VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

the PARENT'S supervised driving guide

Creating Safe Vermont Drivers

Made Possible by IRVING & VM Since 1828

1828
Vermont Mutual Insurance Company is established.

1883
Karl Benz introduces the first gas-powered automobile.

1893
Charles and Frank Duryea manufacture the first American automobile.

At Vermont Mutual, we've been protecting the assets of Vermonters since well before the first automobile rolled off the assembly lines. Through local independent insurance agencies, we continue to provide insurance protection to Vermont families and businesses and are proud to sponsor The Parent's Supervised Driving Program.

Since 1828

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A Message to Parents and Guardians

Safe drivers are no accident. As the parent or guardian of a teenager just learning to drive, you play a critical role in helping your teen develop the habits and skills necessary to be a safe and responsible driver. This supervised driving guide can be used to help you make the most of the time you spend driving with your teen.

You don't have to go it alone. Is your teen enrolled or preparing to enroll in driver education at their high school or a commercial driver training school? Partnering with their driver education instructor will help you help your teen reap the benefits of this training. Your involvement is critical in ensuring your teen learns the skills needed to be the best driver possible. Commit to spending the time necessary to help them develop life-long skills.

Driving is a privilege, not a right. Remind your teen that obtaining a driver's license is a privilege that is earned by demonstrating they know and will follow the rules of the road and are committed to be a safe, responsible driver. Remind them they share the highway with many others, including their neighbors and their friends.

Be a Role Model. Teens model the behaviors of their parents. Model the habits you want your teen to develop. They are more likely to do as you do, not as you say. Distracted driving has become an epidemic. Don't drive distracted yourself, and impress upon your teen the importance of ALWAYS paying attention to their driving.

Robert D. Ide
Commissioner

Graduated Driver Licensing and Your Teen

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death and injury for teenagers. Major factors that place teens at risk include age, lack of driving experience, passengers and other distractions. Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) requires teens 15 to 18 years old learn to drive in stages. Driving privileges increase gradually as teens successfully pass through each stage of the licensing program.

Vermont's Graduated Driver License Law – A Parent's Guide is an additional resource that will help you better understand and reinforce positive teen driving behaviors required by Vermont's GDL Law. This guide is available at the DMV or online at http://dmv.vermont.gov/sites/dmv/files/pdf/DMV-Graduated_License_Brochure.pdf

A Message from Irving Oil

As a leading regional energy company, safety is our way of life—it has to be! From our refinery to over 900 gas stations in Eastern Canada and New England, a culture of safety permeates throughout our company. Not only for the obvious reasons of refining and delivering gasoline, home heating oil and lubricants but because we genuinely care. We care about our customers, our employees, their families and the people and places we serve.

We actively incorporate safety protocols into our daily work environment and instill a "safety first" mindset among our employees. We believe that by doing our best, ensuring a safer environment for all and putting people first is just the right thing to do. It's how we've done business since 1924.

This is why we're happy to be part of *The Parent's Supervised Driving Program*. **It is our hope that our support of this educational effort will help make safe driving a way of life for everyone.**

As always, we appreciate your business and look forward to serving you.

Sincerely,

Harry Hadiaris
General Manager of Irving Oil Marketing

A Message from Vermont Mutual

As our children grow, they are faced with an increased number of challenges. Few challenges are more stressful for parents and potentially dangerous for children than getting behind the wheel as an inexperienced driver. Effective education, training and commitment by PARENTS and TEENS can have a profound impact on reducing accidents and the too often tragic consequences of those accidents.

Vermont Mutual is proud to sponsor *The Parent's Supervised Driving Program*, which provides parents and new drivers with the road map to identify and avoid distractions. The program also instills confidence through repetition and creates a tracking mechanism to ensure new drivers complete the necessary hours of training through progressively challenging situations and conditions.

Your commitment to following the information and process outlined in the guide will help reduce the stress related to teaching your child to drive, increase your confidence that your child is prepared for the challenges of driving, and gives your teen the comprehensive pre-license experience needed to keep them safe on our roadways.

On behalf of Vermont Mutual and the more than 100 Independent Insurance Agents across the state, we wish you and your family Safe Driving!

Sincerely,

William Catto
President of Vermont Mutual Insurance Group

For more information and additional resources on supervising your teen driver and teen driver safety, please visit, "Like" and follow our social media pages.

The Parent's Supervised Driving Guide

Developed by Safe Roads Alliance, a non-profit dedicated to promoting safer driving through education for drivers of all ages, *The Parent's Supervised Driving Guide* is designed to improve teen driver safety by providing parents and guardians with a methodical approach to help their teens learn the requisite driving skills. Each lesson concentrates on a particular sequential skill. Parents are in the best position to help their teens to become safe, smart and skilled drivers.

This guide is also available in PDF and e-reader formats. The Parent's Supervised Driving Program also includes a website, social media pages, and, coming soon, a mobile app.

Website: www.theparentssuperviseddrivingprogram.com

You can interact with other parents and guardians on our Facebook page.
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/TheParentsSupervisedDrivingProgram

Keep up on news and information via our Twitter feed.
Twitter: http://www.twitter.com/PSDP_Info

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- National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB)
- Safe Roads Alliance
- Safe States Alliance
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Notes for Parents/Guardians:

About Supervising Teen Drivers

The Parent's Supervised Driving Guide gives you a simple, easy-to-follow plan you can use to help your teen be a safe and responsible driver.

Some thoughts as you begin this exciting experience together:

Make an effort to enjoy the learning process: Driving is a big step toward independence, and your teen is entering a new phase of life. You'll both remember this experience for years to come. Make it a good memory!

Practice makes perfect: Studies show that the risk of a crash diminishes with experience. The more time you can spend driving with your teen, the less likely it is they'll crash when they begin driving alone. Driving in a variety of circumstances is equally important. While using this guide, you should drive on all types of roads. Make sure your teen gets exposure to a variety of roadways, and in different conditions as well: at night; in rain, fog, and snow; and in heavy and light traffic.

Be a driving role model: It's not enough to say, "Do as I do." Children imitate their parents'/guardians' behavior, so your driving should set a good example for your teen to emulate. Be sure that you:

- Obey all traffic laws.
- Correct any unsafe driving habits (driving aggressively, rolling through stop signs, accelerating through yellow lights, speeding, etc.).
- Refrain from using your cell phone or texting while driving.

Tips for Teaching Your Teen

- **Seat belts must always be worn** properly by everyone in the vehicle.
- **Before each session,** discuss the goals of the day's lesson.
- **Before each new lesson,** review what was learned during the previous lesson.
- **Keep instructions simple and concise:** Say where to go and what action to take. For example: "Drive to the corner and turn right."
- **The feedback** you give should be calm, precise, and immediate. Be patient and alert at all times. Remember to give positive feedback when your teen succeeds!
- **When your teen makes a mistake,** which will happen often, do not criticize. Remain calm and simply repeat the maneuver until it's done correctly. To minimize their frustration, emphasize to your teen that mistakes are a normal part of learning.
- **These lessons should be consistent** with what is taught by your teen's driving instructor. If you teach something differently, your teen will be confused and learning will be more difficult. If the lessons in this guide are different from the instructor's, contact them to clarify the discrepancy.
- **Remember that students learn at different paces.** Make sure your teen has mastered each skill before you move on to the next lesson, even if that means repeating a lesson several times. Patience and practice will pay off in the long run.
- **Integrate night driving** into as many lessons as possible.

Most importantly, make sure the vehicle you use for training is safe. Confirm that the brakes have been recently inspected, and check to make sure the tires have sufficient tread depth. It's generally recommended that you do not train in larger vehicles that lack stability control.

Parental Pointers:

At the start of each driving lesson with your teen, leave your problems behind - and make an effort to stay focused. Don't bring up touchy subjects such as grades, homework, boyfriends/girlfriends, and anything else that might distract either of you from the task at hand.

Notes for Parents/Guardians:

Vehicle Control for Supervisors

Teaching a new driver can be stressful, but knowing you have some control can help. Professional drivers' education instructors are taught emergency responses to potential hazards that can crop up with an inexperienced driver behind the wheel. Here are some skills you can learn to help you maintain control from the passenger seat while teaching:

- **Emergency shifting:** In a quiet, large, level, empty area, practice shifting the transmission from drive to neutral.
- **Taking the wheel:** With an experienced driver in the driver's seat, in a quiet, large, level, empty area, practice steering the car with your left hand from the passenger seat.
- **Mirrors:** Adjust the mirror on the passenger sun visor so you can use it as a rearview mirror. If the right side mirror is properly adjusted, you can use it to monitor traffic to the rear from the passenger seat.
- **Awareness:** Never assume everything is okay. Always check and re-check traffic and your teen's actions.
- **Emergency stopping:** Practice stopping the car with the parking brake (if your vehicle's parking brake is located between the seats). This can be dangerous, even at low speeds, and should only be used as a last resort.

Driving Has Changed

Chances are, today's cars are not the same as they were when you learned to drive. To teach your teen effectively, you need to know about a few important recent changes in how cars work, how we drive, and how driving is taught.

