

Pop-Top Campers Can Now Be Registered as Motor Caravans

Oct 21, 2026

Big news for anyone with a pop-top campervan. On 19 October 2026 the DVLA updated its official guidance on converting a vehicle into a motor caravan, and a pop-top elevating roof now counts as one of the recognised external features. Until now, the DVLA only accepted a high-top roof — pop-tops were specifically excluded.

That single change opens the door for thousands of VW Transporter and similar pop-top conversions to be reclassified from “panel van” or “van with side windows” to “motor caravan” on the V5C logbook.

What’s changed

Since the DVLA tightened its rules in 2019, its list of external features excluded pop-tops outright, and also included motor caravan-style graphics on both sides and an awning rail. Many well-built pop-top campers were refused and left registered as vans.

Feature	Previous guidance	Updated guidance (19 Oct 2026)
Roof	High-top only (pop-tops excluded)	High-top or pop-top elevating roof
Side windows	2+ on at least one side	2+ on at least one side
Separate habitation door	Required	Required
Camper-style graphics both sides	Listed	No longer listed
Awning rail	Listed	No longer listed

What you still need

A pop-top on its own won’t get you through. The DVLA still expects the full picture, inside and out.

Outside:

- A high-top or pop-top elevating roof

- Two or more windows on at least one side of the main body (cab door windows don't count)
- A separate door into the living area, such as a sliding side door

Inside (all permanently fixed):

- Seats and a table (the table can be removable)
- Sleeping accommodation, which can convert from the seats
- Cooking facilities
- Storage

To apply, send your V5C to DVLA Swansea with the motor caravan conversion checklist (V1006), interior photos of each feature with the bed and table set up, exterior photos from front, both sides and rear showing the plates, and a photo of the VIN plate. The DVLA may also ask to inspect the vehicle.

Why it matters

Officially, the DVLA says body type is about how a vehicle looks in traffic, not insurance or speed limits. In practice, “motor caravan” on the logbook makes life easier: specialist campervan insurance is simpler to arrange, buyers trust it, and it typically supports a stronger resale value.

If you own a pop-top camper that was refused before, or never applied because pop-tops didn't qualify, now is the time to look again.

How New Forest Custom Campers can help

We build VW Transporter conversions with pop-top roofs, side windows, sliding doors and fully fixed interiors — everything the DVLA now looks for. Whether you're planning a new build or want to check whether your existing camper is ready to reclassify, get in touch and we'll talk you through it.

Sources

- [DVLA: Converting a vehicle into a motor caravan \(updated 19 October 2026\)](#)