



Driver & Vehicle  
Standards  
Agency

# Driver and rider testing



# Did you know?

Britain's 45 million licence holders drive more than 300 billion vehicle miles a year.

Between 2006 and 2016 Great Britain made a lot of progress in road safety, and road deaths went down by 44%. But 1,792 people still died on our roads in 2016.

Motorcyclists account for around 1% of traffic on Great Britain's roads, but about 18% of those killed or sustaining life-changing injuries.

## DVSA:

- has well over 400 practical test locations across England, Scotland and Wales, so we're always local to you
- conducts driving tests from
  - industrial estates
  - airfields
  - showgrounds
  - sports centres
  - livestock markets
  - supermarkets and even Prince Charles' Poundbury estate.
  - football stadiums
  - dockyards
  - post offices
  - barn conversions
  - manor house stable blocks
- is improving test centres because a better environment for test candidates and instructors is a good investment, and we aim to make DVSA a great place to work for our examiners

DVSA's driving theory test is the world's biggest on-screen examination, with over 2 million tests taken across all vehicle categories each year.

In 2017 DVSA's Theory Test Kit was the most downloaded paid app on the App Store.

DVSA is responsible for more web pages on GOV.UK than the other transport departments and agencies combined.

# Safer drivers and riders

DVSA helps millions of people use Great Britain's roads safely every day. Across the agency, our work helps reduce accidents, saves lives, and keeps both traffic and the economy moving.

Despite us having some of the safest roads in the world, far too many die or are seriously injured on our roads each year. Driver error is a contributing factor in nearly all crashes.\*

This is why our driving examiners, operational managers and service development teams are passionate about improving road safety.

We improve standards and make sure new drivers have the skills they need to help them through a lifetime of safe driving. That's why we updated the driving test in December 2017. The new test reflects modern driving practices and makes it more relevant in today's world.

We're always looking for better ways to inform, educate and advise road users at all stages in their lives - directly, and by serving their instructors and trainers better. So we've designed this booklet to tell you what we do to help you through a lifetime of safe driving.

**Gareth Llewellyn**  
DVSA Chief Executive



## We help you stay safe on Great Britain's roads by:

- helping you through a lifetime of safe driving
- helping you keep your vehicle safe to drive
- protecting you from unsafe drivers and vehicles

## We help people through a lifetime of safe driving:

- with better information for drivers and riders
- by raising the standard of driving
- by improving the availability of tests.

# Get started

Start here.

[www.gov.uk/learn-to-drive-a-car](https://www.gov.uk/learn-to-drive-a-car)

You'll be taken through every stage in the simplest and quickest way possible, in the right order.

The tools are there to:

- find an instructor
- choose learning materials
- have a go at a mock theory test
- see the Highway Code
- book your tests at cost with no added fees

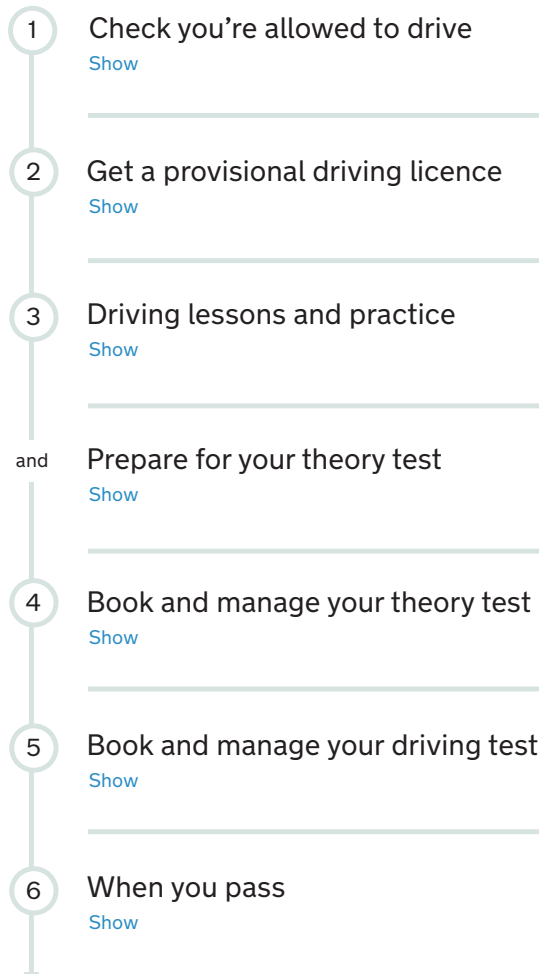
and much more. It's all up to date and official for your peace of mind.

