



The **PARENT'S** Supervised Driving Program

For the parents of teen drivers —
a resource for teen licensing

A PROGRAM OF
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES



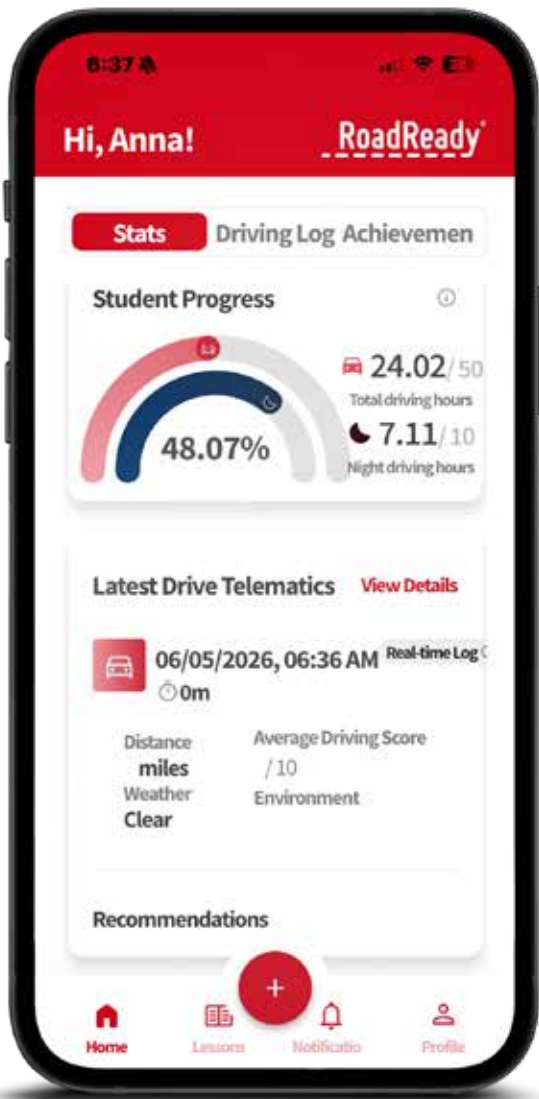
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A component of the **PARENT'S** 
Supervised Driving Program



Organ and Tissue Donation **SAVES LIVES**

When your teen applies for a driver's license, they will have the opportunity to become a registered organ and tissue donor.

Know the Facts!

- Fact:** Saying "Yes" can save a life.
A single organ and tissue donor can save and heal up to 100 lives.
- Fact:** The first priority of any medical professional is to save lives when sick or injured people come to the hospital. Organ and tissue donation does not become an option until death has been declared.
- Fact:** Anyone can register to be an organ and tissue donor.
People of all ages and medical histories should consider themselves potential donors. Advances in medicine continue to allow more people to donate and potential donors are carefully screened prior to transplant.
- There is no cost to the donor or the donor's family for donation.
- Fact:** All major religions in the United States support organ and tissue donation and view it as a final act of love and generosity.

For more information please visit: www.donatelifedc.org



THEY'VE BEEN DRIVING 6 DAYS. YOU'VE AGED 12 YEARS.

Peace of mind for parents of new drivers? En route. Wherever they're headed, Life360 enhanced driving protections are along for the ride.



**CRASH
DETECTION**



**EMERGENCY
DISPATCH**



**WEEKLY
DRIVER REPORT**



**ROADSIDE
ASSISTANCE**



Download peace of mind.



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The family safety app for moms who'd like to know more than "k."

Congratulations! Your baby just got their driver's permit, which means you've been promoted to a thrilling new role: Chief Anxiety Officer, Driveway Division. Pay is \$0. Hours are 24/7.

Luckily there's Life360. This top-rated family safety app was built for **exactly** this era of parenthood. The one where you can't physically buckle them in anymore, but every cell in your body still wants to. The one where they're still sooo cute, but would cringe if you called them that.

Think of Life360 as your safety sidekick, the best possible tool for helping new drivers find independence behind the wheel (and for helping you find peace of mind). We'll tell you when they arrived safely at school, when they detoured to a friend's house "real quick" (it's been 90 minutes), or when they took a corner like the speed limit was a suggestion.

Crash Detection auto-pings emergency contacts if anything actually goes sideways. **Roadside Assistance** shows up at 11pm so you don't have to drive across town in pajamas because someone got a flat. **Weekly Driver Reports** tell you whether they've been hard-braking, speeding, or texting at red lights.

For the pep talks and the parking-lot hugs, it's all you. For the road part, let us take the wheel.



**Download
peace of mind.**



About this program

Developed by Safe Roads Alliance, a non-profit dedicated to promoting safer driving through education for drivers of all ages, *The Parent's Supervised Driving Program* is designed to improve teen driver safety by providing parents and guardians with a methodical approach to teaching the requisite driving skills. Each lesson concentrates on a particular sequential skill. Parents are in the best position to help their teens become safe, smart, and skilled drivers.

The Parent's Supervised Driving Program also includes a website, social media pages, and a mobile app, RoadReady®.

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- Life360
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This program is also
available online at:

PSDPonline.com

The **PARENT'S** Supervised Driving Program

Welcome parents of teen drivers!

The Parent's Supervised Driving Program is a resource for parents to utilize when teaching their teen to drive.

1. This program is divided into core driving skills.



- Read through each section at home before your teen starts a new skill.

2. Log your teen's driving time. This can be done 2 ways:



- Carry this printed guide with you during the drive and use the printed log section – you or your teen can log the supervised driving hours once the drive is finished.



- Download and use the free  **RoadReady**® app to track your teen's driving time. RoadReady tracks their driving hours until they reach the state requirements.

3. Your teen can turn in their log when applying for their license.

Stay Connected with Us!

Follow *The Parent's Supervised Driving Program* for expert driving articles, program launch events, and additional safety resources.



Facebook

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TheParentsSupervisedDrivingProgram

Join Our Parents Group on Facebook!

Talking Teens: A Parenting Support Group

facebook.com/groups/talkingteens



X (formerly Twitter)

twitter.com/PSDP_Info



Instagram

instagram.com/roadreadyapp

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Quick tips for parents and caregivers...

Here are the most important tips that you should keep in mind as your teen starts their supervised driving journey. These tips apply on those very first days of driving, and into your child's young adulthood as independent drivers.

Check your emotions

At the start of each driving lesson with your teen, leave your problems behind — and make an effort to stay focused. Bringing up touchy subjects such as grades, homework, boyfriends/girlfriends, etc. can distract either of you from the task at hand.

1. **Take it seriously:** Car crashes are the second leading cause of death for people ages 16–24. The more parents/caregivers are involved, the less likely it is that your teen will crash.
2. **Be a good role model** and remember that making your teen practice a skill over and over again is the best practice.
3. **Before you drive:** Walk around the car with your teen, explain the importance of tire health, review seating position, mirror settings, identify blind spots, etc.
4. **Plan ahead:** Consider when and where to start the first driving lesson — a large, level, and empty parking lot at a time when no one is stressed out. Review the necessary skills the night before planning to take your teen out for their first time behind the wheel.
5. **Progress through the skills:** Follow this guidebook in order as your teen advances in their comfort and skill level. **Remember that they should not advance to the next skill/s until they have practiced the previous skills many times.**
6. **Encourage as much supervised driving as possible**, in many different conditions and on different road types. They will know how to steer into a skid on an icy road only if they have practiced it with you.
7. **GDL laws, such as passenger restrictions and curfews, are there for a reason:** Read through your state's restrictions for when your teen has their permit AND when newly licensed. These are in place to protect your teen!
8. **Download and use the  RoadReady® mobile app (roadreadyapp.com)** to track your teen's driving hours. It's easy to use, completely free, and helps ensure that your teen completes the required number of hours.

About supervising teen drivers

The Parent's Supervised Driving Program gives you a simple, easy-to-follow plan you can use to help your teen be a safe and responsible driver.

Some thoughts as you begin this exciting experience together:

Make an effort to enjoy the learning process: Driving is a big step toward independence, and your teen is entering a new phase of life. You'll both remember this experience for years to come. Make it a good memory!

Practice, practice, practice: Studies show that the risk of a crash diminishes with experience. The more time you can spend driving with your teen, the less likely it is they'll crash when they begin driving alone. Driving in a variety of circumstances is equally important. While using this program, you and your teen should drive on all types of roads. Make sure your teen gets exposure to a variety of roadways, and in different conditions as well: at night; in rain, fog, and snow; and in heavy and light traffic.

Be a driving role model: It's not enough to say, "Do as I say." Children imitate their parents'/guardians' behavior, so your driving should set a good example for your teen to emulate. Be sure that you:

- Obey all traffic laws.
- Correct any unsafe driving habits (driving aggressively, rolling through stop signs, accelerating through yellow lights, speeding, etc.).
- Refrain from using your cell phone at all while driving.
- Always wear your seat belt, and remind your teen that buckling up is the law. This will need to be an ongoing conversation — buckle up every trip, every time.

Tips for teaching your teen

- **Seat belts** must always be worn properly by **everyone** in the vehicle.
- **Before each session**, discuss the goals of the day's lesson.
- **Before each new lesson**, review what was learned during the previous lesson.
- **Keep instructions simple and concise.** Say where to go and what action to take. For example: "Drive to the corner and turn right." Give the direction with enough time for your teen to process and safely execute the maneuver.
- **The feedback** you give should be calm, precise, and immediate. Be patient and alert at all times. Remember to give positive feedback when your teen succeeds!
- **When your teen makes a mistake**, which will happen often, do not criticize. Remain calm and simply repeat the maneuver until it's done correctly. To minimize their frustration, emphasize to your teen that mistakes are a normal part of learning.
- **These lessons should be consistent** with what is taught by your teen's driving instructor. If you teach something differently, your teen will be confused and learning will be more difficult. If the lessons in this program are different from the instructor's, contact them to clarify the discrepancy.
- **Remember that students learn at different paces.** Make sure your teen has mastered each skill before you move on to the next lesson, even if that means repeating a lesson several times. Patience and practice will pay off in the long run.
- **Integrate night driving** into as many lessons as possible.

Most importantly, make sure the vehicle you use for training is safe. Confirm that the brakes have been recently inspected, and check to make sure the tires have sufficient tread depth. It's generally recommended that you do not train in larger vehicles that lack stability control.

GRAD program

The Gradual Rearing of Adult Drivers (GRAD) program is intended to provide teen drivers with practice under the safest conditions, exposing them to more situations only as their skills and experience grow.

Video: Supervising teen drivers

Scan the QR code below to watch the video.



Vehicle control for supervisors

Teaching a new driver can be stressful, but knowing you have some control can help. Professional drivers education instructors are taught emergency responses to potential hazards that can crop up with an inexperienced driver behind the wheel. Here are some skills you can learn to help you maintain control from the passenger seat while teaching:



Emergency shifting: In a quiet, large, level, empty area, practice shifting the transmission from drive to neutral. This would be necessary if the accelerator becomes stuck.



Taking the wheel: With an experienced driver in the driver's seat, in a quiet, large, level, empty area, practice steering the car with your left hand from the passenger seat.



Mirrors: Adjust the mirror on the passenger sun visor so you can use it as a rearview mirror. If the right side mirror is properly adjusted, you can use it to monitor traffic to the rear from the passenger seat.



Awareness: Never assume everything is okay. Always check and re-check mirrors before you give instructions to your teen. Remember that you are a second set of eyes and ears, and you need to be alert and ready to help your teen.



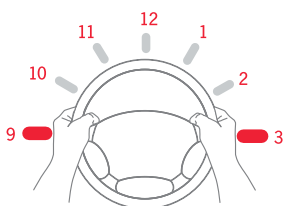
Emergency stopping: Practice stopping the car with the parking brake (if your vehicle's parking brake is located between the seats). This can be dangerous, even at low speeds, and should only be used as a last resort.

Driving has changed

Chances are, today's cars are not the same as they were when you learned to drive. To teach your teen effectively, you need to know about a few important recent changes in how cars work, how we drive, and how driving is taught.

Anti-lock Brake System (ABS): Most newer cars offer ABS as standard equipment. ABS is a dramatic safety improvement that works by letting the tires rotate, rather than lock up, when the brake is engaged. This allows drivers to steer the car in an emergency stop. ABS should be used with firm, continuous pressure. The brakes may shake and grind when applied, which often concerns users — but this is a normal function of ABS. To find out if your car has ABS, check the instrument panel after you turn on the ignition or read the owner's manual.

