



The **PARENT'S** Supervised Driving Program

Creating Safe Vermont Drivers

A PROGRAM OF THE VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES



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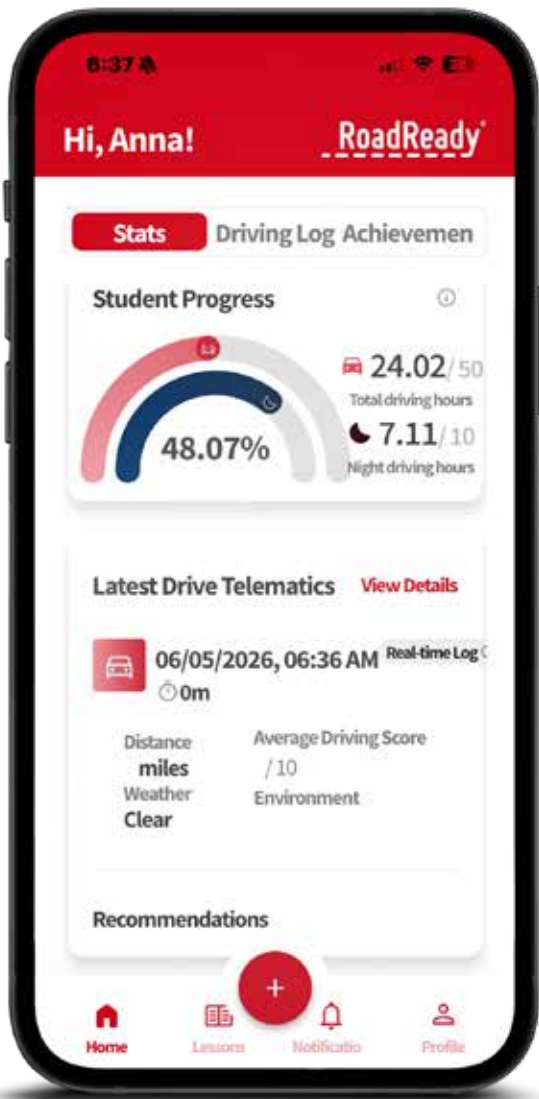


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A component of the **PARENT'S** 
Supervised Driving Program

A message to parents and guardians



Safe drivers are no accident. As the parent or guardian of a teenager just learning to drive, you play a critical role in helping your teen develop the habits and skills necessary to be a safe and responsible driver. This supervised driving guide can be used to help you make the most of the time you spend driving with your teen.

You don't have to go it alone. Is your teen enrolled or preparing to enroll in driver education at their high school or a commercial driver training school? Partnering with their driver education instructor will help you help your teen reap the benefits of this training. Your involvement is critical in ensuring your teen learns the skills needed to be the best driver possible. Please commit to spending the time necessary to help them develop life-long skills.

Driving is a privilege, not a right. Remind your teen that obtaining a driver's license is a privilege that is earned by demonstrating they know and will follow the rules of the road and are committed to be a safe, responsible driver. Remind them they share the highway with many others, including their relatives, neighbors and their friends.

Be a Role Model. Teens frequently model the behaviors of their parents. Model the habits you want your teen to develop. They are more likely to do as you do, not as you say. Distracted driving has become an epidemic. Refrain from driving distracted yourself, and impress upon your teen the importance of ALWAYS paying attention to their driving.

Andrew Collier
Commissioner

Graduated Driver Licensing and your teen

Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death and injury for teenagers. Major factors that place teens at risk include age, lack of driving experience, passengers and other distractions. Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) requires teens 15 to 18 years old learn to drive in stages. Driving privileges increase gradually as teens successfully pass through each stage of the licensing program.



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A Message from Vermont Mutual

At Vermont Mutual, safety and protection have been at the heart of what we do since we first opened our doors back in 1828. Today, with more than 200 million people on U.S. roads every day, the need for safe and responsible drivers has never been greater.

Learning to drive is an exciting milestone for a young adult, marking an important step towards independence. For parents, it's a time of both pride and responsibility, ensuring that their teen is prepared for the challenges of the road.

That's why Vermont Mutual proudly sponsors The Parent's Supervised Driving Program. This worthwhile program equips parents with the tools necessary to guide their child to becoming a confident, capable driver. Beyond the lessons, it also provides an opportunity for parents and teens to connect and build trust.

On behalf of Vermont Mutual and our local Independent Insurance Agency Partners, we wish you and your family many years of safe and happy driving.

Sincerely,

Mark J. McDonnell
President & CEO
Vermont Mutual Insurance Group

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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.



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DETECTION**



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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.



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Your future shouldn't be limited by cost, uncertainty, or lack of opportunity. The Vermont Army National Guard is here to help you take control and move forward with confidence. Whether you're planning for college, considering a trade, or still figuring out your next step, we offer real options that put you in charge of your path.

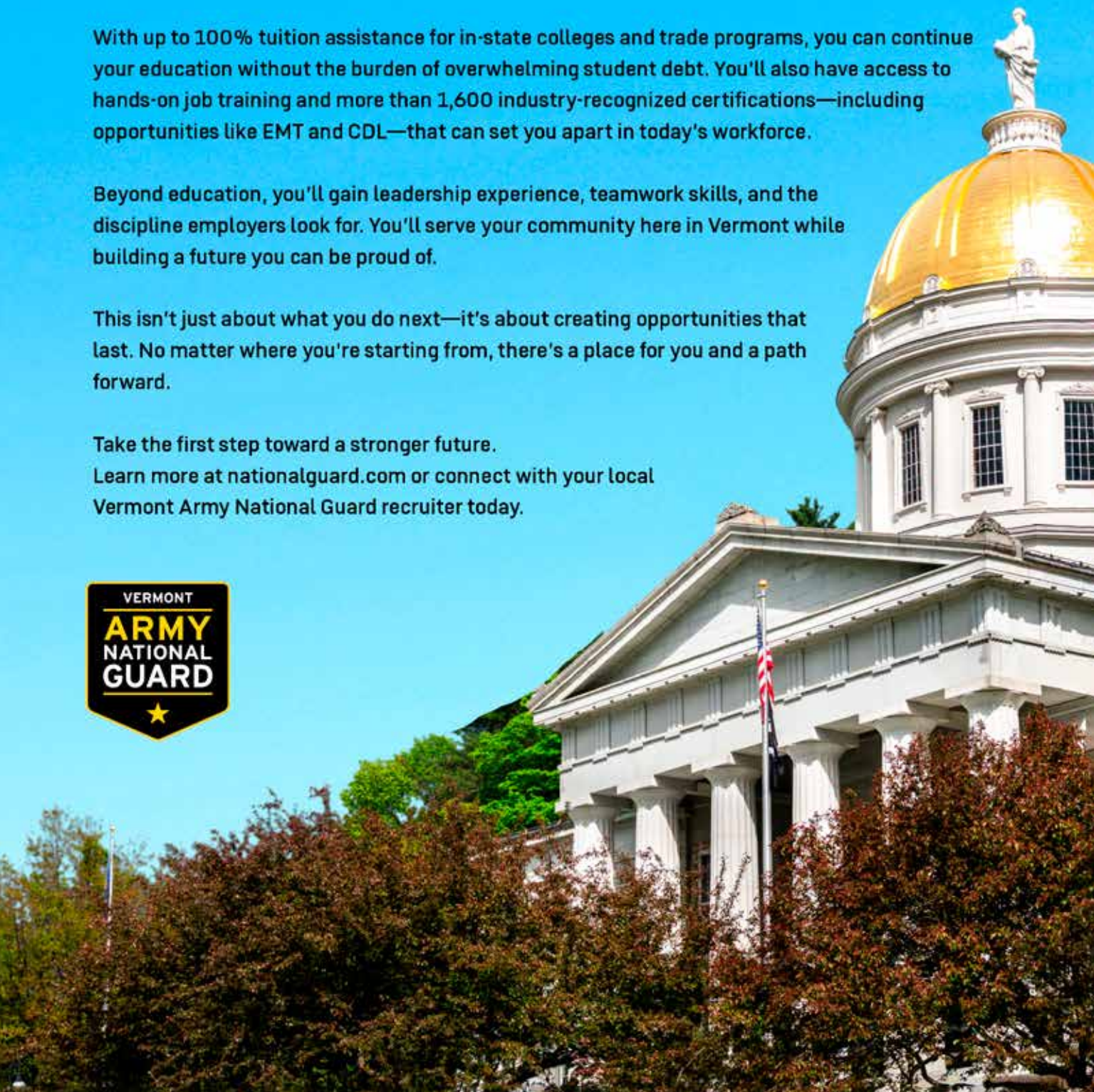
With up to 100% tuition assistance for in-state colleges and trade programs, you can continue your education without the burden of overwhelming student debt. You'll also have access to hands-on job training and more than 1,600 industry-recognized certifications—including opportunities like EMT and CDL—that can set you apart in today's workforce.

