

National standard for driving cars and light vans

The skills, knowledge and understanding you need to be a safe and responsible driver of a car or van (category B vehicle).

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Introduction

What the national standard is for, who it applies to and how it can be used.

Role 1: Prepare yourself, the vehicle, and its passengers for a journey

What you must be able to do and understand when to prepare yourself, the vehicle and its passengers for a journey.

Role 2: Guide and control the vehicle

What you must be able to do and understand to guide and control the vehicle.

Role 3: Use the road in accordance with The Highway Code

What you must be able to do and understand to follow The Highway Code.

Role 4: Drive safely and responsibly in the traffic system

What you must be able to do and understand to drive safely and responsibly in traffic.

Role 5: Review and adjust driving behaviour over lifetime

What you must be able to do and understand to review your driving, change your behaviour and demonstrate developed skills, knowledge and understanding.

Introduction

What the national standard is for, who it applies to and how it can be used.

What the standard is for

How the standard is set out

Who the standard applies to

Who can use the standard

Feedback on the standard

What the standard is for

The national standard sets out the skills, knowledge and understanding that you need to be a safe and responsible driver of a car or light van.

These are vehicles which fall into the driving licence category B.

By setting out exactly what's needed to drive safely and responsibly, it makes it clearer what's needed to train, test and assesses drivers. These areas can then be improved over time.

How the standard is set out

The standard is split into the different 'roles' of driving a car or light van.

Each role is made up of more specific 'units'.

Each unit is then split into 'elements'. Each element covers:

what you must be able to do (the 'performance standard')

what you must know and understand (the 'knowledge and understanding requirements')

Who the standard applies to

This standard applies to driving:

all types of vehicle covered by driving licence category B

manual and automatic vehicles

on any type of road

at any time

in any weather conditions

with any number of passengers (staying within the law and the manufacturer's specification)

with any load (staying within the law and the manufacturer's specification)

for private use and for commercial purposes (staying within the law)

Who can use the standard

The standard can be used by anyone. It's particularly useful for:

drivers of cars and light vans

trainers

driving schools

employers

standards setting bodies

education and training providers

producers of learning materials

Feedback on the standard

Feedback on the standard

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) knows that this standard will evolve and develop over time.

Email national.standards@dvs.gov.uk if you have:

questions about the standard

ideas about how it could be improved

evidence to make the standard stronger

Role 1: Prepare yourself, the vehicle, and its passengers for a journey

What you must be able to do and understand when to prepare yourself, the vehicle and its passengers for a journey.

Unit 1.1: Prepare yourself and passengers for a journey

Unit 1.2: Make sure the vehicle is safe to drive

Unit 1.3: Plan a journey

Unit 1.1: Prepare yourself and passengers for a journey

There are 3 elements in this unit:

choose a suitable mode of transport

make sure you're fit to drive

control the risks linked with carrying passengers, loads and animals

Element 1.1.1: Choose a suitable mode of transport

Performance standards

You must be able to:

assess your own and your passengers' physical, emotional and other needs

assess the environmental impact and cost of other modes of transport

decide whether it's suitable to use a vehicle for the journey

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the pros and cons of different modes of transport, and how each affects the environment

how using a car for very short journeys affects the environment

how vehicle exhaust gases (for example, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and lead) affect the environment

the environmental implications of different:

types of power unit

fuel types

tyres

how much it costs to own and run different types of vehicles over their life

how vehicle noise can affect the environment

Element 1.1.2: Make sure you're fit to drive

Performance standards

You must be able to:

assess whether your ability to drive safely and legally is affected or likely to be affected by the use of:

over-the-counter medicines

prescription medicines

illegal or controlled substances

alcohol

assess whether your ability to drive safely and legally is affected by:

your emotional state

a short or long-term physical condition

tiredness

make other travel arrangements when your ability to drive safely or legally is affected

get help to make any changes needed for you to drive safely and responsibly if you have a long-term physical condition

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

what the law says about driving while you have illegal or controlled substances or alcohol in your system

how illegal or controlled substances or alcohol affect your ability to drive safely, and:

that regardless of any legal limits, it's best to have no alcohol in your system

how the strength of alcohol varies in different types of drink

what a 'unit' of alcohol is equivalent to in different types of drink

how the body processes drugs and alcohol and the rate at which they're removed from your system

that any alcohol can make you more likely to fall asleep, even if the levels in your blood are below the legal limit

how over-the-counter or prescription medicines can affect your ability to drive safely

the risks linked to any combination of:

over-the-counter medicines

prescription medicines

illegal or controlled substances

alcohol

that any remedy or medicine with instructions that say 'may cause drowsiness' is highly likely to cause drowsiness

the range of possible solutions to help people with long-term physical conditions drive safely and responsibly

how being tired before or during your journey affects your ability to drive, and:

how a poor seating position and bad posture can make you tired

that a poor diet or eating food at the wrong time can make you more likely to fall asleep

