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What you need to know about your Drive Test

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About the Drive Test

New probationary drivers have a high risk of being involved in a crash.

To increase the safety of young drivers, there are rules for learner and probationary drivers:

- most learner drivers must have at least 120 hours (including 20 hours night driving) of supervised driving experience before attempting to pass the tests needed for a probationary licence
- after passing the tests, there will be a two-stage probationary period: P1 (red P plates) for one year and P2 (green P plates) for three years.

All learner drivers have to pass two tests to get their licence – the Hazard Perception Test and an on-road practical Drive Test.

The Drive Test helps identify drivers who are ready to drive safely on their own.

You're more likely to pass the Drive Test if you:

- have had at least 120 hours of supervised driving experience
- have had supervised driving experience in a broad range of different driving conditions – such as at night, in wet weather, and on roads with different speed limits
- can drive safely and legally in different driving situations – such as in normal and busy traffic, at intersections and on multi-lane roads.

Follow the four stages in the *Learner Kit* to safely guide your driving practice. Make sure you correctly fill in the *Learner Log Book* as you go.

You will receive a free copy of the *Learner Kit* when you pass your learner permit test.

This brochure has general information about what you need to know and do to pass your Drive Test in Victoria.

For more detailed information about the test, learner and probationary requirements, and to view the *Learner Kit* visit vicroads.vic.gov.au

What tests must I pass to get my licence?

- a Hazard Perception Test requiring you to watch videos showing real driving situations and respond to potential hazards. You must be aged at least 17 years and 11 months to take this test. You have to pass it before you take your practical Drive Test
- an eyesight check
- a practical Drive Test that takes about 30 minutes. You must be at least 18 years of age to take this test. For young learner drivers there are also some driving experience requirements (please check the *Learner Kit* or VicRoads website).

The practical Drive Test checks that you can:

- drive safely
- control the car smoothly
- obey the road rules
- co-operate with other road users.

If you have a disability or difficulty understanding English you should tell VicRoads when booking an appointment for your test.

What do I need to bring to my test?

- your current Victorian learner permit card
- your appointment number and/or appointment receipt
- if you're under 21 years old you must bring your *Learner Log Book* to prove you have completed a minimum of 120 hours of supervised driving experience. The *Learner Log Book* must be filled in correctly
- if you're an overseas licence holder you must provide proof of your overseas licence. If your overseas licence is not in English, you need to provide an English translation of it by a qualified translator, or an International Driving Permit
- if you do not have an Australian learner permit with a photo, full evidence of identity is required. Check what type of documents you can use to prove your identity at vicroads.vic.gov.au
- payment for your licence (VicRoads accepts Mastercard*, Visa*, cheque, EFTPOS or cash).

If you can't provide documents that prove your identity on the day of your test, or you have not filled in the *Learner Log Book* correctly, or you are late for your appointment, you will not be able to take the test, your appointment and test fees will not be refunded, and you will have to wait at least six weeks before you can take the test.

*Please note: a card payment fee will apply when using Mastercard or Visa.

What vehicle can I use for the practical Drive Test?

You will take the test in a car provided by you or your driving instructor. It must:

- be registered, roadworthy, and clean
- have both driver and passenger side mirrors
- have a windscreen demister and a functioning rear demister (where fitted)
- have a seatbelt for all occupants
- be able to maintain a comfortable temperature
- be fitted with L plates
- have a primary speedometer (as fitted by the vehicle manufacturer) that can be viewed by the licence testing officer at all times. If visibility of a primary speedometer is compromised, a supplementary unit may be used (refer to VicRoads website)
- be capable of having the headlights (low beam) turned on during the test
- be fitted with a centrally mounted handbrake accessible by the person in the front passenger seat (this is not required in a dual control vehicle if a driving instructor is in the front passenger seat). Vehicles fitted with electric or foot operated park brakes cannot be used for solo tests
- be of a body type that allows each person to be able to exit the vehicle from a door directly beside them during the test
- have normal manual transmission if you want a manual driver licence to be issued.

Speed warning devices, cruise control and navigators must be turned off during the test. Parking sensors and reverse cameras can be left on.

If a dual control vehicle is used it must have working electronic buzzers fitted or dual control pedal covers.

Who is allowed in the car during my Drive Test?

A VicRoads licence testing officer will conduct the test. Sometimes a second VicRoads officer may be in the car to receive training or to monitor the testing officer's performance. This second officer will not affect your test.

A qualified driving instructor (with a Driver Instructor Authority number) may sit in the front passenger seat during your test, provided the vehicle has dual controls, but they are not allowed to communicate with you or in any way influence your driving during the test.

What will happen during the Drive Test?