Beyond education, you'll gain leadership experience, teamwork skills, and the discipline employers look for. You'll serve your community here in Vermont while building a future you can be proud of.

This isn't just about what you do next—it's about creating opportunities that last. No matter where you're starting from, there's a place for you and a path forward.

Take the first step toward a stronger future.

Learn more at nationalguard.com or connect with your local Vermont Army National Guard recruiter today.



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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info@saferoadsalliance.org

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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 and caregivers 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 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 driving time. RoadReady tracks your teen's driving hours until you reach the state requirements. Email the Road Ready log to yourself, print it off, and bring it to DMV when it is time for your skills test.

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

Concerns or questions? Please contact:

roadready@theparentssuperviseddrivingprogram.com

Stay Connected with Us!

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



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Talking Teens: A Parenting Support Group

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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.

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 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.).
- 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.
- Refrain from using your cell phone while driving. To see a Vermont-produced distracted driving video please go to: drivewell.vermont.gov/distracted-driving/

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: "At the intersection, 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. Drive a route in daylight first, and then repeat it at night.
- **Best practice** suggests the length of a driving session for a new driver be 20–30 minutes.
- **Route planning** is suggested, with preparation for challenging situations, intersections, and other users.

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.

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. Always give as much advance notice as possible to a new driver. They may not see what you see, or perceive it as a danger. Professional driver 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 traffic and your teen's actions. Remember that you are a second set of eyes and ears, and you need to be alert and ready to help your teen.



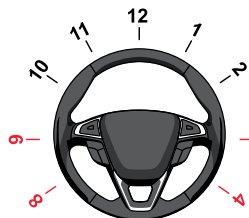
Emergency stopping: Practice stopping the car with the parking brake (if your vehicle's parking brake is located between the seats). This can be dangerous, even at low speeds, and should only be used as a last resort. Hold the release button in while pulling gradually up on the parking/emergency brake in order to stop the vehicle without causing wheels to lock up and put the vehicle into a skid.

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. Check your owner's manual for updates in vehicle technology or the website mycardoeswhat.org

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 on" 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. If skidding does occur, because of wheel lock up, let off the brake in order to reestablish steering control and then try braking again.



Hands 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 along 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 air bag. Since air bags deploy out of the wheel on impact, it's important to keep your hands and arms in the recommended position in order to lessen the risk of injury upon air bag deployment.

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 or 8 and 4 o'clock. This gives you better vehicle control and keeps your hands away from the air bag.

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. Having students identify potential hazards through commentary driving lets the supervising driver know if the student is actually seeing the hazards, and how far ahead. 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.



Teens' biggest dangers

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

Speeding

Speeding is a critical safety issue for teen drivers. In 2024, it was a factor in 33% of the passenger vehicle teen drivers (15–18 years old) involved in fatal crashes ([nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving](https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/teen-driving)). 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 53% of teen drivers killed in 2023 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 windshield 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 drivewell.vermont.gov/occupant-protection

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 2024, 29% of young drivers age 15–20 involved in fatal crashes had been drinking. Marijuana is the drug that's most commonly found in the blood of drivers who have been in a car crash. 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: [nhtsa.gov/teen-driving/parents-talk-your-teen-driver-about-safe-driving](https://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% more likely to crash than teens who get more than 8 hours of sleep. This lack of sleep can result 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.

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 are factors that increase risk.

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. This is the primary reason many states have passed laws that restrict the ability of teens to drive with their peers.

Video sources

To view a video showing the importance of buckling up, please go to edrivermanuals.com/vermont/teens-biggest-dangers

To see a video produced in Vermont about Distracted Driving, please go to edrivermanuals.com/vermont/distracted-driving-more

Distracted driving and more

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. Coach them repeatedly on the importance of focusing on the road ahead. Advise them to adjust controls before putting the vehicle in motion.

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 a 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. In a 2019 study, 39% of teen drivers admitted to texting while driving at least once in the previous 30 days. According to a AAA study, distracted driving was the cause of 58 percent of teen crashes.
- According to NHTSA, 3,275 people were killed in 2023 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.
- A recent AAA study shows that when a teen driver is carrying teen passengers, the fatality rate for occupants of other cars increases by 56%; for pedestrians and cyclists it increases 17%; and for the teen driver, the fatality rate increases 45%.

There are three kinds of distractions:

- **Visual** – doing something that requires the driver to look away from the driving task.
- **Manual** – doing something that requires the driver to take one or both hands off the wheel.
- **Cognitive** – doing something that causes the driver's mind to wander or focus elsewhere.

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% 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. To view a video showing the importance of this, please go to [youtube.com/watch?v=rI7iX1s5D9M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rI7iX1s5D9M)
- **Talk to your teen:** Discuss the risks and responsibilities of driving and the danger of dividing their attention between a text, or a phone call, and the road. Show them the statistics related to distracted driving and urge them to share what they learn with their friends. 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 device while behind the wheel. Enforce the limits set by the graduated licensing program and state law.
- **Sign a pledge:** Have your teen take action by agreeing to a family contract about wearing seat belts, not speeding, not driving after drinking or using any drugs, 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: In addition to cell phone use, distracted driving can 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.

Take the Distracted Driving Pledge
www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/distracted-driving#take-the-pledge



TAKE THE PLEDGE

The fight to end distracted driving starts with you. Make the commitment to drive phone-free today.

Distracted driving kills and injures thousands of people each year. I pledge to:

- Protect lives by never texting or talking on the phone while driving.
- Be a good passenger and speak out if the driver in my car is distracted.
- Encourage my friends and family to drive phone-free.

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____



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.

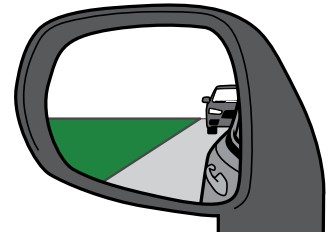
Have your teen practice these basic skills until they don't need help:

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

Lesson two – mirror settings

No matter how the mirrors are adjusted, there are areas that still cannot be seen, requiring drivers to turn their heads to check prior to making a move to the left or right.

- **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 and right outside rearview mirrors:** Adjust the left and right outside rearview mirrors so they show a slight amount of the sides of the vehicle when the student is sitting in an upright position.



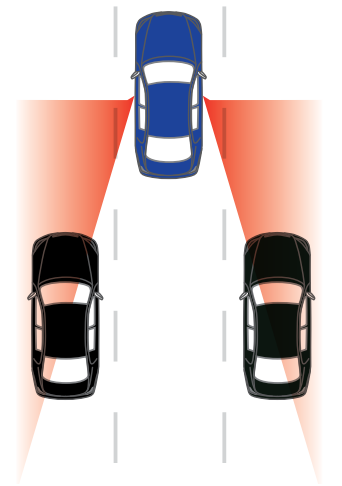
Adjust tilt to have the horizon appear in the center of the mirror. And, adjust the viewing angle to see a slight amount of the vehicle, which is essential to detect other traffic.