that there are times of the day when people are likely to feel more sleepy

how emotional states (like anger, grief, sadness and joy) can affect your ability to drive safely

that being careless, thoughtless and/or reckless are frequent causes of crashes

how a short-term injury (like a sprained ankle) can affect your ability to drive safely

that eyesight gets worse over time, and that not realising or doing anything about it can affect your ability to drive safely and legally

the need to have an eyesight test at least every 2 years

that you must wear glasses or contact lenses all the time when driving if you need them to meet the driving eyesight rules

how different sorts of tinted and light-sensitive lenses or visors react in different driving conditions

that changes to your physical and mental abilities, particularly as you get older, can affect your ability to drive safely (such as slower reaction times or reduced muscle strength)

how to make other travel plans when your ability to drive safely or legally is affected

Element 1.1.3: Control the risks linked with carrying passengers, loads and animals

Performance standards

You must be able to:

manage how passengers affect your ability to drive safely

make sure passengers are seated legally, correctly and securely

make sure loads are secure and distributed according to the manufacturer's guidelines

allow for the effect that extra loads may have on how the vehicle handles

make sure animals are secure and correctly restrained within the vehicle

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the law for fitting and using seatbelts

the law for fitting and using baby seats, child seats, booster seats and booster cushions

the importance of using head-restraints, where fitted, and of adjusting them correctly

the correct use of airbags (such as when using a baby seat)

the law on the carriage of loads on the outside of the vehicle

how to use the vehicle handbook to identify how best to safely load the vehicle

what types of load-carrying and securing equipment you can use with the vehicle and how to fit and use them

how to restrain animals safely

how to make sure that you can still see clearly if windows or mirrors are blocked by passengers or by a load

how to adjust the vehicle to allow for extra weight and changed weight distribution

how to adjust your driving behaviour to allow for extra weight or changed weight distribution

how to deal with social pressure and distractions that passengers cause

Unit 1.2: Make sure the vehicle is safe to drive

There are 3 elements in this unit:

make routine checks that your vehicle's safe to drive

check the vehicle is fit for the journey

make sure the vehicle's documents meet the legal requirements

Element 1.2.1: Make routine checks that your vehicle's safe to drive

Performance standards

You must be able to:

check all fluid levels, including windscreen washer reservoir(s)

check that the horn is working correctly

check that all lights and reflectors are:

legal

clean

in good working order

check electrical equipment is in good working order

check there is no damage that would:

affect your ability to drive the vehicle safely

make the vehicle illegal

have an adverse environmental impact

check all tyres, including any spare, are:

legal

correctly inflated

check any equipment, such as the car jack, is in good working order

check all controls are in good working order

check windscreen, mirrors and other viewing devices are clear and adjusted to give the best view

check registration plates are:

fitted

visible

legal

check that any ancillary equipment (like aftermarket sat nav systems or 'head-up' displays) is legal to use in the vehicle and securely fitted in a position that minimises distraction to you

make sure checks are carried out by a competent person where you are unable or unwilling to carry them out yourself

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

that different vehicles may permit different levels of access to check and maintain fluid levels, check electric systems etc, and some checks or maintenance on some vehicles should only be carried out by qualified mechanics

that the vehicle handbook identifies which checks can be carried out by the owner or user and explains how and when to carry them out, either directly or using the vehicle's instrumentation

that overfilling with engine oil can:

damage your engine

increase the amount of environmental pollution the vehicle creates

that using oil that isn't to the manufacturer's specification:

can increase fuel consumption

may cause damage

could affect the vehicle warranty

what fluids to add to the vehicle coolant system and the need to maintain the level of coolant additive

how to check that tyres:

are correctly fitted and inflated

meet legal requirements for tread depth

are free from defects that would make them unsafe or illegal to use

the rules that apply to the fitting of different types of tyres

that tyres specially adapted for different weather conditions are available (such as winter tyres or all-season tyres)

that the operation of any equipment could result in the driver taking their eyes off the road

how to spot signs of abnormal tyre wear and the need to have the vehicle checked if abnormal wear is found

that the windscreen and other windows should be clean and free from obstructions and that there are legal limits to the amount and location of damage to windscreens, beyond which they must be replaced

that lights, indicators, reflectors and number plates must be clean at all times

any rules that apply to the fitting and use of ancillary equipment and how to make sure it can be used safely and with the minimum of distraction

what electrical equipment to check

what controls to check

the legal need to dispose of or recycle oil, batteries and tyres correctly

Element 1.2.2: Check the vehicle is fit for the journey

Performance standards

You must be able to:

familiarise yourself with the vehicle if it is the first time you have driven it

conduct pre-journey checks and configure the vehicle correctly

make changes to your driving position so that you:

are safely and comfortably seated

have good all-round visibility

have control of the vehicle

minimise tiredness

check there is enough fuel of the right type

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

what pre-journey checks are needed and what adjustments to make

the effect of filling a vehicle with the wrong sort of fuel

how to check what sort of fuel your vehicle uses

the operation of low-fuel, mpg or range indicators and how much fuel is left in the tank when low-fuel indicators operate