Anti-lock Brake System (ABS): Most newer cars offer ABS as either standard or optional equipment. ABS is a dramatic safety improvement that works by letting the tires rotate, rather than lock up, when the brake is engaged. This allows drivers to turn the car in an emergency stop. ABS should be used with firm, continuous pressure. The brakes may shake and grind when applied, which often concerns users - but this is a normal function of ABS. To find out if your car has ABS, check the instrument panel after you turn on the ignition, or read the owner's manual.

Note: When driving a car without ABS, the old rules still apply. Don't "slam" the brakes. Rather, press the brake pedal firmly. The intention is to stop quickly, but also to avoid locking the brakes and skidding. Skidding causes a loss of control and requires more distance to stop.

Hand Position

Arms holding the wheel at 9 and 3 o'clock are not as likely to be hit by the air bag.

Air bags: Air bags are designed to work with seat belts, which must be worn for the air bags to be effective. Since air bags literally explode out of the wheel on impact, it's important to keep your hands and arms clear of that explosion to avoid injury. This development has changed the recommended steering wheel hand position and height.

- **Steering wheel hand position:** Most of us were taught to position our hands at 10 and 2 o'clock on the steering wheel. It's now suggested that you hold the wheel at 9 and 3 or 8 and 4 o'clock. This gives you better vehicle control and keeps your arms clear in case the air bag deploys.
- **Steering wheel height:** Again, to protect you if the air bag deploys, it's best to point the steering wheel toward your chest, as far down as is comfortable.

Parental Pointers:

"Commentary driving" is a great communication tool. Coach your teen to describe their actions, thoughts, and observations out loud as they drive, similar to a sports commentator. Throughout the learning process, ask them to verbalize what they see around them, including potential risks and any steps they need to take to avoid those risks.

Notes for Parents/Guardians:

Distracted Driving and More

Distracted driving involves any activity, such as cell phone use, that has the potential to distract someone from the task of driving. It has become an epidemic, joining alcohol, speeding, and not wearing seat belts as a leading cause of death and injury in crashes. Teens, who are still learning the complex skills of driving, are particularly susceptible to distractions while behind the wheel. Don't let you or your teen become another statistic. Here are the facts:

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens. Mile for mile, teens are involved in 3 times as many fatal crashes as all other drivers. And 1 in 3 teens who text say they have done so while driving.
- In 2009, almost 5,500 people were killed and almost a half million were injured in accidents related to distracted driving. That's 16 percent of all fatal crashes and 20 percent of all crashes resulting in injury for that year. And almost 1 in 5 of those deaths involved reports of a cell phone.
- A Virginia Tech Transportation Institute study revealed that physically dialing a phone while driving increases the risk of a crash as much as 6 times. Texting is riskier still, increasing collision risk by 23 times.
- A University of Utah study found that the reaction time of a teen driving and talking on a cell phone is the same as that of a 70 year-old driver who's not using a phone.

To combat this growing epidemic, we suggest the following:

- **Set a good example:** Kids observe and learn from their parents. Put your phone down while driving and only use it when you are safely pulled over. According to the Pew Research Center, 40 percent of teens 12 to 17 say they have been in a car when the driver used a cell phone in a way that put themselves and others in danger.
- **Talk to your teen:** Discuss the risks and responsibilities of driving and the danger of dividing their attention between a phone call and the road. Show them the statistics related to distracted driving and urge them to share what they learn with their friends.
- **Establish ground rules:** Set up family rules about not texting on a handheld cell phone while behind the wheel. Enforce the limits set by the graduated licensing program.
- **Sign a pledge:** Have your teen take action by agreeing to a family contract about wearing safety belts, not speeding, not driving after drinking, and not using a cell phone behind the wheel. Agree on penalties for violating the pledge, including paying for "tickets" or loss of driving privileges.
- **Other dangerous distractions:** In addition to cell phone use, distracted driving can include eating, grooming, drinking, listening to or adjusting the radio or MP3 player, using the GPS, talking to passengers, or watching a video, just to name a few activities. Inexperienced drivers are particularly susceptible to these kinds of distractions.

Parental Pointers:

Teens tend to look away from the road and become distracted for longer periods than older drivers. It's important to train them to never look away for longer than two seconds at a time. Test your teen on how long they look away when doing various tasks inside the vehicle, such as tuning the radio. Coach them repeatedly on the two-second limit.

Skill One:

Before You Start the Engine

Goal: Teach your teen vehicle basics before actual driving begins.

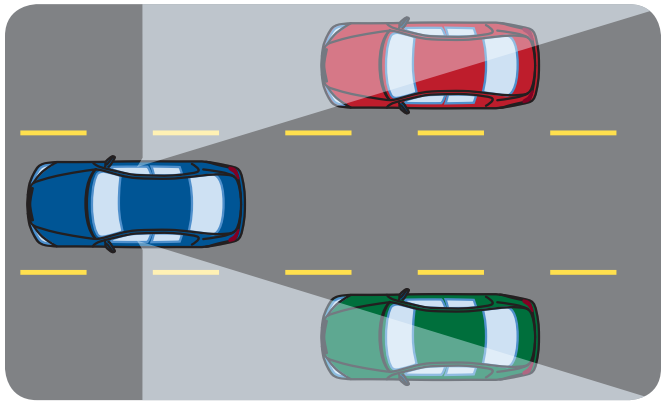
Location: Parked. This is a non-driving lesson.

1. Walk around the outside of the car with your teen. Instruct them to look for leaks and hazards such as broken glass, and to make sure it's clear behind the vehicle as well as in front of the vehicle.

2. Have your teen practice these basic skills until they don't need help:
   - Starting and stopping the engine
   - Naming and operating all dashboard controls
   - Checking oil level
   - Checking wiper fluid
   - Checking tire pressure

3. Teach correct mirror settings. The method below provides the best view of adjacent lanes, for maximum safety.
   - **Inside mirror:** Have your teen sit up straight in the driver's seat and adjust the inside mirror so that it frames the entire rear window. This is the main mirror for viewing what is behind the vehicle.
   - **Left-side mirror:** Have your teen lean their head towards the left-side window, and set the left mirror so they can barely see the side of the car. When they sit up straight, the car should no longer be visible in the mirror.

Checking Blind Spots



The most effective way to deal with blind spots is to briefly turn and look.

   - **Right-side mirror:** Do the same to the right. Have your teen lean to the right over the car's center console, and set the right mirror so they can barely see the right side of the car.

Additionally, teach your teen how to look over their shoulder to check the "blind spot" on each side of the car that cannot be seen in the mirrors.

Seating position: The proper seat position is important to safely control the vehicle. Your teen should sit with their back firmly against the seat. There should be at least 12 inches between the steering wheel and the driver's chest, with the air bag pointing at the chest. The top of the steering wheel should be no higher than the shoulders. Move the seat forward or back so that the driver's heel touches the floor and can pivot between the brake and accelerator. Shorter drivers may need a seat cushion or pedal extenders to sit safely 12 inches from the air bag. The head restraint should be at the center of the driver's head.

Parental Pointers:

In the past, drivers were often taught mirror settings that caused overlap between the rear and side mirrors, which was less safe. This is a great opportunity to update your own driving skills while teaching your teen!

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Two:

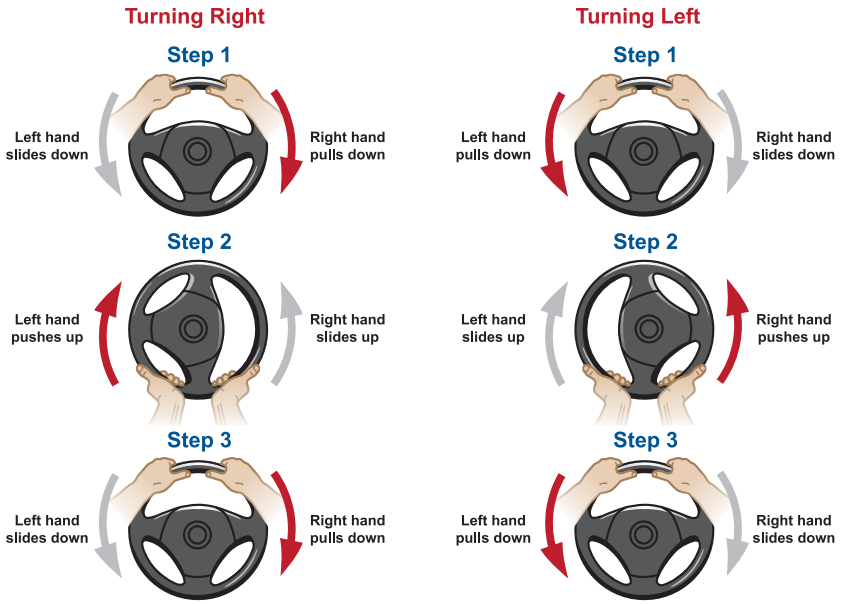
Moving, Steering, and Stopping

Goal: Teach your teen to consistently start, stop, and turn smoothly with full vehicle control.