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 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. In an automatic car, the left foot should be off to the left on the dead pedal and out of the way. Left foot braking is not recommended. Shorter drivers may need a seat cushion or pedal extenders to safely sit 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

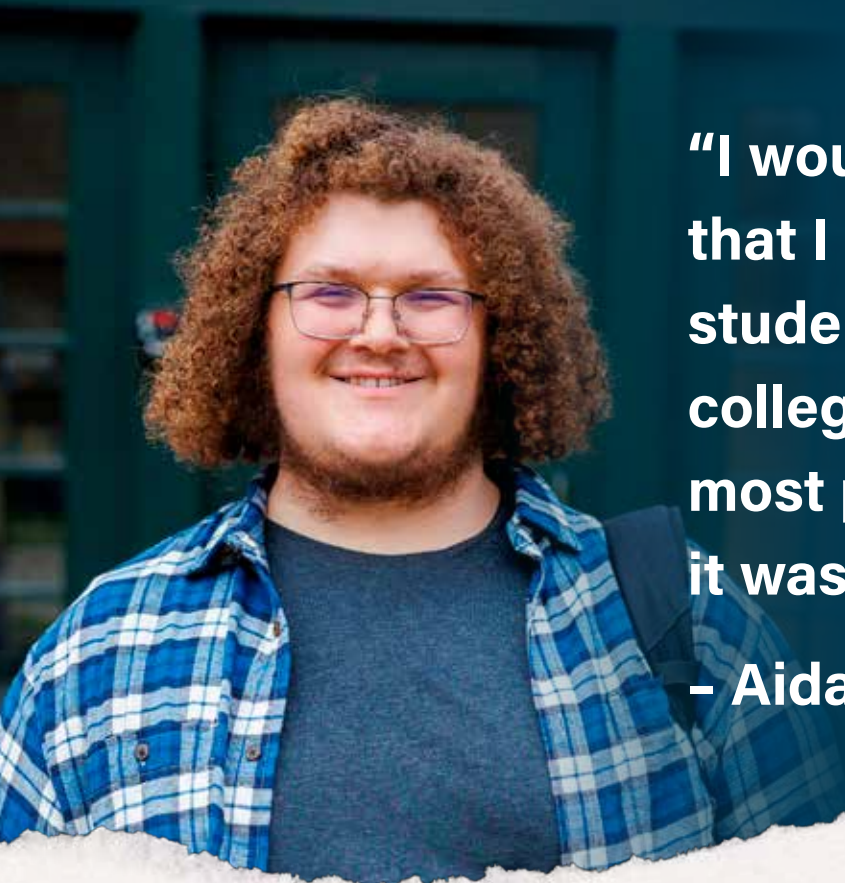
In the past, drivers were often taught mirror settings that created an overlap between the rear and side mirrors. This is actually less safe because it increases the size of the blind spots. This is a great opportunity to update your own driving skills while teaching your teen!

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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“I wouldn’t have imagined that I would be one of those students who completed college a year earlier than most people are able to, and it was just amazing.”

– Aidan H.

Vermont high school students can start college for **FREE at the Community College of Vermont.**



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SKILL TWO: MOVING, STEERING, AND STOPPING – PART ONE

Moving, steering, and stopping – part one

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.

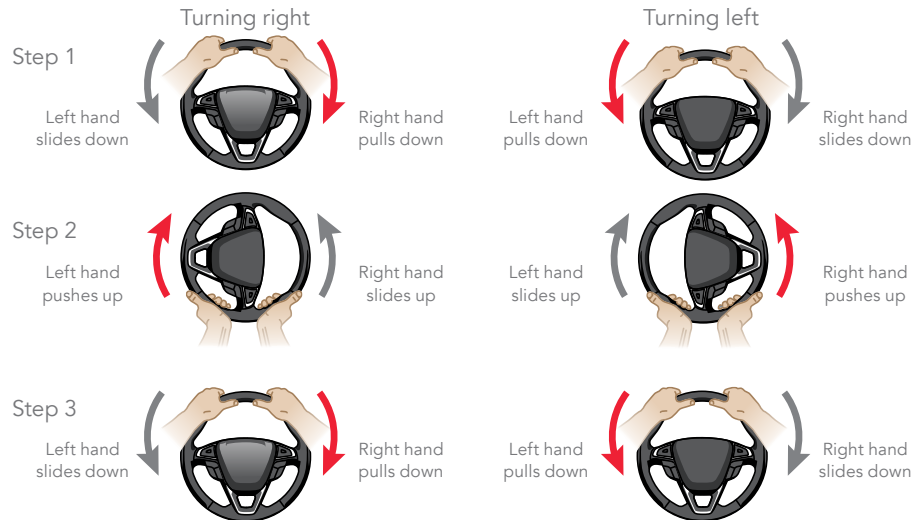
Pick several targets in the large, level, empty practice area, and have your teen drive to them at specific speeds. For example, "Drive to the stop sign at 15 mph." Focus on steady speed and smooth starts and stops.

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, staying clear of the air bag.

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 well ahead 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

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Moving, steering, and stopping – part two

Goal: Teach your teen to safely stop and start on a hill without rolling back.

Location: A quiet road or area that has a hill.

When you take your skills test, the examiner will have you stop and start on a hill. You will be instructed to drive to the right side of the road, stop, and then set your parking/emergency brake and shift to neutral.

When you've chosen a safe and quiet location for this skill, coach your teen to signal right as you drive up the hill to tell others what you are doing. Drive to the right side of the road, stop, and then set your parking/emergency brake and shift to neutral. The parking/emergency brake will keep the vehicle from rolling back.

Before continuing up the hill, put the vehicle in gear. Signal left, then check your mirrors and left blind spot to be sure that traffic is clear. Accelerate gently until you feel the vehicle start to move and then release the parking brake, and look over your left shoulder once again before driving out. You will be able to drive up the hill without rolling back. Some vehicles have parking brakes that will automatically release when you accelerate. These vehicles will make this skill easy for you as you will have one less step to perform.

Note: You may need to stop on a hill for a stop sign, traffic light, or emergency such as a dog or person running into the street. To prevent a rollback when starting on a hill, a driver can use any of these following techniques:

- Quickly move your foot from the brake to the gas.
- Set your parking/emergency brake. Move your right foot to the gas. Apply the gas lightly and carefully release the parking/emergency brake to continue up the hill.

Note: When driving downhill, you should never coast with the clutch to the floor or the gearshift in neutral.

Stopping on a hill

When stopping on a hill for a stop sign, traffic light, or an emergency (such as an animal, bicycle, or pedestrian coming out into your lane), you will have to start from a stop. Use this procedure to prevent rolling back.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

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SKILL THREE: HOW CLOSE ARE YOU?

How close are you?

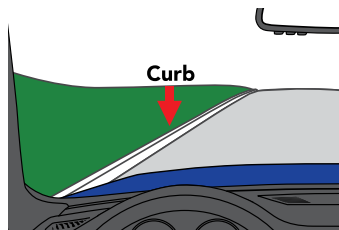
Goal: Teach your teen how to tell where their vehicle is in relation to other vehicles or objects.

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.

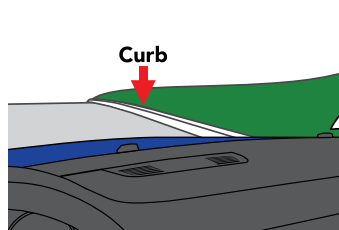
Lesson one – driver's side curb (or line)



*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.

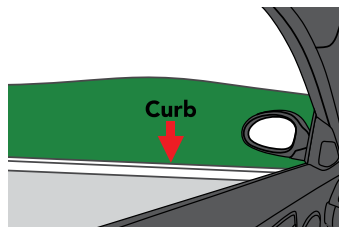
Lesson two – passenger's side curb (or line)



*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 or base of windshield, if the hood is not able to be seen, as in some newer vehicles.
- 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

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.
- When backing straight, 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 in a straight line

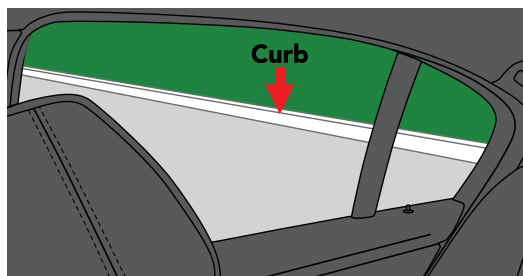
- Check all areas behind the vehicle prior to and while backing.
- Grasp the steering wheel with the left hand and look over the right shoulder through the rear window.
- First release the brake, then use the accelerator gently, and only when necessary, to control speed. Keep it slow.

