

A Guide To Passing Your Driving Test

The information contained herein is drawn from the experiences of the men and women who conduct the driving tests - the Motor Vehicle inspectors and agents. Section 14-36(e) of the Connecticut General Statutes requires an applicant who has not held a Connecticut motor vehicle operator license during the preceding two years to demonstrate that, “the applicant is a *proper person to operate* motor vehicles of the class for which they have applied, has *sufficient knowledge of the mechanism* of the motor vehicles to ensure their safe operation by themselves and has *satisfactory knowledge of the laws* concerning motor vehicles and the rules of the road.”

We expect applicants to be able to safely perform any legal maneuver that we ask and to recognize, understand and react properly to any road sign, marking or situation that is encountered during the skill test. We do not follow specific routes nor must we exclude any roadways (including limited access highways) during the course of a driving test. Driving is a skill and how well you have developed this skill will be the determining factor when the inspector evaluates your driving test.

This guide is based on the errors recorded on previous Road Test Evaluation Reports; we hope that you will find it useful in avoiding mistakes on your own driving test.

Test Vehicle

We test you in the vehicle that you provide; you should be familiar with it. It may have no defective or missing equipment. Applicants should be able to release or apply the parking brake and recognize when it has been applied. You should have learned to operate the windshield wipers and washer, the heater and defroster and know when to use them. Drivers should know how to turn on the headlights and recognize if the parking lights or high beams have been selected. You should be able to operate the horn and each of the other instruments without taking your eyes off the road. You should recognize any warning lights that may be displayed on your instrument panel.

Getting Ready To Drive

Prior to entering the test vehicle, you should have observed nearby parked cars, people, or objects that could affect your ability to safely put the car in motion. Upon entering the vehicle you should adjust your seat (and steering wheel if adjustable) so that you are sitting erect behind the wheel with your feet

able to easily operate the foot controls. The car windows should be clean and defogged. The inside and outside mirrors should be adjusted to give you a good view to the rear with minimized blind spots. You should fasten and adjust your safety restraints. We expect applicants to be able to start the vehicle and recognize when it is running.

Basic Driving Skills

The inspector will instruct you to follow certain directions or perform certain maneuvers in order to evaluate specific driving skills. You should be able to follow the directions you are given. The brake should be applied before you shift the car into gear from the park (P) position. Drivers should accelerate and/or shift smoothly, maintaining good control of the vehicle. The car should be brought up to driving speed in a reasonable amount of time. You should be able to maintain a “space cushion” from the vehicles around you that is appropriate for the speed, road and traffic conditions you are experiencing. Under normal traffic situations, you should be able to bring your vehicle to a stop by smoothly and safely applying your brakes. We expect you to use the turn signals every time it is appropriate and to be able to demonstrate hand signals. You should be aware of other traffic and pedestrians as you make your turn and your

speed should be adjusted for the turn. You should have had enough experience and training to enable you to determine what your best course of action should be in a particular driving situation. Drivers must be alert to what is happening around them.

Critical Driving Skills

It is important to know what is an acceptable and proper speed and be able to maintain that speed. We expect you to know what lane you should turn into, drive in, and turn from. You should know when and to whom you must yield the right of way and recognize when it is being yielded to you. We expect you to know when you must stop for a yellow traffic signal and when it is permissible not to stop. We expect you to know that when you are stopped at a stop sign or traffic light your vehicle is not moving. You should be able to safely control your car while backing. A skilled driver should be able to park in and exit any style parking space. You should be able to drive or back into a perpendicular parking space from the left or right. You must be able to park next to a curb in front of, behind, or between cars. You should know the proper way to park on a hill.

Laws for 16-and 17-year-old Drivers

Connecticut has laws for 16-and 17-year-old drivers. These teen driving laws apply to both learner permit holders and newly licensed drivers. NOTE: 16- and 17-year-old drivers must obtain a learner permit before earning a driver license. These laws include passenger restrictions, a nighttime driving curfew and no cellphone use while driving (even with a hands-free device). You can find detailed information on these laws on the Web at ct.gov/teendriving.

Final Note

Passing your driving test does not automatically make you a good driver. If you continue to drive safely and carefully for the next few years and treat this time as an advanced learning experience, then you will have earned the title of good driver.

Good luck and safe driving!



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