

✓ BG Autogiro

✓ A guide to Direct ✓ Debit in Sweden



GO CARDLESS

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Chapter 1

What is Autogiro?

Bg Autogiro is a popular method for collecting payments in Sweden. [Approximately eight out of ten Swedes use Autogiro](#) with the average customer paying five to seven bills per month via Autogiro.

There are two key features of the Autogiro system:

- **Autogiro is for pull-based payments.** The Autogiro system relies on a mandate between the merchant and the customer. Once a mandate has been agreed by the customer, it's the merchant who initiates the payment. The customer won't need to lift a finger.
- **Autogiro payments are bank-to-bank.** The card networks aren't involved in the Autogiro system. All communication happens directly between the banks via the Bankgirot clearing house.

Autogiro is pull-based

With Autogiro, it's the merchant who initiates payment collection. The pull-based nature of Autogiro has considerable benefits to both the merchant and the customer:

- **Cash flow.** Autogiro puts the merchant in control of when they get paid. This is great for business cash flow as it reduces the number of late payments.
- **Automation.** The entire collection process can be automated with Autogiro. It reduces admin for merchants: less time needs to be spent tracking your payments. It's also great for customers: they'll no longer need to keep track of bills, the relevant due dates and possible late payment charges.
- **Flexibility.** Autogiro allows the payment amount and frequency to be varied, keeping the merchant in control.

The pull-based nature of Autogiro also necessitates strong customer protection. Protection is provided by the Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751).

Autogiro payments are bank-to-bank

Autogiro operates through the [Bankgirot clearing scheme](#), rather than through the card networks.

This has significant benefits when taking payments on an ongoing basis:

- **Low cost.** Since Autogiro payments aren't routed through expensive card networks, they're much lower cost than taking payment by card.
- **High retention.** Churn due to card expiry is completely eliminated. Autogiro relationships last longer than ongoing card payments.
- **Anyone can pay.** Anyone with a Swedish bank account can pay by Autogiro. This includes both businesses and consumers.

A disadvantage of using Sweden's bank-to-bank infrastructure is that Autogiro payments aren't instant.

Autogiro and SEPA Direct Debit

If your customer base spans multiple European geographies, you may have heard of the [Single Euro Payments Area \(SEPA\)](#).

SEPA is an EU-wide payment-integration initiative for making and receiving Euro-denominated payments. As part of SEPA, [SEPA Direct Debit](#) allows you to collect Euro-denominated from 34 countries. [Our guide on SEPA Direct Debit](#) has more information.

As Sweden is outside the Eurozone, it uses the Swedish kronor (SEK) as its currency. Autogiro is Sweden's direct debit scheme for collecting payments in kronor.

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In Sweden, it's also possible to collect payments through SEPA Direct Debit (the scheme runs alongside the Autogiro scheme). However, SEPA Direct Debit can only be used to collect payments denominated in Euro (EUR). If you plan to collect payments in kronor, you should use Autogiro rather than SEPA.

GoCardless allows you to collect direct debit payments from both Autogiro and SEPA in a single integration.

Autogiro payments through GoCardless

GoCardless is an online direct debit specialist that can manage the entire collection process on your behalf. Merchants can collect and manage payments using a simple online tool or with our REST API. We offer access to Autogiro in Sweden, SEPA Direct Debit in the Eurozone and Bacs Direct Debit in the UK, all in a single integration. To find out more, visit our [website](#).

Use cases for Autogiro

The Autogiro scheme is for merchants who want to collect payments from customers in Sweden, denominated in krona.

Autogiro is great for...

- **Regular payments** such as membership fees and subscription payments. With Autogiro, customer retention rate is much higher as churn due to card expiry is completely eliminated. Gyms, charities and web hosting companies are great examples.
- **Invoicing** for services where instant payment is not required. Accountancies and marketing agencies are good examples.
- **Account customers** who have an ongoing relationship with the merchant. Autogiro automates the collection process and lets customers simplify the way they pay. Wholesalers are a good example.

Autogiro isn't so good for...

- **Transactions** which need immediate clearing. Autogiro payments are not instant.
- **Liquid assets and high value goods**, such as cars or currency. Tight customer protections are built in to the Autogiro scheme. These protections give customers the right to a refund if they have been incorrectly charged. The protection can make this a target for fraudsters.

Autogiro payments through GoCardless

Our online API, dashboard and partner integrations make it easier and cheaper to access the Autogiro system:

- **Online businesses:** We have a simple API that can integrate with your website or CRM. The API allows you to automate the manual processes associated with other providers.
- **Invoicing:** Our API allows you to build automatic reconciliation into your invoicing software.
- **Small businesses:** There's no need to talk to your bank or find a software solution to access Autogiro. All you need to do is sign up with GoCardless.

To find out more about collecting Autogiro with GoCardless visit our [website](#).

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Getting access to Autogiro

Getting access to Autogiro typically involves three stages:

1. Signing a contract with your bank
2. Implementing a solution to create and manage payment files for Bankgirot
3. Setting up a secure communication solution to exchange files with Bankgirot

Signing a contract with your bank

Companies must sign a contract with a sponsor bank in order to make submissions to Bankgirot.

Merchants can contact their preferred bank to request access to the Autogiro service. Each bank has a different application process, but all will need to be satisfied with the merchant's ability to enforce the Autogiro scheme rules and verify the merchant's contractual capacity to indemnify the sponsor bank against any refunds made.

Generating and managing payment files

Instructions must be submitted to Bankgirot in the form of a file with the correct structure and contents. The contents of these files is covered in more details in our guide to [Bankgirot submissions](#).

Most companies use third-party software to create payment files. This functionality can be included in Enterprise Resourcing Planning (ERP) systems or industry-specific software such as gym management systems. The same software is typically able to import files containing responses from Bankgirot.