Lesson three – backing in a turn

- Use two hands on the wheel when maneuvering backward.
- Remind your teen to look to the rear and turn the wheel in the direction they want the back end of their vehicle to go.
- 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 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 parking 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

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SKILL FIVE: DRIVING ON A QUIET STREET – PART ONE

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. **Please do not use DMV skills test routes 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, and 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

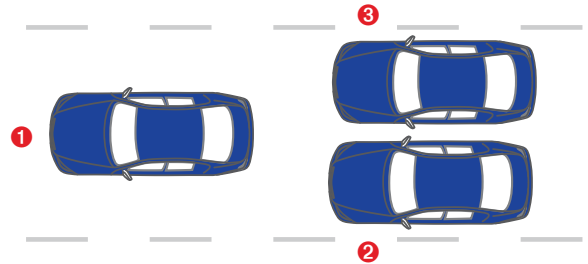
When you and your teen feel ready, move to a quiet street.

With your teen behind the wheel, first have them practice driving straight in three 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 as when going by bicycles and pedestrians (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 turning, put on the turn signal four seconds before making the turn.
- If a stop is required, stop before the front bumper crosses the stop line. When a stop line is placed back farther than what is normally expected, you should stop behind the line for any large truck to make the turn into your side street, before you creep up for better visibility. If there is no line, stop behind the crosswalk. If there is no crosswalk, stop behind the sidewalk, and if there is no sidewalk, stop before the curb line or edge of the roadway.
- After making a complete legal stop, you may creep up for better visibility.
- 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, signal, 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

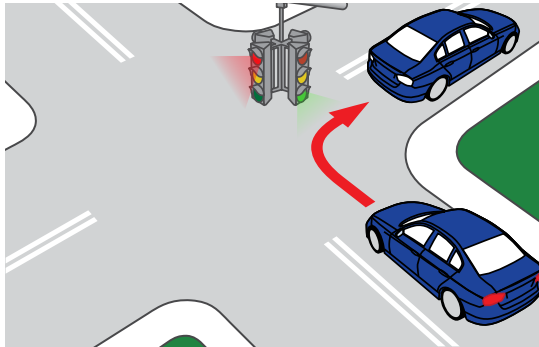
Goal: Teach your teen to turn both right and left safely and with confidence on quiet roads.

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:

- Always check mirrors before turning and signal 4 seconds before the intersection.
- Search the intersection in all directions for vehicles, pedestrians, signs, and signals.
- Position the vehicle 2–3 feet from the edge of the roadway (lane position 1).
- If there is a stop sign or red light, stop with wheels pointed straight ahead before the front of the vehicle reaches the stop line, crosswalk, or intersection.
- Clear the front reference point in the right front passenger window before starting the right turn.
- Focus on smooth braking into the turn and smooth acceleration out of the turn, as previously practiced in the large, empty area.
- Pick a target at the center of the intended travel path at least 12 seconds ahead while steering through the turn.



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.

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. Remind your teen to focus on a line of sight 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 and frequently.

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:

- Always check mirrors before turning and signal 4 seconds before the intersection.
- Search the intersection in all directions for vehicles, pedestrians, signs, and signals.
- Position the vehicle in lane position two (close to the yellow lines).
- 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.
- Select a gap in traffic and pull straight forward toward the center of the intersection. Coach your teen to avoid hesitating.
- Use the double solid yellow line on the street being turned onto as the front reference point to clear in the driver's side window. Start turning/pivoting around the yellow lines onto the side street.
- Focus on smooth braking into the turn and smooth acceleration out of the turn, as previously practiced in the large, level, empty area.
- Pick a target at the center of the intended travel path at least 12 seconds ahead while steering through the turn.

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

Skill completed

supervisor 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. **Please do not use DMV skills test routes 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 increasing the following distance behind other vehicles is the single best thing they can do to minimize the risk of a crash.

Lesson one – Zone Control System

Teach your teen the Zone Control System, a simple system to help new drivers recognize, anticipate and avoid risks before they turn into problems.

ABCs of Zone Control:

- A. Find a LOS-POT (line of sight-path of travel) zone change
- B. Check other zones
- C. Select the best choice of speed, lane positioning, communication

Have your teen use commentary driving as they practice the Zone Control System. As they drive, ask them to verbally describe their thoughts, intentions, and actions in order to identify potential risks they see in their line of sight or path of travel. Check the options available for speed, lane position, and communication and make the safest adjustment.

Lesson two – stopping-distance rule

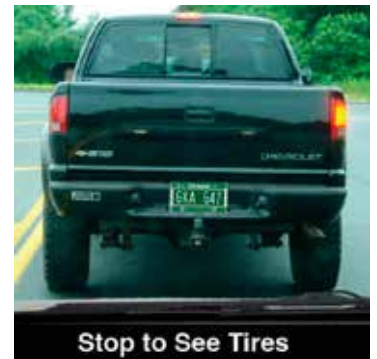
Teach your teen the stopping-distance rule, for the safest distance to stop behind another vehicle. When your vehicle stops, you should be far enough away from the car in front of you that you can see where its tires make contact with the ground. Any closer is too close.

Lesson three – four-second rule

Teach your teen the four-second rule for the appropriate following distance when driving behind other vehicles. The four-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 a fixed object like a sign or telephone pole.
- Count "one thousand ONE, one thousand TWO, one thousand THREE, one thousand FOUR."
- Your front bumper should not pass that fixed object before you've reached "four."

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



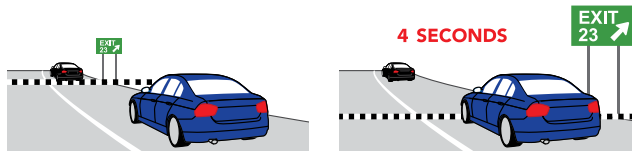
Source: Professor Fred Mottola,
Executive Director National Institute
for Driver Behavior

Skill completed

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

Turning around

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

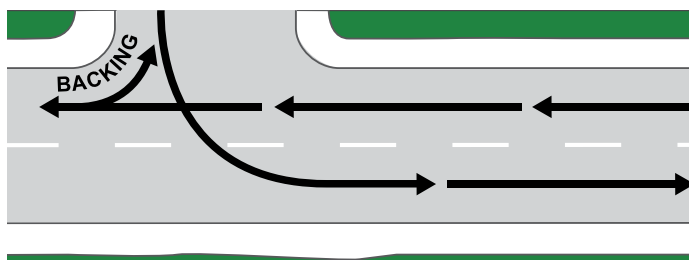
Location: Start on a quiet neighborhood street with accessible side streets. Please be respectful of neighbors and private property.

Lesson one – turning around safely

Turning around involves backing into a side street to reverse direction. Your teen will need to demonstrate turning around when they take their DMV skills test. On a quiet street, have your teen identify an available side street on the same side of the street as your car, at a point where they can see oncoming traffic for at least 200 feet.

- As you approach a side street on your right, reduce speed and check for traffic in all directions. Turn on your directional light when you are in front of the side street you will be backing in to. This will eliminate having a vehicle pull out of the side street in front of you thinking you are turning into the side street. Drive just past the street and stop about 18 inches from the curb or the edge of the road lining up the rear reference point. Shift into reverse and turn wheel all the way to the right. Check for traffic and people walking or biking in all directions before backing. Be sure to check your blind spots.
- When the side street is clear, back slowly into it. Be careful to keep on your own side of the street. Check the blindspot as your front end swings out. Look mostly through the rear window while backing. Stop backing when your vehicle is all the way into the side street beyond any crosswalks or stop lines.
- Before you turn back out onto the street, signal left and shift to drive.
- When there are no vehicles coming, make a proper left turn to complete the turn around.

Always look behind you, with occasional checks to the front and blind spot areas, and back the vehicle slowly. Never back across an intersection. Remember when you are backing your vehicle, you are responsible for traffic in all directions!



Turning around will be required when you take your DMV road test.