Note: When driving a car without ABS, the old rules still apply. Don't "slam" the brakes. Rather, press the brake pedal firmly. The intention is to stop quickly, but also to avoid locking the brakes and skidding. Skidding causes a loss of control.



Arms holding the wheel at 9 and 3 o'clock are not as likely to be hit by the air bag.

Air bags: Air bags are designed to work with seat belts, which must be worn for the air bags to be effective. The use of a seat belt allows the driver to stay behind the wheel in order to take advantage of the airbag. Since air bags deploy out of the wheel on impact, it's important to keep your hands and arms in the recommended position.

Steering wheel hand position: Most of us were taught to position our hands at 10 and 2 o'clock on the steering wheel. It's now suggested that you hold the wheel at 9 and 3 o'clock. This gives you better vehicle control. DC Law requires drivers to have two hands on the steering wheel at all times and also lessens the risk of injury if the airbag was to deploy.

Commentary driving

Commentary driving is a great communication tool. Coach your teen to describe their actions, thoughts and observations out loud as they drive, similar to a sports commentator. Throughout the learning process, ask them to verbalize what they see around them, including potential risks and any steps they need to take to avoid those risks. Encourage your teen to verbalize an action they plan to make, such as turning, merging and approaching traffic lights.

Video: Vehicle control for supervisors

Scan the QR code below to watch the video.



Distracted driving and more

Distracted driving involves any activity that takes the driver's attention away from the primary task of driving. Distracted driving, impairment, speeding, and not wearing seat belts are all risky choices that can lead to serious injury and death. Teens, who are still learning the complex skills of driving, are particularly susceptible to distractions while behind the wheel. Don't let you or your teen become another statistic. Here are the facts:

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens. Mile for mile, teens ages 16–19 are involved in 3 times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers. And 1 in 3 teens who text say they have done so while driving.
- According to NHTSA, 3,308 people were killed in 2022 in distraction-related crashes nationwide, with teens having the highest rate of distracted driving crashes involving a fatality.
- A Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study revealed that physically dialing a phone while driving increases the risk of a crash as much as 6 times. Texting is riskier still, increasing collision risk by 23 times.

To combat this growing epidemic, we suggest the following:

- **Set a good example:** Kids observe and learn from their parents. Put your phone away while driving and only use it when you are safely pulled over. According to the Pew Research Center, 40 percent of teens aged 12 to 17 say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put themselves and others in danger.
- **Talk to your teen:** Discuss the risks and responsibilities of driving and the danger of dividing their attention between a phone call and the road. Encourage them to speak up if they are a passenger in a car with a distracted driver.
- **Establish ground rules:** Set up family rules about not using the phone or other electronic devices while behind the wheel. Enforce the limits set by DC DMV's Graduated License Program (GRAD) which gives novice drivers the support they need to improve their driving skills and graduate from learner permit, to provisional license, to a full DC DMV driver license.
- **Sign a pledge:** Have your teen take action by agreeing to a family contract about wearing seat belts, not speeding, not driving after drinking, and not using a cell phone behind the wheel. Agree on penalties for violating the pledge, including paying for tickets or loss of driving privileges.
- **Other dangerous distractions:** Distracted driving can also include eating, grooming, drinking, listening to or adjusting the radio, using the GPS, talking to passengers, or watching a video, just to name a few activities. Inexperienced drivers are particularly susceptible to these kinds of distractions.

Just because it's legal, doesn't mean it's safe

Laws for operating under the influence of alcohol also apply to drugs. Almost any drug can affect your driving skills. Illegal drugs, prescription medicines, and over-the-counter medicines can all make it dangerous to drive. Smoking or ingesting marijuana makes it more difficult to respond to sights and sounds. This makes you dangerous as a driver because it lowers your ability to handle a quick series of tasks. The most serious problems occur when facing an unexpected event, such as a car coming from a side street or a child running out from between parked cars. These problems get worse after dark, because marijuana also causes decreased visibility at night.

District of Columbia law has decriminalized certain aspects of possession and/or use of marijuana. However, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of marijuana is still illegal and remains a criminal offense.

- It is illegal to use marijuana under the age of 21.
- Marijuana can negatively impact your ability to safely control a vehicle.
- Marijuana will slow your reaction time and impair your judgment.
- Marijuana affects your coordination, your memory, and ability to problem-solve.
- Combining marijuana and alcohol, even in small doses, greatly increases the risk of getting into a crash.

If you plan to drive, be smart and have no alcohol, marijuana, or any other drugs in your system.

Eyes on the road

Teens tend to look away from the road and become distracted for longer periods than older drivers. It's important to train them to keep their eyes on the road ahead. While parked, test your teen on how long they look away when doing various tasks inside the vehicle, such as adjusting the temperature or tuning the radio. Coach them repeatedly on the importance of focusing on the road ahead.

Teens' biggest dangers

Newly licensed teens crash much more often than older, more experienced drivers. These are the most common trouble areas for young drivers:

Other teens

Research is clear on the fact that risky teen driving behaviors increase in the presence of teen passengers. A teen who is driving with other teens in the car is more likely to crash, and the more kids there are in the car, the stronger the likelihood of a crash. This is the primary reason many states have passed laws that restrict the ability of teens to drive with their peers.

Speeding

We have seen a disturbing increase in speeding in the last few years. According to NHTSA, in 2023, speeding was a factor in 34% of fatal crashes among teen drivers 15–18 years. The rate of these fatalities among males was nearly double that of females. Spend time talking to your teen about speeding and model this by following the speed limit yourself. Lastly, studies show that teens are less likely to speed if they drive the family car, instead of having their own vehicle.

Seat belts

It's a shocking statistic, but **51% of teen drivers killed in 2022 were unbuckled**. Seat belts stop you from being thrown out of the vehicle, and help you stay seated and in control of the vehicle. They also stop you from hitting the windshield, dashboard, steering wheel, or other hard parts of the vehicle. Hitting the wind shield at 30 mph is like falling from the third story of a building and hitting the pavement. In 2019, 43% of high school students did not always wear a seat belt as a passenger. Whether sitting in the front or back of a car, buckle up every trip and remind other passengers to buckle up too. It could save their lives, and yours. Please visit NHTSA's website for more information www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/seat-belts

Drugs and alcohol

Teens are at far greater risk of death in an alcohol-related crash than the overall population. This is despite the fact they cannot legally purchase or publicly possess alcohol in any state. When alcohol is added to the inexperience of teen drivers, the results can be deadly. In 2023, 24% of teen drivers aged 15 to 18 years old who were involved in a fatal crash had been drinking. It is important to enforce a zero-tolerance policy at home. If your teen uses any alcohol or drugs, they cannot drive, nor should they ride with anyone who has been drinking or using drugs — in any amount. For more info, go to: www.nhtsa.gov/teen-driving/parents-talk-your-teen-driver-about-safe-driving

Fatigue

As teens get older their bedtimes get later, but waking times do not tend to change. From ages 13 to 19, nightly sleep is reduced by 40–50 minutes. Teen drivers who sleep less than 8 hours a night are 33 percent more likely to crash than teens who get more than 8 hours of sleep. This lack of sleep results in depressive moods, more risk-taking behaviors, and lower grades. It further reduces a person's ability to process information, be attentive, and have good reflexes, which are all crucial to safe driving. Studies have shown that being awake for 18 hours has a similar impact to having a blood alcohol content (BAC) level of 0.08.

Inexperience

Just as it takes years to perfect any skill — athletic, artistic, or otherwise — it also takes years to be a truly good driver. Until teens are much more experienced, they run a greater risk of crashing, getting hurt, and potentially dying. A driver's license makes them a driver. Experience helps them become safer drivers.

If you feel different, you drive different

If you're buzzed, drunk, or high, you are impaired and should never get behind the wheel, as marijuana and alcohol can effect people differently. The best rule is this: if you plan to drive, have no drugs or alcohol.

Night driving

For teens, the most severe crashes occur at night and on weekends. Night driving is challenging for all drivers, but novice drivers do not have the experience to anticipate and react when visibility is reduced. When teens drive at night, it is more often with a lack of adult supervision, with other teen passengers, and at higher speeds — all of which increase risk.

On the Road to Independence

Watching your teen pull out of the driveway with a brand-new license is a major life moment most parents anticipate...and quietly dread. This milestone marks a meaningful shift in your relationship, from driver to passenger, to two people navigating independence side by side. The good news is that the years of teaching, modeling, and steady conversation don't end here. They evolve. With clear communication, mutual trust, and thoughtfully shared boundaries, parents and teens can work together to make this next chapter feel safer, calmer, and a little less daunting for everyone involved. Here are a few ways to set the tone as your teen settles into the driver's seat.

Think Conversation, not Contract

Before you hand over the keys, sit down and talk through what independent driving actually means to your fam, without the conversation feeling like a list of rules being read aloud. Ask what your teen is most excited about, what makes them nervous, and where they think they'll need more support. Listening before legislating builds buy-in, and teens are far more likely to honor agreements they helped create. Aim for the energy of a planning session, not a permit hearing. The more your teen feels like a partner in shaping expectations, the more those expectations will hold up in the moments that matter most, like a late night, a long drive, or an unexpected detour.

Trust, meet Transparency

Trust is the name of the game. Building trust between parents and new drivers is built through small, consistent moments of honesty. When you share your reasoning out loud ("I want to know you got there safely because it helps me sleep at night."), your teen learns that staying in touch is about connection, not control.

The same goes in reverse: when parents share their own location, plans, and ETA with the family, it sets a household-wide tone of openness rather than a one-sided watchtower. Life360 works best when everyone in the family understands what's being shared and why, turning location sharing into a normal, mutual part of daily life.

Boundaries are bound to grow with them

Boundaries aren't a fixed list handed down once and never revisited. They're a living agreement that should evolve as your teen gains experience and confidence behind the wheel. In the early weeks, that might look like more frequent check-ins, daytime-only driving, or a rule about who can ride along. As skill and trust build, those guardrails can loosen. Be specific and concrete: clarify what "drive safe" actually means in your household (no phone use, no eating while moving, headlights on at dusk, hands at 9 and 3). Then revisit the agreement every few months, and let your teen weigh in on what feels fair as they grow into the responsibility.

Connected, not Hovering

Once your teen is on the road, the temptation to over-text or repeatedly refresh an app is real, and understandable. But constant check-ins can quietly wear down the very trust you've been working to build. Lean on tools that surface what actually matters: arrival notifications, weekly drive summaries, and speed reports deliver real information without putting your teen on the defensive. Save the face-to-face conversations for the moments that count, like celebrating a first solo trip, reviewing a tough drive together, or talking through a close call. The goal isn't tracking every move, it's staying meaningfully connected while they grow into the driver (and the young adult) you've raised them to be. They've got the keys. We've got the driving safety features. You've got this.



SKILL ONE: BEFORE YOU START THE ENGINE

Before you start the engine

Goal: Teach your teen vehicle basics before actual driving begins.

Location: Parked. This is a non-driving lesson.

Lesson one – touring the vehicle

Walk around the outside of the car with your teen. Instruct them to look for leaks and hazards such as broken glass, and to make sure it's clear behind the vehicle as well as in front of the vehicle.

Have your teen practice these basic skills until they don't need help:

- Starting and stopping the engine
- Naming and operating all dashboard controls
- Checking oil level
- Checking wiper fluid
- Checking tire pressure
- Checking tire tread depth

Lesson two – mirror settings

The method below provides the best view of adjacent lanes, for maximum safety:

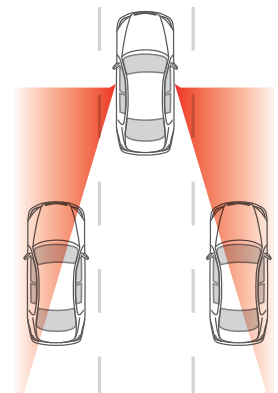
- **Inside mirror:** Have your teen sit up straight in the driver's seat and adjust the inside mirror so that it frames the entire rear window. This is the main mirror for viewing what is behind the vehicle.
- **Left-side mirror:** Have your teen lean their head toward the left-side window, and set the left mirror so they can barely see the side of the car. When they sit up straight, the car should no longer be visible in the mirror.
- **Right-side mirror:** Do the same to the right. Have your teen lean to the right over the car's center console, and set the right mirror so they can barely see the right side of the car.

Lesson three – checking blind spots

Additionally, teach your teen how to look over their shoulder to check the blind spot on each side of the car that cannot be seen in the mirrors. Blind spots should be checked every time you change lanes.

