

RSA



# PREPARING FOR YOUR DRIVING TEST

An tÚdarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre  
Road Safety Authority

The Road Safety Authority is Working to Save Lives.

# If you want to pass your driving test make sure your instructor has passed all of ours!

Only driving instructors who meet the standard set by the Road Safety Authority can become Approved Driving Instructors (ADI).

So when you book your driving lessons, make sure it's with a full permit holding Approved Driving Instructor.

For further details see [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie) or contact the ADI Unit on

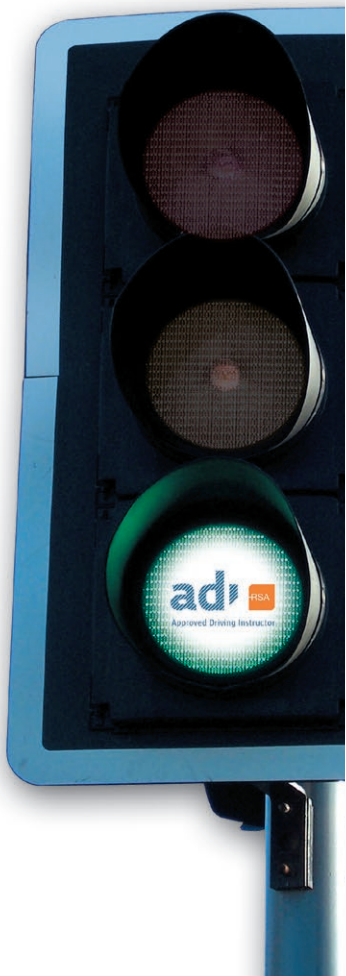
**096-25007** or

**[adi@rsa.ie](mailto:adi@rsa.ie)**

to find your nearest Approved Driving Instructor.



Approved Driving Instructor



# What is the Purpose of a Driving Test?

## The driving test is designed to find out if you:

- know the Rules of the Road
- have the knowledge and skill to drive competently in accordance with those rules
- drive with due regard for the safety and convenience of other road users

## Preparing for your driving test you should:

- study carefully the Rules of the Road booklet
- get tuition from an Approved Driving Instructor. A list of Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs) who have been approved as reaching a high standard can be found by visiting [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie).



Approved Driving Instructor

- practise driving as much as possible on all types of roads and in all types of traffic situations, including driving at night
- build up your driving experience and confidence before applying for your test
- look out for the RSA suite of Learner Driver manuals which are for sale in bookshops for cars, motorcycles, trucks and buses.

## Avoid:

- unnecessarily obstructing traffic or causing annoyance to other road users
- practising on driving test routes for the most part; congestion on these routes causes inconvenience to residents and test applicants alike.



## Special Circumstances

### You should advise the driver testing section in advance if you:

- have a severe hearing problem or if you are deaf
- are restricted in your movements or have any disability which could affect your driving
- drive an adapted vehicle, with steering knob, extra hand controls etc.

This will eliminate delay on the day of your test. If you cannot speak English or are deaf, you are permitted to have an interpreter with you. This person must not be your driving instructor, and the person cannot accompany you on the practical test.

## Your appointment

Appointments for driving tests are arranged in the order in which applications are received. It is the RSA's aim to have a national average waiting time for a driving test of 10 weeks or less. Our ability to meet this target depends on the number of applications received for different centres. Accordingly, the average waiting time in certain driving test centres may vary above or below this 10-week figure. Current waiting times for each centre are available on our website [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie).

When you apply for your test, you may also be able to schedule your own test date. You may only be able to do so if there are dates available for the centre you are applying for.

You will normally be given an appointment notice four to five weeks in advance of your test. This will set out the time, date and venue for the test, together with conditions which must be met. Please read this notice carefully as it may help avoid problems on the day of the test.

It will also set out the arrangements for cancelling your appointment should this prove necessary.

## Your vehicle

You must ensure that the vehicle you present to test with meets the requirements for the category of vehicle for that test. This information is provided with your appointment notification. You must also ensure that the vehicle is in a roadworthy condition.

## First learner permit

A first-time holder of a Learner Permit (the code 991 will be noted opposite the category on your permit) for licence categories of motorcycle, car and works vehicle (AM,A1,A2,A,B and W) must hold the Learner Permit for six months before taking a driving test. If you fail to meet these conditions, your test will not be conducted on the day and you will lose your fee.

## Essential Driver Training (EDT) and Initial Basic Training (IBT)

A first-time Learner Permit holder for a Car or Motorcycle must take a structured driver training programme with an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) before taking the test.