Location: A large, level, mostly empty area.

1. Everyone in the vehicle **must** be properly buckled up.
2. Before starting, coach your teen to always signal and check mirrors and blind spots before changing the speed, position, or direction of the car. Remind them when needed.
3. Have your teen drive around the perimeter of the lot several times at a slow speed. Have them stop and start frequently, practicing smooth hand-to-hand steering, braking, and accelerating.
4. Pick several targets in the large, level, empty practice area, and have your teen drive to them at specific speeds. For example, "Drive to the stop sign at 15 mph." Focus on steady speed and smooth starts and stops.
5. Once your teen is braking smoothly, practice "hard, smooth stops" at slightly higher speeds (approximately 25–30 mph). Hint: Curling toes back just before braking results in smoother stops. It eases the pressure on the brake.

Steps toward Turning



With hand-to-hand steering your hands do not cross each other.

6. Practice turning techniques:
   - Ease off the accelerator or use the brake to reduce speed before entering a curve, and use gentle acceleration to overcome inertia and pull the vehicle out of the curve.
   - Use smooth, continuous steering wheel movements when approaching a turn and when returning (sliding) the wheel through the hands until the vehicle is in the proper post-turn position.
   - Coach your teen to pick a target near the center of the intended travel path. This target can be used as a visual aid to aim at while steering through turns.

Parental Pointers:

New drivers tend to use the brake too much, and the accelerator too little, to control speed. Coach your teen about easing up on the gas pedal as a way to reduce the car's speed.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Three:

How Close Are You?

Goal: Teach your teen how to tell where their vehicle is in relation to other vehicles or objects.

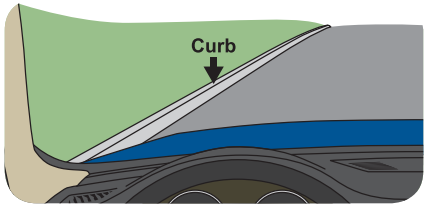
Location: A large, level, mostly empty area with clearly painted pavement lines and curbs.

Reference Points

Explain to your teen that reference points are visual guides to help them judge the car's distance from curbs, lines, other objects, and vehicles.

1. **Driver side curb (or line):**
   - Choose a pavement curb (or line), and tell your teen that the goal is to pull the driver's side of the vehicle 6–12 inches away. Coach them to slowly pull up parallel to the curb, getting gradually closer, and stop when they think they are 6–12 inches away. Have them look at where the curb intersects in the front window (see illustration).
   - Have your teen put the car in park and get out to check if the driver's side wheels are 6–12 inches from the line. If it's not the right distance, have them do it again, checking the reference points.

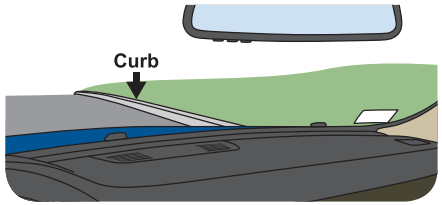
Driver Side Curb



View out the front windshield. Reference points will be different for everyone, depending on the vehicle and the height of the driver.

2. **Passenger side curb (or line):**
   - Choose another curb (or line) parallel to the passenger side, again pulling up slowly to within 6–12 inches. Use the same gradual pull-up method, but for this side, coach your teen to stop when the curb appears to intersect the center of the hood.
   - Again, have your teen get out of the vehicle to check whether the tires are 6–12 inches from the curb. Keep practicing and making adjustments, noticing the reference point, until they can do it consistently.

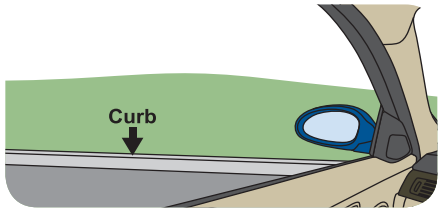
Passenger Side Curb



View out the front windshield. Reference points will be different for everyone, depending on the vehicle and the height of the driver.

3. **Front curb (or line):**
   - Teach your teen to align the front bumper between 6–12 inches from a curb (or line). Have them drive slowly straight toward the curb. Coach them to stop when the curb appears under the passenger side mirror.
   - Have your teen get out of the vehicle to check whether the front bumper is 6–12 inches from the curb. If not, have them adjust the reference point as needed, and keep practicing.

Front Curb



View out the driver's side window. Reference points will be different for everyone, depending on the vehicle and the height of the driver.

Parental Pointers:

It takes more than 15 minutes every day for six months to complete 50 hours of practice driving. For 100 hours, it's more than 30 minutes a day for six months. Studies show that the more time you drive together, the safer your teen will be when driving alone.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Four:

Backing Up

Goal: Teach your teen how to safely drive backwards in a straight line and while turning.

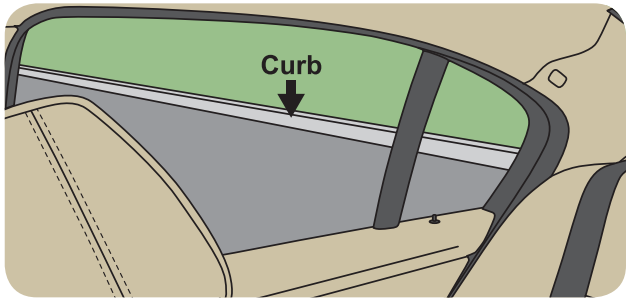
Location: A large, level, mostly empty area.

1. Before moving the vehicle:
   - Coach your teen that they must turn around and look backwards through the rear window when backing up. Using mirrors or back-up cameras doesn't give a full view and is dangerous!
   - Have your teen shift their hips and turn around until they get a good view behind the vehicle. They should drape their right arm over the back of the seat and grasp the top of the steering wheel with their left hand.

2. Practice backing up in a straight line, having your teen follow these steps:
   - Check all areas behind the vehicle prior to and while backing up.
   - Grasp the steering wheel with the left hand and look over the right shoulder through the rear window.
   - First release the brake, then use the accelerator gently, and only when necessary, to control speed. Keep it slow.

3. Once your teen can back up in a straight line consistently, have them practice backing up into a turn:
   - If turning to the left, grasp the steering wheel with the right hand, or with the left hand if turning to the right. Remind your teen to turn the wheel in the direction they want the car to travel.
   - Look in the direction the car is moving through the rear side windows.
   - Back into the turn slowly, first releasing the brake, then using the accelerator if needed.

Backing Up



The driver's view out of the back passenger window. Reference points will be different for everyone, depending on the vehicle and the height of the driver.

4. Practice aligning the rear bumper close to a line or curb, using a reference point (see previous lesson):
   - Choose a line or curb for a target.
   - Have your teen back up toward the target, coaching them to stop when the line or curb appears near the middle of the rear right window when looking over their right shoulder.
   - Have your teen put the car in park and set the emergency brake.
   - Have your teen get out of the car to see whether the rear bumper is close to the target.
   - If adjustments are needed, have your teen try again, establishing a new reference point. Repeat as often as needed until your teen can consistently come within close proximity to the target.

Parental Pointers:

Emphasize that backing up must be done at slow but consistent speeds. It's harder to maintain control of the car when it's in reverse.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Five:

Driving on a Quiet Street – Part 1

Goal: Teach your teen to move and stop a vehicle safely and with confidence on quiet roads.

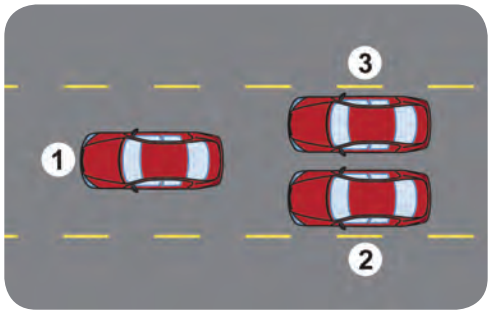
Location: Start in a large, level, mostly empty area. Move to a quiet neighborhood street when indicated. Out of respect to our neighbors, please do not use official state road test courses for practice.

Before moving out onto the road, make sure that your teen has reviewed the driver's manual and is familiar with street signs, signals, pavement markings, and yield and speed laws.

Lane Position

1. Starting in a quiet, large, level, empty area, review the skills learned so far. Have your teen drive several laps around the lot, practicing smooth braking and accelerating, maintaining steady speeds, steering into right and left turns, and using reference points to align the car with pavement lines or curbs.
2. Coach your teen to use "commentary driving" (see page 4) throughout this lesson, if possible.
3. When you and your teen feel ready, move to a quiet street.
4. With your teen behind the wheel, first have them practice driving straight in three different lane positions. Do this for several miles, practicing each position at least 10 times:
   - **Center position (1):** The most common position, with the vehicle centered within the lane. Coach your teen that they should stay in the center position under most circumstances.
   - **Left position (2):** The vehicle positioned to the left side of the lane. This is usually done when making a left turn, to allow for a safety margin on the right side of the vehicle.
   - **Right position (3):** The vehicle positioned to the right side of the lane. This is used when preparing to park or to provide a safety margin on the left side of the vehicle.