Lesson four – seating position

The proper seat position is important in order to safely control the vehicle. Your teen should sit with their back firmly against the seat. There should be at least 10 inches between the steering wheel and the driver's chest, with the air bag pointing at the chest. The top of the steering wheel should be no higher than the shoulders. Move the seat forward or backward so that the driver's heel touches the floor and can pivot quickly between the brake and accelerator. Shorter drivers may need a seat cushion or pedal extenders to sit safely 10 inches from the air bag. The head restraint should be at the center of the driver's head.



The most effective way to deal with blind spots is to briefly turn and look.

Proper mirror setting

In the past, drivers were often taught mirror settings that created an overlap between the rear and side mirrors. This is actually less safe because it increases the size of the blind spots. This is a great opportunity to update your own driving skills while teaching your teen!

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Moving, steering, and stopping

Goal: Teach your teen to consistently start, stop, and turn smoothly with full vehicle control.

Location: A large, level, mostly empty area.

Everyone in the vehicle **must** be properly buckled up.

Before starting, coach your teen to always signal and check mirrors and blind spots before changing the speed, position, or direction of the car. Remind them when needed.

Have your teen drive around the perimeter of the lot several times at a slow speed. Have them stop and start frequently, practicing smooth hand-to-hand steering, braking, and accelerating.

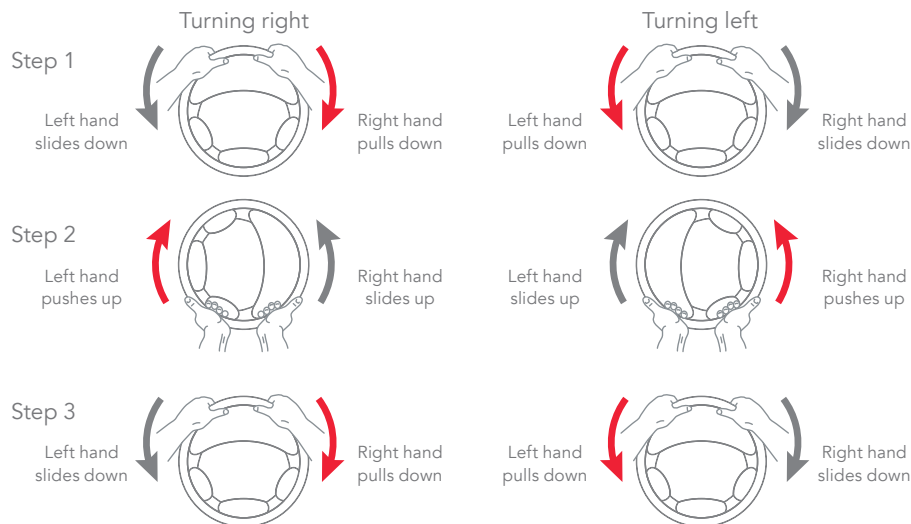
Pick several targets in the large, level, empty practice area, and have your teen drive to them at specific speeds. For example, "Drive to the stop sign at 15 mph." Focus on steady speed and smooth starts and stops.

Once your teen is braking smoothly, practice "hard, smooth stops" at slightly higher speeds (approximately 25–30 mph). *Hint: Curling toes back just before braking results in smoother stops. It eases the pressure on the brake.*

Controlling speed

New drivers tend to use the brake too much and the accelerator too little to control speed. Coach your teen about easing up on the accelerator as a way to reduce the car's speed.

Lesson one – steps toward turning



With hand-to-hand steering your hands do not cross each other.

Lesson two – turning techniques

- Ease off the accelerator or use the brake to reduce speed before entering a curve; use gentle acceleration to overcome inertia and pull the vehicle out of the curve.
- Use smooth, continuous steering wheel movements when approaching a turn and when returning (sliding) the wheel through the hands until the vehicle is in the proper post-turn position.
- Coach your teen to pick a target near the center of the intended travel path. This target can be used as a visual aid to aim at while steering through turns.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

SKILL THREE: HOW CLOSE ARE YOU?

How close are you?

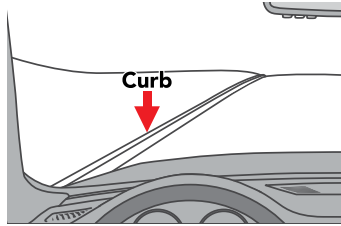
Goal: Teach your teen how to tell where their vehicle is in relation to other vehicles or objects.

Location: A large, level, mostly empty area with clearly painted pavement lines and curbs.

Reference points

Explain to your teen that reference points are visual guides to help them judge the car's distance from curbs, lines, other objects, and vehicles.

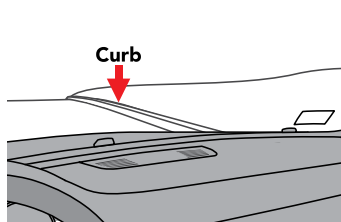
Lesson one – driver's side curb (or line)



*View out the front windshield.
Reference points will be different
for everyone, depending on the
vehicle and the height of the driver.*

- Choose a pavement curb (or line), and tell your teen that the goal is to pull the driver's side of the vehicle 6–12 inches away. Coach them to slowly pull up parallel to the line, getting gradually closer, and stop when they think they are 6–12 inches away. Have them look at where the line intersects in the front window.
- Have your teen put the car in park and get out to check if the driver's side wheels are 6–12 inches from the line. If it's not the right distance, have them do it again, checking the reference points.

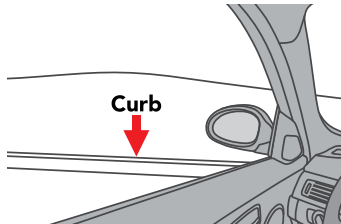
Lesson two – passenger's side curb (or line)



*View out the front windshield.
Reference points will be different
for everyone, depending on the
vehicle and the height of the driver.*

- Choose another curb (or line) parallel to the passenger's side, again pulling up slowly to within 6–12 inches. Use the same gradual pull-up method, but for this side, coach your teen to stop when the curb appears to intersect the center of the hood.
- Again, have your teen get out of the vehicle to check whether the tires are 6–12 inches from the curb. Keep practicing and making adjustments, noticing the reference point, until they can do it consistently.

Lesson three – front curb (or line)



*View out the driver's side window.
Reference points will be different
for everyone, depending on the
vehicle and the height of the driver.*

- Teach your teen to align the front bumper between 6–12 inches from a pavement curb (or line). Have them drive slowly straight toward the curb. Coach them to stop when the curb appears under the driver side mirror.
- Have your teen get out of the vehicle to check whether the front bumper is 6–12 inches from the curb. If not, have them adjust the reference point as needed and keep practicing.

Making your teen safer

It takes more than 15 minutes every day for six months to complete 50 hours of practice driving. For 100 hours, it's more than 30 minutes a day for six months. Studies show that the more time you drive together, the safer your teen will be when driving alone.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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Backing up

Goal: Teach your teen how to safely drive backwards in a straight line and while turning.

Location: A large, level, mostly empty area.

Lesson one – before moving the vehicle

- Coach your teen to first search around the vehicle before entering to identify potential hazards that may not be visible once they are in their seat. Then teach your teen that they must always turn around and look backwards through the rear window when backing up. They should also use their mirrors and back-up camera.
- Have your teen shift their hips and turn around until they get a good view behind the vehicle. When backing up to the right, they should drape their right arm over the back of the seat and grasp the top of the steering wheel with their left hand. When backing up to the left they should look over their left shoulder.
- Review how to use the backup camera with your teen, including what the different lines mean. Always remember that a camera cannot be a substitute for your eyes — it is meant as an additional tool to use when backing up.

Slow and consistent

Emphasize that it is important to back up slowly and be prepared to stop. It is harder to maintain control of the car when it's in reverse.

Lesson two – backing up in a straight line

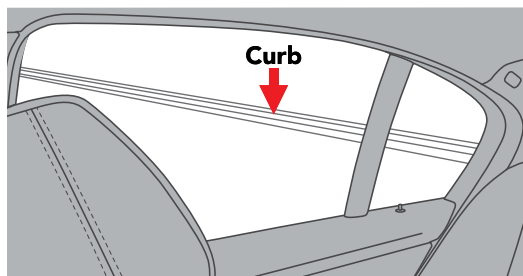
- Check all areas behind the vehicle prior to and while backing up.
- Grasp the steering wheel with the left hand and look over the right shoulder through the rear window.
- First release the brake, then use the accelerator gently, and only when necessary, to control speed. Keep it slow.

Lesson three – backing up in a turn

- If turning to the left, grasp the steering wheel with the right hand, or with the left hand if turning to the right. Remind your teen to turn the wheel in the direction they want the car to travel.
- Look in the direction the car is moving through the rear side windows.
- Back into the turn slowly, first releasing the brake, then using the accelerator if needed.

Lesson four – aligning rear bumper to a curb

- Choose a curb (or line) for a target.
- Have your teen back up toward the target, coaching them to stop when the curb appears near the middle of the rear right window when looking over their right shoulder.
- Have your teen put the car in park and set the emergency brake.
- Have your teen get out of the car to see whether the rear bumper is close to the target.
- If adjustments are needed, have your teen try again, establishing a new reference point.
- Repeat as often as needed until your teen can consistently come within close proximity to the target.



The driver's view out of the back passenger window. Reference points will be different for everyone, depending on the vehicle and the height of the driver.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Driving on a quiet street – part one

Goal: Teach your teen to move and stop a vehicle safely and with confidence on quiet roads.

Location: Start in a large, level, mostly empty area. Move to a quiet neighborhood street when indicated. Out of respect to our neighbors, please do not use official state road test courses for practice.

Before moving out onto the road, make sure that your teen has reviewed the driver's manual and is familiar with street signs, signals, pavement markings, right-of-way and speed laws.

Skill review

Starting in a quiet, large, level, empty area, review the skills learned so far. Have your teen drive several laps around the lot, practicing smooth braking and accelerating, maintaining steady speeds, steering into right and left turns, and using reference points to align the car with curbs (or lines).

Lesson one – commentary driving

Coach your teen to use "commentary driving" (see sidebar on page 3) throughout this lesson, if possible.

Lesson two – lane position

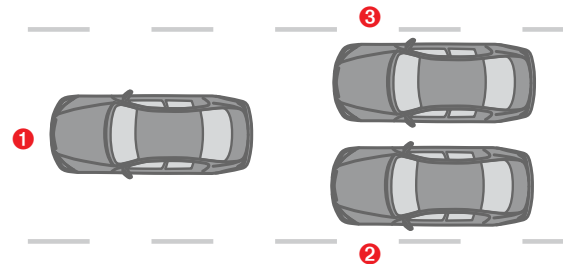
When you and your teen feel ready, move to a quiet street.

With your teen behind the wheel, first have them practice driving straight in 3 different lane positions. Do this for several miles, practicing each position at least 10 times:

Center position 1: The most common position, with the vehicle centered within the lane. Coach your teen that they should stay in the center position under most circumstances.

Left position 2: The vehicle positioned to the left side of the lane. This is best used when approaching parked vehicles and potential hazards on the right (if no oncoming traffic). It should be avoided on a hill or a curve.

Right position 3: The vehicle positioned to the right side of the lane. This is usually done when making a right turn to allow for a safety margin on the left side of the vehicle.



Most driving is done in lane position number one.

Lesson three – intersections

Coach your teen on these techniques for safely approaching an intersection:

- Search for vehicles, pedestrians, signs, and traffic signals.
- Check the rearview mirror for any potential hazards behind the car.
- If it's an intersection with traffic signals, identify who has the right-of-way.
- If turning, put on the turn signal 100 feet before making the turn.
- If a stop is required, stop behind the white stop line or crosswalk, whichever comes first.
- Select the best lane for travel by reading signs and pavement markings.
- Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and other vehicles.

Emergency vehicles

Make sure your teen understands what to do if they encounter emergency vehicles. First, turn down the radio to listen for the direction of the emergency vehicle(s). Stay calm and pull over to the nearest curb, clear of intersections, and wait for the emergency vehicle(s) to pass.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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Driving on a quiet street – part two

Goal: Teach your teen to turn both right and left safely and with confidence on quiet roads.

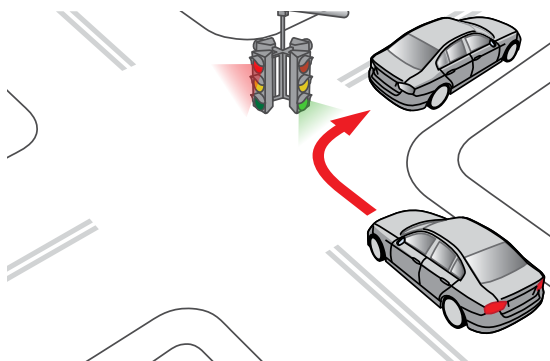
Location: A quiet block of single-lane roads, ideally without traffic signals at the intersections.