For car learner drivers, this is known as Essential Driver Training (EDT) and applies to those whose first Learner Permit for licence category B has a start date on or after April 4th 2011.

Please note that if you are subject to Essential Driver Training (EDT), your test will not be scheduled until your ADI has notified the RSA that you have completed the mandatory 12 lessons.

For motorcyclists, this training is known as Initial Basic Training (IBT) and applies to those whose first learner permit for licence category AM, A1, A2, A and M has a category start date on or after December 6th 2010.

## Day of the Test



You should be present in the waiting area of the test centre before the appointed time of your test. If you are late, the test cannot be conducted and the fee will be forfeited. When you arrive at the test centre, take a seat in the waiting area and you will be called by the Driver Tester.

### **The driver tester will check your learner permit to establish that it:**

- relates to you
- is current and is valid on the day of the test
- is for the correct category of vehicle.

### **You will be asked to read and sign a statement confirming that:**

- the insurance cover in place is adequate and your vehicle is in a roadworthy condition

### **The test**

The driving test is straightforward.

For cars, it will last about 40 minutes and will include:

- questions on the Rules of the Road (including identifying road signs); demonstrating hand signals

- reversing around a corner
- a turnabout in the road
- a hill start
- driving approximately 8 kms under a variety of road and traffic conditions

Remember, if you take and pass the test in a vehicle with an automatic transmission, your driving licence will only cover you to drive an automatic vehicle.

### **Your driving will be assessed in the following situations:**

- moving off
- driving in traffic
- stopping
- reversing round a corner
- turning about to face in the opposite direction
- starting on a hill
- parking
- road positioning
- overtaking and passing
- anticipation and observation
- use of mirrors and signals
- progress
- speed
- compliance with traffic lights, road signs and markings
- use of the vehicle controls (accelerator, clutch, gears, brakes and steering)
- use of secondary controls such as wipers, demisters, etc.

## Other aspects of the driving test will check that:

- you know how to operate the secondary controls, such as windscreen wipers and washers, demisters, rear window heater, lights and air-conditioning (where fitted)
- you must also know how to adjust the seat, safety belt, head restraint and mirrors and ensure the doors are closed
- in the case of a motorcycle test, you must be able to remove the motorcycle from its stand. You must also know how to adjust your helmet. Motorcyclists must also demonstrate a braking manoeuvre and an “avoid the obstacle” manoeuvre
- in the case of a vehicle and trailer, you must know how to uncouple and recouple the trailer from/to the drawing vehicle
- in the case of a heavy vehicle test, you must know how to check the power-assisted braking and steering systems, and how to use any retarder or exhaust brake as fitted to the vehicle
- you know how to perform a check on the tyres, lights, reflectors, indicators, engine oil, coolant, windscreen washer fluid, steering, brakes and horn. For motorcyclists, the checks can also include the chain, and the emergency stop-switch, if fitted
- in the case of a bus test, you must also know how to operate the fuel shut-off valve, the main power switch, and how to manually open and close any powered doors as fitted to the vehicle

## Useful information

- the driver tester understands that you may be nervous and will try to put you at ease
- unlike your instructor, the driver tester will not offer you encouragement or advice. You should not be put off by this formal approach which is designed to ensure fairness to all applicants
- while you will be given clear directions throughout the test, should you not understand a particular direction, ask the tester to repeat or clarify it



- if you make a mistake, do not worry unduly. It may not be as serious as it appears and may not mean you have failed your test
- passengers other than the driver tester and/or RSA officials are not permitted to accompany you in the vehicle during the practical test. The tester may be accompanied on test for training/supervisory purposes. While the accompanying officer may take notes, s/he has no input into the conduct or outcome of the test.



## Common Faults Contributing to Test Failure

**The following are the most common faults which give rise to candidates failing their driving test:**

- inadequate observation moving off, at junctions, at roundabouts and when changing lanes
- failure to anticipate the actions of other drivers
- incorrect road position on the straight, on bends, turning left, turning right, at roundabouts, and when overtaking
- inadequate progress at junctions, roundabouts, on the straight, and when overtaking
- incorrect, inadequate or inappropriate use of mirrors and signals
- non-compliance with traffic controls, e.g. road signs and markings and traffic lights

- incorrect, inadequate or inappropriate use of vehicle controls, including gears, clutch, accelerator, steering, handbrake, footbrake, and secondary controls
- excessive speed for the road or traffic conditions
- failure to yield the right of way to others
- lack of competence in the reverse and turnabout manoeuvres

### **Faults by motorcyclists also include:**

- failure to perform a 'u' turn correctly
- inadequate control at slow speed
- inadequate observations to the rear
- incorrect or inadequate hand-signals
- lack of competence in specific manoeuvres

The list of faults highlighted above is by no means exhaustive. You should study the Rules of the Road carefully and get as much practice as possible, in all types of traffic situations, in preparation for your driving test.