Lane Position



Most driving is done in lane position number one.

Intersections

Coach your teen on these techniques for safely approaching an intersection:

- Search for vehicles, pedestrians, signs, and traffic signals.
- Check the rearview mirror for any potential hazards behind the car.
- If it's an intersection with traffic signals, identify who has the green light.
- If turning, put on the turn signal four seconds before making the turn.
- If a stop is required, stop behind the white stop line.
- Select the best lane for the intended direction of travel.
- Yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and other vehicles.

Parental Pointers:

Make sure your teen understands what to do if they encounter emergency vehicles. First, turn down the radio to listen for the direction of the emergency vehicle(s). Stay calm and pull over to the nearest curb, clear of intersections, and wait for the emergency vehicle(s) to pass.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Five:

Driving on a Quiet Street – Part 2

Goal: Teach your teen to turn both right and left safely and with confidence on quiet roads.

Location: A quiet block of single-lane roads, ideally without traffic signals at the intersections.

Making Turns

When your teen is comfortable with lane positions and intersections, it's time to practice turns. Start with **right turns**. Have your teen drive clockwise around the block 10–12 times:

1. Pick a line at the center of the intended travel path while steering through a turn. Make sure your teen does not fixate on one specific spot, but instead focuses on a broader path.
2. Focus on smooth braking into the turn and acceleration out of the turn, as previously practiced in the large, level, empty area.
3. Always check mirrors before turns, and signal four seconds before turning.

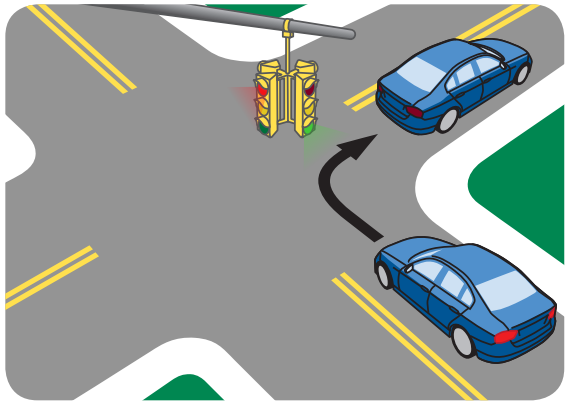
When your teen is proficient at right turns, move on to **left turns**. Have your teen drive counterclockwise around the block 10–12 times, coaching them on these techniques for safe left turns:

1. Position the vehicle close to the yellow line in the middle of the road.
2. If there is a stop sign or red light, stop with wheels pointed straight ahead before the stop line, crosswalk, or intersection.

3. Search the intersection in all directions for vehicles, pedestrians, signs, and signals.
4. Select a gap in traffic, and pull straight forward toward the middle of the intersection. Coach your teen to avoid hesitating.
5. Choose a steering path in the middle of the lane to the right of the yellow line. Turn into the travel lane closest to the yellow line.
6. When the turn is complete, let the steering wheel slide back through the hands.
7. Pick a new target 15–20 seconds ahead in the center of the travel path and accelerate gradually.

Be sure to practice with your teen in a variety of conditions, including at night and in inclement weather, as much as possible.

Making Turns



Have your teen drive around the block making right turns 10–12 times. When they are proficient, drive around the block 10–12 times making left turns.

Parental Pointers:

Most drivers have a tendency to steer in the direction they look. If their eyes move to one side, the car may drift in that direction, too. Remind your teen to focus on a target in the middle of their path of travel - and not fixate on lane lines or other objects. The rest of the area should be scanned quickly, but frequently.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Six:

Looking Ahead

Goal: Teach your teen to develop defensive driving techniques and higher-level visual and anticipatory driving skills before moving on to more complex driving situations. In order to avoid last-second reactions and spot potential hazards, have your teen always look 12-15 seconds down the road. When they are looking far enough ahead, they will be able to spot hazards early and be well prepared to react to them.

Location: Start on a quiet neighborhood street. Out of respect to our neighbors, please do not use official state road test courses for practice. Move onto a road with light traffic when your teen is ready.

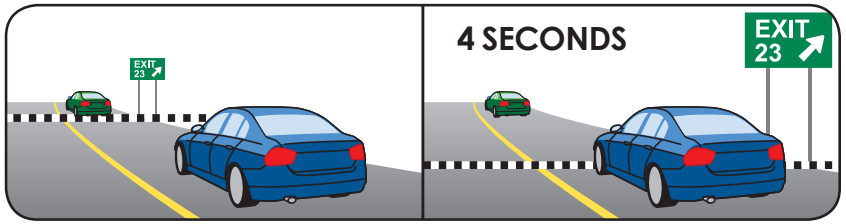
1. Teach your teen the **IPDE system**, a simple system to help new drivers recognize, anticipate, and avoid risks before they turn into problems. IPDE stands for:
   - **Identify** potential risks, like oncoming vehicles, pedestrians, obstacles, or intersections.
   - **Predict** when and where there will be a conflict or problem.
   - **Decide** on the best course of action.
   - **Execute** that action.

   Have your teen use commentary driving as they practice the **IPDE system**. As they drive, ask them to verbally describe their thoughts and actions in order to **identify** potential risks they see, **predict** problems these risks could cause, **decide** what to do to avoid a problem, and then **execute** the maneuver.

2. Teach your teen the **stopping-distance rule**, for the safest distance to stop behind another vehicle. When your vehicle stops, you should be far enough away from the car in front of you that you can see where its tires make contact with the ground. Any closer is too close.

3. Teach your teen the **four-second rule** for the appropriate following distance when driving behind other vehicles. The four-second rule is an important safety measure designed to give drivers enough time to safely steer or brake to avoid problems that occur in front of them on the road.

Four-Second Rule



Your front bumper should not pass before you've reached "FOUR."

How the four-second rule works:

- Start counting when the rear bumper of the vehicle in front of you passes an object.
- Count "one thousand ONE, one thousand TWO, one thousand THREE, one thousand FOUR."
- Your front bumper should not pass that same object before you've reached "FOUR."

Have your teen practice the four-second rule at least 10–12 times, counting out loud to check whether their following distance was appropriate.

Parental Pointers:

Rear-end collisions are the most common form of a car crash. Emphasize to your teen that increasing following distance behind other vehicles is the single best thing they can do to minimize the risk of a crash.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Seven:

Turning Around

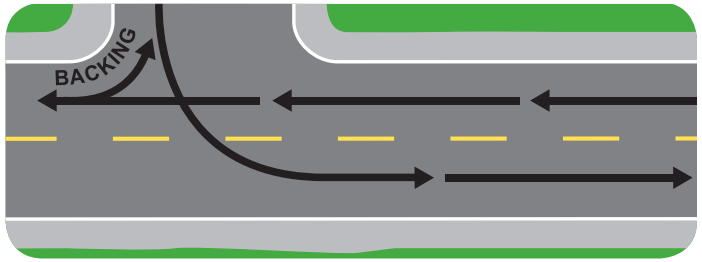
Goal: Teach your teen the best ways to turn a vehicle around in various circumstances.

Location: Start on a quiet neighborhood street with accessible side streets. Please be respectful of neighbors and private property.

1. **Teach turning around safely:** Start by coaching your teen that the safest and easiest way to turn around is to drive around the block. Since that's not always possible, it's important to practice other ways to turn around.

2. **Teach two-point turns:** A two-point turn involves backing into a side street to reverse direction. Your teen will need to demonstrate a two point turn when they take their DMV road test. On a quiet street, have your teen identify an available side street on the same side of the street as your car, at a point where they can see oncoming traffic for at least 200 feet.
   - As you approach a side street on your right, reduce speed and check for traffic in all directions. Turn on your directional light so other drivers will know what you're doing. Drive just past the street and stop about 18 inches from the curb or the edge of the road. Shift into reverse. Check for traffic in all directions before backing up. Be sure to check your blind spots.
   - When the side street is clear, back slowly into it. Be careful to keep on your own side of the street. Look mostly through the rear view window

Two Point Turn



Two point turns will be required when you take your DMV road test.

while backing up. Stop backing up when your vehicle is all the way into the side street beyond any crosswalks or stop lines.
- Before you turn back out on to the street, signal left and shift to drive. When there are no vehicles coming, make a proper left turn to complete the turn around.

Parental Pointers:

Remind your teen to always look in the direction they are backing up and to back up slowly. When backing up a vehicle they need to remember they are responsible for traffic in all directions. Make sure they understand they do not have the right of way and must take care not to interfere with other traffic.

Vermont

Learner's Permit Restrictions:

- With a valid Vermont Learner's Permit you may drive anywhere, anytime in Vermont if there is a licensed and unimpaired parent or guardian, or a licensed or certified unimpaired driver education instructor or a licensed and unimpaired individual 25 years of age or older riding in the front seat.
- Before driving in any other state, you must contact that state's Motor Vehicle Department or law enforcement agency to see if it is legal to drive in that state with a Vermont Learner's Permit.
- The law requires you always have your permit with you when you drive.
- Individuals under the age of 18 may not use a cell phone or other portable electronic device while driving. All drivers are prohibited from texting.