Lesson one – right turns

When your teen is comfortable with lane positions and intersections, it's time to practice turns.

Start with right turns. Have your teen drive clockwise around the block 10–12 times:

- Pick a line at the center of the intended travel path while steering through a turn. Make sure your teen does not fixate on one specific spot, but instead focuses on a broader path.
- Focus on smooth braking into the turn and acceleration out of the turn, as previously practiced in the large, level, empty area.
- Always check mirrors before turns and signal 4 seconds before turning. Make sure to check for vulnerable users, such as bicyclists and pedestrians, before turning. Refer to Sharing the Road with Pedestrian and Cyclists on page 34.



Have your teen drive around the block making right turns 10–12 times. When they are proficient, drive around the block 10–12 times making left turns.

Lesson two – left turns

When your teen is proficient at right turns, move on to left turns. Have your teen drive counterclockwise around the block 10–12 times, coaching them on these techniques for safe left turns:

- Position the vehicle close to the yellow line in the middle of the road.
- If there is a stop sign or red light, stop with wheels pointed straight and make sure to stop before the stop line, crosswalk, or sidewalk, whichever is first.
- Search the intersection in all directions for vehicles, pedestrians, signs, and signals.
- Select a gap in traffic and pull straight forward toward the middle of the intersection. Coach your teen to avoid hesitating.
- Use the yellow line on the street being turned onto as a target. Turn into the travel lane closest to the yellow line.
- When the turn is complete, let the steering wheel slide back through your teen's hands.
- Pick a new target 15–20 seconds ahead in the center of the travel path and accelerate gradually.

Be sure to practice with your teen in a variety of conditions, including at night and in inclement weather, as much as possible.

Focus ahead

Most drivers have a tendency to steer in the direction they look. If their eyes move to one side, the car may drift in that direction, too. Remind your teen to focus on a path line in the middle of their travel lane — and not fixate on lane lines or other objects. The rest of the area should be scanned quickly but frequently.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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Looking ahead

Goal: Teach your teen to develop defensive driving techniques and higher-level visual and anticipatory driving skills before moving on to more complex driving situations. In order to avoid last-second reactions and spot potential hazards, have your teen always look 12–15 seconds down the road. When they are looking far enough ahead, they will be able to spot hazards early and be well prepared to react to them.

Location: Start on a quiet neighborhood street. Out of respect to our neighbors, please do not use official state road test courses for practice. Move onto a road with light traffic when your teen is ready.

Don't tailgate

Rear-end collisions are the most common form of a car crash. Emphasize to your teen that allowing proper following distance behind other vehicles is the single best thing they can do to minimize the risk of a crash.

Lesson one – IPDE system

Teach your teen the IPDE system, a simple system to help new drivers recognize, anticipate and avoid risks before they turn into problems. IPDE stands for:

- Identify** potential risks, like oncoming vehicles, pedestrians, obstacles, or intersections.
- Predict** when and where there will be a conflict or problem.
- Decide** on the best course of action.
- Execute** that action.

Have your teen use commentary driving as they practice the IPDE system. As they drive, ask them to verbally describe their thoughts, intentions, and actions in order to identify potential risks they see, predict problems these risks could cause, decide what to do to avoid a problem, and then execute the maneuver.

Lesson two – stopping-distance rule

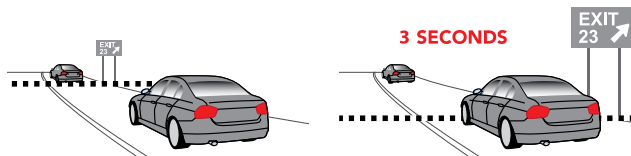
Teach your teen the stopping-distance rule, for the safest distance to stop behind another vehicle. When your vehicle stops, you should be far enough away from the car in front of you that you can see where its tires make contact with the ground. Any closer is too close.

Lesson three – three-second rule

Teach your teen the three-second rule for the appropriate following distance when driving behind other vehicles. The three-second rule is an important safety measure designed to give drivers enough time to safely steer or brake to avoid problems that occur in front of them on the road.

- Start counting when the rear bumper of the vehicle in front of you passes an object.
- Count “one thousand ONE, one thousand TWO, one thousand THREE.” If the road is wet, add on an additional second. If you drive an SUV or heavier vehicle, add an additional 1-2 seconds, as it will take your car longer to stop. Always err on the side of caution and allow for more space in front of you.
- Your front bumper should not pass that same object before you’ve reached “three.”

Have your teen practice the three-second rule at least 10–12 times, counting out loud to check whether their following distance is appropriate.



Your front bumper should not pass before you've reached "three."

Skill completed

Supervisor initials

Driver initials

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Turning around

Goal: Teach your teen the best ways to turn a vehicle around in various circumstances.

Location: Start on a quiet neighborhood street with accessible driveways. Please be respectful of neighbors and private property. Move to a multi-lane road for U-turns, if legally allowed in your area.

Lesson one – turning around safely

Start by coaching your teen that the safest and easiest way to turn around is to drive around the block. The less backing up, the better! Since that's not always possible, practice other ways to turn around.

Lesson two – two-point turns

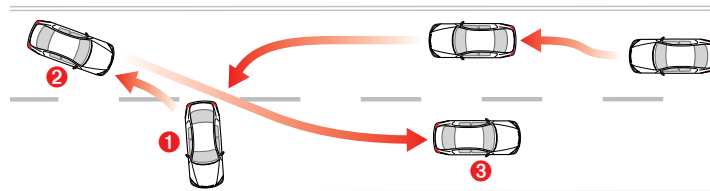
A two-point turn involves backing into a driveway to reverse direction. On a quiet street, have your teen identify an available driveway on the same side of the street as your car, at a point where they can see oncoming traffic for at least 200 feet.

- Pull just ahead of the driveway, making sure there is no traffic behind the car, and signal.
- Make sure the road is clear behind the car and the driveway, put the car in reverse, and then back into the driveway.
- Shift back into drive and check the road for approaching traffic from both directions.
- When it's clear, turn back onto the road.

Lesson three – three-point turns

This more challenging turn should only be done when there is no other option. Three-point turns block both sides of a two-lane road, so coach your teen to make absolutely sure that the traffic is clear in both directions. Three-point turns should only be made on streets where visibility is good, when traffic is light, and only when the turn is legal.

- Pull as far to the right as possible to maximize room to maneuver. Check in both directions for traffic, and cyclists, and signal left.
- Move slowly and turn the steering wheel quickly to the left, **1** until the car is perpendicular to the street, facing the curb. Come to a stop.
- Continue checking for traffic in both directions.
- Put the car in reverse and back up while looking over your right shoulder **2**, turning sharply in the other direction. Back up to the opposite curb, stopping just before the curb.
- Check for traffic in both directions, Signal left, shift into drive, and accelerate to the proper speed. **3**



Practice two-point and three-point turns at least 10 times each.

Legal U-turns

U-turns are legal in many locations, however, in the District of Columbia U-turns are illegal at all intersections with a traffic signal. Make sure you and your teen only practice legal U-turns. U-turns should never be made across a double yellow line or where a sign indicates that they are prohibited.

Lesson four – U-turns

First explain that U-turns can be very dangerous, and should only be done where they are legal.

- Begin the U-turn in the left lane, closest to the center line or median.
- Be sure there is enough room to make the turn without hitting the curb or any parked cars.
- Signal to indicate the direction of the turn, checking carefully for traffic in both directions.
- Move forward, turning the wheel sharply to turn around.
- Finish the U-turn in the opposite direction and accelerate to an appropriate speed.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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Parking – part one

Goal: Teach your teen to master angle and perpendicular parking.

Location: Start in large, level, mostly empty areas. You will need angled and perpendicular spaces.

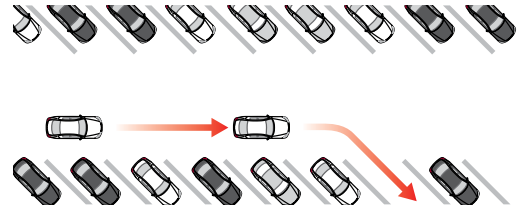
Before your teen starts parking practice, review “Skill three: How close are you?” and “Skill four: Backing up.”

Lesson one – angle parking

The gentler turn makes this the easiest type of parking for new drivers.

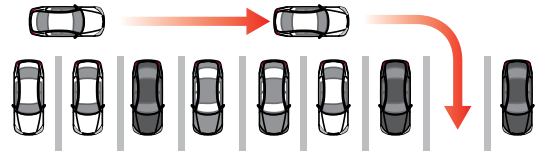
Hint: Choosing a parking spot on the left side of the car can provide more room to maneuver and a better view of traffic when backing out.

- Signal to indicate intent to turn into a parking space.
- Move forward until the steering wheel is aligned with the first pavement line marking the space.
- Look at the middle of the parking space and turn the wheel sharply at a slow, controlled speed.
- Steer toward the center of the space, straightening the wheel upon entry.
- Stop when the front bumper is 6 inches from the curb or from the end of the space.
- After you’ve parked, put the gear in park for automatic transmissions (for manual transmissions, put the car either in first or reverse) and set the parking brake. Shut off the ignition and remove the key. Check for traffic prior to getting out. Lock the doors.
- Suddenly opening car doors can pose a very serious threat to bicyclists. When opening your car door, drivers and passengers are encouraged to check your rear-view mirror, side-view mirror, then open the door with your far hand.



Lesson two – perpendicular parking

The steps are the same as angle parking, but the sharper turn into perpendicular spaces may require more practice.



Lesson three – exiting spaces

- With a foot on the brake, shift into reverse, which will signal that you will be backing up.
- Before moving, search all around your vehicle using your mirrors, backup camera, and looking over your shoulder side-to-side and behind.
- For **angled spaces**, back up straight until the driver’s seat is even with the bumper of the next vehicle on the turning side. For **perpendicular spaces**, back up straight until the windshield is aligned with the bumper of the next vehicle.
- Quickly turn the wheel in the direction that the rear of the car needs to go.
- Glance forward to make sure the front bumper is clear of the car on the other side.
- When the front bumper clears the other vehicle, stop, shift into drive, and pull forward to complete the exit.

Turn when your outside mirror reaches the edge of the space. Always finish with your wheels straight and your car centered in the space.

Practice makes perfect

Plan to spend a good amount of time on parking practice with your teen — it’s a difficult skill to learn. Many crashes happen in parking lots, and mastering parking skills is an important way to help avoid collisions. Have your teen practice angle and perpendicular parking 15–20 times each.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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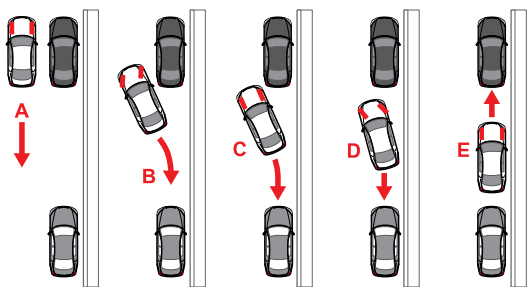
Parking – part two

Goal: Teach your teen to master parallel parking.

Location: A street with marked parallel parking spaces at a time of day when traffic is light.

Lesson one – parallel parking

Parallel parking is a difficult maneuver for new drivers, so patience is key. Many drivers never learn to do it well, especially in areas where it's not common. Because of the difficulty of learning parallel parking, and because there are several different teaching methods, this skill is sometimes best taught by a professional driving instructor. Assess your own parallel parking skills and your teen's abilities before beginning.



Start by practicing with cones before graduating to practicing alongside vehicles.

- Select an available space on the passenger's side of the car.
- Signal when approaching the space and check mirrors for traffic behind the vehicle.
- Move forward past the space until lined up directly parallel to the car parked in front, 2–5 feet away. Being too close or too far away will make parking more difficult.
- With a foot on the brake, shift to reverse and turn around to check for traffic and make sure the travel path is clear.
- Release the brake, start backing up slowly, and start to make an "S" turn, turning first right and then left.

- Glance both forward and backward repeatedly to check the space around the car while turning.
- Once the rear of the car is mostly in the space, start turning in the other direction to straighten out.
- Adjust the vehicle's position as needed to center it in the space.
- Check to see if the wheels are 6–12 inches from the curb. If not, pull out and try again.
- Always check for passing vehicles and cyclists before you open your door.

Lesson two – exiting a parallel parking space

- With a foot on the brake, shift to reverse, turn around, and back as close as possible to the vehicle behind you.
- Check your side mirror and look over your shoulder for cyclists or fast-moving cars, then, signal, and shift into drive.
- Make sure the travel path is clear, then move slowly forward while steering rapidly out of the space.

