the second year of the biennial registration period (and is not within three months of expiration), you would pay the \$30.00 special plate fee, DMV credits you for one year registration fee, requests an additional one-year registration fee, and extends the registration expiration by one year.

Example: You paid \$24.00 registration fees for your car in April 2007. You currently have an 09 expiration decal. You would pay the \$30.00 special plate fee, and an additional \$12.00. With this plate receive an April month decal and a 2009 year decal for your new plate, but your registration is extended until April, 2010. That means when you pay your taxes in April 2009, you will not owe any additional registration fees and you will receive a 2010 year decal.

Example: You paid \$60.00 registration fees for your light truck in October 2007. You currently have an 09 expiration decal. You would pay the \$30.00 special plate fee and an additional \$30 (one-year registration fee). You receive an October month decal and a 2009 year decal for your new plate. But your registration is extended until October, 2010. When you pay your taxes in October 2009, you will receive a 2010 year decal, and will not owe any additional registration fees until October 2010.

4) If your current plate is in the second year of the biennial registration period and **IS** within three months of expiration, you would renew your registration when we exchange the plate. You would pay the \$30.00 special plate fee, DMV would request an additional two-year registration fee, and would extend the registration expiration by two years. DMV renews the plate at the time of the exchange so you would not have to pay your registration fees again when the registration would otherwise expire.

Example: You paid \$24.00 registration fees for your car in January 2007. You currently have a January 09 expiration decal. You would pay the \$30.00 special plate fee, and an additional \$24.00. You receive a January month decal and a 2010 year decal. When you pay your taxes in January 2010, you will receive a 2011 decal and not owe any additional registration fees until January 2011.

5) Under SC Code of Laws section 56-3-840, if your current registration is expired, before DMV can exchange and renew your plate, you may also be required to pay late penalties ranging from \$10.00 to \$75.00, depending on how many days have elapsed since your registration expired.