And there's even more DVSA-backed help on our YouTube Channel and our partner's site, [www.safedrivingforlife.info](https://www.safedrivingforlife.info).

GOV.UK is the best place to find services and information to help you through a lifetime of safe driving. You can find:

- services, like becoming a trainer booker to book tests for your learners
- step-by-step guides, like becoming a driving instructor
- detailed guidance, like safety checks to do when you tow a trailer with a car
- standards, like the national standard for driving cars

You can get email alerts from us, like us on Facebook or follow @DVSAgovuk on social media. Get the latest news, give your views on new or changing government policies by responding to consultations, and take part in surveys about our services.



# Official learning materials

Our publications and products are designed to make preparing for your tests easy.

With our commercial partners, we produce bestselling apps and online products, books and e-books. They range from The Official Highway Code to the books that tell you everything you need to be safe and responsible on the road, whether you're a motorcyclist or drive a car, van, bus, coach or lorry. We publish all the theory test, trainer and ADI resources you might need too.

## Our customers say:

“Great value for the number of books provided and the high quality of the learning materials.” \*\*\*\*\*

Learner on Amazon.co.uk, 'Official DVSA Complete Learner Driver' book pack

“Really gets you thinking about how to drive better and have a better mindset.” \*\*\*\*\*

Experienced driver on Amazon.co.uk, 'Official DVSA guide to better driving'



# Driving Instructors

Over 39,000 ADIs are registered and regulated by DVSA. They can also register at GOV.UK to be able to book tests for their learners.

We keep in touch regularly through [despatch.blog.gov.uk](https://despatch.blog.gov.uk).

In 2017 DVSA carried out:

- **9,000** ADI part 1 theory tests
- **6,700** ADI part 2 driving tests
- **5,100** ADI part 3 instruction tests

We will always work hard to keep the public safe, and to protect the reputations and businesses of the vast majority of ADIs who are ethical and law-abiding.

## Tackling the law-breakers

Legitimate ADIs study and work hard to keep people safe on our roads.

Our busy investigation team has an impressive record in prosecuting those who take money for instructing learners illegally.

We carry out around **1,200** investigations into identity fraud a year.

Accepting payment for taking tests for others can get you up to **5 years** in prison.

Other cheats, like those providing answers to people doing their theory tests, have received up to **32 months in prison.**

**You can help. Report fraud to us on 0300 123 3248.**

The instruction industry and DVSA provide world class standards of service to help protect everyone from dangerous drivers.

By law, anyone accepting money or reward for teaching someone to drive a car must be an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI). They are registered by our ADI Registrar and must display their certificate whenever giving paid lessons.

Even after qualifying, ADIs go through our standards checks to maintain and develop their skills.

The Registrar also holds ADIs to high standards of professional conduct to be allowed to continue working legally, including their fitness to work with young and vulnerable people.

To become an ADI, a Potential Driving Instructor (PDI) is checked for any criminal or motoring offences, and has to pass 3 DVSA tests within 2 years:

- a theory test, at a theory test centre, that is longer than that taken by learners and with a higher pass mark (known as Part 1)
- a driving test but to a higher standard than learners, over a wider range of roads, including motorways (known as Part 2)
- an instruction test, where they give a lesson to a pupil and are assessed by an examiner from a back seat (known as Part 3).



# Your tests

You work hard for this, so make your performance count. Our examiners offer some advice.