Element 1.2.3: Make sure the vehicle's documents meet the legal requirements

Performance standards

You must be able to:

make sure your driving licence is valid for the category of vehicle being driven

make sure the vehicle is registered and taxed

make sure you have valid insurance for the use you intend to make of the vehicle

make sure that the vehicle has a current MOT certificate (where applicable)

display red L plates (or if you wish, red D plates in Wales) if you are a provisional licence holder

make sure that the correct documents are in place even if you don't own the vehicle

where your journey will take you into an area where different rules apply, make sure that you follow those rules

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

that you must:

have a valid driving licence for the vehicle you drive

meet any restrictions on your licence

that learner drivers, holding a provisional licence, must be supervised by somebody who:

is at least 21 years old, and

has held a licence to drive the category of vehicle for at least 3 years

that any vehicle driven by a learner must clearly display legal, red L plates (or in Wales either red L or red D plates, or both)

that L (D) plates should be removed when a vehicle is not being driven by a learner

that the vehicle must be registered with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)

the law on the taxation of vehicles and the need to make a statutory declaration (SORN) if you take the vehicle off the road and stop taxing it for any period of time

that you must notify the DVLA if you:

change your name or address

have or develop a medical condition that will affect your ability to drive

buy or sell a vehicle

make any substantive changes to your vehicle

that you must have a minimum of third party insurance covering you for the intended use of the vehicle, and what insurance companies require you to do to meet your obligations under that insurance

that you must hold a valid MOT test certificate for the vehicle if it is more than 3 years old

that, if required by an authorised person, you must be able to produce:

your driving licence

a valid insurance certificate

a current MOT certificate either immediately or within seven days to a police station

that if you borrow or rent a vehicle you still must make sure that you have the correct documents

that if you lend somebody your vehicle you still must make sure that they have the correct documents

that if you drive outside Great Britain there may be different document rules, like a need to have your documents with you at all times

Unit 1.3: Plan a journey

There is one element in this unit - plan a journey.

Element 1.3.1 Plan a journey

Performance standards

You must be able to:

plan a suitable route taking into account:

road conditions

weather conditions

traffic

driving experience

the vehicle you are using

work out the time needed to complete your journey safely and legally, including rest breaks and refuelling stops

decide whether it is safe to make a journey in poor weather conditions

consider other routes if your planned route is blocked, or if weather conditions make it unsafe to continue

program any sat nav systems before you start your journey so that you're not distracted while driving

be prepared for the possibility that your journey may be delayed or affected by poor weather conditions, by taking:

suitable clothing

equipment

food and drink

plan where you intend to park at the end of your journey

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the principles of mapping, the technologies available for route planning and for monitoring road traffic conditions, and the limitations of these technologies

the need to build in extra time to allow for unforeseen delays

how congestion charges and road and bridge tolls may affect your choice of route

how the risks involved in travelling on some routes can change at different times, such as:

heavier traffic at rush hour or in the holiday season

lower stability on exposed routes in windy conditions

the link between your level of skill and experience and whether you should choose a particular route

how to get information on likely weather conditions and how they might affect your journey

when using sat nav systems:

how to program them

the information they can provide

that they can sometimes fail, and how to prepare for that happening

the importance of minimising distractions while driving

how to find safe, secure, legal and convenient places to park

Role 2: Guide and control the vehicle

What you must be able to do and understand to guide and control the vehicle.

Unit 2.1: Start, move off, stop and leave the vehicle safely and responsibly

Unit 2.2: Drive the vehicle safely and responsibly

Unit 2.3: Drive the vehicle while towing a trailer or caravan

Unit 2.1: Start, move off, stop and leave the vehicle safely and responsibly

There are 4 elements in this unit:

start the vehicle

move off safely and smoothly

decelerate and bring the vehicle to a stop safely

park the vehicle safely and responsibly

Element 2.1.1: Start the vehicle

Performance standards

You must be able to:

carry out pre-start checks on:

doors

parking brake

seat

steering

seatbelt

mirrors

disengage anti-theft devices

make sure the gear lever is in neutral (or 'P' or 'N' if driving an automatic vehicle)

consider the effect of starting the engine on other road users, particularly vulnerable road users such as passing cyclists, pedestrians or horse riders

monitor vehicle instruments and gauges during engine start up

respond correctly to information given by instruments and gauges during engine start up

start the engine correctly

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

how to read and respond correctly to instruments, like:

gauges

indicators

warning lights

on-board diagnostic systems and other aids fitted to the vehicle to allow you to monitor its operation and performance

that different vehicles may have different starting mechanisms, types of instrument, parking brakes and other aids, and that it is vital to use the vehicle handbook to find out how they work