Lesson three – parallel parking on a hill

Make sure the vehicle is in park and the parking brake is properly engaged. To prevent the vehicle from rolling into traffic, instruct your teen to turn the front wheels as follows:

- Toward the curb when parking downhill
- Away from the curb when parking uphill

If there is no curb, have your teen point the wheel so that the car would roll away from traffic if it moved.

Have patience

When practicing parallel parking, your teen will probably hit the curb several times. Tell them not to worry — even the best parallel parkers do this sometimes. Coach them to pull out of the space and try again, adjusting their turning angle as needed.

Video: Parallel parking

Scan the QR code below to watch the video.



Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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Multi-lane roads – part one

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and with confidence on busier, more complex, multi-lane roads.

Location: A busier, multi-lane road. When beginning, choose a time with limited traffic, such as a weekend morning.

Skill review

By now, your teen should be comfortable driving on quiet roads. Before starting multi-lane road practice, it's important to review some key information from previous lessons. The following skills are crucial to safe driving on busier, more complicated roads.

Other road users

Motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians are more difficult to see than cars because they are smaller — and drivers tend to focus on looking for cars. Traffic, weather, and road conditions require cyclists to react differently than motorists. It can be difficult for young drivers to judge and predict their actions. Always give bicyclists and motorcyclists a wide berth and reduce your speed.

Lesson one – mirror positioning, monitoring and blind spots

Refer to Skills one and two. Clearly seeing the adjacent traffic is especially important on multi-lane roads. Remind your teen to check the mirror positions when entering the car, and to constantly monitor the traffic around them.

Lesson two – stopping distance

Refer to Skill six. Remind your teen that when stopping their vehicle behind another one, they should be far enough back to see where the other car's tires meet the road.

Lesson three – following distance

Refer to Skill six. Review the three-second rule with your teen, emphasizing that increasing following distance is the single best way to reduce crash risk. This gives the driver visibility, time, and space to avoid crashes.

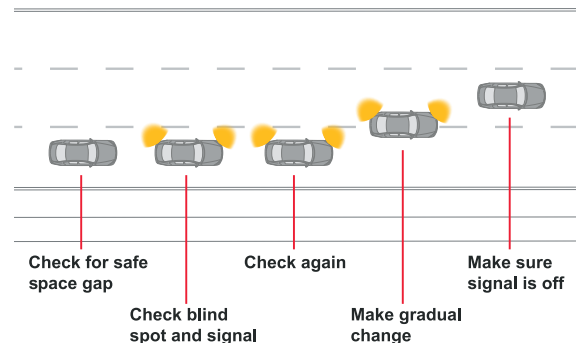
Lesson four – safe lane changing

First, coach your teen not to change lanes unnecessarily. Studies show that while it may not look like it, most travel lanes flow at around the same rate. Changing lanes in an effort to save time doesn't actually save time, but it does increase crash risk.

Ask your teen to list valid reasons to change lanes. Good answers include: to make a turn, to avoid an obstacle, to exit the road, to park, or to pass another vehicle.

Have your teen practice these lane change steps until proficient:

- Check traffic to the rear and the sides for an appropriate gap.
- Signal to indicate intention to change lanes.
- Recheck traffic, including a glance over the shoulder at the mirror blind spot area.
- Maintain speed or accelerate slightly before and during the lane change.
- Gradually move into the new lane.
- Adjust following distance, using the three-second rule.



When changing lanes, always recheck traffic with a glance over the shoulder at the blind spot.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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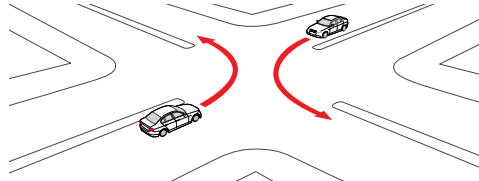
Multi-lane roads – part two

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and with confidence on busier, more complex, multi-lane roads.

Location: A busier, multi-lane road. Choose a time with limited traffic, such as a weekend morning.

Lesson one – right turns

Start with right turns, which are fairly simple. Right turns are always made from the right lane of the current road to the first, open lane of the new road. Look for signs and signals that indicate whether “right on red” is allowed. Practice right turns until you feel confident that your teen is proficient before moving on to left turns.



Don't turn the wheel until you're ready to make the turn.

Lesson two – left turns

Left turns should almost always begin and end in the closest lane to the right of the yellow line. The yellow line in the lane being turned into should be your teen's target. There are 3 types of left turns:

- **Exclusive left turns** with a designated left turn lane and left turn signal
- **Shared left turns** made from a center or shared turn lane
- **Unprotected left turns** made from an active travel lane

Protected left turns should be made from the designated lane when the left turn signal displays a green arrow, using the yellow line in the lane being turned into as the steering target.

For unprotected left turns, coach your teen on these steps:

- Make sure the vehicle is in the correct lane to make a left turn.
- Signal the turn and begin slowing down at least 100 feet from the intersection.
- Move carefully into the intersection. Don't turn the wheel until you're ready to make the turn.
- Yield to any vehicles, cyclists, or pedestrians.
- When there is sufficient space with no oncoming traffic, move ahead into the turn.
- Choose a steering path line in the middle of the closest lane to the right of the yellow line.

Lesson three – safe passing procedures

Discourage your teen from passing other cars unnecessarily. If passing is necessary, the following steps should be observed:

- Position your vehicle more than 3 seconds behind the vehicle to be passed.
- Check the oncoming travel ahead to make sure there's plenty of space before you try to pass.
- Check mirrors and blind spots for traffic behind you.
- Signal intent to pass and accelerate quickly to match the speed of traffic flow.
- While passing, monitor the space in front of and behind your vehicle and check the rearview mirror for the front of the car being passed. Make sure to not exceed the speed limit when passing.
- When you see the front of the passed car in the rearview mirror and your vehicle is well clear, signal intent, gently and slowly move back to the original lane, cancel the signal, and maintain speed.

Making left turns

Left turns are one of the hardest maneuvers for teens to master. Be patient. New drivers often have difficulty judging the speed and distances of multiple lanes of oncoming traffic. Practice judging oncoming vehicles' distance from your vehicle by counting out loud the time it takes for them to reach your car from a designated point.

Video: Multi-lane roads

Scan the QR code below to watch the video.



Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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Qualifications for teens to get a District of Columbia license

Anyone who operates a motor vehicle or motorcycle on public roadways in the District of Columbia is required to have a driver license. You may obtain a DC driver license if you:

- Are at least 16½ years old (learner permit at age 16);
- Are able to submit proof of full legal name, date of birth, social security number and DC residency;
- Have successfully completed the knowledge test, skills road test and vision screenings;
- Have parental/guardian consent if under age 18;
- Surrender any driver license or identification card previously held;
- Have not had your license suspended, revoked, or denied;
- Comply with medical requirements; and

Types of licenses for GRADs

Gradual Rearing of Adult Drivers (GRAD) Program. The GRAD program allows novice drivers (16–20 years old) to safely gain driving experience before obtaining full driving privileges. A learner permit allows you to operate a motor vehicle when supervised by another driver who is 21 years or older, has a valid full driver license and is seated next to you in the passenger front seat.

Learner permit

You **CANNOT** drive alone. You must be accompanied by and under the instruction of a driver who is 21 years or older, has a valid, full driver license, and is seated next to you in the passenger front seat. Driving hours are restricted for learner permit holders. You and your passengers must wear seat belts at all times. You may not operate a motor vehicle for compensation. You may not operate a commercial vehicle. You may not use a mobile phone or other electronic device (with or without hands free accessories) while driving in the District of Columbia. To obtain a learner permit you must:

- Be at least 16 years of age.
- Pass the knowledge test and vision test.
- If you are under the age of 18, you must also have a parental consent form signed by your parent/guardian.

The learner permit is valid for two (2) years and is non-renewable.

Provisional license

During your Provisional License stage you may drive alone. You can drive with one (1) passenger that is the holder of a valid full driver license who is 21 years of age or older, occupying the front passenger seat next to you and wearing a seat belt, and any other passenger who is your sibling or parent. You and your passengers must wear seat belts at all times and driving hours are restricted for provisional license drivers. You may not use a mobile phone or other electronic device (with or without hands free accessories) while Driving in the District of Columbia. To obtain a provisional license you must:

- Be at least 16 years, 6 months old.
- You must have held a valid learner permit for at least six (6) months and have no pointable violations.
- Provide a signed 40 hours Certification of Eligibility for Provisional License Application form certifying that you have at least 40 hours of driving experience accompanied by a licensed driver who is 21 years or older and who has a valid, full driver license.
- Take and pass the road skills test.

The provisional license is valid for one (1) year and is renewable. Prior to age 18, you are not allowed to operate a vehicle for compensation.

Full driver license

Once you have held your provisional driver license for at least 6 months you must:

- Have no pointable moving violations for 12 consecutive months;
- Practiced night driving for at least 10 hours, provide a signed Certification of Eligibility for Full Driver License Application certifying that you have at least 10 hours of night driving experience accompanied by a licensed driver who is 21 years or older and who has a valid, full driver license. Once you complete these steps, you may then be issued a full driver license (Class D).

GRAD permissible driving hours

	Months	Days	Hours
Learner Permit Must be accompanied by a driver 21 years or older			6:00 am – 9:00 pm
Provisional License & Full License Drivers Between the ages of 17 – 18 years old	July – August	Everyday	6:00 am – 11:59 pm
	September – June	Sunday – Thursday	6:00 am – 10:59 pm
		Friday & Saturday	6:00 am – 11:59 pm

You can operate a motor vehicle during GRAD restricted hours if you are driving to or from work, a school-sponsored activity, a religious or an athletic event, training sessions, or any event sponsored by the District of Columbia or another similar entity that takes responsibility for the minor.

At the age 21, drivers are released from the GRAD program. During the learner permit stage, once you are age 21, you may immediately schedule a road test appointment. No driving certification form or six (6) months holding period is required. During provisional license stage, once you are age 21, you may visit a DMV service center location to obtain a regular driver license. No driving certification form or six (6) months holding period is required.

Supervised driving log

Parents or guardians are responsible for making certain that their teen has completed no less than 40 hours of supervised driving when obtaining a Provisional Driver License. The 40 hours can be completed with a commercial driving school or any other supervising driver. When obtaining a Full License with Conditions make certain your teen has completed no less than 10 hours of supervised night driving. The following log is a tool for your convenience that will help you keep track of time spent on the road and ensure that your teen has a diverse supervised driving experience. You want your teen to be as prepared as possible for their Provisional Driver License and Full License with Conditions.

GRAD program

The Gradual Rearing of Adult Drivers (GRAD) program is intended to provide teen drivers with practice under the safest conditions, exposing them to more situations only as their skills and experience grow.

WITH SUPPORT FROM



Track your supervised
drive time with

RoadReady®



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD
OUR **FREE** MOBILE APP!



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Motor Vehicles



Certification of Eligibility for Provisional License

Applicant Full Name (Last, First, Middle, Suffix)	Learner Permit No.

In order to obtain your Provisional License, you must have held a valid learner permit for at least 6 months. You must not have admitted to, been liable for, or convicted of an offense for which points may be assessed for at least 12 consecutive months. You must complete and sign this Certification of Eligibility for Provisional License form certifying that you have practiced driving skills for at least **40 hours** accompanied by a driver/tutor(s) who is 21 years or older with a valid full driver license, occupying the seat beside the learner and wearing a seat belt. The tutor supervising your driving must complete and sign the tutor's information and a photocopy of their driver license must be submitted with this form. You must bring this form with you when you report for your scheduled Road Test appointment.

Date	Tutor's Name (Please Print)	Amount of Time	Hours/Minutes
Example			
02/10/05	Jane Doe	8:15 am – 10:15 am	2 hours
Total Hours			

By signing the above certification, I, the tutor, certify that the learner has received **40 hours** of driving experience specified by me on the dates and times indicated. If more than one person has tutored the learner for the **40 hours** of driving, each tutor's signature certifies only the hours for which that tutor accompanied and instructed the learner. I also certify that I meet the requirements for being a tutor.

Tutor's Signature	Date	Tutor's Signature	Date
Driver License No:		Driver License No:	
State of Issuance:		State of Issuance:	
Expiration Date:		Expiration Date:	

I hereby certify that I am at least 16 years and 6 months old and have been a holder of a valid learner permit for at least six months, during which time I have not admitted to, been liable for or convicted of an offense for which points may be assessed. I also certify that I have received at least **40 hours** of driving experience.

