

## Driver Safety Checklist

### Before Starting the Vehicle

- \_\_\_\_\_ Adjust the mirrors and your seat
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fasten your seat belt
- \_\_\_\_\_ Know where the vehicle controls are located and how to use them (headlights, windshield wipers, turn signals, etc.)

### During the Drive Test

- \_\_\_\_\_ Use the turn signals when appropriate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Look in the mirrors regularly and over your shoulder when necessary
- \_\_\_\_\_ Keep both hands on the steering wheel unless you are backing up

### Stopping

- \_\_\_\_\_ Check traffic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stop completely behind crosswalk or limit line
- \_\_\_\_\_ Stop smoothly without the vehicle “jerking”

### Turning or Changing Lanes

- \_\_\_\_\_ Signal 100 feet before starting maneuver
- \_\_\_\_\_ Adjust speed for safety
- \_\_\_\_\_ Check mirrors
- \_\_\_\_\_ Look over your shoulder for the blind spot
- \_\_\_\_\_ Begin and end maneuver in correct lane
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yield or accept right-of-way as appropriate

### Always

- \_\_\_\_\_ Check mirrors at regular intervals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Look both ways at all intersections
- \_\_\_\_\_ Look for and obey all traffic lights and signs
- \_\_\_\_\_ See and react appropriately to hazards
- \_\_\_\_\_ Follow at a safe distance (adjust for weather)

## Safety Tips

Please follow these general safety tips when operating a vehicle:

- Always drive defensively. Try to anticipate errors another driver might make.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Check your mirrors, look both ways at intersections, and look over the proper shoulder before making a lane change or merging with traffic.
- Steer smoothly and avoid sudden turns.
- Accelerate and stop smoothly. Slow down or speed up gradually to avoid sudden jerks.
- Be aware of where you have to stop when approaching an intersection. If your view is blocked, stop then move forward carefully. Look both ways before continuing into the intersection. Do not roll through stop signs or red lights.
- Always obey posted speed limits. When poor weather, road, or traffic conditions are present, reduce speed accordingly.
- Use the two-second rule to ensure you are following at a safe distance. Increase the following distance for poor weather, road, or traffic conditions.
- Know what all traffic signs and signals mean and obey them at all times.
- Use the correct lane. Signal and turn from the improper lane into the proper lane.
- Put your signal on 100 feet before turning or changing lanes.

## Driver License (DL)

### How to Prepare for a Drive Test



[www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense](http://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense)



**DRIVER LICENSE DIVISION**

*Creating a faster, easier, friendlier  
driver license experience and a safer Texas*

**Help keep Texans safe.  
Be a responsible driver.**

## Who Must Take the Drive Test?

You are required to take a drive test if any of the following conditions apply:

- You have never been licensed in any U.S. state or territory.
- You are licensed in another state but your license is expired.
- You are licensed in Texas but your license has been expired over two years.
- You have a medical condition that may affect your ability to safely operate a vehicle.
- You currently have specific restrictions on your Texas driver license which require a driving test to be removed.
- You were ordered by a court to comply with a driving test.

A drive test is not required for renewals or for anyone over age 18 surrendering a valid driver license from another state; however, DPS may require a drive test at any time. Anyone under age 18 must take a driving test.

## Preparing for the Drive Test

To prepare for the drive test, review the *Texas Driver Handbook*. This free handbook is available online at [www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense](http://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense) in “Handbooks & Forms” or at any driver license office.

Practice all of the maneuvers listed in the “Driver Safety Checklist” section before scheduling your test. While practicing, ask the person with you to give you instructions and point out any mistakes.

## Scheduling a Drive Test

Most Driver License offices now offer the option of scheduling your drive test online. To schedule a drive test, visit [www.dps.texas.gov](http://www.dps.texas.gov) in “More Online Services.”



## Vehicle Inspection

Before you begin the drive test, the vehicle you bring must pass an inspection to ensure it is safe and can be legally operated on public roadways.

The customer service representative will check for:

- Two license plates with the exception of single out-of-state or temporary plates; *no* auto dealership plates (permanently affixed to the front and back of the vehicle)
- Operational speedometer
- A properly functioning horn
- Turn signals on the front and back of the vehicle
- Unexpired vehicle registration and inspection
- Unexpired insurance (applicant cannot be listed as “excluded driver”)
- At least one rearview mirror inside or outside of the vehicle
- Driver and front passenger door must open normally
- Functioning seatbelts
- Any restrictions on the driver
- Brake lights
- Windshield wipers, headlights, and taillights, depending on weather conditions and time of day

## Before the Drive Test

You must present one valid form of identification to the customer service representative before the drive test.

Try to ask all questions before your drive test begins. Once the test starts, the customer service representative is not permitted to engage in general conversation.



## During the Drive Test

No pets or unauthorized passengers are allowed in the vehicle during the test.

The test takes about 20 minutes. The goals of the drive test are to determine your ability to safely operate a vehicle and obey traffic laws.

You will be graded on your ability to demonstrate the following maneuvers:

- Backing in a straight line
- Parallel parking
- Approaching intersections
- Turning
- Stopping in regular traffic conditions
- Controlling the vehicle
- Observing traffic
- Maintaining vehicle position (turning, stopping, etc.)
- Using signals

if at any time a dangerous or illegal maneuver is performed, the drive test will be immediately stopped and will result in an automatic failure.

## After the Drive Test

After you complete the drive test, you will be informed if you passed or failed. You will also receive detailed feedback on the areas where you did well and the areas where you need to improve.

If you do not pass the drive test, your application will be held in the driver license office for 90 days. After 90 days — or three failed tests — a new application and fee must be submitted.

**Becoming a safe driver  
is an ongoing process.**