how to start the engine when it is cold

the benefits of using anti-theft devices, and how turn them on and off

Element 2.1.2: Move off safely and smoothly

Performance standards

You must be able to:

carry out all-round visual checks, including blind spots, to make sure that it is safe to move-off

signal your intention to move off to other road users, where needed

move off straight-ahead, on the level and on slopes, safely and smoothly, keeping control of the vehicle at all times

move off at an angle from behind a parked vehicle or obstruction, safely and smoothly, keeping control of the vehicle at all times

check that controls are operating correctly

restart quickly and safely if the vehicle stalls

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the importance of carrying out all-round, effective observation of the road and other road users before moving off

the importance and location of blind spots and how to carry out blind spot checks before moving away

the importance of using a safe, systematic routine to help you to move off safely and smoothly

the importance of applying the footbrake before selecting drive on an automatic vehicle

where applicable, the relevance of the 'biting point', that is the point at which the clutch plate and the flywheel come into firm contact and start to transmit drive

the operation of the parking brake release mechanism

the limitations of hill assist systems, where fitted

the effects of 'dry steering', that is turning the wheels when the vehicle is not moving

how to check controls, such as steering and brakes, are operating correctly

Element 2.1.3: Decelerate and bring the vehicle to a stop safely

Performance standards

You must be able to:

use the accelerator and brakes correctly to regulate speed and bring the vehicle to a stop safely

stop the vehicle safely and under control in an emergency

use the parking brake when stationary, where needed

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

how to apply a safe, systematic approach when stopping

the distance a vehicle requires to stop from different speeds and in different road and weather conditions

that a vehicle's overall stopping distance consists of 2 parts:

thinking distance - which is the distance travelled from the point where you decide to brake to the point where you start braking

braking distance - which is the distance travelled from the point where you start to brake to the point where you stop

the importance of anticipation and judgement to allow for progressive use of the brakes

how aids such as an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) can help in safe and effective braking

Element 2.1.4: Park the vehicle safely and responsibly

Performance standards

You must be able to:

select a safe, legal and convenient place to stop and park and, once stationary, secure the vehicle on slopes, facing both up and down, as well as on the level

make sure the parking brake is applied effectively

select a gear to hold the vehicle safely when parked

switch the engine off

make sure that vehicles fitted with automatic transmission are left with the lever in the Park position

make sure lights are left on where required

check for oncoming cyclists, pedestrians and other traffic before opening your door

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

what factors to take into consideration when looking for a safe, legal and convenient place to stop or park

the pros and cons of reversing or 'pulling through' into a parking space rather than reversing out

that you must switch off the headlights, fog lights if fitted and engine when parked

the rules in The Highway Code that apply when leaving your vehicle on different roads and in different lighting and weather conditions

how and when to set the position of the steering wheels of the vehicle to prevent it rolling away

how to make sure that the parking brake is applied effectively

that, when parking a vehicle with manual gears, selecting a gear will help to hold the vehicle if the parking brake should fail

the possible outcomes of opening a door, particularly on the offside of the vehicle, when not safe to do so

Unit 2.2: Drive the vehicle safely and responsibly

There are 4 elements in this unit:

monitor and respond to information from instrumentation, driving aids and the environment

control the acceleration of the vehicle effectively

use gears correctly

steer the vehicle safely

manoeuvre the vehicle

Element 2.2.1: Monitor and respond to information from instrumentation, driving aids and the environment

Performance standards

You must be able to:

monitor and respond correctly to gauges, warning lights and other aids when driving

monitor and respond appropriately to instructions provided by sat nav systems without being distracted from the driving task

respond to the actual situation on the road ahead

make effective use of driving aids such as adaptive cruise control, daytime running lights, automatic headlights and lane warning systems and override or disable them if it is safer to do so

make effective use of mirrors and other aids to vision to identify and monitor other road users and hazards

judge speed and distance correctly and effectively

signal your intentions correctly to other road users in a safe and systematic way

use the vehicle's lights, indicators and horn correctly

use the windows, wipers, demisters and climate and ventilation controls so that you can see clearly

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the purpose and meaning of dashboard warning lights

the location of switches and controls and how to use them without being distracted or losing control of the vehicle while on the move

that you must always act on the basis of what is in front of you and not just rely on the information provided by sat nav systems or other aids

when it is safer to override or disable driving aids

when and how to use dipped headlights

the rules that apply to the use of fog lights

how different types of mirror can make other road users appear to be nearer or further away than they actually are

how to identify and respond to changes in road surfaces and weather conditions

Element 2.2.2: Control the acceleration of the vehicle effectively

Performance standards

You must be able to:

use the accelerator smoothly to achieve and maintain a suitable speed

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

that correct use of the accelerator will help:

vehicle performance

safety

the environment

the disadvantages of over-revving when moving away and while stationary

how to operate cruise control systems safely, if fitted

the importance of using a driving position that allows you to use the accelerator smoothly