Applicant's Signature	Date

Any person who signs this form certifies that the statements that he or she is making are true. The making of a false statement on this form is a violation of DC law and subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or 180 days imprisonment or both (D.C. Official Code § 22-2405). A false statement may be ground for denial, suspension, or revocation of an applicant's permit.

Visit our website www.dmv.dc.gov or call 311 in DC or 202-737-4404 for additional information.

To report waste, fraud, or abuse by any DC Government Agency or official, call the Office of the Office of the DC Inspector General at 1-800-521-1639.

DMV-GRAD-HR40 Rev.08/24/09

SUPERVISED DRIVING LOG



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Motor Vehicles



Certification of Eligibility for Full License with Conditions

Applicant Full Name (Last, First, Middle, Suffix)	Provisional License No.

In order to obtain your Full License with conditions, you must have held a valid Provisional License for at least 6 months. You must not have admitted to, been liable for, or convicted of an offense for which points may be assessed for at least 12 consecutive months. You must complete and sign this Certification of Eligibility for Full License with Conditions form certifying that you have practiced night driving skills for at least **10 hours** accompanied by a driver/tutor(s) who is 21 years or older with a valid full driver license, occupying the seat beside the driver and wearing a seat belt. The tutor supervising your night driving must complete and sign the tutor's information and a photocopy of their driver license must be submitted with this form when you visit a DMV service center to obtain your Full License with Conditions.

Date	Tutor's Name (Please Print)	Amount of Time	Hours/Minutes
Example			
01/12/05	John Doe	8:00 pm – 9:15 pm	1 hour 15 minutes
Total Hours			

By signing the above certification, I, the tutor, certify that the driver has received **10 hours** of night driving experience specified by me on the dates and times indicated. If more than one person has tutored the driver in meeting the **10 hours** of night driving experience, each tutor's signature certifies only the hours for which that tutor accompanied and instructed the learner. I also certify that I meet the requirements for being a tutor.

Tutor's Signature	Date	Tutor's Signature	Date
Driver License No.		Driver License No.	
State of Issuance:		State of Issuance:	
Expiration Date:		Expiration Date:	

I hereby certify that I am at least 17 years old and have been a holder of a valid provisional license for at least six months, during which time I have not admitted to, been liable for or convicted of an offense for which points may be assessed. I also certify that I have received at least **10 hours** of night driving experience.

Applicant's Signature	Date

Any person who signs this form certifies that the statements that he or she is making are true. The making of a false statement on this form is a violation of DC law and subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or 180 days imprisonment or both (D.C. Official Code § 22-2405). A false statement may be grounds for denial, suspension, or revocation of an applicant's permit.

Visit our website www.dmv.dc.gov or call 311 or 202-737-4404 for additional information.
To report waste, fraud, or abuse by any DC Government Agency or official, call the Office of the DC Inspector General at 1-800-521-1639.

DMV-GRAD-HR10 Rev. 07/20/09

Preparing for the road test

The following is a checklist of documentation and vehicle requirements that must be met prior to performing a road test. Please take the time to review this list and check the vehicle to be used for compliance.

Necessary items

- Arrive at least 15 minutes before your appointment
- Arrive in a vehicle that fulfills the vehicle requirements below
- Bring your valid learner permit
- Bring your 40-hour Certification of Eligibility of Provisional License form
- Be accompanied by a licensed driver 21 years or older
- Bring a car that has valid registration and proof of insurance
- Wear your seat belt

Please note: If you have a learner permit and drive yourself to your road test appointment without being accompanied by a licensed driver 21 years or older, you will not be allowed to take your test for 6 months.

Vehicle requirements

The vehicle used to take the test must:

- Have a current registration card with a valid window registration sticker (if applicable) or current sticker displaying a valid expiration date affixed to the plates (if applicable).
- Have a motor vehicle liability insurance card or the policy which must identify the vehicle and include the expiration date.
- Display front and rear license plates (if applicable), properly affixed to the bumper.
- Have properly functioning brake lights, turn signals, horn, windows that roll up and down, operable doors with inside and outside door handles, inside rearview mirror, and outside side (left/right) view mirrors properly placed.
- Have a hand emergency brake located between the driver and the front passenger seats.
- Have a windshield with no cracks or debris, providing an unobstructed field of vision and nothing hanging from the rearview mirror.
- Have tires that are in good condition and properly inflated. Spare (donut) tires are not acceptable.
- Rental vehicles are allowed for road tests only if the person taking the test is listed on the rental contract as an approved driver.
- DC DMV does offer the option to take the road skills test in a DMV road test vehicle and there is no additional fee.

For questions, please visit our website at www.dmv.dc.gov or contact the District's City Wide Call Center at 311 or (202) 737-4404

City driving – part one

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and confidently in the complex environment of city driving. *Note: City driving takes hundreds of hours, if not several years, to master.*

Location: Busy, urban streets. Start at times when traffic is light, moving on to heavier traffic times as your teen gains practice.

Skill review

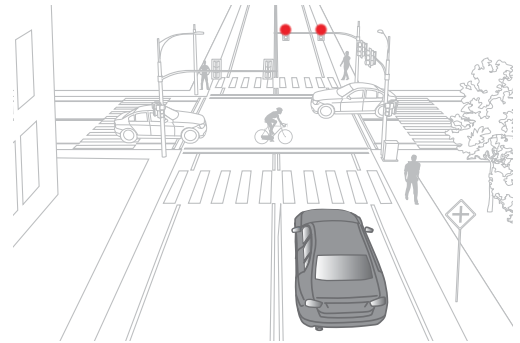
Since the busy, crowded environment of city driving is challenging for new drivers, this is a good time to review key driving skills. **One of the most important skill for drivers is the ability to make good decisions.** City driving forces drivers to make lots of decisions quickly. The three things they need to drive safely in the city are:

- **Visibility:** To see potential problems in all directions
- **Space:** To maneuver around obstacles and avoid hazards
- **Time:** To anticipate risks and make adjustments to speed or position

Lesson one – maximizing visibility and space

As you practice, have your teen focus on making decisions that will maximize visibility and space around the vehicle, increasing the available reaction time.

- **Looking ahead (refer to Skill six):** Congested city driving leaves very little room for error. Identifying and anticipating potential problems is crucial.
- **Covering the brake:** Coach your teen that when they spot a hazard, they should “cover” the brake by taking their foot off the accelerator and holding it over the brake. This will prepare them to slow down or stop suddenly. Make sure they don’t “ride” the brake. Ridding the brake confuses other drivers and puts unnecessary wear on the brakes.



Looking ahead, identifying and anticipating potential problems is crucial for safe driving.

Lesson two – identifying hazards

As you begin city driving practice, have your teen drive through several blocks to identify and name common hazards on busy, congested streets. Ask them to describe how they will safely deal with each hazard they identify.

Such hazards may include:

- Parked cars, cars entering or exiting parking spaces, and car doors opening
- Delivery trucks stopping suddenly, with drivers racing to and from the trucks
- Buses making frequent stops, loading and unloading passengers
- Blind alleys, with cars or cyclists darting out
- Pedestrians and cyclists moving unpredictably, crossing streets outside of a crosswalk, etc.
- Limited visibility and intersections spaced at shorter intervals
- Aggressive drivers competing for lane space and parking spots
- Stop-and-go traffic flow

Scan first

Keep reminding your teen that constant awareness and looking ahead are the keys to learning to drive safely on city streets. Emphasize the idea that a green light means, “Scan the intersection first, then go.”

Don’t block the box

DC ranks third in the nation for very large urban area congestion. Drivers should not enter an intersection or crosswalk, regardless of the signal phase, unless they can clear the far side of the intersection crosswalk before the signal turns red. Blocking an intersection or pedestrian crosswalk disrupts traffic flow, and creates safety hazards.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

City driving – part two

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and confidently in the complex environment of city driving. *Note: This is not a goal that will be achieved in a single session. Spend as much time as possible with your teen practicing safe city driving skills.*

Location: Busy urban streets. Start at times when traffic is light, moving on to heavier traffic times as your teen gains practice.

Lesson one – avoiding obstacles

Focus on lane position to avoid obstacles: City driving involves many circumstances in which travel lanes are shared, congested, and partially or fully blocked. During practice sessions on busy city roads, have your teen identify these steps to safely avoid obstacles:

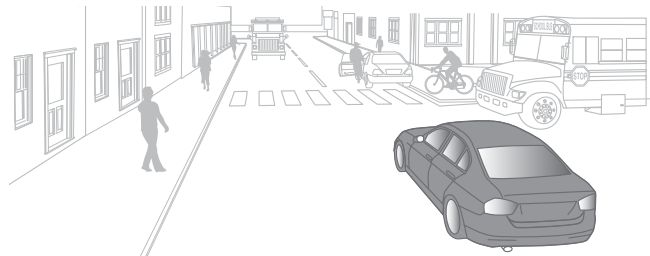
- Identify right-lane obstacles, such as stopped buses, parked cars, delivery trucks, and cyclists.
- Identify left-lane obstacles, such as vehicles waiting to make left turns, or cars traveling in the opposite direction drifting over the center line.
- Identify the least-congested travel lane. *Hint: On a three-lane road, this is usually the center lane.*
- Position the vehicle in the lane at the greatest distance possible from any obstacles.

It can be tempting to pass vehicles on congested streets, when obstacles or traffic volume slow traffic. However, this can be dangerous due to closely spaced intersections, irregular traffic flow, cars entering and exiting parking spots, etc. Coach your teen to avoid passing on busy city streets.

Lesson two – deadly distractions

What happens inside the car can be just as dangerous as what happens outside. **Engaging in distracting activities while driving can be deadly, especially for young drivers.** Ask your teen to list dangerous driving distractions. Their answers should include:

- Talking, texting or using apps
- Changing radio stations, shuffling/streaming, or dialing a phone
- Passengers, pets, or objects moving in the car
- Eating, drinking, or smoking
- Searching for an item
- Intense or emotional conversations
- Putting on makeup or looking in the mirror



Remind your teen to stay alert, scan their surroundings, and not fixate on any one thing.

Coach your teen to avoid distracting activities whenever possible, but especially in busy, congested environments. Remind them to focus on keeping as much space as possible around the vehicle at all times.

More is better

City driving skills take a long time to acquire. Spend as much time and drive in as many circumstances with your teen (night, inclement weather) as you are able. Plan trips to less-familiar places where you might not normally travel.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Highway driving – part one

Goal: Teach your teen highway basics and how to safely enter and exit a highway.

Location: Start on a multi-lane highway with easily accessible exits, at a time when traffic is light, such as a weekend morning. Move on to practice at heavier traffic times when your teen is ready.

Lesson one – observation

Before your teen gets behind the wheel on the highway, have your teen spend some time on highways with you as the driver and your teen as the passenger. Emphasize the importance of looking ahead to anticipate potential problems, and explain key highway features, such as:

- The different kinds of interchanges
- The meanings of highway signs and signals
- The meanings of different lane lines and markings

Lesson two – on-ramp segments

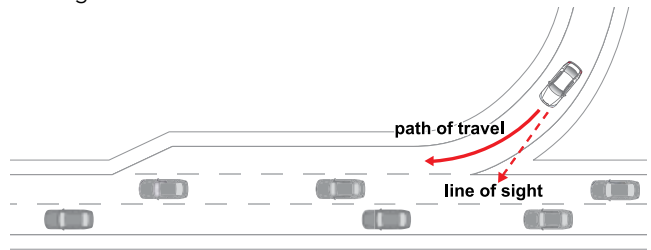
Explain the three segments of on-ramps, and how they're used:

- **Entrance area:** The driver searches the highway and evaluates how much space they have to enter and what speed is needed.
- **Acceleration area:** The driver brings the vehicle up to the speed of highway traffic flow.
- **Merge area:** The driver uses this space to merge into the traffic flow.

Lesson three – merging

Teach the steps for merging onto a highway:

- Check for on-ramp speed signs.
- Before the entrance area, make quick glances at the highway, scanning for vehicles and entry gaps.
- In the acceleration area, signal to show intent to enter the highway and adjust speed to match the traffic flow.
- In the merge area, enter the flow of traffic, checking mirrors and blind spots.
- Turn off the turn signal and begin looking ahead to anticipate problems or upcoming lane changes.
- Do not completely stop in the entrance area unless absolutely necessary.



There is plenty of time to merge. If a gap doesn't present itself immediately, adjust your speed as early as possible in order to find one.