<p><b>Work for it</b></p> <p>Commit to learning and work with your instructor on how to tackle each challenge. ADIs are trained professionals who've proved to DVSA that they can coach you to learn your way, not theirs.</p>	<p><b>Be prepared</b></p> <p>Take the time to build the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• knowledge</li><li>• understanding</li><li>• coordination</li><li>• physical skills</li></ul> <p>to serve you for a lifetime. A test is just one step, but don't take it until you're ready.</p>
<p><b>Book your tests</b></p> <p>Instructors can register to book tests for the people they instruct, or you can book your own, all on GOV.UK. Booking services that charge extra fees, and promise free re-tests if you fail, don't always deliver.</p>	<p><b>Use the pressure</b></p> <p>Showing nerves is healthy. Let it heighten your performance and sharpen your observation and reflexes. We understand and we'll try to put you at ease. You can be proud to show us what you've learnt.</p>
<p><b>Get comfortable</b></p> <p>Try to sleep well the night before. Dress for comfort, eat something, drink some water, and use the toilet all in good time before your test.</p>	<p><b>Don't be shy</b></p> <p>We're here to help and we know you're nervous. Don't worry if you take a wrong turn safely. If you need to stop, for example to drink water because your mouth's dry, just ask.</p>

# Tackling nerves

The most calming thing is to be prepared and confident. Leave nothing to luck.

Watch our YouTube guides so you know what to expect.

Visit your test centre so it's familiar.

Why not ask your instructor to sit in on your practical test.

Notice what makes you tense and talk to your ADI about improving your confidence.

Spot the signs, like:

- tense shoulders or jaw
- short breaths
- posture changes
- sweating.

Find out what works for you. These are proven methods:

- slow, deep breathing
- standing or sitting up straight, shoulders back
- raising your arms above your head
- smiling (even if you don't feel like it)
- taking a warm bath
- yoga
- meditation.





## Theory tests and hazard perception

Theory tests make sure you understand everything you need to know to keep you safe for a lifetime, not just the things that can be tested on the road. A theory test pass lasts for 2 years. So aim to pass your practical test in that time and you won't have to retake your theory test.

We only write the questions based on 'Know your traffic signs', the Highway Code and 'Driving' or 'Riding – the essential skills', so you know what to expect. Questions for driving instructors' part 1 test can also be from any of their recommended reading texts. For large vehicle drivers we write a lot of questions from 'Driving buses and coaches' and 'Driving goods vehicles'.

A huge choice of apps, online resources and books is available to help you. Most publishers use DVSA questions and hazard perception clips. They aren't identical to the questions on test, so memorising the answers won't work. They're to help you check how well you're doing.

Study theory while you're having lessons with an instructor. The facts and situations feel more relevant, and your mind naturally 'files' them better. That way, your ADI can be your coach for the whole process and it can help your practical skills too.

“My oldest daughter lives with her mum in another city. Now I can drive I can make more time for her and we can do more together.”

Rob Humphries, musician, Hatfield



## At a glance – the practical driving test for cars and light vans

The test should take around 40 minutes. To pass you must make no more than 15 minor driving faults, and none must be serious or dangerous.

There's an eyesight test before getting into the car, and a 'Tell me' question before setting off. This is to test your understanding of the safety features and equipment.

Independent driving for about 20 minutes, or roughly half the test

Using a sat nav during independent driving – 4 out of 5 tests

Following traffic signs instead of a sat nav – 1 in 5 tests

Reversing – 1 out of:

- parallel parking
- park in a bay and move off, which may either mean reversing into the bay, or reversing out of it
- pull up on the right-hand side of the road, reverse 2 car lengths and rejoin the traffic.

Reversing around a corner and turning in the road are still part of the syllabus, but they aren't how your reversing skills will be tested.

A 'show me' question while driving:

- wash and clean the windscreens
- demist one of the windscreens
- operate the horn
- open either of the side windows
- turn on the dipped headlights safely, without distraction or loss of control.

# Avoid the pitfalls

You're ready to pass when you get things right without prompting, you apply your knowledge of driving theory, you anticipate hazards and you make good decisions.

## 90% of people who pass their test learn with an Approved Driving Instructor

Get these right - 10 most common reasons people don't pass their test:

1. Observation at junctions
2. Checking mirrors to change direction
3. Steering control
4. Turning right from junctions
5. Moving off safely
6. Moving off under control
7. Responding to traffic lights
8. Positioning when driving
9. Controlling the reverse park
10. Responding to traffic signs



Our examiners are the best in the world and we regularly have visits from other agencies across the world, to see how we test candidates.