Element 2.2.3: Use gears correctly

Performance standards

You must be able to:

change gear smoothly and in good time

select the most suitable gear for the speed of the vehicle, given road and traffic conditions

combine the use of gears with braking and acceleration

use an automatic or automated gear box effectively, when fitted

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

that different vehicles may have different numbers of gears and those gears may be set up differently

the effect that unsuitable gear selection can have on:

the performance of the vehicle

the driver's ability to drive safely and responsibly

the environment

the use of selective gear changing (sometimes known as block changing)

the benefits of timely gear selection when going up and down slopes, particularly when loaded

the use of 'kick down' and 'lock up' when using an automatic vehicle

how to use gears to assist safe parking

the difference between automatic and automated gearboxes

Element 2.2.4: Steer the vehicle safely

Performance standards

You must be able to:

steer the vehicle safely and responsibly in all road and traffic conditions

hold and control the steering wheel to steer the vehicle accurately and safely
continue to steer the vehicle safely and responsibly while operating other controls

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

how to keep safe control of the steering wheel
the effect that the vehicle's turning circle has on steering the vehicle

Element 2.2.5: Manoeuvre the vehicle

Performance standards

You must be able to:

make proper use of all controls to manoeuvre the vehicle safely and responsibly in:
all road and weather conditions
forward and reverse gear
continue to make effective observations, including checks of blind spots, while manoeuvring
position the vehicle correctly to carry out manoeuvres safely
use a safe and systematic way to keep yourself and other road users safe, such as 'mirrors, signal, manoeuvre, position, speed, look'
use reversing camera systems or proximity sensors effectively, where fitted

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

how the use of safe, systematic routines will contribute to safe and responsible manoeuvring
the blind spots for the vehicle and how to check them
the correct procedure:
for reversing into a side road on the left
for reversing into a side road on the right
to carry out a turn-in-the-road or U-turn manoeuvre
for carrying out any reverse parking exercise on and off road
the rules about when and where you cannot make U-turns
the effects of sudden or harsh use of the accelerator, brakes or steering whilst manoeuvring
that different vehicles will react differently in a possible skid situation depending on their configuration (such as front-wheel or rear-wheel drive) and on the technologies fitted (such as ABS or electronic stability program (ESP))
why a skid may occur, how to avoid skids and how to correct them if they do occur

how to allow for vulnerable road users when carrying out a manoeuvre

the benefits of engine braking and when it should be used

the risks linked to reversing a vehicle further than necessary

the risks linked to 'coasting' (allowing the vehicle to move without having a gear selected, either with the clutch depressed or when in neutral)

how to identify a suitable place for manoeuvring

that use of reversing aids, such as camera systems and proximity sensors, does not replace the need to practise good, all-round, effective observation

Unit 2.3: Drive the vehicle while towing a trailer or caravan

There is one element in this unit - drive the vehicle while towing a trailer or caravan.

Element 2.3.1: Drive the vehicle while towing a trailer or caravan

Performance standards

You must be able to:

make sure you have the correct licence to drive the combination of vehicle and trailer or caravan

make sure that the trailer or caravan is suitable and legal for use on the road

make sure that you are insured to drive the combination of vehicle and trailer or caravan

make sure that your vehicle is capable of towing the trailer or caravan

make sure that the trailer or caravan is safely and correctly coupled to the vehicle

carry out correct safety checks

make sure that any load is evenly distributed and secure

allow more time and brake earlier when slowing down or stopping

allow more distance and time to overtake safely

make allowances for the extra length of the vehicle with the trailer or caravan, particularly when turning or emerging at junctions

safely and correctly uncouple the trailer or caravan from the vehicle when it is no longer needed

reverse the vehicle with the trailer or caravan attached

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the driving licence regulations on towing trailers or caravans

that not all insurance policies cover towing a trailer or caravan

that most manufacturers make recommendation for the maximum size of trailer or caravan that can be safely towed by each type of vehicle, and for how they should be attached, and that these recommendations must be followed

how to find the trailer or caravan's 'nose weight' and how to check that this does not exceed the limits of the vehicle's tow bar

how to couple and uncouple a trailer or caravan safely

that towing a trailer or caravan may increase the number of blind spots

how and when to use aids to observation, such as extra mirrors

what safety checks should be made on a trailer or caravan

the speed limits when towing a trailer or caravan

that vehicles towing trailers on motorways are not allowed in the outside lane where there are 3 or more lanes

that towing a trailer or caravan will change the way a vehicle handles, and how to deal with those changes

that it may be necessary to take up a different position on the road when dealing with junctions or roundabouts

what 'snaking' is and how to correct it

that strong winds pose a particular hazard for caravans or high-sided trailers

how to steer correctly when reversing a vehicle with a trailer or caravan attached

the effect that towing a trailer or caravan may have on braking, the concept of brake fade and what to do when descending slopes to make sure you keep in control

that you may have to check height or width restrictions on your route when you tow a trailer or caravan

that rescue services may not include recovery of a trailer or caravan

the benefits of carrying a spare wheel and any other equipment for the trailer or caravan

Role 3: Use the road in accordance with The Highway Code

What you must be able to do and understand to follow The Highway Code.