Always look

Remind your teen to always look in the direction they are backing and to back slowly. When backing a vehicle, they need to remember they are responsible for traffic in all directions. Make sure they understand they do not have the right of way and must take care not to interfere with other traffic.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Parking – part one

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

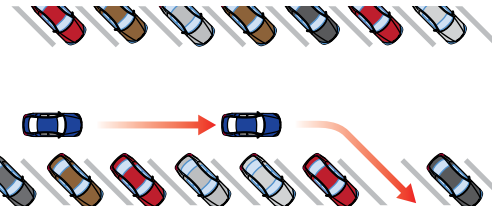
Location: Start in large, level, mostly empty areas. You will need angled and perpendicular spaces.

Before your teen starts parking practice, review “Skill three: How close are you?” and “Skill four: Backing” on page 12.

Lesson one – angle parking

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. Positioning your vehicle further away from the spaces before starting to turn into the spaces will allow for a better final position in both angle and perpendicular parking.

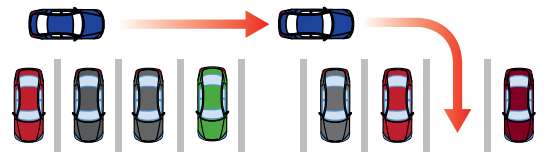
- Signal to indicate intent to turn into a parking space.
- Move forward until the steering wheel is aligned with the first pavement line marking the space.
- Look at the middle of the parking space and turn the wheel sharply at a slow, controlled speed.
- Steer toward the center of the space, straightening the wheel upon entry.
- Stop when the front bumper is six inches from the curb or from the end of the space.
- After you’ve parked, put the gear shift lever 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 their car door, drivers and passengers should check their rear-view mirror, side-view mirror, then open the door with their far hand.



Watch for white back up lights on vehicles that may be backing out of spaces and be prepared to let them exit before you park. They may not see you.

Lesson two – perpendicular parking

The steps are the same as for angle parking, but the sharper turn needed for perpendicular spaces may require more practice. Start turning into the space when you have lined up the front reference point. This will be the pivot point for turning into the space. As with angle parking starting further away from the space allows for a better final position in the space.



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

Lesson three – exiting parking spaces

- With a foot on the brake, shift into reverse, which will signal that you will be backing.
- Turn 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 straight until the driver’s seat is even with the bumper of the next vehicle on the turning side. For **perpendicular spaces**, back straight until the windshield is aligned with the bumper of the next vehicle.
- Look rear and 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, check the blind spots for vehicles, and pull forward to complete the exit.

Practice, practice, practice!

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

Teens will be required to parallel park for the Vermont skills test. This skill is sometimes best taught by a professional driving instructor. Assess your own parallel parking skills and your teen's abilities before beginning. There are several methods to accomplish this; all require steering fully right to fully left and looking through the rear window while backing slowly. Finish up by slowly pulling forward to center the vehicle in the space.

- When approaching the parking space on the right, check your rearview mirror and signal right.
- Stop alongside the front vehicle, two to three feet away with back bumpers even, shift to reverse, and turn wheel all the way to the right.
- Check for traffic and pedestrians in all directions.
- Look over your left shoulder to check the blind spot area and let any traffic clear.
- Let vehicle roll slowly until the driver can first see across the back end of the parked vehicle. Your vehicle should be at a 45 degree angle at this point. Stop and straighten the wheel. Check for traffic.
- Proceed to let the vehicle roll slowly backward, with wheels straight, until the front bumper clears the rear bumper of the car ahead. The taillight of the vehicle you are parking behind should be visible in the right lower windshield area of your vehicle.
- Stop and turn the wheel all the way to the left, checking for front bumper clearance, and then looking to the rear over the right shoulder, and let the vehicle roll slowly into a straight vehicle position.
- Pull ahead to adjust vehicle's position to be centered in the space.
- The vehicle's wheels should be within 12" of the curb or edge of the street.

Lesson two – exiting a parallel parking space

- With right foot on the brake, shift to reverse, look to the rear, and back (with wheels straight) to a spot where re-entry into traffic can be made in one motion.
- Shift to drive and turn wheels all the way to the left and signal left.
- Check your side mirror and look over your shoulder for cyclists or fast-moving cars, then pedestrians and bicyclists in all directions, including the blind spot over the left shoulder.
- Ease out of the space while checking for front bumper clearance on the vehicle ahead.

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

Parallel parking seems to produce unnecessary anxiety in both the student and the supervising driver. Hopefully by the use of reference points, moving the vehicle slowly, and checking for potential hazards, we can help to alleviate this anxiety.

Video: Parallel parking

Scan the QR code below to watch the video.



Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Supervised driving log

Parents or Guardians are responsible for making certain that their teen has completed no less than 40 hours of supervised driving, with 10 of those hours being completed at night. The Supervised Driving Log on the following page should be used to keep track of practice driving time. You can also use the Log to ensure your teen is practicing in a variety of driving environments and weather conditions. This Log will need to be turned into the DMV when your teen goes to take their Junior Operator License skills test. An online version of this Log can also be found by visiting: dmv.vermont.gov/document/driving-practice-log-sheet

GDL systems

Graduated Driver License (GDL) systems are 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



VERMONT MUTUAL
INSURANCE GROUP



Vermont learner's permit restrictions

- With a valid Vermont Learner's Permit, you may drive anywhere, anytime in Vermont if there is a licensed and unimpaired parent or guardian, a licensed or certified unimpaired driver education instructor, or a licensed and unimpaired individual 25 years of age or older riding in the front seat.
- Before driving in any other state, you must contact that state's Motor Vehicle Department or law enforcement agency to see if it is legal to drive in that state with a Vermont Learner's Permit.
- The law requires you to always have your permit with you when you drive.
- All drivers are prohibited from using any handheld electronic device while driving. Examples include cell phones, PDA's, laptops, tablets, iPods, MP3 players and game players.

Track your supervised
drive time with

RoadReady®



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



Department of Motor Vehicles
120 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05603
802.828.2000

DRIVING PRACTICE LOG SHEET

Name: Last			First			Middle		
Mailing Address (Street, Road or PO Box):						City:		
Date of Birth:			Learner's Permit Number:			Date Permit Issued:		
↓ TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN ↓								
To the best of your knowledge, has your child ever been convicted of any motor vehicle/driving offenses? ☐ Yes If 'Yes', please indicate what offense(s): ☐ No								
Do you certify that your child has received a minimum of 40 additional hours of practice behind the wheel, with at least 10 hours being nighttime driving? (Nighttime driving is defined as driving during the period of 30 minutes after sunset, to 30 minutes before sunrise.) ☐ Yes If 'No', the applicant is not eligible for a Junior Driver's License until s/he has completed the required driving practice. ☐ No								
Statements and warrants herein are certified under penalty of 23 VSA §202 and §203.								
Printed Name of Parent/Guardian						Parent/Guardian License #		
Signature of Parent/Guardian						Date Signed		

This form must be submitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles at the time of application for a Junior Driver's License. It is very important that you do not lose this Log Sheet. As driving practice takes place, the authorized individual who provided the driving practice must fill in the fields in columns 1, 2 and 3 with the appropriate information and initial the form. The **grand total** of the practice time **must be logged on Page 4** of this form. You may attach additional sheets if necessary.

SUPERVISED DRIVING LOG



**LOG YOUR DRIVES ON THE BELOW FORM
OR DOWNLOAD THE FREE MOBILE APP**

RoadReady®

SAMPLE LOG SHEET ENTRY:					
07/04/12	10:00 a.m.	Hill Starts	City - Daytime	30 min.	J.F.K

↓ Column 1 ↓

[illegible]



LOG YOUR DRIVES ON THE BELOW FORM
OR DOWNLOAD THE FREE MOBILE APP

RoadReady®

↓ Column 3 ↓

Date	Time of Day	Skills Practiced	Driving Environment	Practice Duration	Initials of Provider
Total Practice Time of Column 3:					
Combined Practice Time of Columns 1 & 2:					
Total Practice Time of Any Additional Sheets:					
GRAND TOTAL OF PRACTICE TIME (Columns 1, 2 and 3)					

Download the FREE RoadReady mobile app to track your driving experience together and to keep safety tips top of mind. The latest addition to *The Parent's Supervised Driving Program* offers parents and teens an easy, educational and convenient way to log the required supervised driving time with the click of a button.