Setting up a communication solution

Payment files must be submitted to Bankgirot over a secure communications channel.

Third-party software is available to create and authenticate this connection. An authorised user from the merchant must log in to the software to establish the link to Bankgirot. This user must submit files for new mandates and payments and download files containing updates on payments. These updates include codes for errors and failures.

To achieve optimal timings, merchants must establish an internal process to download files from Bankgirot every morning and submit files to Bankgirot at the end of every working day.

Companies processing a larger volume of Autogiro payments can invest the extra time, cost and resources to purchase and set up an FTP solution to automatically transfer files to and from Bankgirot and an ERP system.

Using Autogiro with GoCardless

GoCardless is an online Autogiro specialist that manages the entire collection process on your behalf. When using us, you won't need an agreement with your bank or expensive software to submit into the Bankgirot system. The set-up process described above is replaced with a [simple online sign-up process](#).

You can manage payments yourself through the GoCardless dashboard or through one of our partner integrations. You can also integrate with our [REST API](#) to create a fully automated system.

We allow your customers to set up Autogiro payments online. This means you do not need to collect and store paper mandates. As soon as a mandate is in place you can collect one-off and recurring payments from your customer.

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There are two ways to collect Autogiro payments using GoCardless:

1. **Using the GoCardless bankgiro number:**
GoCardless has a master Bankgiro number from which we can submit and manage payments on your behalf. Merchants can customise part of the payment reference that appears on customer bank statements.
2. **Using your own bankgiro number:** GoCardless can set up a bankgiro number for you. With this option, only the name of your business will appear on customers' bank statements.

If your business has customers outside Sweden, GoCardless can also provide access to the local equivalents of Autogiro in other countries. This is all managed within the same account and integration. This includes SEPA Direct Debit in the Eurozone and [Bacs Direct Debit in the UK](#). For more information see our [Bacs Direct Debit guide](#) and our [SEPA Direct Debit guide](#).

What is a bankgiro number?

A bankgiro number (known in Swedish as Bankgironummer) is an identifier for bank accounts in Sweden. All Autogiro collections must be associated with a bankgiro number and Bankgirot, the central clearing service for Autogiro, will use the bankgiro number to create a record of the transaction.

Banks will use the bankgiro number to determine the name to show on customer's bank statements. The bankgiro number is also used to find other details about the payment originator. If the customer later requests a refund for the payment, the bankgiro number associated with the payment will be used to identify the originator who is liable for the refund. In both cases, details are obtained from the Bankgirot database.

Having your own bankgiro number is a requirement to submit directly to Bankgirot. Merchants without their own bankgiro number can still submit indirectly using GoCardless' bankgiro number.

Getting a bankgiro number

A bankgiro number can be issued by banks in Sweden that are sponsored by Bankgirot. A list of approved banks can be found on the [Bankgirot website](#). Each bank has a different application process for obtaining a bankgiro number but all of them will look for the following key requirements:

- Management expertise to enforce the Autogiro scheme rules, to minimise submission errors, and to maintain the reputation of the scheme.
- Contractual capacity to indemnify the sponsor bank against any refunds made.

Sponsorship decisions are ultimately at the discretion of each bank. In some cases, banks may also impose additional requirements in addition to those listed here.

Using GoCardless' bankgiro number

Organisations without their own bankgiro number can still submit to Bankgirot via GoCardless. This is known as submitting indirectly.

Indirect submissions are still attached to a bankgiro number. However, the bankgiro number will be owned by GoCardless. This may take one of two forms:

- **Facilities management via GoCardless.** GoCardless will set up a bankgiro number on behalf of the merchant, but will own the bankgiro number. Customers will see the name of the merchant on their bank statements when payments are collected. Payments are collected into the GoCardless client monies account. GoCardless will then transfer any

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funds collected to your bank account within two working days.

- **Collection through aggregation.** GoCardless is a Payments Institution regulated under the Payments Service Directive. A Payments Institution is able to collect payment under their own name with a single bankgiro number. These payments are then paid out to its clients. GoCardless allows merchants to customise part of the payment reference - this means the name of the merchant can be visible on customers' bank statements.

In either case, you won't need to go through a bank to get access to Autogiro. GoCardless satisfies the banking and scheme requirements as part of the service. With GoCardless, there are no upfront costs to collect payments by Autogiro. Also, as payments are collected under a single banking agreement, there are scale benefits which we pass on to our merchants.

To find out more about collecting Autogiro with GoCardless visit our [website](#).

Similarities to SEPA and Bacs Direct Debit

The bankgiro number in Autogiro plays the same role as the [Creditor ID in SEPA Direct Debit](#) and the [Service User Number in Bacs Direct Debit](#).

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How does Autogiro work?

Autogiro mandates

This guide will walk you through the rules around setting up and managing an Autogiro mandate (known in Swedish as Autogiro medgivande).

What is an Autogiro Mandate?

An Autogiro mandate is an authorisation given by your customer for your business to collect payments from their bank account. The details of each authorisation are standardised:

- All future payments are authorised so you can collect any amount at any time from your customer.
- Your customer needs to be notified no later than eight working days before the payment is collected, unless the customer has explicitly authorised the payment being collected.
- All payments are covered by the Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751). This gives protection to customers in case a payment is taken in error.
- Mandates can either be written in English or Swedish (standardised wording exists in both languages).

In many cases, there will be a specific schedule of payments, such as a fixed recurring subscription, when the Autogiro mandate is authorised. The Autogiro rules and the Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751) protect the customer from any other payments taken fraudulently or in error.

Setting up an Autogiro mandate

To register a mandate, your customer needs to complete an Autogiro mandate form. Generally, this is done in one of two ways:

- **Paper mandate.** A physical Autogiro mandate form can be completed by the customer and returned to you.
- **Online mandate.** Your customers can provide authorisation online through bank-approved payment pages.