Supervised Driving Log

Parents or Guardians are responsible for making certain that their teen has completed no less than 40 hours of supervised driving, with 10 of those hours being completed at night. The Supervised Driving Log on the following page should be used to keep track of practice driving time. You can also use the Log to assure your teen is practicing in a variety of driving environments and weather conditions. This Log will need to be turned into the DMV when your teen goes to take their junior operator license road test. An online version of this Log can also be found by visiting:
http://dmv.vermont.gov

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VERMONT

Department of Motor Vehicles
120 State Street
Montpelier, Vermont 05603
802.828.2000

Driving Practice Log Sheet

Name: Last	First	Middle

Mailing Address (Street, Road or PO Box):	City:	State:

Date of Birth:	Learner's Permit Number:

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE PARENT OR GUARDIAN

1.	**On what date did your son/daughter acquire his/her Learner's Permit?**	
2.	**To the best of your knowledge, has your son/daughter ever been convicted of any motor vehicle/driving offenses?**	
	❒ Yes ❒ No	If **'Yes'**, please indicate what offense(s):
3.	**Do you certify that your son/daughter has received a minimum of 40 additional hours of practice behind the wheel, with at least 10 hours being nighttime driving? (Nighttime driving is defined as driving during the period of 30 minutes after sunset, to 30 minutes before sunrise.)**	
	❒ Yes ❒ No	If **'No'**, the applicant is not eligible for a Junior Operator's License until s/he has completed the required driving practice.

Statements and warrants herein are certified under penalty of 23 VSA §202 and §203.

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian	Parent/Guardian License #

Signature of Parent/Guardian	Date Signed

This form must be submitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles at the time of application for a Junior Operator's License. It is very important that you do not lose this Log Sheet. As driving practice takes place, the authorized individual who provided the driving practice must fill in the fields (columns 1, 2 and 3) with the appropriate information and initial the form. The **grand total** of the practice time **must be logged on Page 4** of this form. You may attach additional sheets if necessary.

To schedule an exam in any area, call 802.828.2085. For general information, call 802-828-2000 or visit our website at dmv.vermont.gov

TA-VN-210 5M 05/2012 MTC

SAMPLE LOG SHEET ENTRY:					
07/04/12	*10:00 a.m.*	*Hill Starts*	*City - Daytime*	*30 min.*	*J.F.K*

Column 1

Date	Time of Day	Skills Practiced	Driving Environment	Practice Duration	Initials of Provider
Total Practice Time of Column 1:					

Column 2

Date	Time of Day	Skills Practiced	Driving Environment	Practice Duration	Initials of Provider

↓ Column 3 ↓

Date	Time of Day	Skills Practiced	Driving Environment	Practice Duration	Initials of Provider
Total Practice Time of Column 3:					
Combined Practice Time of Columns 1 & 2:					
Total Practice Time of Any Additional Sheets:					
GRAND TOTAL OF PRACTICE TIME (Columns 1, 2 and 3)					

A NOTE ABOUT THE GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSE PROGRAM

(Affecting 15, 16 and 17 Year Old Individuals)

Learner's Permit:

- If you are 15 years of age or older and hold a valid Learner's Permit, you may operate a motor vehicle as long as you are accompanied by one of the following people in the vehicle, **who is riding beside the driver**: 1.) A licensed and unimpaired parent or guardian, 2.) A licensed or certified and unimpaired driver education instructor, and/or 3.) A licensed and unimpaired individual who is at least **25 years of age**.
- To apply for a Learner's Permit, you must have maintained a 'clean' driving record in the previous 2 years
- You must have a Learner's Permit for at least 1 year prior to obtaining a Jr. Operator's License.

Junior Operator License:

- Before you can obtain a Jr. Operator's License, you must complete an additional 40 hours of practice behind the wheel, with at least 10 hours being nighttime driving, while accompanied by one of the individuals indicated above, who is riding beside you. Proof of this additional practice must be submitted to DMV at the time of application for a Jr. Operator's License on this form, and certified by one of the individuals indicated above. **Note:** '**Nighttime driving**' is defined as driving during the period of 30 minutes after sunset, to 30 minutes before sunrise.
- While holding a Jr. Operator's License, there are certain driving restrictions, which are as follows:
  - You may not operate a vehicle in the course of employment or carry passengers for hire for 1 year following the issuance of the Jr. Operator's License. For example, you cannot act as a pizza delivery driver or a taxi driver until you have had your Jr. Operator's License for 1 year, or until you reach the age of 18, whichever comes first.
  - During the first 3 months of operation under a Jr. Operator's License, you are restricted to driving alone, or with one of the individuals indicated above. If one of those individuals is in the vehicle with you, there is no restriction on the number of passengers you can transport; however, you cannot exceed the number of seatbelts.
  - During the second 3 months of operation under a Jr. Operator's License, you may begin transporting family members.
  - After holding a Jr. Operator's License for 6 months, there are no passenger restrictions.

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As the leading regional energy company in New England and Eastern Canada, safety is a way of life, from our extensive safety protocols at our refinery to the occupational behaviors followed by our drivers, operators and employees. And when it comes to safe driving for our employees, we have a policy of no cell phone use while driving—not even on a hands-free device. We're deeply committed to the communities we serve and helping to keep them safe.

We look forward to serving you!

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Skill Eight:

Parking – Part 1

Goal: Teach your teen to master angle and perpendicular parking.

Location: Start in large, level, mostly empty areas. You will need angled and perpendicular spaces.

Before your teen starts parking practice, review Skill 3: "How Close Are You?" and Skill 4: "Backing Up."

Angle Parking

The gentler turn makes this the easiest type of parking for new drivers.
Hint: Choosing a parking spot on the left side of the car can provide more room to maneuver and a better view of traffic when backing out.

1. Signal to indicate intent to turn into a parking space.
2. Move forward until the steering wheel is aligned with the first pavement line marking the space.
3. Look at the middle of the parking space and turn the wheel sharply at a slow, controlled speed.
4. Steer toward the center of the space, straightening the wheel upon entry.
5. Stop when the front bumper is six inches from the curb or from the end of the space.
6. After you've parked, put the gear in park for automatic transmissions (for manual transmissions, put the car either in first or reverse) and set the parking brake. Shut off the ignition and remove the key. Check for traffic prior to getting out. Lock the doors.

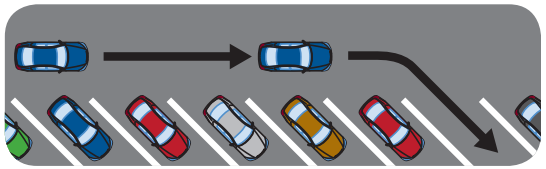
Perpendicular Parking

The steps are the same as angle parking, but the sharper turn into perpendicular spaces may require more practice.

Exiting an angled or perpendicular parking space:

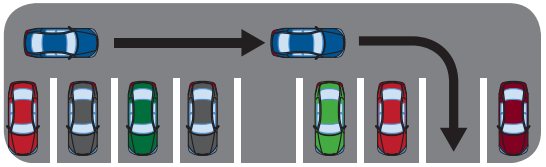
1. With a foot on the brake, shift into reverse, which will signal that you will be backing up.
2. Turn around to look for oncoming traffic.
3. **For angled spaces,** back up straight until the driver's seat is even with the bumper of the next vehicle on the turning side. **For perpendicular spaces,** back up straight until the windshield is aligned with the bumper of the next vehicle.
4. Quickly turn the wheel in the direction that the rear of the car needs to go.
5. Glance forward to make sure the front bumper is clear of the car on the other side.
6. When the front bumper clears the other vehicle, stop, shift into drive, straighten your steering wheel and pull forward to complete the exit.

Angle Parking



Turn when the front of your vehicle reaches the edge of the space. Stay alert for cars backing out to leave their space.

Perpendicular Parking



Turn when your outside mirror reaches the edge of the space. Always finish with your wheels straight and your car centered in the space.

Parental Pointers:

Plan to spend a good amount of time on parking practice with your teen – it's a difficult skill to learn. Many crashes happen in parking lots, and mastering parking skills is an important way to help avoid collisions. Have your teen practice angle and perpendicular parking 15–20 times each.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Eight:

Parking – Part 2

Goal: Teach your teen to master parallel parking.

Location: A street with marked parallel parking spaces at a time of day when traffic is light.

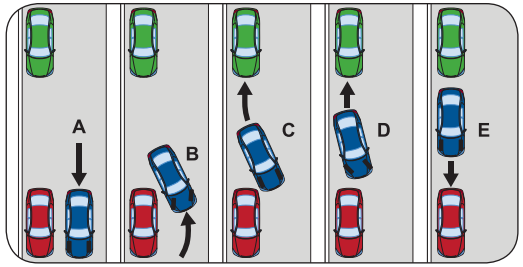
Parallel Parking

Parallel parking is a difficult maneuver for new drivers, so patience is key. Many drivers never learn to do it well, especially in areas where it's not common. Because of the difficulty of learning parallel parking, and because there are several different teaching methods, **this skill is sometimes best taught by a professional driving instructor.** Assess your own parallel parking skills and your teen's abilities before beginning.