- Track your time
- Learn safe driving practices
- Track driving conditions
- View driving summaries
- Download your driving log
- Know your goals
- Receive parental pointers
- Reach your goals
- Identify areas of improvement
- Track your teen's progress



If using the RoadReady App it is not necessary to use this form. ***Be sure to print the RoadReady log sheet and bring with you to the road test appointment for verification of driving hours.***

Download at bit.ly/RoadReadyVT or use the QR code above

Graduated Driver License Program

Individuals who obtain a Learner's Permit or Junior Driver's License are subject to our Graduated Driver License law. The key provisions of this law are indicated below:

1. An individual fifteen (15) years of age or older may operate a motor vehicle if they hold a valid Learner's Permit and are accompanied by one (1) of the following people in the vehicle, who is riding beside the driver:
 - A licensed and unimpaired parent or guardian,
 - A licensed or certified and unimpaired driver education instructor, and/or
 - A licensed and unimpaired person at least **twenty-five (25) years of age**.
2. To apply for a Learner's Permit, an individual must have maintained a clean driving record in the previous two (2) years.
3. An individual must possess a Learner's Permit for at least one (1) year prior to obtaining a Junior Driver's License.
4. Prior to obtaining a Junior Driver's License, an individual must complete an additional forty (40) hours of practice behind the wheel, with at least ten (10) hours being nighttime driving, while accompanied by one of the individuals indicated above who is riding beside the driver. The forty (40) hours of practice is in addition to the six hours of behind the wheel instruction time required for successful completion of a driver-training course. Proof of this additional practice must be submitted to DMV at the time of application for a Junior Driver's License on form VN-210 ~ Driving Practice Log Sheet, and certified by one of the individuals indicated above. This form is available in the center of this Driver's Manual, from DMV offices and from the DMV website (dmv.vermont.gov). NOTE: 'Nighttime driving' is defined as driving during the period of thirty (30) minutes after sunset, to thirty (30) minutes before sunrise.
5. An individual must have maintained a 'clean' driving record without any Learner's Permit recalls, suspensions or revocations for a six (6) month period prior to obtaining a Junior Driver's License.
6. While holding a Junior Driver's License, the individual may not operate a vehicle in the course of their employment for one (1) year following the issuance of the Junior Driver's License. For example, an individual cannot act as a pizza delivery driver until having had a Junior Driver's License for one (1) year, or until reaching the age of eighteen (18), whichever comes first.
7. While holding a Junior Driver's License, an individual may not carry passengers for hire.
8. During the first three (3) months of operation under a Junior Driver's License, the individual is restricted to driving alone. Passengers are permitted only if there is a licensed and unimpaired parent or guardian, a licensed or certified unimpaired driver education instructor, or a licensed and unimpaired individual 25 years of age or older riding in the front seat. If one (1) of those individuals is in the vehicle, there are no restrictions on the number of passengers. However, the driver is not allowed to transport more passengers than there are seat belts.
9. During the second three (3) months of operation under a Junior Driver's License, the individual may begin transporting immediate family members; siblings and parents only.
10. After holding a Junior Driver's License for six (6) months, there is no restriction on the number of passengers they can transport in the vehicle. However, the driver is not allowed to transport more passengers than there are seat belts.

11. An individual who holds a Vermont Junior Driver's License must be eighteen (18) years of age and must not have any recalls, suspensions or revocations during the previous six (6) month period, to be eligible to obtain a Driver's License. This six (6) month period commences on the date of their reinstatement. Any Junior Driver's License may be renewed. Notwithstanding the provisions of any other law, a renewed Junior Driver's License shall be issued without a photograph or imaged likeness. Any person to whom a renewed Junior Driver's License has been issued shall, while operating a motor vehicle, carry upon his or her person the last license issued to him or her as well as the renewed license certificate.
12. When an individual who has a Junior Driver's License from another state applies for a Vermont Junior Driver's License, he or she will be required to provide proof they have successfully completed a state approved driver education course which meets or exceeds Vermont requirements. They will also be required to pass an eye, written and skills test. They will also be subject to the Graduated License Law unless they have held the other state's license for a period of at least six months.
13. A Learner's Permit or Junior Driver's License is considered to be a 'provisional license', which is recallable. Any of the following actions will result in the recall of an individual's Learner's Permit or Junior Driver's License (**for more detail, see 23 VSA § 607a, § 614a**):
 - Carrying Passengers For Hire, Junior Operator Violation (CPH) = 90 day recall
 - Driving For Employer/Employment, Junior Operator Violation (DFE) = 90 day recall
 - Recommendation From A Diversion/Reparative Board Recall (DRB) = 30 day recall
 - Junior Operator Points Accumulation Recall (JRP) = 90 day recall (for a single 3 pt. Speeding violation or a 6 pt. Total)
 - Junior Operator texting (JRT) = 30 day recall (includes fines of at least \$100 and at least two points on your driving record)
 - While a recall is in effect, an individual is **ineligible** for a Junior Operator's License or a Driver's License.
 - When a recall is issued, the individual has the right to a hearing.
 - When a Learner's Permit or Junior Driver's License is recalled, it shall be restored upon the expiration of a specific term, and, if required, when the individual has passed a re-examination.
 - No reinstatement fee shall be due when a Learner's Permit/Junior Driver's License recall is restored.

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 only 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 motorcyclists and bicyclists a wide berth and reduce your speed.

Lesson one – mirror positioning, monitoring and blind spots

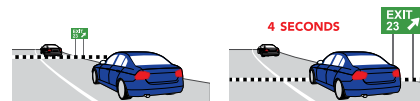
Refer to Skills one and two. Clearly seeing the adjacent traffic is especially important on multi-lane roads. Remind your teen to check the mirror positions when entering the car, and to constantly monitor the traffic around them.

Lesson two – stopping distance

Refer to Skill six on page 15. 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

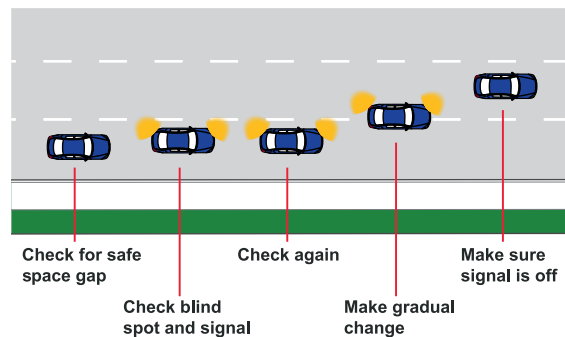
Refer to Skill six. Review the four-second rule with your teen, emphasizing that increasing following distance is the single best way to reduce crash risk. This gives the driver visibility, time, and space to avoid crashes. If another driver enters the four second space, have your student driver readjust to four seconds once again.



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. The law says you must proceed with caution and make a lane change away from a vehicle in the breakdown lane as soon as it is safe to do so.



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 four-second rule.
- If applicable, familiarize your teen with the car's lane detection warning system.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

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.

Lesson two – left turns

Left turns should almost always begin and end in the closest lane to the right of the yellow line. Choose a steering path in the middle of the closest lane to the right of the yellow line. There are three types of left turns:

- **Protected left turns** with a designated left turn lane and left turn arrow
- **Semi-protected 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.

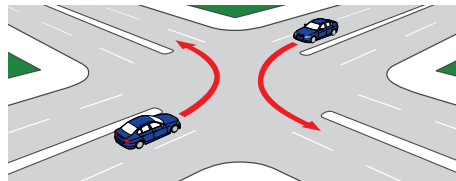
For unprotected left turns, coach your teen on these steps:

- 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 and have cleared the reference point.
- 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 and look ahead 12 seconds in the center of anticipated lane.
- Change lanes to the right after completing the turn unless you will be taking a left turn soon.

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 four 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 in all directions.
- Signal intent to pass check blindspot over left shoulder, 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, check the blind spots for vehicles, and gradually move back to the original lane, cancel the signal, and maintain speed.