Paper mandates

For paper mandates, there are two standard forms that can be ordered from Bankgirot. The form must either be signed with an account number (form BG600P) or bankgiro number (form BG600F).

There's also the flexibility for your company to design their own Autogiro mandate. If you choose to do this, there are [mandatory details](#) you'll need to include on the form. The mandate form needs to be approved by your sponsor bank before being presented to customers.

Once a paper mandate form has been completed and returned to you by a customer, its details will need to be submitted to the banks (see the next section). The paper mandate form must be retained as proof your customer has authorised the mandate.

Online mandates

There are three types of online mandate in Sweden:

- Mandate via the Internet bank
- Mandate via web page
- Mandate via electronic mandate form

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Mandate via the Internet bank

With 'mandate via the internet bank' (Medgivande via Internetbank in Swedish), customers will need to log in to their online banking service to enter details about the mandate they want to set up. You'll need to give your customers the details of what to enter on the mandate. You'll also need to be set up to receive notification of when the mandate is created. When receiving a mandate via the Internet bank, you'll need to approve it or reject it.

The main advantage of this method is your bank takes care of storing the mandate. The main disadvantage is lower conversion compared to enabling your customers to sign up on-site (mandate via the internet bank isn't a seamless process). If the customer makes a mistake when setting up the mandate (for instance, by fixing the wrong payment amount), you'll need the customer to correct the details with their bank.

Mandate via web page

Mandates can also be submitted through an electronic form hosted by your bank (Medgivande via Hemsida in Swedish). You'll need access to Autogiro Online and you'll need to be set up to receive notifications when a new mandate is created.

The main advantage of using this method is you're able to build it into your online sign-up flow. This will increase the conversion. A limitation of this method is the mandate will always be standardised - there's less scope for your business to customise it.

Mandate via electronic mandate form

A 'mandate via electronic mandate form' (Medgivande via elektroniskt medgivandeformulär in Swedish) can be created by you or an authorised supplier. The form of the mandate needs to be approved by a sponsor bank. This is to verify they comply with the Autogiro rules.

This method gives you ultimate control. You're able to host the mandate on your own website which improves conversion and allows for greater customisation. You'll need to make sure your finance system supports this method.

Once payment information and approval have been collected from your customer, it must be submitted electronically to the banks (see next section). There is no physical copy of the mandate to retain, which can make it more difficult to prove authorisation if later disputed.

Telephone mandates

It's worth noting that the Autogiro scheme rules don't allow mandate details to be taken over the phone. This is different to SEPA and UK Direct Debit.

Submitting an Autogiro mandate to the banks

Once your customer has completed an Autogiro mandate, it needs to be submitted to the banks. This will inform your customer's bank about the mandate and will allow you to collect payments against it in the future.

Submissions to the banking system are made through Bankgirot, the clearing service for Autogiro. You'll need to create a file containing details of each mandate which must then be transferred to Bankgirot.

Once submitted to Bankgirot, it can take up to 6 banking days before the mandate is active. Once active, you'll be able to start taking payments against the mandate.

If anything goes wrong during the mandate setup process, you'll be alerted by a message from Bankgirot.

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Managing your Autogiro mandates

Once an Autogiro mandate is set up, you can cancel it by submitting a cancellation message to the banks. Your customer can also cancel the mandate directly through their bank.

If you wish to cancel the mandate without it first being requested by the customer, you'll need to inform the customer about its cancellation at least 30 days in advance. There are exceptions to this rule (e.g. if the payer repeatedly fails to have sufficient funds or if the bank account has already been closed).

You'll receive a message from Bankgirot whenever there are changes to an Autogiro mandate (for example, if a payer cancels their mandate).

Autogiro mandates through GoCardless

GoCardless provides an optimised flow for your customers to create new Autogiro mandates:

- The customer setup flow is optimised, with simple online payment pages.
- The submission of mandates to Bankgirot is handled on your behalf.
- Mandate management is automated in response to messages from Bankgirot.

Advantages of online mandates for Autogiro

Online mandates

At GoCardless we believe that the use of online mandates is the key to unlocking the full potential of Autogiro and other Direct Debit schemes.

Online mandates can increase Autogiro sign-up rates and provide substantial cost and efficiency benefits:

- **Less hassle for your customers** – Online mandates avoid the inconvenient process of printing, signing and posting a paper form. This makes signing a mandate more convenient for customers and can result in higher conversion.
- **Fewer manual entry processes** – Paper mandates must be physically transferred and stored. Many merchants also input the data into their systems manually. With online mandates, this isn't necessary making it much more efficient and less open to error.
- **Automated processes** – Online mandates allow for automatic storage and retrieval of mandate data.

The automated processing of mandates can also bring benefits to your customers. For example, newly-signed mandates can be registered immediately. This means customers can potentially be given access to services sooner, without waiting for the post.

Mandate via electronic mandate form

There are three types of online mandates in Autogiro. GoCardless uses mandates via electronic mandate form (Medgivande via elektroniskt medgivandeformulär in Swedish). All of our merchants can use the secure GoCardless hosted [payment pages](#). GoCardless Pro customers can also build custom payment pages into their website ([see our guide](#)).

Electronic mandate forms provide several advantages over other online mandate types:

- **Optimised payment flow** – Unlike mandates via internet bank, customers can be seamlessly directed to a mandate form rather than being asked to log in to their online banking.

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- **Improved user experience** – Our customised electronic mandate form provides a more polished user experience than the Bankgirot-hosted web pages. GoCardless Pro customers can also build the form directly into their checkout page without a re-direct.
- **Reduce form clutter** – On our hosted electronic mandate forms we reduce form length by removing optional fields. GoCardless Pro customers who have already gathered some or all of the required fields don't have to ask customers to enter this data again.

Mandatory mandate contents

There is certain mandatory information that needs to appear on all Autogiro mandates.