After you complete some administrative tasks, you'll walk to your car with the licence testing officer for a short pre-drive check (see next page), then the Drive Test will begin.

The test takes about 30 minutes in total, in two parts:

- the first part involves five to ten minutes of driving in less challenging situations to assess your basic driving abilities and readiness to continue the test. At the end of this first part, you will be asked to pull over to the kerb and the testing officer will assess and record your performance
- the second part involves 20 minutes driving in a wider range of traffic conditions to assess your driving ability more thoroughly in normal day-to-day driving tasks.

Your testing officer will give you simple, clear instructions throughout the test, such as:

'At the next street, turn right'

If you're unsure of an instruction, ask for it to be repeated.

If you do anything unsafe, the Drive Test will be stopped and you will fail.

The pre-drive check

You must be able to identify and operate the following vehicle controls:

- turn indicators
- brake lights
- horn

- headlights (high and low beam)
- hazard lights
- windscreen washer and wipers.

You must be able to identify the handbrake or park brake.

You must be able to identify but not operate the following controls:

- windscreen demister
- rear window demister (where fitted).

You must be able to start the engine.

If your brake lights or any of these controls don't work properly, the assessment may not continue.

Please note that during the Drive Test, you'll be required to have your vehicle's headlights on low beam.

How your driving will be assessed

The first part of the Drive Test takes place in less challenging driving situations. You'll be asked to turn left and right at intersections, change lanes, reverse park or do a three point turn, and then stop the car so the testing officer can calculate your score for the first part of the test. If you pass, you will continue on to the second part of the test. If not, you'll return to the VicRoads Customer Service Centre to receive feedback about your driving.

The second part of the test takes place on busier roads. You'll be assessed when you turn left and right at different intersections, change lanes, merge with other traffic, and drive along straight and curved sections of road. At the end of the test you will return to the VicRoads Customer Service Centre and receive your results.

During the test, the testing officer will award points for your driving performance when you demonstrate the following safe driving skills:

Observation

Safe drivers are aware of other road users and road conditions at all times while driving. You should look ahead of your car and use head checks and your mirrors to maintain a high level of awareness – especially when turning at intersections, stopping or slowing, changing lanes, and entering or leaving the flow of traffic.

Signal use

Safe drivers communicate their intentions to other road users. You must signal for long enough to warn other drivers and road users (at least three seconds, provided this does not cause an unsafe situation) before turning, diverging or changing lanes and for at least five seconds if you're pulling out from the kerb.

Gap selection

When moving into the traffic flow, safe drivers carefully observe traffic and then choose safe gaps so other drivers don't have to take action to avoid a crash. They also choose the first safe gap to enter and don't cause unnecessary delays to other road users. You must carefully observe the traffic and choose the first safe gap when moving into traffic from an intersection, when merging, or when starting off from the kerb.

Speed choice

Speed choice is a key issue for safe driving. Exceeding the speed limit by as little as 5km/h increases your crash risk. Safe drivers do not exceed the speed limit, but when it is safe to do so they drive close to the speed limit so that traffic can flow smoothly. They continually monitor traffic and road conditions and adjust their speed if needed. You must show that you can drive at a suitable speed within the speed limit, which is safe for the conditions.

Following distance

Following other vehicles too closely is a significant cause of crashes – especially for young drivers. Safe drivers leave sufficient distance between their car and vehicles in front so there's time to deal with unexpected events. You must leave at least two seconds between you and any vehicle ahead – and longer in poor driving conditions.

Lateral position

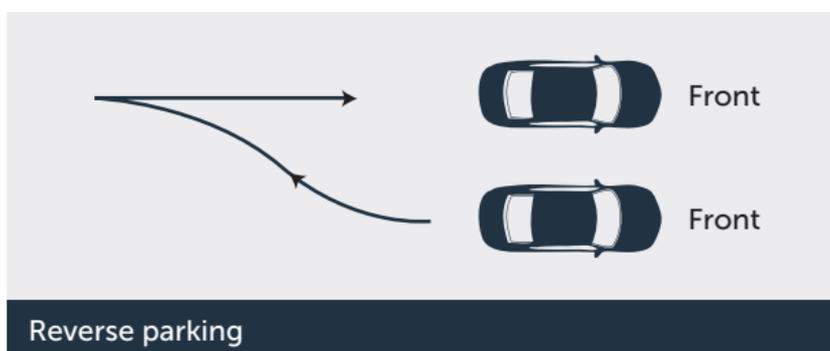
Safe drivers choose the best lane to drive in, steer a smooth path, follow a safe and legal path when turning at an intersection and stay completely within their lane. They keep a safe distance between their car and other road users, including parked cars. During the test, you must choose an appropriate lane, position your car safely within the lane and follow a safe and legal path at all times.

