

## 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 Driving 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 must 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.

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

## Texas Driver License (DL)

### How to Prepare for a Driving 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

## Who Must Take the Driving Test?

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

- You have never been licensed in any US state or territory.
- You are licensed in another state, but your license has expired.
- You are licensed in Texas, but your license has been expired for 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 that require a driving test to be removed.
- You were ordered by the court to take a driving test.

A driving 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 driving test at any time. Anyone under age 18 must take a driving test.

## Preparing for the Driving Test

To prepare for the driving test, review the *Texas Driver Handbook*. This free handbook is available online at [www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense](http://www.dps.texas.gov/DriverLicense) under “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 Driving Test

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



## Vehicle Assessment

Before you begin the driving test, your vehicle must pass an assessment 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) permanently affixed to the front and back of the vehicle; *no* auto dealership plates
- Working speedometer
- Working horn
- Working turn signals on the front and back of the vehicle
- Current vehicle registration and inspection
- Current insurance (applicant cannot be listed as “excluded driver”)
- At least one rearview mirror inside or outside of the vehicle
- Front passenger door that opens normally from the inside and outside
- Working seatbelts
- Any restrictions on the driver
- One working brake light for 1959 or earlier model vehicles, Two working brake lights for models after 1960, or three for vehicles equipped with a “high mounted stop lamp”.
- Working windshield wipers, headlights, and taillights (depending on weather conditions and time of day)

## Before the Driving Test

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

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

## During the Driving Test

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

The test takes about 20 minutes. The goal of the driving test is 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 driving test will be immediately stopped and will result in an automatic failure.

## After the Driving Test

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

If you do not pass the driving 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.**