Mandatory Wording

All Autogiro mandates need to include some mandatory wording. The mandatory wording is available in [English](#) and [Swedish](#).

1. **Alternative texts.** Your mandate needs to include one of three "alternative texts". There are three versions of the alternative text:
 - Text for the mandate form where the payer can choose to enter a bank account
 - Text for the mandate form where the payer can choose to enter a bankgiro number
 - Text for the mandate form where the payer can choose to enter a bank account or bankgiro number
2. **General text.** In addition to the "alternative text", your mandate must also include the general text. The general text on every mandate will always be the same, irrespective of whether the customer is entering a bank account or bankgiro number.

Mandatory Contents

There are certain details that must be included on all mandate forms to comply with Autogiro rules:

Your company's details

1. Name
2. Company number
3. Address
4. Town

Payer's details

1. Payer's name
2. Civic/company number
3. Payment service provider (e.g. bank)
4. Account number

Mandate text (as above)

Either Bankgirot's logo or your company's logo

GoCardless can help you design a compliant Autogiro mandate. Our API can automatically populate a Bankgirot-compliant mandate. This will include all of the above information.

To find out more and to register your interest in collecting Autogiro payments, please visit the GoCardless [website](#).

Taking Autogiro Payments

This guide will walk you through notifying your customer, submitting a payment to Bankgirot, and the response messages you will receive.

Notifying your customers of payments

Before you're able to collect an Autogiro payment from a customer, you must give them "Advance Notice".

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The scheme rules require that your customer is informed of each payment before it leaves their account.

If your payments vary, either in frequency or amount, advance notice of 8 working days is required before each payment. The notice must contain the payment date and amount. Unlike SEPA or UK Direct Debit, with Autogiro this notification period cannot be reduced by an extra agreement with your bank.

There are, however, two exceptions to this rule:

- For regular payments of a fixed amount, a single payment notification or invoice can be issued. This will need to contain details of the payment frequency and payment amount.
- If your customer has approved an Autogiro payment in conjunction with a purchase or order, you do not need to give advance notice. You will need to make it clear on the invoice that payment is to be made by Autogiro.

Notice given, either in writing or electronically, should be as clear as possible.

Submitting payment requests to the banks

Payment requests are submitted to the banks through Bankgirot. Each request is routed to your sponsor bank and your customer's bank. On the day the payment is due, your bank will credit your account. Your customer's bank will then debit your customer's account. The two banks will then settle-up between themselves.

More detail on the submission process is available [here](#)

Post-submission

If a payment is successful your account will simply be credited. No further messages will be received. If, on the other hand, a payment fails, Bankgirot will send a message detailing the failure. For full details on how these messages are received, and their meanings, see our guide on how to handle [Autogiro reports from Bankgirot](#).

Taking Autogiro payments through GoCardless

GoCardless can process Autogiro payments on your behalf, including:

- **Registering mandates:** GoCardless will handle mandate registration with Bankgirot on your behalf.
- **Notifying customers:** GoCardless will send customers a bank-approved advance notice of each payment (optional).
- **Submitting payment requests:** GoCardless will handle all submissions to Bankgirot on your behalf.
- **Managing payments:** GoCardless automatically handles reports from Bankgirot and shows you the status of all of your payments. We also make it easy for you to cancel, retry or refund payments within our system.

GoCardless also allows you to collect payments using other Direct Debit schemes, including SEPA (for the Eurozone) and Bacs (for the UK).

To find out more about collecting Autogiro with GoCardless visit our [website](#).

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Customer Protection

There are two main sources of protection for customers:

- The Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751)
- The Autogiro rules

This guide describes the protection your customers receive, your obligations under the The Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751) and The Autogiro rules, and how to dispute an invalid refund claim.

The Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751)

The Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751) protects customers in two ways:

- **Refunds** - customers are entitled to a full refund of any payment that has been taken in error.
- **Payment cancellations** - customers can cancel an outgoing Autogiro payment at any time by contacting their bank.

Each of the above protections is enforced by the banks and forms an intrinsic part of the Autogiro scheme. Cancellations are processed by the payer's bank without prior discussion with the merchant.

Autogiro rules

The Autogiro rules are a set of rules put in place by Bankgirot. Every merchant who takes payments using Autogiro is expected to abide by these rules and to uphold the reputation of the scheme.

There are two further protections in addition to the protections given by the Payment Services Act:

- **Notifications** - customers must be notified in advance of each payment. Failure to follow notification requirements may result in a merchant being barred from the scheme. Notification must typically be given at least 8 working days before a payment is taken, although there are certain exemptions. [For more details see our guide on taking Autogiro payments.](#)
- **Mandate cancellations** - customers can cancel a Autogiro mandate at any time by contacting their bank.

The refund request process

Under the Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751), there are strong rules around refunds. A customer can request a refund for any payment, and provided the bank agrees with the validity of their claim, the customer will receive a refund.

To raise a refund request, a customer must notify their bank. There are two types of refund available:

- **Refunds for unauthorised payments.** A payment is unauthorised if the payer never signed a mandate form or if the mandate was cancelled before the payment was collected. Customers have 13 months from the date of the payment to request a refund for unauthorised payments. A shorter time period applies for business-to-business payments and is agreed with seller's bank.

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- **Refunds for authorised payments.** In this case, refunds can be granted if the amount was not explicitly specified when signing the mandate and the amount is more than what the customer could have reasonably expected. Customers have 8 weeks to request a refund for authorised payments. Businesses are not entitled to refund

In Sweden there is an investigation process for when refunds are requested. The steps are as follows:

1. The customer reports the payment to their bank.
2. The bank submits a refund request to Bankgirot.
3. Bankgirot contacts your company to request documents showing the payment was correct and authorised.
4. Your company can either send the proofs back to Bankgirot, or send proof that the request has been resolved with the customer directly.
5. Bankgirot decide on the outcome of the investigation.
6. Any refunded payments are reported in your daily reports from Bankgirot (see the Payment specification section in [Messages from the Banks](#)).
7. The amount refunded to the customer is then reclaimed from the merchant automatically.

The Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751) in practice

In practice, only a low percentage of Autogiro payments are actually refunded. This rate, however, varies significantly depending on business type, as does the severity of the refund.

The risk of a refund request is particularly high for businesses selling:

- High value goods such as cars, where the merchant stands to lose a lot from a single fraudulent refund.
- Liquid assets such as currency or loans, which could be a target for fraudulent refund requests.
- Services likely to see refund requests, such as gambling and payday loan services.

The risk of facing a refund request can be minimized by:

- **Giving sufficient advance notice.** If customers are provided with the required advance notice they'll be able to raise any issues or cancel the payment before it is made.
- **Providing good customer service.** Having clear contact information and an easy-to-reach customer service channel will encourage customers to bring any complaints to you before seeking a refund from their bank.
- **Promptly processing cancellation requests.** Mandate cancellation requests should be processed immediately. This means you can avoid attempting payments on a cancelled mandate.
- **Following the Autogiro scheme rules.** Make sure both you and your provider precisely follow the Autogiro scheme rules - including any updates.

Refunds in action at GoCardless

GoCardless can help you manage refund requests. If a request is made by one of your customers we will notify you immediately. We will then work with you and your customer to understand the reason, and will re-take the payment if appropriate.

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GoCardless' processes are designed to minimise the risk of a refund request and to make sure you always abide by The Swedish Payment Services Act (2010:751) and the Autogiro scheme rules.

These include:

- Clear and compliant payment pages.
- Advance notices sent for you automatically. GoCardless will automatically notify your customers by email 8 working days in advance of a payment (optional for Pro customers).
- Follow the Autogiro scheme rules. GoCardless keeps up to date with all Autogiro scheme rules. We precisely follow the rules and help you do the same.

To find out more about collecting Autogiro with GoCardless visit our [website](#).

Autogiro Timings

Like other Direct Debits schemes such as BACS and SEPA, Autogiro is not an instant payment method.

This guide details the timings for Autogiro, and explains how GoCardless can help you to optimise them.

Advance notice

Except for in the cases below, you must notify your customer before submitting a payment to be collected by Autogiro. By default, the amount of advance notice required is 8 working days.

Notable exceptions to this rule are:

- Explicitly authorised payments - if your customer has approved an Autogiro payment in conjunction with a purchase or order, you do not need to give

advance notice. You will need to make it clear on the invoice that payment is to be made by Autogiro.

- Fixed payment schedules - for regular payments of a fixed amount, a single payment notification or invoice can be issued. This will need to contain details of the payment frequency and payment amount.

Cut-off to submit payments in Autogiro

Collecting an Autogiro payment against an existing mandate

A collection under an existing mandate must be submitted to the banks one working day before the date the payment is due. The relevant timings are:

- **D-8** - This is the last day you can send a notification of payment to your customer (unless one of the exceptions listed above applies).
- **D-1** - This is the deadline for payment initiation instructions to be received by Bankgirot.
- **D** - The day on which the payer's bank account is debited. This is also when you will be notified via Bankgirot if the transaction has been unsuccessful.
- **D+3** - This is the final day on which you can retry a payment if it failed due to insufficient funds.

Under the Autogiro scheme, the payer is entitled to request a refund of an authorised collection within 8 weeks of their account being debited. The payer is also entitled to request a refund for an unauthorised or fraudulent collection from their bank account up to 13 months after the payment is taken.

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Collecting payment when no mandate exists

If you don't already have a mandate with your customer, you must set up one before a payment can be collected. You must then wait up to 6 banking days to allow the mandate to be set up before submitting a payment request. This means a mandate can be set up and payment submitted within the eight day notification period.

For further details on how to set up a mandate, see our guide on [Autogiro mandates](#).

Payment failure notifications

Once submitted, a payment may still fail due to the payer having insufficient funds in their bank account. The payer will need to have sufficient funds in their account at 0:01 on the day of the payment. If a payment fails for this reason then you will receive an update in the daily Payments Specification report. See our guide to [reports from Bankgirot](#) for more information.

You can retry failed payments once per day for up to three business days in the period following the payment due date.

Non-working days and optimising timings

Submissions to the banks cannot be made on non-working days, and the banks will not process any Autogiro messages on non-working days. Despite this it is possible to receive messages that were sent the previous day. For example, payment failure reports distributed overnight on a Friday are available to download on a Saturday morning.

Payment timings with GoCardless

GoCardless processes all Autogiro payments according to the fully optimised timetable above. We will receive the funds on the same day the customer's bank account is debited. On D+2 we will transfer all the payments we have collected into your account. Funds will therefore arrive in your account on D+3.

GoCardless can submit and receive messages from the banks on your behalf, complying with notification rules, interbank timing and cut-off times. This will give you absolute transparency on the status of your payments at any time, through our dashboard and API.

For further details on how to set up a mandate, see our guide on [Autogiro mandates](#).

Submitting Mandates and Payments to Bankgirot

To collect Autogiro payments, new mandate or payment requests must be submitted through Bankgirot. This guide explains how to submit new mandates and payment requests. For details on receiving update messages, see our guide on how to handle Autogiro reports from Bankgirot.

What is Bankgirot?

Bankgirot is a Swedish payment system used to transfer payments directly from one bank account to another.

The submission process

New mandates and payment requests are submitted to Bankgirot by uploading a file. The contents of this file depends on the submission, but the process is always the same:

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How does Autogiro work?

- A file is created with the required structure. The details of this are provided below. Separate sections are required for mandate and payment request submissions.
- The file is uploaded using FTP or a Communication Solution, which helps keep all personal details safe.
- Once successfully submitted, the contents of the file are processed by Bankgirot.