## Who are driving examiners?

The job of a driving examiner is a complex one, and it's crucial to your safety and opportunities in life. Our examiners are there to help you start your lifetime of safe driving if they see you have the skills.

So we test their personality, interpersonal skills and judgement as well as their driving or riding, even before they can be accepted into typically 5 weeks of initial training.

Ability and standard of service are crucial. Once in the job, an examiner must do:

- 5 days of driving or riding training every 5 years
- 4 days of training on carrying out tests every 4 years.

More training is scheduled when changes are made to the test or policies, and we constantly check pass rates across the country so any differences are never down to inconsistent practice.

When you meet one of our examiners, they will:

- aim to put you at ease
- carry out the eyesight check and vehicle safety questions
- carry out the driving test
- give you and your instructor feedback
- complete the driving test report form and give you a copy
- complete a much more detailed report on any faults you may have made during your test when you get back into the test centre.

Few things are more important than public safety. By insisting on the high standards we have in Britain, we aim to help you enjoy accident-free driving.

Remember, if you fail your test, the examiner only has your safety at heart.

And if they give you the great news you have passed, you will still need to keep your driving skills up to date.

## Why not join us?

Driving examiners are age 24 or over and have:

- had a UK or EU driving licence continuously for the past 4 years, plus the relevant motorcycle or C+E lorry and trailer licence for HGV tests
- no more than 3 penalty points on their licence
- been subject to enhanced Criminal Records Bureau checks
- passed health checks.

It's a proud profession that makes a huge difference to people's lives and safety.

Visit [www.gov.uk/guidance/become-a-driving-examiner](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/become-a-driving-examiner)



“Extremely happy to have passed, but emotional. Now I know I can help my wife out with day-to-day driving. We’ve got a trip to Cornwall planned in the next few days, and hopefully I can give her the break that she deserves.”

Luke Smith, Rugby



# At a glance – the route to your motorcycle licence

To ride:

- a moped if you're 16 or over
- a motorcycle up to 125cc and up to 11kW if you're 17 or over with L plates, or L or D plates in Wales, you need a provisional or car licence and to have completed compulsory basic training (CBT) with an approved training body (ATB).

You must pass your full moped or motorcycle test within 2 years, or take CBT again.

To ride a moped or motorcycle without L or D plates you also need to take:

- a motorcycle theory test
- a motorcycle practical test.

The practical test is in 2 modules:

1. skills and manoeuvres off-road
2. eyesight check, show-me tell-me, directed and independent riding on the road.

There are 3 sub categories of motorcycles you can ride, depending on your age and experience:

- a motorcycle up to 125cc and up to 11kW if you're 17 or over (known as A1)
- a motorcycle over 125cc and up to 35kW if you're 19 or over (known as A2)
- a motorcycle over 35kW if you're 24 or over, or have held your A2 licence for more than two years (known as full category A).

Full details, and the rules for tricycles and quadricycles, are on GOV.UK. Search for 'How to get a motorcycle licence'.



## Motorcycle training and testing

Motorcycling is a quick and economic way for many people to get around, but their vulnerability means it's vital that we help you to stay safe and protect you from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

Around 650 approved training bodies and 2,650 instructors across Great Britain carry out compulsory basic training (CBT) for motorcyclists. You know they are safe because we make sure:

- they are fit and proper people in terms of traffic violations, convictions or court proceedings
- they have a DVSA-assessed instructor who can 'down-train' up to 10 others to provide CBT
- training complies with the syllabus and guidance, no more than 2 learners are trained at a time and radio contact is adequate
- their training sites are suitable.

We put them through similar periodic standards checks to ADIs and make unannounced visits to make sure their training is up to our standard.

Our Enhanced Rider Scheme means motorcyclists can take additional training to improve their skills and become safer after passing their test with DVSA-qualified motorcycle trainers.

Work has also begun on a raft of new ideas to improve training, qualifications and assessment still further, after receiving support in a public consultation in 2017.