### **If you fail:**

You will receive a detailed report on the faults which occurred during the test. Pay particular attention to these when preparing for your next test without, of course, neglecting other aspects of your driving. A person aggrieved by a decision of a driving test may appeal to the appropriate District Court under Section 33 of the Road Traffic Act, 1961. The District Court may either refuse the appeal or, if satisfied that the test was not properly conducted, direct that the applicant be given a further test without payment of another fee.

The Court will not examine individual faults incurred during the test.

## **The Learner Permit**

### **Accompaniment:**

You must be accompanied by a person holding a full driving licence for a period of two years for the category of vehicle being driven. The only exceptions to this are when:

- driving a work vehicle (e.g. agricultural tractor) unless adapted for a passenger
- riding a motorcycle

A Learner Permit Holder cannot act as an accompanying driver for a learner driver. An accompanying driver must have held their full licence for a period of at least two years. It is not sufficient to have a certificate of competency to act as an accompanying driver.

Motorcycle learner drivers should check if they are restricted to riding a motorcycle with a particular power output (kW) and ensure that they adhere to these restrictions. It is the responsibility of the test candidate to ensure that s/he holds the correct learner permit for the vehicle presented for test.

### **“L” Plates:**

Your vehicle must display an “L” plate front and rear. The plate should be a red “L” on a white background and should not be less than 15cm high with a border of at least 2cm.

A learner Motorcyclist must wear a yellow tabard displaying the “L” Plate not less than 15cm high on a white background, in clearly visible vertical positions front and rear worn over the chest clothing.

In the case of a test involving a trailer, an L Plate must be displayed on the rear of the trailer.

### Motorways:

You cannot drive on a motorway on a learner permit, even if you hold a certificate of competency.

If you hold a learner permit to drive vehicles of categories B, C1, C, D1 or D, you cannot drive the vehicle when drawing a trailer.

### Carrying a passenger:

- you cannot carry any passenger for reward
- a motorcyclist may not carry a pillion passenger
- if driving a category W vehicle (e.g. work vehicle or land tractor), you cannot carry a passenger, unless the vehicle is constructed/adapted to carry a passenger and the passenger holds a full driving licence for category W for at least two years.

To take the driving test, you must hold a learner permit covering the category in which you wish to be tested. For first-time learner permit holders, the code 991 will be displayed on their permit for Categories AM, A1, A2, A, B and W and they must wait six months before taking a driving test.

A first-time Learner Permit holder for a Car or Motorcycle must take a structured driver training programme with an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) before taking the test. This is known as Essential Driver Training (EDT) for car learner drivers and applies to those whose first Learner Permit for licence category B has a start date on or after April 4th 2011. For motorcyclists, this training is known as Initial Basic Training (IBT) and applies to those whose first learner permit for licence category AM, A1, A2, A or M has a category start date on or after December 6th 2010.



## Customer service

The RSA is committed to the continuous improvement of its service and welcomes any comments or feedback you may have. If you want to make a formal complaint about any aspect of your driving test or give feedback about the service provided, please write to:

**Driver Testing Section,**  
Road Safety Authority, Ballina, Co. Mayo;  
you can also phone 1890 40 60 40 or  
email: [drivingtest@rsa.ie](mailto:drivingtest@rsa.ie)

This leaflet is intended as a guide only and is not an interpretation of the law. October 2013.

# Working to Save Lives



## **Údarás um Shábháilteacht ar Bhóithre**

### **Road Safety Authority**

Páirc Ghnó Ghleann na Muaidhe, Cnoc an tSabhaircín,  
Bóthar Bhaile Átha Cliath, Béal an Átha, Co. Mhaigh Eo.  
Moy Valley Business Park, Primrose Hill, Dublin Road,  
Ballina, Co. Mayo

**LoCall:** 1890 40 60 40 **Fax:** (096) 78290

**Email:** [drivingtest@rsa.ie](mailto:drivingtest@rsa.ie) **Website:** [www.rsa.ie](http://www.rsa.ie)