Lesson four – exiting

Teach the steps for exiting a highway:

- Identify the exit well ahead of time.
- Scan traffic for problems when approaching the exit, but don't slow down on the highway.
- Start to signal 4 to 6 seconds before reaching the ramp.
- Upon entering the ramp, tap the brakes and begin to slow down to the posted exit ramp speed limit before reaching the curve. On some ramps, be prepared to rapidly reduce your speed.

Practice both merging and exiting 10–12 times each, or more if needed for your teen to feel comfortable.

Worthy of repetition

Practice merging and exiting many times, until you feel confident that your teen is proficient. Keep coaching your teen that always being attentive and looking ahead are the keys to learning to drive safely.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Highway driving – part two

Goal: Teach your teen to maneuver safely in complex highway driving environments at higher speeds.

Location: Start on a multi-lane highway with easily-accessible exits, at a time when traffic is light, such as a weekend morning. Move on to practice at heavier traffic times when your teen is ready.

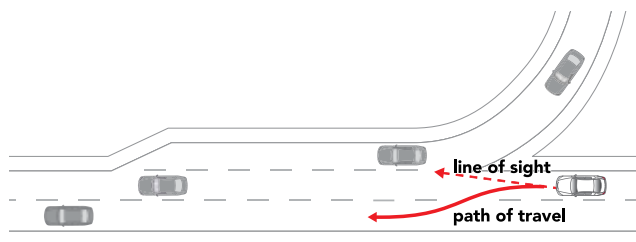
Lesson one – steering technique

Once on the highway, coach your teen on steering technique. At fast highway speeds, excessive steering can be dangerous and lead to loss of control. Remind your teen to steer gently on highways.

Lesson two – lane changing

In the high-speed, complex highway environment, lane-changing skills are very important. Have your teen spend lots of time practicing the lane-changing and passing skills previously learned in “Skill eight: multi-lane roads,” until they are comfortable performing them at highway speeds. Remind your teen to:

- Watch for merging vehicles and move one lane left to make space for them when needed.
- Change lanes one at a time only.
- Watch mirrors for tailgaters and move to another lane to let them pass. Grow comfortable with checking blind spots frequently to be aware of the traffic around you.



For the first several lane changes you may need to talk your teen through the decision-making process. Double-check all mirrors to make sure that the lane is clear.

Higher order

Early in the training process, parental instruction tends to focus on vehicle handling. As your teen's skills improve, try to focus on “higher order” instruction, such as scanning ahead, hazard detection, and anticipating the other driver's behavior.

Lesson three – three-second rule

Review the three-second rule for following distance, learned in “Skill six: looking ahead.” At higher speeds it's recommended to add more following distance. Additionally, coach your teen to also use a three-second rule for these highway driving circumstances:

- Merging onto a highway
- Changing lanes
- Exiting a highway

Lesson four – challenging road conditions

Coach your teen to adjust travel speed and vehicle position based on weather and road conditions. Once your teen is comfortable with and proficient at highway driving in good conditions, spend some practice time on highways under more challenging conditions, such as rain. Coach them to always use appropriate caution, as conditions can change quickly.

Lesson five – road trips

Consider planning some short day trips with your teen to a destination 2 to 3 hours away. Have them drive there and back. Find an event or place that you will both enjoy and have fun.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Roundabouts

Goal: Teach your teen how to enter and drive roundabouts safely.

Location: A road that leads to a one-lane roundabout. Move on to practice at 2 or more lane roundabouts when your teen is ready.

Roundabouts are becoming more common in the United States because they provide safer and more efficient traffic flow than standard intersections. Statistics for roundabouts have found reductions in injury crashes of 72–80 percent and reductions in all crashes of 35–47 percent when compared to other types of intersections.

When driving a roundabout, the same general rules apply as for maneuvering through any other type of intersection.

Lesson one – driving a roundabout

- Slow down. Obey traffic signs and pavement markings.
- Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Yield to traffic in all lanes on your left already in the roundabout.
- Enter the roundabout when there is a safe gap in traffic.
- Keep your speed low within the roundabout.
- As you approach your exit, turn on your right turn signal.
- Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists as you exit.

Lesson two – emergency vehicles in the roundabout

- Always yield to emergency vehicles.
- If you have not entered the roundabout, pull over and allow emergency vehicles to pass.
- If you have entered the roundabout, continue to your exit, then pull over and allow emergency vehicles to pass.
- Avoid stopping in the roundabout.

Lesson three – driving a roundabout with two or more lanes

Choosing the proper lane before entering: As you get closer to the roundabout entrance, it is very important to observe the signs and arrows to determine which lane to use before entering a roundabout.

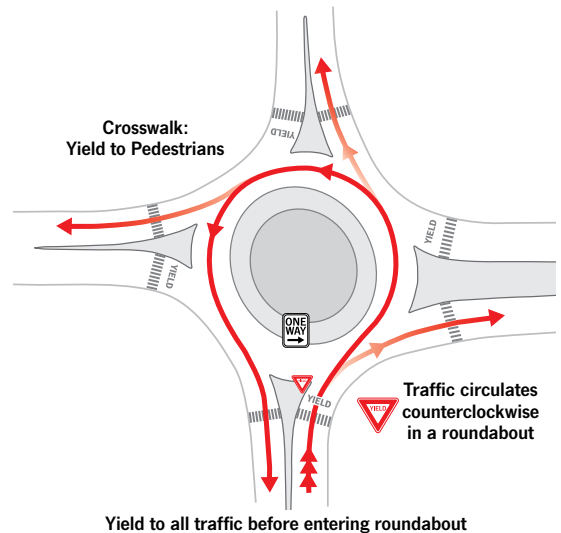
- Black and white signs on the side of the road and white arrows on the road will show the correct lane to use.
- In general, if you want to make a left turn, you should be in the left lane or other lanes that are signed and marked as left turn lanes.
- If you want to make a right turn, you should be in the right lane or other lanes that are signed and marked as right turn lanes.
- If you want to go straight, observe the signs and arrows to see which lane is correct.

Yield the right-of-way

As a rule of thumb, when entering or driving through a roundabout always yield to traffic on your left.

Video: Roundabouts

Scan the QR code below to watch the video.



This example shows the traffic movement patterns through a one-lane roundabout. The one-lane roundabout is known as one of the safest and most efficient intersections.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Driving on rural roads

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and with confidence on two-lane rural roads.

Location: A two-lane rural road.

Coach your teen to notice and respond to these hazards.

Lesson one – driving hazards

Large/slow vehicles: Slower trucks, farm vehicles and road maintenance equipment are likely to make wide turns at unmarked entrances. Use caution and make sure the driver can see your vehicle before passing.

Sharp drop-offs and gravel shoulders: One of the most common driving hazards is running off the road. The urge to overcorrect is strong, and often results in a serious crash. If you run off the road, follow these steps to ease your vehicle back onto the road:

- Do not turn the wheel; continue driving straight.
- Take your foot off the accelerator.
- Find a safe place to reenter the road.
- Turn on your turn signal.

Blind spots: Trees, cornfields, buildings, and hills can block a driver's view of oncoming traffic entering from the side. Identify blind spots to better anticipate and prepare for potential dangers.

Uncontrolled intersections: These are intersections not controlled by signs, signals, or pavement markings. Use caution, slow down, and check both ways twice. Proceed cautiously once no oncoming traffic.

Animals: If unable to stop for an animal crossing the road, do NOT swerve — swerving makes it hard to keep control. The most serious crashes happen when drivers swerve into oncoming traffic or roll into a ditch.

If you see an animal, slow down and prepare to stop. Always be on the lookout, especially at sunrise and sunset.

Hills and curves: These are often steeper and sharper on rural roads than on highways. Before reaching the crest of a hill or entering a curve, slow down, move to the right side and watch for traffic.

Railroad crossings: Always slow down, look both ways, listen, and prepare to stop. Many railroad crossings are marked only with a round, yellow "railroad crossing ahead" warning sign and a white X-shaped railroad crossing. There may not be flashing lights, warning bells, crossing gates or pavement markings. It is difficult to judge the speed of a train, so before you cross, make sure you don't see or hear a train either direction.

Highway hypnosis: This condition can result from driving for a long period of time. Remind your teen that it is important to stay alert when driving. To avoid driving in a dulled, drowsy, trance-like state, take frequent breaks and stop if you begin to feel tired.

Velocitation: This is caused by slowing down after driving fast for a long time. The change makes you think the car is going much slower than it actually is, leading you to drive faster than you intend. Don't be misled. After slowing down, make sure to check your speedometer regularly.

Gravel slide

Be ready for skids. A vehicle can become difficult to handle in heavy gravel. If the vehicle starts to skid, release the accelerator or brake. As you release them, look where you want to go, and steer in that direction.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Continuing education

Learning doesn't stop when your teen has received their license. It's important to continue teaching and building upon the skills they have learned. As you continue the supervision process, think about these three areas of focus:

- **Spend as much time as possible driving with your teen.**
- **Drive in a wide variety of conditions** (weather, time of day, different traffic volumes, etc.).
- **Focus on "higher level" learning:** scanning ahead, recognizing hazards, and learning to anticipate the behavior of other drivers.

Keep on coachin'

Even after your teen is licensed, use your time driving with them to instill habits of good judgment, accurate hazard anticipation, and smart decision-making. Remember that crash rates are highest in the first months of licensure. Your role is still vital even after your teen receives his or her license!

Now that your teen has become proficient in the basic operational skills of driving, it is essential that they be exposed to a wide variety of driving circumstances and conditions. Make a point of driving with them in different situations that they have not yet experienced, and do it for all types of roads — quiet neighborhood streets, multi-lane roads, and highways. Drive with them at different times of the day, in poor weather, and with varying levels of traffic. It's much better that they experience these conditions with you, rather than alone or with other teens.

Much of what has been discussed to this point has related specifically to the basic skills your teen will need to be a safe driver. Now, your goal is to ensure your teen is thinking intelligently and making the right decisions as a driver. Sometimes after teens become proficient with the basic skills, parents/guardians will often "step back," becoming less involved in their teen's supervision. But there's still a lot to learn; their teen's education is not complete.

Be clear with your teen that the training process is ongoing and that you will continue to provide input into their development so that you both stay in the learning/teaching mode.

Even the best new drivers are likely to make mistakes. These mistakes are great teachable moments for "higher order" instructions. So instead of saying, "Stop sooner," advise your teen to try to focus on looking ahead and anticipating events, with an emphasis on good judgment, good decision making, and hazard perception. The shift from a basic comment to a more advanced focus is perhaps the most essential element of educating your teen at this point in the learning process.

As your teen drives, talk to them about specific hazard areas, possible areas of conflict, and blind spots where trouble may hide. Teens tend not to be as good at anticipating these trouble areas as experienced drivers. A good exercise is to have your teen describe the blind spots and possible areas of conflicts they see. It will let you know that they are thinking, anticipating, and driving intelligently.

New Vehicle Technology

There is an ever-increasing amount of safety technology in today's cars. Features like automatic emergency braking, blind spot monitoring, and forward collision warning keep us all safer, but only if they're used correctly. It's important to understand how these advanced driver assistance features work and their limitations. **A key point is to remember these are driver "assistance" features and not driver "replacement" features.**

The easiest way to ensure you're using everything right is to carefully review your car's manual. Read about any features that are new to you and make sure you know how they work. If you still have questions, then reach out to the dealership so they can explain. Once you understand the technology, share that information with your teen driver so they understand it, too.

Check out this website for additional information: mycardoeswhat.org/safety-features

Practice in other conditions

For new drivers, it can be challenging to drive in new and unfamiliar conditions such as in inclement weather, at different times of day, and with varying traffic volume. It's best that you provide guidance before they experience these conditions on their own.

Night driving

A driver's reaction depends on their vision, which is limited at night, making it difficult to make judgments and see pedestrians, bicyclists, and other obstacles. Some tips to keep in mind:

- Glare from oncoming headlights makes it difficult to see. Looking toward the right side of the road and flipping the rearview mirror can help to reduce headlight glare.
- Headlights should be turned on before the sun goes down to make the car more visible.
- High beams should only be used when other drivers won't see them, such as on roads with little traffic.
- To compensate for reduced visibility, drive more slowly and at a greater following distance.

Wet/slippery roads

To reduce risk on wet and slippery roads, coach your teen to practice the following:

- Turn on the wipers as soon as the windshield becomes wet.
- Turn on the low beam headlights; this helps others see you.
- Reduce your speed and increase your following distance to five or six seconds. When roads are wet, braking distance increases.
- Be more cautious, and slow down on curves and when approaching intersections.
- Turn the defroster on to keep windows from fogging over.

If you must make adjustments while driving, make sure the road ahead is clear before looking down at the dashboard — and look away for only a second.