Don't turn the wheel until you're ready to make the turn and have cleared the reference point.

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 the 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

#RoadReady

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 skill in this situation.

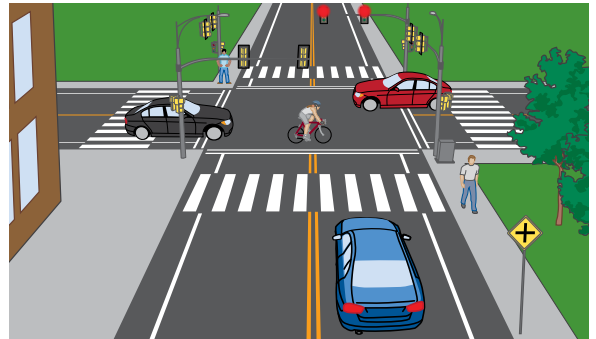
Skill review

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



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

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."

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 on page 15):** 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. Riding the brake confuses other drivers and puts unnecessary wear on the brakes.

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

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 skill.

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 a left turn, 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.

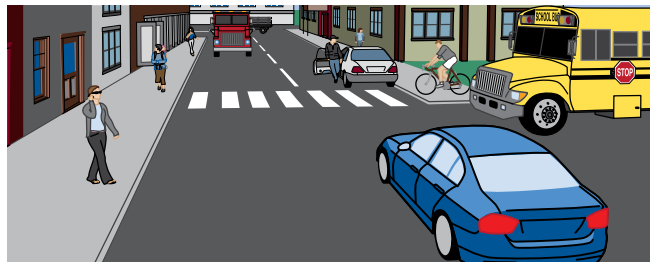
More is better

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.

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:

- Use of any portable electronic device while driving
- Dialing, talking or texting on a mobile phone
- Changing radio stations, or shuffling/streaming music
- Passengers, pets, or objects moving in the car
- Eating, drinking, or smoking
- Searching for an item
- Intense or emotional conversations, or cognitive distractions, such as trying to solve a problem
- 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.

Skill completed

supervisor initials

driver initials

#RoadReady

Highway driving – part one

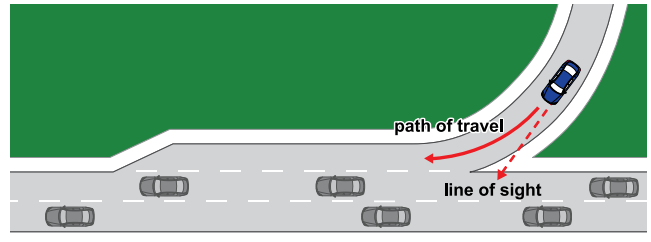
Goal: Teach your teen highway basics and how to safely enter and exit a highway.

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



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.

Teach your teen three rules to remember when driving on a highway:

- Maintain proper speed.
- Create space.
- Always use your signal.

Lesson two – on-ramp segments

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

- **Entrance area:** This allows for the driver to have time to search the highway and evaluate 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.

Lesson four – exiting

Teach the steps for exiting a highway:

- Identify the exit well ahead of time.
- Search traffic for problems when approaching the exit, but don't slow down on the highway.
- Start to signal four to six 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.

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

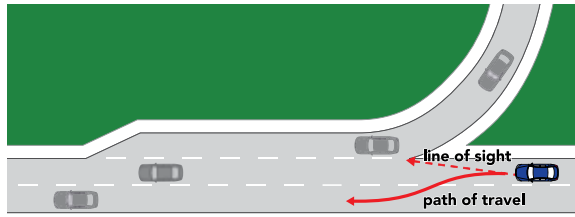
Once on the highway, coach your teen on steering technique. At fast highway speeds, excessive steering can be dangerous and lead to loss of control. Remind your teen to steer gradually, or drift, on the highways.

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 nine: multi-lane roads,” until they are comfortable performing them at highway speeds.

Remind your teen to:

- After checking the blind spot, 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.
- Change lanes to move around any stopped vehicle with flashing lights, or vehicles stopped on the shoulder. Unless it's absolutely necessary, never stop on the shoulder of a highway.
- If it isn't possible to change lanes for another vehicle in the breakdown lane you must reduce speed to 20 mph below the speed limit and use lane position #2 when going by.



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 and check the blind spot before changing lanes.

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 – four-second rule

Review the four-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 four-second rule for these highway driving circumstances:

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

When the conditions are not ideal, more following distance is necessary. (Examples: high speeds, rain, wind, ice, snow, darkness, and any other poor surface conditions or road construction).

Lesson four – challenging road conditions

Coach your teen to adjust travel speed, vehicle position, and following distance 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 two to three 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

Roundabouts are becoming more common in the U.S. because they provide safer and more efficient traffic flow than standard intersections. Statistics for roundabouts have found reductions in injury crashes of 72–80% and reductions in all crashes of 35–47% 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.

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.



Lesson one – driving a roundabout

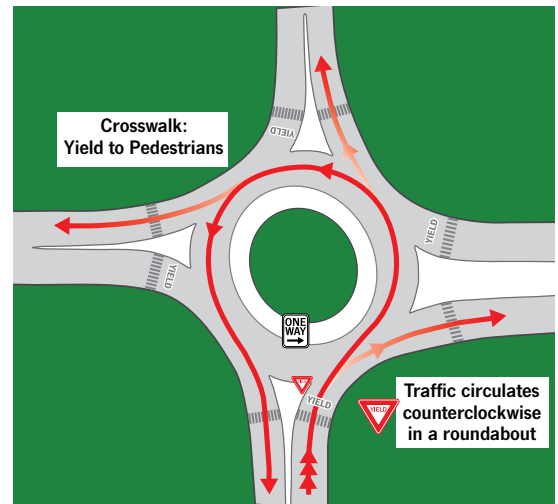
- Slow down. Obey traffic signs.
- Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Vehicles entering must always yield to cars already in the roundabout. Look to your left for entering traffic.
- Enter the roundabout when there is a safe gap in traffic.
- Keep your speed low within the roundabout.
- As you approach your exit, turn on your right turn signal.
- Yield to pedestrians and bicycles 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, then pull over when you can safely do so and allow emergency vehicles to pass.

Lesson three – driving a roundabout with two or more lanes

- Choose 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.
- 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 what lane is correct.



Yield to all traffic before entering roundabout

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 types of 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.

Lesson one – gravel roads

Gravel roads present their own special road safety challenge; the issue is traction. Driving on loose gravel is harder than driving on pavement because your tires don't have the traction needed to give you stable control. Slow down, avoid sudden turning, accelerate and brake slowly, and increase your following distance to six seconds. Be particularly aware of gravel "windrows," piles of gravel near the road edge, used for highway maintenance. Potholes, ruts, and washboard bumps are all common hazards on dirt roads. Reduce speed and take avoidance measures to avoid damaging your vehicle, and to maintain a safe lane position on the roadway.

Lesson two – driving hazards

Large/slow vehicles: Slower trucks, farm vehicles, and road maintenance equipment are likely to make wide turns at unmarked entrances. When meeting such vehicles adjust lane position and reduce speed in order to help accommodate them. 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 and reenter the road when it is clear.
- In general, try to not apply brakes until regaining control of the vehicle.

Restricted visibility: Trees, cornfields, buildings, and hills can block a driver's view of oncoming traffic, or traffic entering from the side. Identify blind spots and reduce speed to better anticipate and be prepared 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 there is 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 be prepared to stop. Always be on the lookout, especially at sunrise and sunset. October and November are peak months for deer crashes. Deer travel in groups; if you see one, look for more.

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 be prepared to stop. On rural roads, many railroad crossings are marked only with a round yellow 'Railroad Crossing Ahead' warning sign and a white X-shaped railroad crossbuck sign. 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.