Unit 3.1: Negotiate the road correctly

Unit 3.2: Comply with signals, signs and road markings

Unit 3.1: Negotiate the road correctly

There are 4 elements in this unit:

maintain a suitable position on the road

negotiate bends

negotiate all types of junctions, including roundabouts, and all types of crossings

drive on motorways and dual carriageways

Element 3.1.1: Maintain a suitable position on the road

Performance standards

You must be able to:

select and maintain a suitable position on the road

change lanes safely and responsibly

overtake other road users legally, safely and responsibly

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

how to select a suitable position on the road

where you may not drive, for example on the pavement, hard shoulder or in cycle lanes

what lane discipline is and why it is important

that your position on the road may be affected by a range of factors including weather, road and traffic conditions

the importance of:

scanning the road ahead for reasons to change your position, such as roadworks

taking timely action to reposition yourself

how to use a safe and systematic way to change position safely and responsibly in time

how the performance and handling of your vehicle will affect your ability to overtake safely and responsibly

where you may and may not overtake

Element 3.1.2: Negotiate bends

Performance standards

You must be able to:

- assess bends correctly on approach
- select a safe position and speed to enter a bend
- maintain safe speed and control throughout a bend
- exit bends safely

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

- how to use various methods such as 'limit point analysis' to judge the severity of a bend
- that when deciding on the line to take and the speed at which it is possible to negotiate a bend safely you should take into account factors such as:
 - adverse camber
 - banking
 - uneven or slippery surfaces
 - weather conditions
 - visibility
 - road junctions
 - other road users
- that different vehicles will perform and handle differently through bends
- the importance of coordinating the use of gears, accelerator, brakes and steering to negotiate a bend safely and responsibly
- how the use of a safe and systematic way to negotiate bends safely
- the effect that loads and passengers may have on the handling of the vehicle through bends

Element 3.1.3: Negotiate all types of junctions, including roundabouts, and all types of crossings

Performance standards

You must be able to:

- apply a safe and systematic way to negotiate all types of junctions, roundabouts and crossings safely and responsibly
- actively scan for more vulnerable road users at junctions, roundabouts and crossings ' for example cyclists and motorcyclists
- turn left and right and go ahead safely and responsibly

emerge safely and responsibly into streams of traffic

cross the path of traffic safely when turning right

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the rules that apply to particular junctions and roundabouts, such as priority rules

how to turn left and right safely and responsibly

the issues that apply to turning right at crossroads

the rules that apply to:

merging into a stream of traffic

crossing the path of an approaching stream of traffic

all types of pedestrian crossing

train and tram crossings

the meaning of warning lights used at pedestrian and train and tram crossings and how to respond correctly

how the use of a safe, systematic routine, including effective observations, will support the safe negotiation of junctions, roundabouts and crossings

the rules that apply to other road users, particularly drivers of large vehicles or vulnerable road users such as cyclists and motorcyclists, and the position that they may select on the road as a result

Element 3.1.4: Drive on motorways and dual carriageways

Performance standards

You must be able to:

join a motorway or dual carriageway safely and responsibly from the left or the right

leave a motorway or dual carriageway safely and responsibly to the left or the right

drive in the most suitable lane

allow for other road users joining or leaving the motorway or dual carriageway

change lanes safely and responsibly

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

how to join a motorway or dual carriageway, safely and responsibly, from traffic light controlled or uncontrolled slip roads

how to leave a motorway or dual carriageway safely and responsibly, including the need to position yourself well in advance to allow other road users enough time to react

how to join or leave a motorway or dual carriageway safely in a safe way systematic way

that you may not stop on a motorway except in an emergency

when and for what purposes you are allowed to use the hard-shoulder

that you mustn't pick up or set down anybody, or walk on a motorway, except in an emergency

that you mustn't cross the central reservation, or drive against the traffic flow on a motorway or dual carriageway, unless directed to do so by an authorised person or traffic signs

the rules that apply when using a motorway or dual carriageway

that some stretches of motorway may have local, active traffic management (also known as smart motorways or managed motorways) control systems installed, which will change speed limits or the direction of flow in particular lanes, and that it is vital to obey the instructions given by such systems

the need to scan well ahead on the approach to junctions to make sure you are aware of:

other road users joining or leaving

queuing traffic

the correct use of hazard warning lights

the risks posed by drivers of left-hand-drive vehicles, in particular large goods vehicles

Unit 3.2: Comply with signals, signs and road markings

There is one element in this unit - comply with signals, signs and road markings.