1. Select an available space on the passenger's side of the car.
2. Signal when approaching the space and check mirrors for traffic behind the vehicle.
3. Move forward past the space until lined up directly parallel to the car parked in front, 2–3 feet away. Being too close or too far away will make parking more difficult.
4. With a foot on the brake, shift to reverse and turn around to check for traffic and make sure the travel path is clear.
5. Release the brake, start backing up slowly, and start to make an "S" turn, turning first right and then left.

6. Glance both forward and backward repeatedly to check the space around the car while turning.
7. Once the rear of the car is mostly in the space, start turning in the other direction to straighten out.

Parallel Parking



In the beginning you could start by practicing with cones.

8. Adjust the vehicle's position as needed to center it in the space.
9. Check to see if the wheels are 6–12 inches from the curb. If not, pull out and try again.
10. Always check for passing vehicles and cyclists before you open your door.

Exiting a parallel parking space:

1. With a foot on the brake, shift to reverse, turn around, and back as close as possible to the vehicle behind you.
2. Check for traffic, signal, and shift into drive.
3. Make sure the travel path is clear; then, move slowly forward while steering rapidly out of the space.

Parallel parking on a hill: Make sure the vehicle is in park and the parking brake is properly engaged. To prevent the vehicle from rolling into traffic, instruct your teen to turn the front wheels as follows:

- Towards the curb when parking downhill
- Away from the curb when parking uphill

If there is no curb, have your teen point the wheel so that the car would roll away from traffic if it moved.

Parental Pointers:

When practicing parallel parking, your teen will probably hit the curb several times. Tell them not to worry – even the best parallel parkers do this often. Coach them to pull out of the space and try again, adjusting their turning angle as needed.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Nine:

Multi-Lane Roads - Part 1

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and with confidence on busier, more complex multi-lane roads.

Location: A busier multi-lane road. Choose a time with limited traffic, such as a weekend morning.

Skill Review

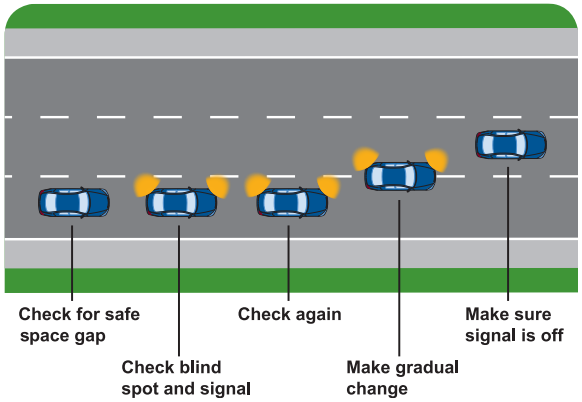
By now, your teen should be comfortable driving on quiet roads. Before starting multi-lane road practice, it's important to review some key information from previous lessons. The following skills are crucial to safe driving on busier, more complicated roads:

- **Mirror position, monitoring, and blind spots (Skills 1 and 2):** Clearly seeing the adjacent traffic is especially important on multi-lane roads. Remind your teen to check the mirror positions when entering the car, and to constantly monitor the traffic around them.
- **Stopping distance (Skill 6):** Remind your teen that when stopping their vehicle behind another one, they should be far enough back to see where the other car's tires meet the road.
- **Following distance (Skill 6):** Review the four-second rule with your teen, emphasizing that increasing following distance is the single best way to reduce crash risk. This gives the driver visibility, time, and space to avoid crashes.

Safe Lane Changing

First, coach your teen not to change lanes unnecessarily. Studies show that while it may not look like it, most travel lanes flow at around the same rate. Changing lanes in an effort to save time doesn't actually save time, but it does increase crash risk.

Multi-Lane Roads



When changing lanes, always recheck traffic with a glance over the shoulder at the blind spot.

Ask your teen to list valid reasons to change lanes. Good answers include: to make a turn, to avoid an obstacle, to exit the road, to park, or to pass another vehicle.

Have your teen practice these lane change steps 15–20 times:

1. Check traffic to the rear and the sides for an appropriate gap.
2. Signal to indicate intention to change lanes.
3. Recheck traffic, including a glance over the shoulder at the mirror's blind spot area.
4. Maintain speed or accelerate slightly before and during the lane change.
5. Gradually move into the new lane.
6. Adjust following distance, using the four-second rule.

Parental Pointers:

Motorcycles, bicyclists, and pedestrians are more difficult to see than cars because they are smaller – and drivers tend to focus on looking for cars. Traffic, weather, and road conditions require cyclists to react differently than car drivers. It can be difficult for young drivers to judge and predict their actions. Always give them a wide berth.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Nine:

Multi-Lane Roads – Part 2

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and with confidence on busier, more complex multi-lane roads.

Location: A busier multi-lane road. Choose a time with limited traffic, such as a weekend morning.

Turns on Multi-Lane Roads

Right turns on multi-lane roads: Start with right turns, which are fairly simple. Right turns are always made from the right lane of the current road to the first open lane of the new road. Look for signs and signals that indicate whether "right on red" is allowed. Practice right turns 10–12 times before moving on to left turns.

Left turns on multi-lane roads: Left turns should almost always begin and end in the closest lane to the right of the yellow line. Choose a steering path in the middle of the closest lane to the right of the yellow line.

There are three types of left turns:

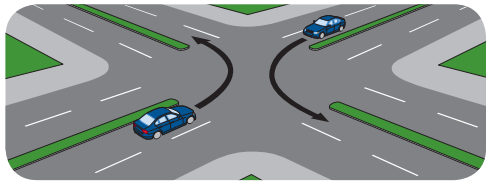
1. **Protected left turns** with a designated left turn lane and left turn signal
2. **Semi-protected left turns** made from a center or shared turn lane
3. **Unprotected left turns** made from an active travel lane

Protected left turns should be made from the designated lane when the left turn signal displays a green arrow.

For semi-protected and unprotected left turns, coach your teen on these steps:

1. Make sure the vehicle is in the correct lane to make a left turn.
2. Signal the turn and begin slowing down at least 100 feet from the intersection.
3. Move carefully into the intersection. Don't turn the wheel until you're ready to make the turn.
4. Yield to any vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians.
5. When there is sufficient space with no oncoming traffic, move ahead into the turn.
6. Choose a steering path line in the middle of the closest lane to the right of the yellow line.

Turning on Multi-Lane Roads



Don't turn the wheel until you're ready to make the turn.

Safe Passing Procedures

Discourage your teen from passing other cars unnecessarily. If passing is necessary, the following steps should be observed:

1. Position your vehicle more than four seconds behind the vehicle to be passed.
2. Check mirrors and blind spots for oncoming traffic.
3. Check the passing lane ahead to make sure there's plenty of space before you try to pass.
4. Signal intent to pass and accelerate quickly to match the speed of traffic flow.
5. While passing, monitor the space in front of and behind your vehicle and check the rearview mirror for the front of the car being passed.
6. When you see the front of the passed car in the rearview mirror and your vehicle is well clear, signal intent, gently and slowly move back to the original lane, cancel the signal, and maintain speed.

Parental Pointers:

Left turns are one of the hardest maneuvers for teens to master. Be patient. New drivers often have difficulty judging the speed and distances of multiple lanes of oncoming traffic. Practice judging oncoming vehicles' distance from your vehicle by counting out loud the time it takes for them to reach your car from a designated point.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Ten:

City Driving – Part 1

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and confidently in the complex environment of city driving. Note: City driving takes hundreds of hours, if not several years, to master.

Location: Busy urban streets. Start at times when traffic is light, moving on to heavier traffic times as your teen gains skill in this situation.

City Driving Skills

Since the busy, crowded environment of city driving is challenging for new drivers, this is a good time to review key driving skills. **The most important skill for drivers is the ability to make good decisions.** City driving forces drivers to make lots of decisions quickly. The three things they need to drive safely in the city are:

1. **Visibility:** to see potential problems in all directions
2. **Space:** to maneuver around obstacles and avoid hazards
3. **Time:** to anticipate risks and make adjustments to speed or position

As you practice, have your teen focus on making decisions that will maximize visibility and space around the vehicle, increasing the available reaction time.

- **Looking ahead (see Skill 6):** Congested city driving leaves very little room for error. Identifying and anticipating potential problems is crucial.
- **Covering the brake:** Coach your teen that when they spot a hazard, they should "cover" the brake by taking their foot off the accelerator and holding it over the brake. This will prepare them to slow down or stop suddenly. Make sure they don't "ride" the brake. Riding the brake confuses other drivers and puts unnecessary wear on the brakes.

Identifying Hazards

As you begin city driving practice, have your teen drive through several blocks to identify and name common hazards on busy, congested streets. Ask them to describe how they will safely deal with each hazard they identify. Such hazards may include:

City Driving

Looking ahead, identifying and anticipating potential problems is crucial for safe driving.