## At a glance – Driver CPC

To drive a bus, coach or lorry as the main part of your job you usually need to get qualified, and then train to stay qualified with a driver certificate of professional competence (CPC). Check on GOV.UK whether or not you have to.

Even if you don't need driver CPC, you need to take the theory and practical driving tests to get a licence.

### **Get qualified - tests**

Part 1 – multiple choice theory

Part 2 – case studies of work situations

Part 3 – practical driving test of about 90 minutes

Part 4 – practical demonstration of safety checks, loading, etc

### **Stay qualified**

You have to do 35 hours of 'periodic training' in the country where you normally work or live every 5 years to stay qualified to drive a lorry, bus or coach. You can find trainers who are approved at: <https://www.gov.uk/driver-cpc-training-courses>.

The fine for driving professionally while unqualified is £1000.



# Vocational training and testing

Drivers of buses, coaches and lorries control some of the largest vehicles on our roads. They have a particular responsibility for safety and respect for others, as well as the training in matters beyond driving that they need for their job.

DVSA sets safe standards for drivers and instructors. So choosing the right instructor and getting quality training is important. The large goods vehicle (LGV) driver training industry has two registers of instructors who play an important role in raising standards and increasing the competence of professional lorry drivers.

So that we can then provide practical vocational tests across the country efficiently, 77 sites provided by the training industry complement our own 77 test centres.

There are also 121 delegated examiners working for the police, fire, bus and certain haulage companies in Great Britain. We approve them to provide theory and practical driving tests for drivers of lorries, buses and coaches, cars and trailers, and emergency service vehicles.

Most recently we've opened up the driver CPC part 4 tests so they can be delivered by assessors working in the training industry as well. Now we have 184 assessors, who work in:

- approved driver CPC periodic training centres
- lorry and bus and coach industry training organisations
- haulage, and bus and coach companies.

We also arrange for JAUPT to make sure approved providers give drivers periodic training to the highest standard.

“Tideway is a huge project, with over 4,000 drivers. DVSA's low waiting times have helped get these drivers on the road quicker.”

Gordon Sutherland, Tideway Project Road  
Traffic and Logistics Manager



# The future

We're increasing the number and diversity of driving examiners to make tests more convenient for people, reduce waiting times and improve our service to customers even further.

Standards will develop to keep pace with increasingly autonomous and connected vehicles.

We will develop the driving tests so they're always relevant to people's daily journeys, and test the skills to help you stay safe.

From June 2018, learners with ADIs in dual control cars can use motorways. Increasing the amount of instruction on motorways will improve skills and understanding, and reduce the number of people who avoid motorways – the safest roads on the network – after they pass their test.

Our frontline will benefit from being part of a digitally enabled organisation. Examiners will process tests on tablets to reduce time and paperwork. Licences will arrive more quickly, errors will become rarer, and the data collected will improve our service.

New apps will allow our examiners to check candidates' identification, and vehicles' insurance, tax, and MOT.

Our success leads to safer journeys for everyone, and relieves strain on the NHS and emergency services. That's why we are always investigating how we can improve:

- the way you learn
- what we test and how
- how we keep in touch and listen to you
- how we protect you and our staff from fraud.

For example, we're looking at ways we can use the models we developed for hazard perception tests to develop virtual reality resources.

Society and technology are changing faster than ever. Everyone must keep up to date, and DVSA will be there to help you.

# In numbers



driving examiners in DVSA



new examiners welcomed in 2017, that's 1 every 2 days

2017 saw:



car theory tests at a pass rate of around 49%



practical car driving tests at a pass rate of around 47% - that's 120,000 more than 2016!



motorcycle theory tests, with a pass rate of around 72%



motorcycle module 1 tests with a pass rate of around 72%



motorcycle module 2 tests with a pass rate of around 71%



vocational practical tests with a pass rate of around 58%



investigations undertaken by DVSA's Counter Fraud & Investigation Team between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017. This included:

- 406 arrests
- 99 court convictions, 72 of which led to a prison sentence
- 285 police cautions



official DVSA and Highway Code apps have been downloaded, and 1,000 more are downloaded every day



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Safer drivers, safer vehicles, safer journeys for all

[www.gov.uk/dvsa](http://www.gov.uk/dvsa)