Stop position

When you are required to stop – for example at Stop signs, traffic lights, and crossings – you must stop the car in the correct position. Safe drivers stop close to (but not over) the Stop line. This ensures the safety of other road users and gives the driver the best opportunity to detect potential hazards and to select a safe gap before moving off.

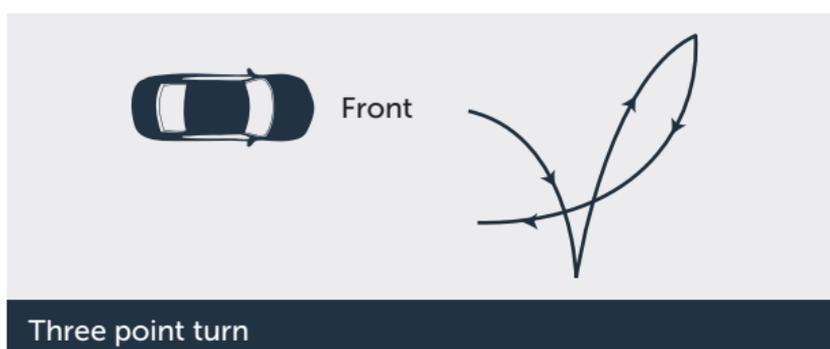
Parking

Most Drive Tests include a reverse parking task to assess your ability to control the car at slow speed. You must show you can signal correctly, look for potential hazards behind the car and complete the parking task safely and efficiently. You must finish with the car parked near the kerb and at a safe distance from the vehicle in front. You also need to move off again safely by signalling correctly and selecting a safe gap.



Three point turn

If there is no opportunity to do a reverse parking task, you may be asked to do a three point turn. You must show you can look for potential hazards before and while making the turn and then while reversing the car. You are allowed to use a driveway when making the turn, but you must not drive onto private property. You should not hit or mount the kerb. You need to use your indicators correctly and move off on the correct side of the road.



Control

Safe drivers are in full control of their vehicle at all times. To demonstrate this you must accelerate and brake smoothly during all manoeuvres. If you are driving a manual, you must avoid stalling the engine and use the clutch and gears smoothly. You must not coast in neutral or with the clutch disengaged for more than 50 metres.

Serious errors while driving

The Drive Test is designed to assess your ability to drive safely. You will be penalised if you do something during the test that creates an unsafe situation, or if you do something that could create an unsafe situation.

The most serious penalty – where the test is stopped and you fail immediately – is used if you do something that puts you or other road users at immediate risk of a crash or injury. Immediate termination will be applied if you:

- have a collision with another vehicle or mount the kerb while driving
- exceed the speed limit by 5km/h or more at any time
- exceed the speed limit by any amount for five seconds or more
- exceed the speed limit by any amount in a school zone when the school zone is in operation
- fail to give way, signal, or check for other road users so that someone else has to take action to avoid a collision
- stop the car in a dangerous position
- drive through a Stop sign or red traffic light
- disobey a direction given by your testing officer or a member of the Victoria Police
- do anything that requires your instructor or testing officer to provide verbal or physical assistance during the Drive Test
- do anything else that creates an unsafe situation.

A penalty called a Critical Error applies if you do something that could create an unsafe situation but is not an immediate danger during the test.

A critical error will be recorded if you:

- drive too slowly for the conditions or fail to move off when safe to do so from traffic lights or a Stop or Give Way sign
- fail to look for other road users when necessary for safety (but no evasive action is required from other road users)
- fail to signal when required (but no evasive action is required from other road users)
- block a pedestrian crossing but no pedestrians are affected
- allow one wheel of your car to mount the kerb when parking or leaving a parking space
- stall your car
- slow and pause but do not stop your car completely at a Stop sign (but other road users or pedestrians are not endangered)
- do something else that is potentially unsafe but does not result in an immediate risk of collision or injury.

If you have too many Critical Errors you will fail.

After the test

The testing officer will give you feedback at the VicRoads Customer Service Centre. You will be told whether you passed or failed, and if there are aspects of your driving which need improvement.

If you fail the test, the feedback will help you focus your practice on specific areas before you attempt the test again.

Remember you are more likely to pass the test if you have at least 120 hours (including 20 hours night driving) of supervised driving experience in a range of different conditions.

For more information

For VicRoads Customer Service Centre locations and further information please visit vicroads.vic.gov.au or call 13 11 71 (TTY users call 13 36 77, Speak and Listen users call 1300 555 727).

Information provided in this brochure is correct at the time of printing and may be subject to change.