- Parked cars, cars entering or exiting parking spaces, and car doors opening
- Delivery trucks stopping suddenly, with drivers racing to and from the trucks
- Buses making frequent stops, loading and unloading passengers
- Blind alleys, with cars or cyclists darting out
- Pedestrians and cyclists moving unpredictably, crossing streets illegally, etc.
- Limited visibility and intersections spaced at shorter intervals
- Aggressive drivers competing for lane space and parking spots
- Stop-and-go traffic flow

Parental Pointers:

Keep reminding your teen that constant awareness and looking ahead are the keys to learning to drive safely on city streets. Emphasize the idea that a green light means, "Scan the intersection first, then go."

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Ten:

City Driving – Part 2

Goal: Teach your teen to drive safely and confidently in the complex environment of city driving. Note: This is not a goal that will be achieved in a single session. Spend as much time as possible with your teen practicing safe city driving skills.

Location: Busy urban streets. Start at times when traffic is light, moving on to heavier traffic times as your teen gains skill.

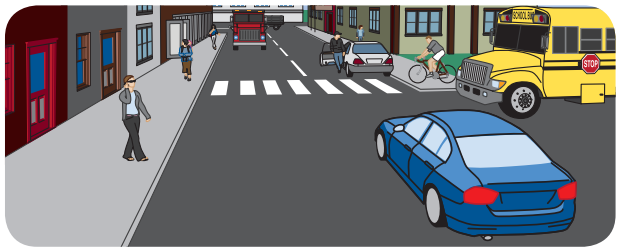
Avoiding Obstacles

Focus on lane position to avoid obstacles: City driving involves many circumstances in which travel lanes are shared, congested, and partially or fully blocked. During practice sessions on busy city roads, have your teen identify these steps to safely avoid obstacles:

- Identify right-lane obstacles, such as stopped buses, parked cars, delivery trucks, and cyclists.
- Identify left-lane obstacles, such as vehicles waiting to make a left turn, or cars traveling in the opposite direction drifting over the center line.
- Identify the least-congested travel lane. Hint: On a three-lane road, this is usually the center lane.
- Position the vehicle in the lane at the greatest distance possible from any obstacles.

It can be tempting to **pass vehicles** on congested streets, when obstacles or traffic volume slow traffic. However, this can be dangerous, due to closely spaced intersections, irregular traffic flow, cars entering and exiting parking spots, etc. Coach your teen to avoid passing on busy city streets.

City Driving



Remind your teen to stay alert, scan their surroundings, and not fixate on any one thing.

Deadly Distractions

What happens inside the car can be just as dangerous as what happens outside. **Engaging in distracting activities while driving can be deadly, especially for young drivers.** Ask your teen to list dangerous driving distractions. Their answers should include:

- Talking or texting (these are the most dangerous distractions)
- Changing radio stations, CDs, or tapes - or dialing a phone
- Passengers, pets, or objects moving in the car
- Eating, drinking, or smoking
- Searching for an item
- Intense or emotional conversations
- Putting on makeup or looking in the mirror

Coach your teen to avoid distracting activities whenever possible, but especially in busy, congested environments. Remind them to focus on keeping as much space as possible around the vehicle at all times.

Parental Pointers:

More is better! City driving skills take a long time to acquire. Spend as much time and drive in as many circumstances with your teen (night, inclement weather) as you are able. Plan trips to less-familiar places where you might not normally travel.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Eleven:

Highway Driving – Part 1

Goal: Teach your teen highway basics, and how to safely enter and exit a controlled access highway.

Location: Start on a multi-lane highway with easily-accessible exits, at a time when traffic is light, such as a weekend morning. Move on to practice at heavier traffic times when your teen is ready.

Basics, Merging, and Exiting

Before your teen gets behind the wheel on the highway, spend some time on highways with you as the driver and your teen as the passenger. Emphasize the importance of looking ahead to anticipate potential problems, and explain key highway features, such as:

- The different kinds of interchanges
- The meanings of highway signs and signals
- The meanings of different lane lines and markings

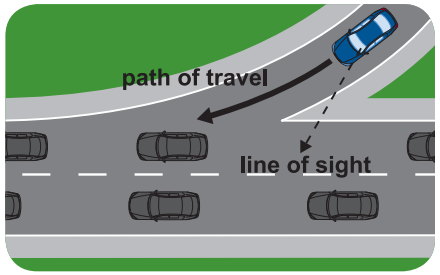
Explain the three segments of on-ramps, and how they're used:

1. **Entrance area:** This stretch allows the driver time to search the highway and evaluate how much space they have to enter and what speed is needed.
2. **Acceleration area:** Here, the driver brings the vehicle up to the speed of highway traffic flow.
3. **Merge area:** The driver uses this space to merge into the traffic flow.

Teach the steps for **merging onto a highway:**

1. Check for on-ramp speed signs.
2. At the entrance area, make quick glances at the highway, scanning for vehicles and entry gaps.
3. In the acceleration area, signal to show intent to enter the highway and adjust speed to match the traffic flow.
4. In the merge area, enter the flow of traffic, checking mirrors and blind spots.
5. Turn off the turn signal and begin looking ahead to anticipate problems or upcoming lane changes. Do not completely stop in the entrance area unless absolutely necessary.

Highway Driving



There is plenty of time to merge. If a gap doesn't present itself immediately, adjust your speed in order to find one.

Teach the steps for **exiting a highway:**

1. Identify the exit well ahead of time.
2. Scan traffic for problems when approaching the exit, but don't slow down on the highway.
3. Start to signal four to six seconds before reaching the ramp.
4. Upon entering the ramp, tap the brakes and begin rapidly reducing speed.
5. Slow down to the posted exit ramp speed limit before reaching the curve.

Three rules to remember when driving on a highway:

1. Maintain proper speed.
2. Create space.
3. Always use your signal.

Parental Pointers:

Practice merging and exiting 10–12 times each, or more if needed for your teen to feel comfortable. Keep coaching your teen that constant awareness and looking ahead are the keys to learning to drive safely.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Skill Eleven:

Highway Driving – Part 2

Goal: Teach your teen to maneuver safely in complex highway driving environments at higher speeds.

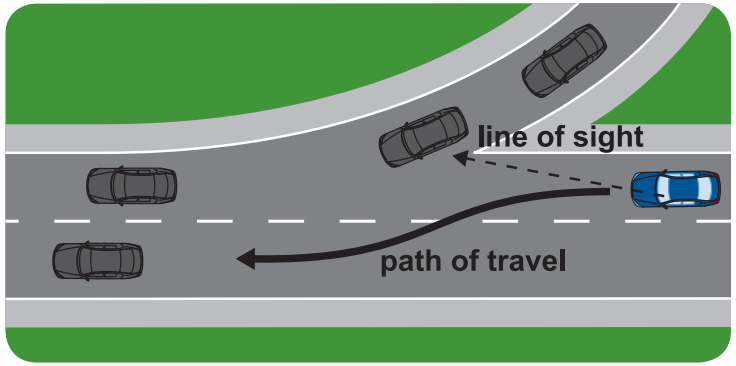
Location: Start on a multi-lane highway with easily accessible exits, at a time when traffic is light, such as a weekend morning. Move on to practice at heavier traffic times when your teen is ready.

Highway Driving Skills

- Once on the highway, coach your teen on steering technique. At fast highway speeds, excessive steering can be dangerous and lead to loss of control. Remind your teen to steer gently on highways.
- In the high-speed, complex highway environment, lane-changing skills are very important. Have your teen spend several miles practicing the lane-changing and passing skills previously learned in Skill Nine: "Multi-Lane Roads," until they are comfortable performing them at highway speeds. Remind your teen to:
  - Watch for merging vehicles, and move one lane left to make space for them when needed.
  - Change lanes one at a time only.
  - Watch mirrors for tailgaters, and move to another lane to let them pass.

- Review the four-second rule for following distance, learned in Skill 6: "Looking Ahead." Additionally, coach your teen to also use a four-second rule for these highway driving circumstances:
  - Merging onto a highway
  - Changing lanes
  - Exiting a highway
- Coach your teen to adjust travel speed and vehicle position based on weather and road conditions. Once your teen is comfortable with and proficient at highway driving in good conditions, spend some practice time on highways under more challenging conditions, such as rain. Coach them to always use appropriate caution, as conditions can change quickly.
- Consider planning some short day trips with your teen to a destination two to three hours away. Have them drive there and back. Find an event or place that you will both enjoy, and have fun.

Highway Driving



For the first several lane changes you may need to talk your teen through the decision-making process. Double-check all mirrors to make sure that the lane is clear.

Parental Pointers:

Early in the training process, parental instruction tends to focus on vehicle handling. As your teen's skills improve, try to focus on "higher order" instruction, such as scanning ahead, hazard detection, and anticipating the other driver's behavior.

