



Motorcycle licences

how to get a Class 6 licence

ISSN 1171-1650

MOTORCYCLE riding requires skills that you can only gain by spending time on a motorcycle. For this reason, you can't legally ride a motorcycle on the road using a car driver licence. You need a Class 6 (motorcycle) licence to ride a motorcycle on the road.

Three stages to get your licence

New Zealand's graduated driver licensing system has three stages:

Stage 1: Learner licence

Stage 2: Restricted licence

Stage 3: Full licence.

As you graduate from one stage to the next, you're given a new licence with different requirements and more responsibilities. Normal road rules apply at all times, and you must always carry your licence with you when you're riding.

You must be at least *15 years old* before you can apply for a motorcycle licence.

Basic handling skills test

Before you can apply for a learner licence you must pass a 'basic handling skills test' conducted by an approved motorcycle riding instructor or testing officer.

Before your test you can practise basic motorcycle handling skills on *your own private property* or at a *motorcycle training school*.

For more information on the riding exercises in this test see the latest version of *The Official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists*.

How much does it cost?

	Fee
Basic handling skills test	\$41.00
Learner licence application fee	\$39.30
Learner licence test	\$39.70
Restricted licence application fee	\$39.30
Restricted licence test	\$48.90
Full licence application fee	\$44.30
Full licence test	\$70.80
Total	\$323.30

All fees include GST and are non-refundable.

* Please note: Undertaking the basic handling skills test with a testing officer will cost \$41.00. The fee charged by motorcycle riding instructors will vary.

Stage 1 — learner licence

When you have your basic handling skills test certificate you can apply for a learner licence. You'll need to:

- fill out an application form at your local driver licensing agent
- produce your basic handling skills test certificate
- produce two forms of identification – one can be your birth certificate, passport or other proof of your identity and age and the other must show your current address (see factsheet 20 for a full list of acceptable forms of ID)
- pay the appropriate fees for the test and the learner licence application
- pass an eyesight screening check
- provide a signature
- have your photograph taken
- pass a written theory test.

The Official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists provides all the information you need when preparing for the test and practice questions. You must correctly answer 32 of the 35 questions in the test to pass. You can use a reader to assist you with the test if you have difficulty reading.

After you pass the test you'll be given a temporary licence, valid for 21 days, to use until you receive your learner licence in the mail. Your learner licence should arrive within 2 to 3 weeks.

Learner licence conditions

1. You must not ride a motorcycle with an engine capacity greater than 250cc.
2. You must not go faster than 70 km/h on the open road.
3. You must not ride between 10 pm and 5 am.
4. You must not carry a passenger.
5. When you're riding, you must always have a learner ('L') plate attached to your motorcycle's rear number plate. You can obtain 'L' plates from Land Transport New Zealand's driver licensing agents:

- Automobile Association (AA)
- Vehicle Testing New Zealand (VTNZ)
- Vehicle Inspection New Zealand (VINZ)
- On Road New Zealand.

Remember that you must *always* carry your learner licence when you're riding.

If you're under 20 years old the legal blood alcohol limit is 30 mg/100 ml, and 150 mcg/litre for breath alcohol. This is effectively a zero limit — consuming one drink will mean a rider can be charged with drink driving.

If you're over 20 years, the legal blood alcohol limit is 80 mg/100 ml, and 400 mcg/litre for breath alcohol.

Stage 2 — restricted licence

After holding a learner licence for at least six months you can go to your driver licensing agent and book a time to sit your restricted licence practical riding test.

To obtain your restricted licence, you must:

- have held your learner licence for at least six months
- pay the appropriate fees for the test and restricted licence application
- produce two forms of identification (one can be your learner licence, the

other must show your current address)

- pass an eyesight screening check
- have your photograph taken
- provide a signature
- pass the restricted licence practical riding test.

When you pass this test you'll be given a temporary licence, valid for 21 days, to use until you receive your restricted licence in the mail. Your restricted licence should arrive within 2 to 3 weeks.

Restricted licence conditions

1. You must not ride between 10 pm and 5 am.
2. You cannot carry a passenger.
3. You must not ride a motorcycle with an engine capacity greater than 250cc.

Remember, you must *always* carry your restricted licence when you're riding.

If you are under 20, your legal alcohol limit is still the same as it was on your learner licence. To be safe, you should not drink anything before you ride.

Stage 3 — full licence

You can apply for a full licence after 18 months on your restricted licence if you are under 25 years old, or after six months on your restricted licence if you are 25 or older.

If you successfully complete an *approved course*, the length of time you must hold your restricted licence for will be reduced to 12 months for those aged under 25 years, and three months for those 25 or older. You must present the course certificate to the driver licensing agent when you book the practical test.

If you're under 25, you can only complete an approved course after you've had your restricted licence for at least six months.

To obtain your full licence, you must also:

- pay the appropriate fees for the test and full licence application
- produce two forms of identification (one can be your restricted licence, the other must show your current address)
- pass an eyesight screening check
- have your photograph taken
- provide a signature
- pass the full licence practical riding test (Factsheet 59, *Full motorcycle licence: What the full licence test involves* tells you more).

When you pass the full licence test you'll be given a temporary licence, valid for 21 days, to use until you receive your full licence in the mail. Your full licence should arrive within 2 to 3 weeks.

You must *always* carry your motorcycle licence when you're riding.

What do I need for the riding tests?