Most companies use finance software or an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to create the file, but it can be useful to understand the structure of these files. An example file for submitting mandates is available [here](#), and one for payment requests is [here](#).

Note that you must not submit a payment request before the Autogiro mandate has been set up.

Old and new payment files

Bankgirot recently added a new file layout for Autogiro. They are currently providing compatibility for both the old and new files types, but there are some key differences worth noting.

The type of file layout determines which reports you will receive back from Bankgirot. Bankgirot recommends that you use the new layout. This file layout covers all events and enables a completely digital Autogiro process. One of the key implications of using the old file layout is that you will not be able to fully reconcile receivables automatically. This can mean a significant amount of manual admin work is required to complete a reconciliation.

If you are using accounting software to create your reports, you should ensure this is able to support the new file layouts in order to streamline your Autogiro processes.

Submitting Autogiro mandates

Mandates are submitted in the mandate file. There are three transaction codes for submitting mandate actions to Bankgirot:

Code	Use case
03	Cancel a mandate
04	Add a mandate
05	Update the payer number

For further details on how to set up a mandate, see our guide on [Autogiro mandates](#).

Submitting Autogiro payments

Payments are initiated in the payment initiation file. The codes are as follows:

Code	Use case
82	Initiate a direct debit
32	Initiate a refund

For more details on taking Autogiro payments, see [here](#).

Submitting to Bankgirot through GoCardless

GoCardless provides a simple but powerful user interface for creating mandates and payment requests, with API access also available. We can then create and submit all messages to Bankgirot for you.

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How does Autogiro work?

How to handle Autogiro reports from Bankgirot

If you don't already have a mandate with your customer, you must set up one before a payment can be collected. You must then wait up to 6 banking days to allow the mandate to be set up before submitting a payment request. This means a mandate can be set up and payment submitted within the eight day notification period.

For further details on how to set up a mandate, see our guide on [Autogiro mandates](#).

Receiving messages from Bankgirot

Each working day at 6am, Bankgirot will make new reports containing any messages available to you. You must have a server set up in order to receive them. If you're using GoCardless we'll automatically handle the reports for you.

Each report is for a separate type of notification and will contain a line for each event of that type. The different reports and associated reason codes are described below.

Mandate notifications

Notifications about your mandates are received as Mandate Advice files. These notifications relate to new, amended or cancelled mandates. For instance, if there have been any problems with the setup or cancellation you'll receive a mandate advice message. There are also messages that confirm the successful set up of new mandates.

Within each message there are "information codes" and "comment codes". You need to use both together to understand the status of the mandate.

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Information codes:

Code	Bankgirot Meaning	Possible Comment Codes
03	Cancellation, initiated by the payee	04, 09, 21, 29, 30, 33
04	New addition, initiated by the payee	09, 10, 20, 21, 23, 29, 30, 32
05	Change payer number, initiated by the payee	04, 10, 21, 29, 30, 32, 33
10	Cancelled due to payee's Bankgiro number being closed, initiated by payee or payee's bank	—
42	Response to account inquiry from bank on new payer in Autogiro	03, 05, 32
43	Cancelled/removed due to unanswered account inquiry	07
44	Cancelled due to payer's Bankgiro number being closed, initiated by payer's bank	98
46	Cancellation, initiated by payer or payer's bank	02

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Comment codes:

Comment codes are used with information codes to specify the reason for the mandate information action.

Code	Bankgirot Meaning
02	Mandate cancelled on initiative of payer or payer's bank.
03	Account type not approved for Autogiro.
05	Mandate not found in Bankgirot's mandate directory.
07	Incorrect bank account or personal details.
09	Cancelled/removed due to unanswered account inquiry.
10	Payer Bankgiro number not found at Bankgirot.
20	Mandate already registered in Bankgirot's directory or inquiry pending.
21	Incorrect civic/company number or agreement on mandate based on Bankgiro number not found.
23	Incorrect payer number.
29	Incorrect bank account number.
32	Incorrect payee Bankgiro number.
30	Deregistered payee Bankgiro number.
32	New mandate.
33	Cancelled.
98	Mandate cancelled due to cancelled payer Bankgiro number.

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Payment specifications and payments rejected in balance check inquiry

This report details information on incoming payments, outgoing payments and payments that are stopped after the balance check enquiry. You can view an example payment specification and rejected payments message [here](#).

Rejected payments

This report details payments that fail for reasons other than failing the balance check inquiry. This is usually due to a mistake in the submission.

Code	Bankgirot Meaning
01	Omitted, mandate not found.
02	Omitted, account not approved or closed.
06	Incorrect period code.
07	Incorrect number for recurring payments.
08	Amount non-numeric.
09	Ban on outgoing payments.
10	Bankgiro number not found at Bankgirot.
12	Incorrect payment date.
13	Payment date passed.
15	The payee Bankgiro numbers in the opening record and the transaction record are not the same.
24	Amount exceeds Max. amount.

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How does Autogiro work?

Cancellations/Amendment of payments

The cancellation and amendment of payments report details which payments have been cancelled or amended and provides details as to why.

Cancellation codes:

TK	Bankgirot Meaning	Possible Comment Codes
03	Cancelled due to cancelled mandate.	12
11	Cancelled by payer/payer's bank	12
21	Cancelled, payee's agreement terminated.	12
23	Cancel all payments for a payer number.	02, 10, 11, 12, 13
24	Cancel all payments for a payer number on a specified payment date. Note: For recurring payments, all payments included in the recurring payment order are cancelled.	01, 02, 10, 11, 12, 13
25	Cancel one payment for a payer number on a specified payment date, for a specified amount and with a specified reference (optional). Note: For recurring payments all payments included in the recurring payment order are cancelled.	01, 02, 04, 05, 10, 11, 12, 13

Amendment codes:

TK	Bankgirot Meaning	Possible Comment Codes
26	Amend all payments to new payment date.	06, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15
27	Amend all payments on specified payment date to new payment date.	01, 06, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15
28	Amend all payments with specified payer number on specified payment date to new payment date.	01, 02, 06, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18
29	Amend a payment on specified payment date to new payment date.	01, 02, 04, 05, 06, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18

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How does Autogiro work?