Together we completed this lesson. Parent Initials _____ Teen Initials _____

Beyond the Basics:

Continuing Education

Learning doesn't stop when your teen has received their license. It's important to continue teaching and building upon the skills they have learned. As you continue the supervision process, think about these three areas of focus:

1. Spend as much time as possible driving with your teen.
2. Drive in a wide variety of conditions (weather, time of day, different traffic volumes, etc.).
3. Focus on "higher level" learning: scanning ahead, recognizing hazards, and learning to anticipate the behavior of other drivers.

Now that your teen has become proficient in the basic operational skills of driving, it is essential that you ensure they are exposed to a wide variety of driving circumstances and conditions. Make a point of finding circumstances to drive with them that they have not yet experienced, and do it for all types of roads: quiet neighborhood streets, multi-lane roads, and highways. Drive with them at different times of the day, in poor weather, and with varying levels of traffic. It's much better that they experience these conditions with you, rather than alone or with other teens.

Much of what has been discussed to this point has related specifically to the basic skills your teen will need to be safe drivers. Now, your goal is to ensure your teen is thinking intelligently and making the right decisions as a driver.

Sometimes after teens become proficient with the basic skills, parents/guardians will often "step back," becoming less involved in the teen's supervision. But there's still a lot to learn; the teen's education is not complete.

Be clear with your teen that the training process is ongoing and that you will continue to provide input into their development so that you both stay in the learning/teaching mode.

Make sure your teen drives on all kinds of roads, in all kinds of conditions, at different times of the day, in poor weather, and with varying levels of traffic.

Even the best new drivers are likely to make mistakes. These mistakes are great teachable moments for "higher order" instructions. So instead of saying, "Stop sooner," advise your teen to try to focus on looking ahead and anticipating events, with an emphasis on good judgment, good decision making, and hazard perception. The shift from a basic comment to a more advanced focus is perhaps the most essential element of educating your teen at this point in the learning process.

As your teen drives, talk to them about specific hazard areas, possible areas of conflict, and blind spots where trouble may hide. Teens tend not to be as good at anticipating these trouble areas as experienced drivers. A good exercise is to have your teen describe the blind spots and possible areas of conflicts they see. It will let you know that they are thinking, anticipating, and driving intelligently.

Parental Pointers:

Even after your teen is licensed, use your time driving with them to instill habits of good judgment, accurate hazard anticipation, and smart decision-making.

Beyond the Basics:

Practice in Other Conditions

For new drivers, it can be challenging to drive in new and unfamiliar conditions such as inclement weather, different times of day, and varying traffic volume. It's best that you are there with your teen to provide guidance in these situations before they experience them on their own.

Night driving: A driver's reaction depends on their vision, which is limited at night. This makes it more difficult to make judgments and see pedestrians, bicyclists, and other obstacles. Some tips to keep in mind:

- Glare from oncoming headlights makes it difficult to see. To avoid being temporarily blinded, you should look ahead toward the right side of the road.
- Headlights should be turned on before the sun goes down to make the car more visible.
- High beams should only be used when other drivers won't see them, such as on isolated roadways with little traffic.
- To compensate for reduced visibility, drive more slowly and at a greater following distance.

Wet/slippery roads: To reduce risk on wet and slippery roads, coach your teen to practice the following:

- Turn on the wipers as soon as the windshield becomes wet.
- Turn on the low-beam headlights; this helps others see you.
- Drive 5 to 10 mph slower than normal and increase your following distance to five or six seconds.
- Be more cautious, and slow down on curves and when approaching intersections.
- Turn the defroster on to keep windows from fogging over.

If you must make adjustments while driving, make sure the road ahead is clear before looking down at the dashboard – and look away for only a second or two.

Hydroplaning: Hydroplaning occurs as a result of water on the road that is deeper than the tire tread. This layer of water reduces friction with the tires and can result in the loss of control. If you can see deep water on the road, reflections on the pavement, or the car ahead leaves no tracks on the water, these are indications your car could hydroplane. Slow down.

Fog: Use low-beam lights or fog lights if your vehicle has them. Don't use high-beams - they reflect off the fog, causing glare and reduced visibility. Slow down until your speed matches your ability to see, even if it means slowing to a crawl.

Snow: Make sure your vehicle is clear of snow and ice before driving. Driving can cause snow/ice to slide and block your view, or fly off and strike other vehicles. Other tips to keep in mind:

- When starting to drive in snow, keep the wheels straight ahead and accelerate gently to avoid spinning the tires.
- Decrease your speed to make up for a loss of traction. Accelerate and decelerate gently, and be extra careful when braking.
- Stopping distances can be 10 times greater in ice and snow. Begin the slowing-down process long before anticipating a stop at an intersection or turn. Brake only when traveling in a straight line.
- Look ahead for danger spots, such as shaded areas and bridge surfaces that may be icy when the rest of the road is clear.
- When driving uphill, stay far behind the vehicle ahead so you will not need to come to a sudden stop, which can cause skidding.

Parental Pointers:

After becoming proficient in basic driving skills, teens can become overconfident and begin to drive faster, follow other cars more closely, brake abruptly, etc. Gently and continuously remind your teen to stay four seconds back from other vehicles and always drive with caution.

Beyond the Basics:

Teens' Biggest Dangers

Newly-licensed teens crash much more often than older, more experienced drivers. These are the circumstances that are the most common trouble areas for young drivers.

Other teens: Research is clear on the fact that risky teen driving behaviors increase in the presence of teen passengers. A teen who is driving with other teens in the car is more likely to crash. And the more kids there are in the car, the stronger the likelihood of a crash. This is the primary reason many states have passed laws that restrict the ability of teens to drive with their peers.

Seat belts: The unfortunate reality is that teens buckle up far less frequently than adults. Recent studies show that belt use amongst teens is the lowest of any age group, just 76 percent compared to a national average of 85 percent. In fact, that same year, the majority (58 percent) of young people 16 to 20 years old involved in fatal crashes were unbuckled.

Drugs and alcohol: Teens are at far greater risk of death in an alcohol-related crash than the overall population. This is despite the fact they cannot legally purchase or publicly possess alcohol in any state. When alcohol is added to the inexperience of teen drivers, the results can be deadly. Drunk male teenage drivers are 18 times more likely than a sober male teen driver to be killed in a single-vehicle crash. Drunk female teenage drivers are 54 times more likely to be killed than a sober counterpart.

Fatigue: As teens get older their bedtimes get later, but waking times do not tend to change. From age 13 to 19, nightly sleep is reduced by 40–50 minutes. Teen drivers who sleep less than eight hours a night are 33 percent more likely to crash than teens who get more than eight hours of sleep. This lack of sleep results in depressive moods, more risk-taking behaviors, and lower grades. It further reduces a person's ability to process information, be attentive, and have good reflexes, which are all crucial driving skills. Studies have shown that being awake for 18 hours has a similar impact to having a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of 0.08.

> Until teens are much more experienced, they run a greater risk of crashing.

Distracted driving: A driver's primary responsibility when behind the wheel is to focus on the act of driving. Any behavior that distracts from that activity increases the risk of a collision. In this age of electronic communication, the dangers of distractions have increased significantly. Use of electronic devices for any purpose, to send or receive communications, to surf the web, to view images, video, or anything at all, should absolutely be avoided.

Inexperience: Just as it takes years to perfect any skill – athletic, artistic, or otherwise – it also takes years to be a truly good driver. Until teens are much more experienced, they run a greater risk of crashing, being hurt, and potentially dying. A driver's license makes them a driver. Experience makes them good drivers.

Night driving: For teens, the most severe crashes occur at night and on weekends. Night driving is challenging for all drivers, but novice drivers do not have the experience to anticipate and react when visibility is reduced. When teens drive at night, it is more often with a lack of adult supervision, with other teen passengers, and at high speeds – all of which increase risk.

Parental Pointers:

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) systems are intended to provide teen drivers with practice under the safest conditions, exposing them to more situations only as their skills and experience grow.

Beyond the Basics:

Sharing the Road with Trucks

When driving on the highway, you are at a serious disadvantage if involved in a crash with a larger vehicle. In crashes involving large trucks, the occupants of a car - usually the driver - sustain 78 percent of fatalities.

In order to keep you and your teen safe on the road, you should be extra cautious when driving around large trucks and buses. Sharing the road with larger vehicles can be dangerous if you are not aware of their limitations. Here are a few tips to help you drive safer to prevent a crash and minimize injuries and fatalities if one does occur.

Cutting in front can cut your life short: If you cut in front of another vehicle, you may create an emergency-braking situation for the vehicles around you, especially in heavy traffic. Trucks and buses take much longer to stop in comparison to cars. When passing, look for the front of the truck in your rearview mirror before pulling in front, and avoid braking situations.

Beware of blind spots – the "No-Zones": Large trucks have blind spots, or No-Zones, around the front, back, and sides of the vehicle. These No-Zones make it difficult for the driver to see. Avoid being caught in a truck's No-Zones. If you can't see the truck driver in the truck's mirror, the truck driver can't see you.

Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Q: What's safer than Air Bags, Anti-Lock Brakes and Comprehensive Insurance Protection?

A: Attentive Driving

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