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

Adapting to new landscapes

Mountain driving

Some hazards you should be aware of are steep hills, changing weather, wildlife, and rocks in the roadway. If your vehicle experiences difficulty traveling up steep roadways, pull off the road at the first place you may do so safely, or stay in the right lane to allow other vehicles to pass. Here are some added tips:

- Pay special attention to speed limit signs and warning signs, such as those warning of curves, steep hills, or other hazards.
- Watch for bicyclists near the right edge of the road.
- Use lower gear to control speeds while going up or down long, steep hills.
- You must yield to vehicles going uphill if you are traveling downhill on a narrow road.
- Do not coast downhill by shifting into neutral or engaging the clutch.
- Shifting down, with occasional use of the brakes, is recommended for going down steep hills. Constant braking can cause brake failure.

The higher the altitude, the less oxygen there is in the air. Some people may react to the decrease in oxygen. They may develop mild symptoms, such as headache, nausea, and fatigue. Remember, insufficient hydration can lead to the onset of symptoms of altitude sickness. Even if they are mild, they can affect your alertness as a driver.

Rural driving

When driving in rural or country areas, there are a number of special situations that require attention. Watch for driveways, farm equipment, railroad crossings that might not be marked, and bridges that are narrow and poorly surfaced. Some intersections may be hidden by trees, brush, and crops. Animals are often found wandering along the roadway. Extra care and slower speeds should be used when driving on gravel roads because of the reduced traction due to the road surface. The road surface can be affected by loose gravel, slippery conditions after rain or snow, ruts in the driving lanes, and washboard conditions. When approaching oncoming vehicles, watch for soft shoulders or the absence of shoulders.

Safety around snowplows

When you see lights from a snow plow, slow down and use caution.

- **Give snowplows room to work:** The plows are wide and can cross the center line or shoulder.
- **Do not tailgate and avoid passing, especially on the right:** If you must pass, be extremely cautious and beware of the snow cloud.
- **Keep your distance and watch for sudden stops and turns:** A snowplow operator's field of vision is restricted. You may see them, but they don't always see you.

Overconfidence

After becoming proficient in basic driving skills, teens can become overconfident and begin to drive faster, follow other cars more closely, brake abruptly, etc. Gently and continuously remind your teen to stay four seconds back from other vehicles and always drive with caution.

Practice in other conditions

For new drivers, it can be challenging to drive in new and unfamiliar conditions such as 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 headlights makes it difficult to see. Looking toward the right side of the road and flipping the rearview mirror can help to reduce glare.
- Low-beam headlights should be on at all times, but are required at night.
- High beams should not be used when following or meeting other vehicles.
- To compensate for reduced visibility, drive slower and at a greater following distance.

Wet/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.

Hydroplaning

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

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.

- When starting to drive in snow, keep the wheels straight ahead and accelerate gradually to avoid spinning the tires.
- Decrease your speed to make up for a loss of traction. Accelerate and decelerate gradually, and be cautious when braking.
- 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.
- Stay far behind the vehicle ahead so you will not need to come to a sudden stop, which can cause skidding.

Note: Four-wheel drive (4WD) vehicles do not stop faster on ice and snow than two-wheel drive (2WD) vehicles. The heavier the vehicle, the longer it takes to stop.

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, frequent yawning or drifting from 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 and always keep four seconds of following distance. Driving after not sleeping for 18 hours is equivalent to driving impaired with a .08 BAC.

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.

Sharing the road – part one

Trucks: When driving on the highway, you are at a serious disadvantage if involved in a crash with a larger vehicle. In crashes involving large trucks, the occupants of a car — usually the driver — sustain 78 percent of fatalities.

In order to keep you and your teen safe on the road, you should be extra cautious when driving around large trucks and buses. Sharing the road with larger vehicles can be dangerous if you are not aware of their limitations. Here are a few tips to help you drive safer to prevent a crash and minimize injuries and fatalities if one does occur:

Speed is everything

When driving in high traffic 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.

Cutting in front can cut your life short: If you cut in front of another vehicle, you may create an emergency-braking situation for the vehicles around you, especially in heavy traffic. Trucks and buses take much longer to stop in comparison to cars. When passing, look for the front of the truck in your rearview mirror before pulling in front, and avoid braking situations.

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 truck driver to see vehicles around him/her. If you can’t see the truck driver in the truck’s mirrors, the truck driver can’t see you. Avoid being caught in a truck’s No-Zones.

Avoid squeeze play: Be careful of trucks making wide right turns. If you try to get in between the truck and the curb, you’ll be caught in a “squeeze” crash. Truck drivers sometimes need to swing widely to the left in order to safely negotiate a right turn. They can’t see cars directly behind or beside them. Cutting in between the truck and the curb increases the possibility of a crash. So pay attention to truck signals, and give them lots of room to maneuver.

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. Here are a few tips 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.

Take your cues from trucks: Work zones often pop up suddenly. If you are not paying attention to the signs, you could find yourself in a serious crash. Since trucks have a height advantage and can see ahead of traffic, their brake light activity can provide a good signal of a slow-down or work zone ahead. Truck drivers know the stopping limitations of their trucks and pay close attention to traffic.

Merge gently: Aggressive drivers can be extremely dangerous while driving in work zones. Driving in work zones requires extra time and courtesy. For a smooth passage through work zones, allow others to merge in front of you. Be especially considerate to trucks. They require more space to merge and are the least maneuverable vehicles on the road.

Sharing the road – part two

School Buses: Always be cautious around school buses. It is against the law to pass a school bus which has stopped and has its red warning lights on. Never pass from any direction when the red lights are on. There are few exceptions where a stop is not necessary. You do not have to stop on a divided highway if the school bus is traveling in the opposite direction. A concrete barrier may be used to separate traffic from the bus, and you are not required to stop.

Bikes: Bicycles are considered vehicles and should be given the appropriate right-of-way, as with other vehicles. Reduce your speed when encountering and don't tailgate, especially in bad weather. Leave plenty of room, as much space as possible and pass with care. Always look in your side mirror for cyclists before you open your door and before making a right turn. Vermont requires a driver to leave a four foot distance between your vehicle and the bicyclist when passing them on the roadway.

Children on bicycles can be unpredictable, so slow down and use extra caution. Don't expect children to obey traffic laws. Because of their size they can be harder to see.

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.

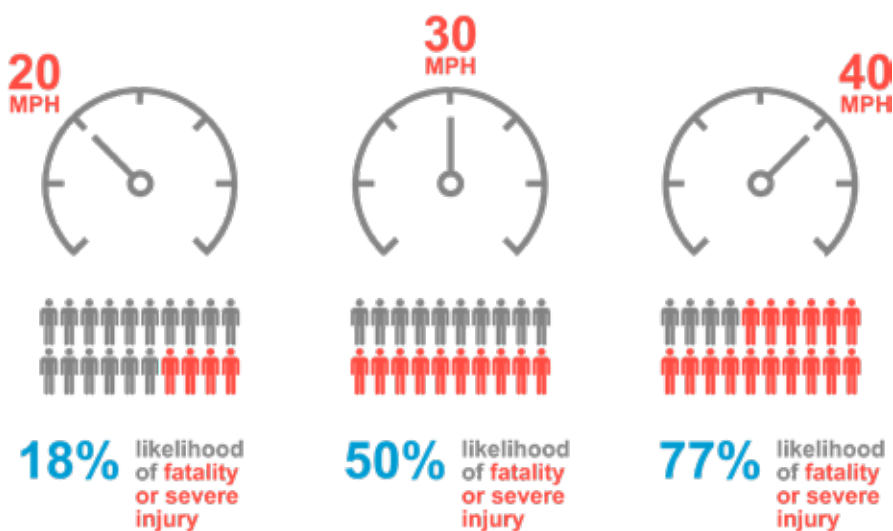
At intersections, motorcycles' smaller size makes it difficult to judge their distance and speed. An oncoming motorcycle is probably much closer and coming much faster than it appears. Scan intersections thoroughly for motorcycles. They are easily hidden by parked cars.

Pedestrians: Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and intersections – it's the law. Crosswalks exist at all intersections, even when unmarked. Always look for pedestrians especially before turning at a light. Stay alert and slow down.

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

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.



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

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.

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 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

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!

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Final tips for parents...

1. The longer a teen holds their Learner's Permit, the less risk of crashing. Aim for 12 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.

Love it



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see their speed 😊

by Kassakaybend

I got in trouble



I got snitched on u a snitch

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