Comment codes:

Comment codes are used with cancellation and amendment records to specify the reason either for the amendment made or for the amendment not being processed.

TK	Bankgirot Meaning	Possible Comment Codes
01	Incorrect payment date	24, 25, 27, 28, 29
02	Incorrect payer number	23, 24, 25, 28, 29
04	Incorrect debit code	25, 29
05	Incorrect amount	25, 29
06	Incorrect new payment date	26, 27, 28, 29
10	Incorrect payee Bankgiro number (incorrect check digit)	23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
11	Payee Bankgiro number missing (zero or blank)	23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
12	Cancelled	03, 11, 21, 23, 24, 25
13	Payment missing, not processed	23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
14	Amended payment date	26, 27
15	Not amended, recurring payment order	28, 29
18	Amended payment date	28, 29

Receiving messages with GoCardless

GoCardless can receive and interpret all messages from Bankgirot on your behalf. Where necessary, we will notify you immediately and work with you and your customers to resolve any issues.

To find out more about collecting Autogiro with GoCardless visit our [website](#).

Chapter 4

Autogiro Compliance

Online payment pages

The organisation responsible for the oversight of the Autogiro scheme, Bankgirot, defines three types of online mandates for Autogiro (for more details see our guide to Autogiro mandates [here](#)).

GoCardless uses mandates via an electronic mandate form (known as Medgivande via elektroniskt medgivandeformulär in Swedish). This practical guide will help you with the compliance requirements to create this electronic document and to offer online Autogiro on your website.

To create fully compliant payment pages for your customers, you will need to:

Receiving messages from Bankgirot

1. Serve your payment pages over HTTPS
2. Collect the payer's name, civic/company number and bank details
3. Make sure your customers are aware that payments are powered by GoCardless in the footer of the page
4. Provide your own company's name, address, company number and logo
5. Display the Autogiro mandate text

The [GoCardless payment pages](#) are used as an example throughout this guide. You can view them in their entirety [here](#).

1. Serve your payment pages over HTTPS

Why? Ensures customer details are transmitted securely.

How? Configure your website to only accept secure (SSL) connections.

2. Collect the payer's name, civic or company number and bank details, and display 'Payments by GoCardless'

Why? This is the minimum information required to set up an Autogiro Direct Debit.

How? Collect this information on a payment page.

Name should include both first name and last name. The name of the account holder can be different from the payer's name (for example in a B2B transaction) but you may suggest the concatenated first name and last name.

The Swedish civic/identity number must be collected from individuals (the personnummer, or samordningsnummer for persons not registered in Sweden). The Swedish company number (organisationsnummer) must be collected for companies.

Bank account details must include the sort code (clearingnummer) and account number (konotonummer). Local bank account details are required for Autogiro in Sweden. It is not possible to submit an Autogiro mandate against an IBAN.

Optionally, you may also want to collect the customer's email address as there are notification requirements before payment is taken under Autogiro. See our guide to [taking Autogiro payments](#) for more information.

3. Make sure your customers are aware that payments are powered by GoCardless in the footer of the page.

Why? To comply with data protection law, it's essential to let your customers know about third party data controllers that power your website.

How? Display the text below in your page footer:

Payments by GoCardless. [Read the GoCardless privacy notice.](#)

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Without that upfront notice, we could both be violating the law. ([Read more here](#))

If that's not technically possible, at a minimum you should include a reference to GoCardless in your website privacy notice. That text should be:

We use GoCardless to process your Direct Debit payments. More information on how GoCardless processes your personal data and your data protection rights, including your right to object, is available at gocardless.com/legal/privacy/

If you are a [GoCardless partner](#), you must include the 'Payments by' notice set out above on your payment pages, or, at a minimum, enable the merchant to provide a link to their privacy notice at the detail intake stage.

4. Provide your own company's name, address, company number and logo

Why? Ensures the customer is aware of who is collecting the payment.

How? Add a snippet of text on the page along with the company logo. Scheme rules also allow merchants to display Bankgirot's logo instead if desired.

5. Display the customer's details back to them for confirmation and display the Autogiro mandate

Why? Confirm the customer's approval and provide the Autogiro terms, conditions and rules that the payer accepts by signing a mandate.

How? Display a final confirmation before the form submits, and provide a copy of the mandate.



The formatting of the mandate is at your discretion, but you must include the following details:

- The customer's information: name, civic/company number and account details, as described above
- The customer's Payment Service Provider (their bank)
- Your company's details, as described above
- The date the mandate was created

Bankgirot provides mandatory text that must be included on the mandate verbatim. The mandatory wording is available in [English](#) and [Swedish](#).

You can see a compliant electronic mandate confirmation page below:

Clicking 'View your Direct Debit instruction' opens the electronic copy of the mandate. You can see an example of this [here](#).

Once a customer has confirmed the electronic mandate, you should create a timestamp of the transaction. You should also store their IP address or a log of the transaction.

Autogiro and GoCardless

GoCardless is an end-to-end Autogiro provider. We can either completely handle Autogiro compliance on your behalf, or guide you through your own custom implementation.

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Autogiro Compliance

GoCardless has off-the-shelf [payment pages](#) which:

- are fully compliant with the scheme rules
- have been translated into English and Swedish (we automatically detect your customer's language and show them the payment page in their preferred language)
- can be customised with your business name and logo
- Alternatively, if you want to design and host your own payment pages you can use the GoCardless Pro API to do so. Your Account Executive will support you during your implementation of the Autogiro compliance guidelines.