Your motorcycle must have a current warrant of fitness (WoF), be up to WoF standard and have a current *licence* (sometimes (incorrectly) called registration) label showing. You can't use a moped for a restricted or full licence practical test. You must have an 'L' plate showing for a restricted licence practical riding test. You must have your licence with you.

The testing officer will observe your riding, including the way you search around you and control your speed and direction. They will assess your overall driving standard, including your behaviour toward other road users.

If you can't keep your test appointment, you must give at least *two working days* notice. If you don't, or you are more than *five minutes* late, you'll have to re-book and pay the test fee again.

questions

answers

Are the requirements different if I'm 25 or older?

If you are 25 or older, you don't have to spend as long on the restricted licence stage of the graduated driver licensing system. In the past, riders aged 25 or older did not have to go through the restricted licence stage at all. That was changed by the *Driver Licensing Rule 1999* because the development of safe riding skills and experience is vital and is equally important to all riders, whatever their age.

Can I ride to my learner licence test?

No. You don't yet have a licence and it's illegal to ride without one.

What happens if I am unlicensed and I ride?

You will be breaking the law. The penalty for this offence is a \$400 fine or a fine of up to \$1,000 if you're summoned to appear in Court. If you

crash, you may not be covered by insurance. You'll also be forbidden to ride by the Police until you obtain a licence. If you're caught riding unlicensed on another occasion, you will be fined again and your motorcycle may be impounded by the Police for 28 days.

What material should I study to pass my learner licence test?

The Official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists and the practice scratch test papers.

Where can I get copies of The Official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists?

You can buy *The Official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists* from major bookstores and some driver licensing agents, or you may find it at your public library.

Where can I get the practice scratch test questions?

You can buy these questions from most BP service stations, driver licensing agents and bookstores that sell *The official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists*.

Do I need to purchase all the practice scratch test papers?

No. All of the information is in *The official New Zealand road code for motorcyclists*. The scratch tests help you become familiar with the format of the learner licence test.

How many answers have to be correct in the learner licence test?

For your learner licence, you must answer 32 out of 35 questions correctly.

Does the learner licence test have to be taken in English?

Yes, but if you have problems reading English you can bring along an interpreter who is competent in English.

Can I pass the learner licence test if I can't read properly?

You can arrange for a reader-writer to read the questions to you.

What's involved in the eyesight check?

All driver licensing agents have special machines that check your distance vision and your field of vision (how well you see to the sides). If you don't pass this check, you'll have to have your eyes tested by an optometrist or doctor.

Who can teach me to ride?

An approved riding instructor can teach you.

Where do I find my nearest approved riding instructor?

Look in the *yellow pages* first, under *motorcycle riding schools*.

Are there any exemptions to the conditions that apply to the restricted licence?

You can apply through a driver licensing agent for an exemption if you can prove the restrictions are unreasonable in your case, and that safety will not be compromised if an exemption is granted. There is a non-refundable application fee of \$22.50.

What if I break the conditions of my learner or restricted licence?

Each time you are caught offending you will get 25 demerit points and a \$400 fine, or a fine of up to \$1,000 if you are summoned to appear in Court. If you crash,

What kind of motorcycle can I ride once I've got a full licence?

your insurance claim could be delayed or declined. Licences are suspended for three months if a driver gets 100 or more demerit points within two years (and in addition to more Court appearances, vehicles can be impounded for 28 days if a person is caught driving with a suspended licence).

You can ride any motorcycle, moped or ATV (all-terrain vehicle).

What should I do if I lose my licence?

If your licence has been lost, defaced, mutilated or has become unreadable, you can apply for a replacement by filling out an application form, which can be picked up from any driver licensing agent. You'll have to pay a fee.

What can happen if I commit driving offences?

This will depend on how serious the offence is. The penalties range from a fine to imprisonment, or both. Your licence could also be suspended or you could be disqualified from riding.

What happens if I'm disqualified from riding?

You will need to hand in your licence to the Court, or return it to the Director of Land Transport New Zealand. You will not be able to ride until your disqualification period has passed. If the disqualification is for longer than a year, you will have to sit and pass the tests again and pay the appropriate fees. If you are caught riding while disqualified, you may have the motorcycle you are riding impounded for a period of 28 days.

What if any details on my licence application are wrong?

It's important to make sure that you fill out your application form correctly. You may be fined for putting false details in your application. If the agent makes a mistake, your licence will be replaced free of charge.

Can I get a licence if I have a medical condition?

There are some medical conditions that could stop you from getting a licence. For more information, factsheets are available on diabetes, epilepsy, head injuries and vision. Your doctor will also have information about these and other conditions.

Where can I find out more?

Visit our website: www.landtransport.govt.nz. There is excellent safety information there for motorcyclists.

Call our Driver Licensing Call Centre:
(freephone) 0800 822 422.

Write to us: Land Transport New Zealand, PO Box 2840,
Wellington.

Where to get factsheets

You can access all our factsheets on our website: www.landtransport.govt.nz. You can also get copies of most of our factsheets in print from driver licensing agents and Land Transport New Zealand regional offices.

About factsheets

We use our factsheets to provide useful, common-sense advice and information in a concise format. They can't cover all aspects of a topic, and should not be used instead of authoritative legal documents or legal advice.

The content in our factsheets is carefully checked to ensure it is accurate and current. However, some factsheets are updated several times a year and because of this, print versions can quickly become out of date. If the currency of the information you are reading is important, check the factsheet index on our website (www.landtransport.govt.nz) to ensure you have the latest version, or call our Helpdesk on (freephone) 0800 699 000.