Hydroplaning

Hydroplaning occurs as a result of water on the road that is deeper than the tire tread. This reduces friction and can result in the loss of control. If you can see deep water, reflections on the pavement, or if the car ahead leaves no tracks on the water, these are indications your car could hydroplane. Slow down.

Fog

Use low beam lights and fog lights if your vehicle has them. Don't use high beams — they reflect off the fog causing reduced visibility. Slow down until your speed matches your ability to see, even if it means slowing to a crawl.

Snow

It's best to stay off the roads until they are cleared and treated. If you have to drive, make sure your vehicle is clear of snow and ice before driving. Driving can cause snow/ice to slide and block your view, or fly off and strike other vehicles. Other tips to keep in mind:

- When starting to drive in snow, keep the wheels straight and accelerate gently to avoid spinning the tires.
- Decrease your speed to make up for a loss of traction. Accelerate and decelerate gently, and be extra careful when braking. Never tailgate in the snow!
- Stopping distances can be up to 10 times greater in ice and snow. Begin the slowing-down process long before a stop. Try to brake only when traveling in a straight line.
- Look ahead for danger spots, such as shaded areas and bridge surfaces that may be icy when the rest of the road is clear.

Drowsy driving

Staying alert means focusing on the road and not driving when fatigued. Review signs of drowsy driving, such as difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, or drifting from your lane. Remind your teen to take a break after driving for 2 hours, or after 100 miles. Teens should avoid driving at times they would normally be sleeping.

Sharing the road

Trucks and other large or slow vehicles

Watch your blind spots — the “no-zones.” Large trucks have blind spots, or no-zones, around the front, back, and sides of the vehicle. These no-zones make it difficult for the driver to see you. Give them room and expect their speed to be less than the posted speed limit, especially on steep hills.

Streetcars

Streetcars are passenger vehicles that operate on fixed rails on public streets. The vehicles can operate in mixed traffic and/or a separate right of way. Typically the same size as an articulated bus, the streetcar holds more passengers and operates at average speeds of 25 to 35 miles per hour. Streetcar operating speeds are similar to local buses, not exceeding the posted speed limit and keeping up with flow of traffic. Drivers should adhere to observed traffic signs and watch for moving streetcars. Use extra caution when passing a stopped streetcar as passengers may be entering or exiting

- Parking along a streetcar route: District law prohibits parking, stopping or standing a vehicle on or within a streetcar guide-way or adjacent to a streetcar platform. A vehicle in violation of this law shall be subject to a fine and removal or impounding. When parking along a streetcar route:
 - Do not park on tracks
 - Park your vehicle within the solid white line
 - Check for approaching streetcars when opening vehicle doors
 - Double-parking is illegal

Motorcycles

Always treat motorcycle operators with courtesy. Leave plenty of extra space between your vehicle and a motorcycle. Motorcycles can usually stop in shorter distances and may suddenly swerve to avoid obstacles. Before changing lanes, check to see if a motorcycle is in your blind spot or in the space where you plan to move. After you pass, look again before you move back into the other lane. At intersections, motorcycles' smaller size makes it difficult to judge their distance and speed; an oncoming motorcycle is probably much closer and coming much faster than it appears.

Work zones

Work zones can be very dangerous, especially when traveling on the highway. It's important to be alert and prepared to slow down or stop. Slowing down and allowing others to merge will ensure a safe passage through work zones. Remember this tip on work zone safety:

- Stay alert: Work zones are busy places where construction vehicles and workers are always moving. Be alert, and stay on the safe path that is designated throughout the work zone.

Speed is everything

When driving in highly trafficked areas, like urban and town centers, as well as arterial roads, your speed can be a matter of life and death for you, fellow motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians. Follow speed limits and respect all road users.

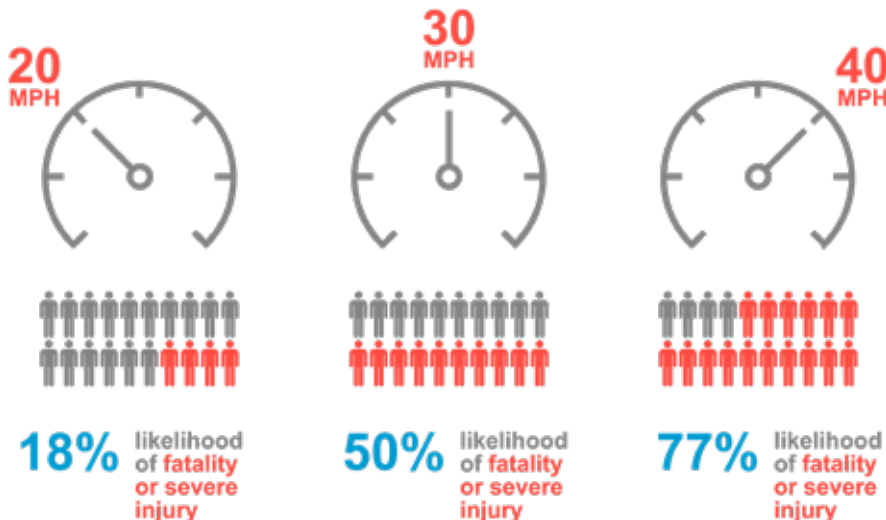
Sharing the road with bicyclists and pedestrians

- **Scan the street for wheels and feet:** Be especially careful to look for people walking and biking before turning at intersections and driveways.
- **Yield to pedestrians:** Pay attention to the pedestrian signal and give people walking the right-of-way. Crosswalks exist at all intersections, even when unmarked. Stay alert and slow down, especially in residential areas, school zones, and commercial areas. Children, particularly, have not yet developed the cognitive skills to calculate speed and distance.
- **Double threat:** Never pass another vehicle that has stopped or is slowing down for a pedestrian. Remember, you might not be able to see the pedestrian when you approach a stopped vehicle so be aware.
- **Watch for bikes:** People riding bicycles have the right to be on the road (and are often prohibited from riding on sidewalks), so respect their right to be there. Slow down and use extra caution around children on bikes, as they can be unpredictable.
- **Passing safely:** Stay at least four feet away from bicyclists (and other vulnerable road users, such as garbage collectors, police officers, and tow truck operators) when passing, and don't return to the right until well clear of the person. If there isn't enough room to safely pass in the same lane, you must use another lane or wait for a safe opportunity to pass. Do not pass a person on a bike and then immediately turn right.
- **Avoid the "right hook":** Look for and yield to people biking on the right when turning right.
- **Avoid the "left cross":** Look for and yield to people walking across the street and yield to oncoming people on bikes when turning left.
- **Visibility:** Look for bicyclists at night and watch for their reflectors or lights.
- **Check blind spots:** Watch for bicyclists coming from behind, especially before turning right.
- **Doors are dangerous:** Before opening your car door, look in your mirror and physically turn your body to make sure no bicyclists are coming. Learn more here: www.dutchreach.org/dutch-reach-practice-tips-door-latch-reminders

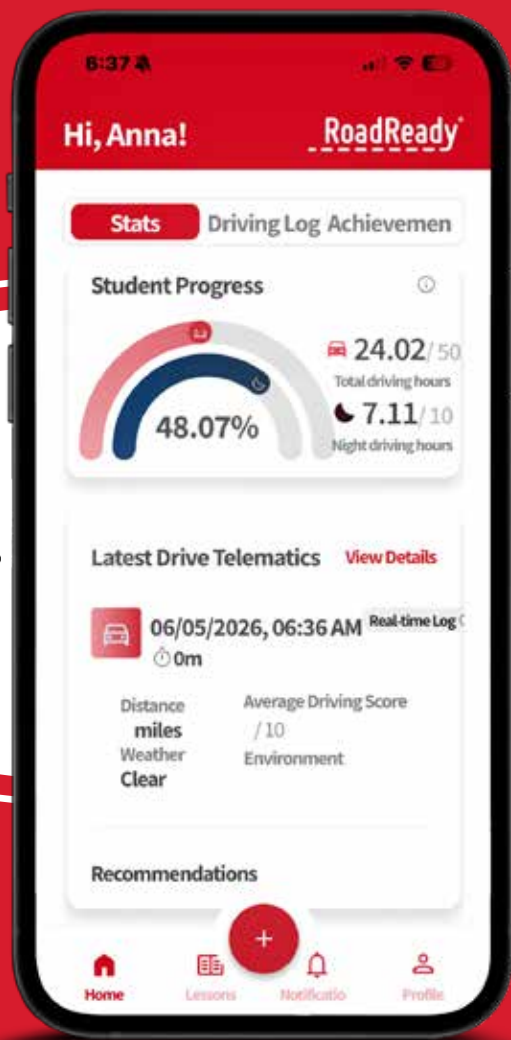
Respect for all road users

Put yourself in the shoes of a person walking or biking. We are all trying to safely get to our destination. Respect and kindness towards other road users can go a long way.

Lowering speeds can save lives



Source: *Impact Speed and a Pedestrian's Risk of Severe Injury or Death*. Brian Tefft, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, 2011



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YOUNG DRIVER

PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

Our family enters into this agreement covering the operation of any family vehicle by:

Full Name of Teen Driver _____

Non-Negotiable Rules (Teen to acknowledge each rule with initials). The vehicle that I drive is my parent's or guardian's property and I may only drive it with their permission and in accordance with their rules and restrictions.

I will:

wear my seat belt when driving or riding as a passenger	
require that every passenger wear a seat belt	
keep my doors locked while driving	
always drive at safe speeds for the conditions — at or below the speed limit	
obey traffic laws	

I will not:

drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs	
be a passenger in a car driven by someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs	
allow alcohol, drugs, or weapons in the vehicle	
conceal any warnings, tickets, or collisions from parents/guardians	
allow anyone else to drive the vehicle	

General Rules

- Our family agrees that our teen won't drive at night between the hours of _____ to _____ for a period of at least _____ months.
- We will work together to make sure that he/she are able to attend all school, social, and work activities during that time.

Parental Commitments (Parent to initial all that apply)

Provide and maintain a safe vehicle	
Pay for driver training class/materials	
Be available to ride with you so you can fulfill your GRAD Licensing Law requirements and gain experience in a variety of conditions and locations	
Share observations and provide coaching in a calm, respectful manner	

PARENT/GUARDIAN AGREEMENT

Courtesies and Considerations (Teen to acknowledge each rule with initials)

As a new driver in our family, you agree to comply with the following courtesies and considerations:

I will:

provide my parent/guardian with my destination and time of return	
call home if I feel I will not make curfew	
not eat, drink, or smoke in the car	
not drive outside of agreed upon boundaries	
pull over and park the vehicle before using my cell phone or any other electronic devices	
always treat pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists with courtesy	

Consequences

The terms of this agreement may change based on how I handle my responsibilities as a driver. My driving privileges will be suspended indefinitely if any of the following rules is violated:

Violations	Loss of Privileges		Penalty	
Use alcohol or other drugs while driving		Indefinite suspension		
		Return permit to DMV		
Receive ticket for speeding or other moving violation		Lose driving privileges		Weeks
				Months
		Other:		
Lie about where you are going with the car		Lose driving privileges		Weeks
				Months
		Other:		
Violate any agreed upon driving restrictions		Lose driving privileges		Weeks
				Months
		Other:		

We both understand and agree to these driving rules and conditions.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Teen Driver's Signature

Date



Final tips for parents...

1. The longer a teen holds their Learner's Permit, the less risk of crashing. Aim for 12 months instead of 6 months of supervised driving.
2. Consistent and varied practice can reduce your teen's crash risk. Practice driving regularly on different roads, even if you're going to and from the same place.
3. Think hard about your teen's access to a vehicle. Consider your teen sharing access to the family car, instead of getting them their own car. It is best for teens to have limited access to a car in the first months of licensure. This can reduce their risk of crashing.
4. Parents should continue to drive with their teens after they get their license! Stay involved, and try to be aware of each trip they're taking in that first year of independent driving.

Our thanks to Dr. Johnathon Ehsani and the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health for these tips and their ongoing research to eliminate teen crashes.



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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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The end...

- Of late night panic sessions.
- Of wondering if they made it to their friend's house.
- Of stressing about phone usage while they drive.
- Of calling them three times in a row desperately hoping for an answer.
- Of “they should have been home an hour ago” math.
- Of stressing that they ran out of gas.
- Of bargaining with the universe at 11:47pm.
- Of praying to the Patron Saint of New Drivers every weekend night.
- Of pretending you weren’t waiting up.
- Of the worst-case scenario montages playing on repeat.
- Of worrying if they know how to change a tire.
- Of catastrophizing drives to the movie theatre.

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