

LESSON  
1

## Learning to Drive

### Stan's Plan

Stan is almost 16 years old. He wants to learn how to drive. In the state where he used to live, he could already have had a license. But in the state where he lives now, the laws are different. Before getting a learner's permit, he must take driver education in a classroom setting.

His school is offering a driver education class. Stan has decided to sign up for it. He will get classroom training for one semester. There, he will learn the rules of the road. He will also get some tips on how to drive safely. The class will prepare him for the written test for a permit.

Once Stan has a permit, he will be able to get some behind-the-wheel training. For that, he will attend a professional driving school. A professional instructor will give Stan four 90-minute lessons of in-car training.

In Stan's state, a minor must have completed 50 hours of supervised driving practice. Ten of those hours must be at night. Stan's mother and father will help him complete the required time behind the wheel.

### Jan's Plan

Jan is 18 years old. Like Stan, she wants to get a driver's license. She is no longer a minor, so the rules for her are different than they are for Stan. She does not have to take driver education in the classroom. She does not have to take driver training behind the wheel. But, like Stan, she does have to prove that she can drive.



Jan will read the driver handbook to study for the written test. Once she has her permit, she will start getting behind-the-wheel training. Her sister will teach her. By law, Jan can practice driving only with a person over age 25. That person must have a valid driver's license. Jan will not have to get 50 hours of practice, as Stan does. She can take the test as soon as she feels ready.

### Fran's Plan

Fran is 25 years old. She has never had a driver's license, but she wants one now. She knows that she is not required to take driver training behind the wheel. But she thinks that she will be a better driver if she does. So she plans to go to driver training school. Professional instruction is not cheap, but Fran thinks it will be worth it. She worries that she won't be able to pass the driver's test without it.

► **Thinking It Over**

1. If you take a driver education class, you
  - a. are sure to pass the written test for a permit.
  - b. learn how to drive by practicing in a car.
  - c. are taught in a classroom.
2. If you take driver training, you
  - a. get behind-the-wheel instruction.
  - b. are sure to pass the test for a license.
  - c. don't have to take the driving test.
3. A minor is someone who is younger than
  - a. 25.
  - b. 18.
  - c. 16.
4. The laws about driver's licenses are
  - a. different from state to state.
  - b. the same in every state.
  - c. too complicated for most people to follow.

► **Everyday Math**

1. Stan needs 50 hours behind the wheel before he can take the driving test. Ten of those hours must be at night. How many hours of daytime practice will he need in all? \_\_\_\_\_
2. During driver training, Stan has four 90-minute lessons behind the wheel in the daytime. How many hours is that? \_\_\_\_\_

3. After his driver training course, how many more hours of daytime practice will he need? \_\_\_\_\_

► **Key Vocabulary**

1. *Driver education* is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. *Driver training* is \_\_\_\_\_.
3. A *minor* is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A *driver's permit* allows you to \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A *driver's license* allows you to \_\_\_\_\_.

► **Drawing Conclusions**

The laws regarding driver's licenses are stricter for persons under the age of 18. Why do you think this is so?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

► **On Your Own**

Would you rather learn to drive from a family member or in a driver training school? Why?

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## Driver's License

This checklist is published by the State of California. It is for the parent or guardian of a teenager. It tells what habits the student driver should have acquired before taking the driving test. If the parent can check off each box, it means that the student driver has developed safe driving habits.

### Locate the Controls

Your child knows where the following controls are located and how they work:

- Horn
- 4-way flashers
- Heater/defroster
- Windshield wipers
- Emergency and parking brakes
- Headlights

### Before Starting the Vehicle

- Adjusts mirrors.
- Fastens safety belt.

### Starting the Vehicle

- Vehicle is in "Park" or "Neutral."
- Foot on brake.
- Starts vehicle smoothly.

### Moving Forward

- Signals.
- Looks over shoulder before pulling into traffic.
- Uses both hands on opposite sides of steering wheel.

### Stopping

- Stops when necessary behind crosswalk or limit line.
- Uses correct foot on brake pedal.

### Turns

- Signals and slows for turns.
- Begins and ends turns in correct lane.
- Yields right-of-way when necessary.
- Accepts legal right-of-way when safe.
- Sees and reacts to hazards.

### Backing

- Looks back over right shoulder when backing out the car.

- Checks mirrors and glances quickly to side while backing.

### Changing Lanes

- Signals.
- Checks mirrors.
- Checks over shoulder.
- Changes lanes safely.

### Hill Parking

- Signals.
- Curbs wheel properly.
- Sets parking brake.
- Signals and checks over shoulder before entering traffic.

### Parallel Parking

- Signals.
- Looks over shoulder while backing.
- Yields to other vehicles when necessary.

### Driving On the Freeway

- Checks traffic flow.
- Signals.
- Times entry onto freeway.
- Checks over shoulder as he or she accelerates into gap in traffic.
- Signals early and slows down on the exit ramp to posted speed limit.
- Adjusts speed to road conditions.

### Defensive Driving Techniques

- Checks mirrors frequently and before braking.
- Checks cross streets before entering intersections.
- Checks signal lights and signs.
- Keeps eyes "moving" (watches sides and middle of road).
- Keeps a "space cushion" around the car.
- Follows at a safe distance.

► **Thinking It Over:** Write T for *true* or F for *false*.

1. \_\_\_\_ You should adjust the mirrors and fasten your safety belt before starting the vehicle.
2. \_\_\_\_ When you are starting the vehicle, you should be in first gear.
3. \_\_\_\_ If you have the legal right-of-way, you should always take it.
4. \_\_\_\_ When changing lanes, you should not only signal but also check over your shoulder.

► **Everyday Math**

1. Carol paid \$65 for each of four 90-minute classes of in-car training. Then she paid \$12 to take the test for a driver's permit. So far, how much has she spent to get her license? \$\_\_\_\_\_
2. The Martinez family was paying \$1,500 a year for car insurance. Then their two teenage boys got licenses in the same year. Their insurance went up by \$2,100. How much is the Martinez family now paying per year? \$\_\_\_\_\_
- How much is that per month? \$\_\_\_\_\_

► **Key Vocabulary**

1. What is a *crosswalk*?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What does the *brake* on a car do?  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. If you *accelerate* while driving, what do you do?  
\_\_\_\_\_

► **Recalling Details**

1. You should begin and end turns in the  
a. right lane.  
b. left lane.  
c. correct lane.
2. You should yield the right-of-way  
a. when necessary.  
b. always.  
c. when it is safe.
3. When you are driving straight ahead, your hands should be  
a. on the left side of the steering wheel.  
b. on opposite sides of the steering wheel.  
c. on the right side of the steering wheel.

► **On Your Own**

Write a paragraph to explain how a driver can safely enter the freeway.

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