To find out more about collecting Autogiro with GoCardless visit our [website](#).

Sending pre-notifications

A pre-notification informs your customer when they can expect a single payment or regular subscription to leave their account. It is a mandatory requirement of Autogiro, and can be sent by email, text message or as part of a normal or electronic invoice.

To create fully compliant pre-notifications, you will need to:

1. Inform the customer with the appropriate notice period
2. Include the amount and due date
3. Include your contact details
4. Clearly notify the customer that payment is to be made by Autogiro (Direct Debit)

Throughout this guide, the examples are taken from the GoCardless pre-notification emails.

1. Email the customer with the appropriate notice period

Why? Gives the customer the chance to ensure they have sufficient funds.

How? Send the pre-notification 8 working days before payment is collected.

It is not mandatory to send a notification if the payer has approved an Autogiro payment in conjunction with a purchase or order.

2. Include the amount, due date and reference

Why? Helps ensure the customer recognises the charge on their statement

How? Either send an email before each payment, or give details upfront for a fixed subscription.

For recurring direct debits of the same amount, such as subscription plans, you only need to inform the payer before the first Autogiro collection. You must include details of all future charge dates (e.g. "first working day of each month"). A new pre-notification will then only be necessary if the amount, frequency or payment date changes.

Example of a pre-notification for a one-off or recurring variable amount:

Stockholm Gym is charging you 500,00 kr

We will debit your bank account *****12 (Skandinaviska Enskilda Banken) by Direct Debit on or shortly after **December 7, 2015**.

This payment will appear on your bank statement as **G-STHLM-GYM**.

We will notify you via email at least 8 working days in advance of any changes to your payment date or amount.

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Autogiro Compliance

Example of a pre-notification for a recurring amount with multiple collection dates:

A subscription of 500,00 kr, on the 25th of each month has been set up to Stockholm Gym for Gold Plan.

The first regular payment for this subscription will be debited from your bank account *****67 (SKANDINAVISKA ENSKILDA BANKEN AB) via Direct Debit on or shortly after **February 25, 2016**.

Payments for this subscription will appear on your bank statement as **G-STHLM-GYM**.

We will notify you via email at least 8 working days in advance of any changes to your payment date, frequency or amount.

3 Include your contact details

Why? Makes it easy for the customer to contact you with any queries.

How? Include a snippet in each email with your address.

Autogiro and GoCardless

GoCardless is an end-to-end Autogiro (Direct Debit) provider and can completely handle Autogiro compliance on your behalf.

GoCardless can send compliant emails for Autogiro on your behalf. We cover both Swedish and English and automatically send emails in the language of the payer. We automatically send emails eight working days before an Autogiro collection.

If you wish to send your own emails, you can do this with GoCardless Pro. Your Account Executive will support you during your implementation of compliance guidelines.

To find out more about collecting Autogiro payments or to register your interest with GoCardless, check out our [GoCardless Sweden](#) page.

Glossary

Autogiro Terms

Term	Meaning
Advance notice	Notice that must be given, under the Scheme rules, to customers before a payment leaves their account.
Bankgiro number (Bankgironummer)	An identifier that points to a bank account. Organisations collecting payment using Autogiro must have a Bankgirot number.
Bankgirot	The clearing system that administers the Autogiro scheme - all Autogiro communications go through Bankgirot
Balance Check Inquiry	A check carried out by Bankgirot early in the morning on the payment due date. This verifies whether there are sufficient funds in the payer's account to complete the transaction.
Bank day	Submissions to Bankgirot can only take place on Bank Days. These are defined by Bankgirot and exclude weekends and public holidays.
Comment code	Comment codes are used in conjunction with information codes within Bankgirot's reports. They specify the reason for mandate information actions.
Communication Solution (or Method)	The method a company uses to send files to and retrieve files from Bankgirot. The service provided by Bankgirot is called Bankgiro Link
Direct Debit	Used in this guide to refer to Autogiro's equivalents in other countries. Examples include Bacs Direct Debit in the UK and SEPA Direct Debit in the Eurozone.
Due date	The date a payment is due to be debited from a payer's account.
Information code	Information codes provide information on the status of mandates lodged with Bankgirot.
Mandate (Medgivande)	An authorisation from your customer to collect future payments automatically. To set up a mandate your customers must complete a standardised form.
Mandate advice file	The file received from Bankgirot containing notifications about submitted mandates.

Glossary

Autogiro Terms

Term	Meaning
Mandate form	The form used to register a new mandate. This includes paper-based forms and electronic forms.
Mandate via form	A paper-based mandate form. This is the only type of mandate that can be signed with a Bankgiro number, rather than an account number.
Mandate via electronic mandate form (Medgivande via elektroniskt medgivandeformulär)	A customised electronic mandate form that has been approved by the payee's sponsor bank. GoCardless provides an optimised custom mandate form to its customers, including the company's logo. GoCardless Pro users can also build their own mandate form into their website.
Mandate via Internet Bank (Medgivande via Internetbank)	An electronic mandate form signed by the payer after logging in to their online banking portal.
Mandate via web page (Medgivande via Hemsida)	An electronic mandate form hosted by Bankgirot. A company can link to this form from its website.
Payment initiation	The file the company sends to Bankgirot containing the payments to be made. Bankgirot currently operates old and new layouts for this - only the new layout allows full reconciliation of payments.
Payment instructions	The payments Bankgirot accepts and processes.
Payments Specification report	The report from Bankgirot containing updates on payments, including any payments stopped in the balance check inquiry.
(Pre-)Notifications	An alternative term for messages providing the Advance Notice required under the Scheme rules.
Unauthorised Transaction	A transaction is unauthorised if an Autogiro mandate was never signed or if the mandate was cancelled before the payment was made.