Element 3.2.1: Comply with signals, signs and road markings

Performance standards

You must be able to:

respond correctly to all permanent and temporary traffic signals, signs and road markings

respond correctly to signals given by authorised persons

respond safely and responsibly to signals given by other road users

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the meaning of, and how to respond to:

mandatory traffic signs

warning signs

road markings

how to work out the speed limit when you can't see speed limit signs

the meaning of, and how to respond correctly to, signals given by:

police officers

crossing patrols

others authorised to control traffic

who is authorised to control traffic

signals that other road users are likely to use and how to respond safely and responsibly to them

Role 4: Drive safely and responsibly in the traffic system

What you must be able to do and understand to drive safely and responsibly in traffic.

Unit 4.1: Interact correctly with other road users

Unit 4.2: Minimise risk when driving

Unit 4.1: Interact correctly with other road users

There are 2 elements in this unit:

communicate intentions to other road users

co-operate with other road users

Element 4.1.1: Communicate intentions to other road users

Performance standards

You must be able to:

use indicators and arm signals to signal intentions correctly

support the use of any signals given by positioning the vehicle correctly and safely

use horn and lights to communicate with other road users where necessary

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the arm signals shown in The Highway Code and when they may need to be given

when and how to use indicators

why you should make sure signals are given in good time and cancelled as soon as possible

how to employ a safe and systematic way to make the best use of signals

when signals must be given and when it is acceptable not to use them

the law on the use of the horn

when the flashing of headlights may be used as a warning of approach or instead of the horn

the risks linked to incorrect use of headlights or the horn as a signal

how and when to use hazard warning lights

how and when to use road positioning to confirm your intentions

Element 4.1.2: Co-operate with other road users

Performance standards

You must be able to:

- be aware of and predict the likely actions of other road users
- give other road users enough time and space to perform manoeuvres
- monitor and manage your own reaction to other road users
- respond to emergency vehicles correctly
- make progress in the traffic stream and overtake with consideration for other road users

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

- how to scan the road ahead to gather useful information
- the rules that apply to other road users, particularly drivers of large vehicles or vulnerable road users such as cyclists and motorcyclists, and the position that they may select on the road as a result
- the importance of predicting the likely actions of other road users, especially vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motorcyclists, children and the elderly
- the importance of always keeping a safe stopping distance between the vehicle and other road users
- how traffic and weather conditions may affect other road users, such as by reducing visibility, and how to allow for this
- how to act safely and responsibly when emergency vehicles are responding to incidents
- how to make safe progress in the traffic stream
- the rules that apply to overtaking on the left
- that driving without due care and attention and reasonable consideration for other road users is an offence

Unit 4.2: Minimise risk when driving

There are 3 elements in this unit:

- identify and respond to hazards
- drive defensively
- drive in an ecologically responsible (eco-safe) way

Element 4.2.1: Identify and respond to hazards

Performance standards

You must be able to:

- continually scan the driving space close to the vehicle and into the distance
- use visual clues to predict possible hazards and prepare for situations that may arise
- judge the significance of possible hazards and prioritise your responses
- respond to hazards safely
- keep focused when faced with distractions

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

- methods you can use to scan your driving space effectively, both close to and into the distance
- what can affect your field of vision, such as parked vehicles, and how to allow for this
- how the construction of your vehicle may affect your field of vision, and how to overcome this
- what aquaplaning is and when it might happen
- factors that might cause you to skid, such as oil or gravel on the road
- how to read the road ahead and prepare for the unexpected
- which kinds of hazard to particularly look for in different environments, such as tractors on rural roads, deer on forest roads or flooding in heavy rain
- that many tunnels are equipped with radio transmitters so that drivers can tune in to be warned of any incidents, congestion or roadworks
- that if you come across congestion in a tunnel that causes you to stop you should leave at least a 5 metre gap between you and the vehicle in front
- when other road users are vulnerable and how to allow for them
- factors that can distract the driver (such as talking to passengers or using a sat nav system) and how to manage them so that you are aware of the driving space and possible hazards
- the law on the use of mobile phones whilst driving

Element 4.2.2: Drive defensively

Performance standards

You must be able to:

- create and maintain a safe driving space
- scan and check your surroundings, especially blind spots

position your vehicle to maximise visibility to other road users

use dipped headlights when necessary during daylight hours

manage your own physical and emotional state to make sure you can manage risks to your safety

drive at such a speed that you can always stop safely in the distance you can see to be clear

assess your own driving behaviour and identify areas needing work

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the importance of using a safe and systematic way to make sure you are always in control of your vehicle and travelling at the right speed, in the right gear and in the correct position on the road for the conditions

the importance of keeping a safe separation distance in all weather and traffic conditions

how to assess your own ability to drive safely and responsibly against best practice

Element 4.2.3: Drive in an ecologically responsible (eco-safe) way

Performance standards

You must be able to:

accelerate and decelerate smoothly and progressively

foresee the need to stop, and use timely and smooth deceleration to reduce fuel consumption and general vehicle wear and tear

drive in the highest responsive gear to keep full control and avoid labouring the engine

remove extra load from the vehicle when not needed

turn off the engine when you are likely to be stationary for some time

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

what affects a vehicle's fuel consumption

how effective scanning and planning can help you to use smooth acceleration or deceleration to keep momentum

how fuel consumption is increased by:

extra load

incorrectly inflated tyres

wind resistance, for example from carrying luggage on roof racks

that selecting the most suitable gear will avoid engine labour and maximise the effects of engine braking

the use of technologies to reduce exhaust pollution

under which circumstances it is appropriate to turn off the engine when stationary, rather than leave it idling

that you should never reduce safety to improve economy

Unit 4.3: Manage incidents effectively

There are 2 elements in this unit:

take suitable action if your vehicle breaks down

take suitable action if you're involved in or witness a collision

Element 4.3.1: Take suitable action if your vehicle breaks down

Performance standards

You must be able to:

stop, in a safe place if possible, and switch off the engine

make sure passengers, animals and loads are managed safely

where suitable, give warning to other road users

seek appropriate help

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

where possible, how to keep control of the vehicle if it breaks down

the law on using the hard-shoulder on motorways and the guidance on waiting for breakdown services

how to identify your precise location on motorways, to allow breakdown services to reach you quickly

that it is better to use an emergency roadside telephone than a mobile phone because it allows the operator to find your exact position

how and when to use a warning triangle

how and when to use hazard warning lights

Element 4.3.2: Take suitable action if you're involved in or witness a collision

Performance standards

You must be able to:

where suitable, stop and park your vehicle in a safe place

make sure passengers, animals and loads are managed safely

make sure warning is given to other road users

assess the incident scene and your safety

note the condition of any casualties

give clear and accurate information to emergency services

give suitable help to others at the scene

where possible, record information about what you saw or the scene as you found it, including taking photographs and drawing sketch plans

comply with legal requirements accurately and in good time, if required

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

the importance of making sure further injury and damage is not caused by:

managing uninjured passengers, animals and passers-by

giving warning to other road users as quickly as possible

how to contact the emergency services and the vital importance of giving them accurate information

the importance of being able to give information about the condition of casualties to the ambulance service

the benefits of gathering and recording information as soon as possible after the event

if you're involved in an incident that causes damage or injury to another person, vehicle, animal or property, you must know the laws that apply to:

stopping

providing your details

giving statements

producing documents

the principles of first aid and the limits of your own first aid skills

Role 5: Review and adjust driving behaviour over lifetime

What you must be able to do and understand to review your driving, change your behaviour and demonstrate developed skills, knowledge and understanding.

Unit 5.1: Learn from experience

Unit 5.2: Keep up to date with changes

Unit 5.1: Learn from experience

There is one element in this unit - learn from experience.

Element 5.1.1 Learn from experience

Performance standards

You must be able to:

demonstrate that you have continued to develop and update your driving skills since you took your driving test

recognise when your ability to drive safely and responsibly is affected by factors such as:

changes in your personal circumstances, such as changes in working patterns

changes in your state of health and your physical abilities, through illness or age-related deterioration

a break from driving

changing to an unfamiliar vehicle

assess the seriousness of the factors identified and:

change your driving behaviour to reduce the risks

make plans for recovering or improving your driving ability

seek professional help where needed

tell DVLA if you have a health or medical condition

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

that you can learn from experience and continue to improve your ability to drive safely and responsibly all through your driving career

how to assess your own ability to drive safely and responsibly against best practice

how to assess and learn from others' driving behaviour

how to use feedback from others to help you be clear about your own ability to drive safely and responsibly

when to seek professional help

the advantages of having regular driver development sessions with a competent instructor to keep up to date and remove bad habits

the advantages of having an initial input from a competent instructor if you return to driving after a break or you change to an unfamiliar vehicle

Unit 5.2: Keep up to date with changes

There is one element in this unit - keep up to date with changes.

Element 5.2.1: Keep up to date with changes

Performance standards

You must be able to:

demonstrate that your understanding of the meaning of road signs and markings is current

demonstrate that your understanding of the law on the use of a vehicle on public roads is current

keep up to date with changes to vehicle technology especially if you change the vehicle you are using

safely operate any technology that is fitted to any vehicle you drive including disabling it where appropriate

respond correctly to any changes in the documents required to use a vehicle on the road

take all steps needed to maintain your entitlement to a licence for the type of vehicle you are driving

Knowledge and understanding requirements

You must know and understand:

where to find information about changes to signs, markings and legislation, such as:

The Highway Code updates

GOV.UK

government publications

motoring organisation websites

where to find information about changes to vehicle technologies, for example:

manufacturers' websites

trade magazines and websites

where to find instructions on the safe operation of technology fitted to a vehicle

where to find information about changes to registration, MOT, or tax rules, such as:

GOV.UK

government publications

motoring organisation websites