



# Restricted licence

## how to get your restricted car licence

ISSN 1171-1650

YOU CAN apply for your restricted licence after you've held a learner licence for at least six months.

### What do I have to do?

You'll need to go to a Land Transport New Zealand driver licensing agent and complete an *application form*. Driver licensing agents are:



New Zealand Automobile Association



Vehicle Testing New Zealand



Vehicle Inspection New Zealand



On Road New Zealand.

### You'll also have to:

- produce identification (eg, your learner licence)
- produce evidence of your current address (eg, a recent bill or bank statement)
- pass an eyesight check or provide an eyesight certificate from your doctor or optometrist
- pay the fees (\$39.30 for the application and \$48.90 for the practical driving test)
- apply for a date and time to sit your practical driving test
- pass the practical driving test.

The application fee and the fee for the restricted licence practical test both include GST and are non-refundable.

### How do I pass the driving test?

The testing officer must be satisfied that you can drive safely and with due regard for other road users, without supervision. The test is designed to examine your driving skills in the areas of speed, control, search and manoeuvres. You can pass the test the first time around if you're well prepared.

Before you sit the test, make sure you get good instruction from someone who can give you experience in different traffic conditions and on different roads. They should choose suitable places for you to practise reversing, hill starts, three-point turns and parking.

### Professional or private instruction?

You can choose from either a qualified professional driving instructor, or private driving instruction.

#### Professional driving instructors

Driving instructors charge a fee for training and are approved by Land Transport New Zealand. They must:

- hold a driving instructor endorsement for those classes of licence they wish to teach
- sit in the front passenger seat when they're instructing you.

Before your first lesson, ask the instructor to show you proof that they hold a current driving instructor endorsement.

#### Private driving instructors

A private instructor is someone you know who is willing to teach you how to drive. They're called your *supervisor*, and they must hold a current full car licence, and have held this for more than two years. They must also sit in the front passenger seat.

Your supervisor should:

- carry their driver licence
- be prepared to commit to the time needed for you to practice



- be a responsible, skilled and confident driver
- be an effective communicator, able to get information and ideas across clearly
- have the patience to instruct you effectively
- be able to teach and build on previous lessons
- review, evaluate and assess your progress.

## Planning your practice sessions

A planned approach to learning is essential, especially in the early stages. Each lesson should be matched to your needs and abilities. There are no short cuts to becoming a safe driver.

Your practice sessions will need to cover the following.

- **Pre-driving checks:** Checking that the vehicle is safe.
- **Cockpit drills:** Knowing the controls, where and when to use them, and how they work.
- **Getting going:** Signals / moving off straight ahead / stopping / steering / moving off at an angle / gear changing / intersections / cornering / negotiating steep gradients / overtaking / town driving / rural driving / motorway driving / making an emergency stop / night driving.
- **Manoeuvres:** Reversing / moving off uphill / moving off downhill / three-point turns / parking (parallel and angle).
- **Observation:** 2-, 4- and 12-second rules (see the *Road code*) / hazard identification / zones of vision.
- **Seeing, thinking and acting:** Seeing road hazards / thinking about what might happen / acting in time to remain safe.
- **Automotive dynamics – how the vehicle reacts:** When cornering / when braking / on ice / in wet weather / on different road surfaces.

You should also learn how to handle driving emergencies (eg, breakdowns and situations requiring first aid).

## The restricted licence practical test

The restricted licence practical test is a chance for you to show how well you can drive.

The test takes 20 minutes on a set route that is designed to measure your driving performance against set criteria. It is also designed to test your ability to recognise and cope with existing and potential road hazards.

### Don't be late

Don't be late for your restricted licence test. The test can't be rushed, so if you're more than five minutes late, your test will have to be cancelled. You'll have to pay again when you book another test.

On the day of the test, you'll need to:

- show the testing officer your *learner licence*. (You must carry your licence at all times when you're driving, so if you don't have it, you can't sit the test)
- have the use of a car, station wagon or light van that
  - has a current warrant of fitness or certificate of fitness, and meets warrant of fitness requirements.
  - has a current vehicle licence label
  - has a current road user charges licence, if it is a diesel vehicle
- ensure that you have two learner licence plates ('L' plates) displayed correctly on the vehicle you're using for the test
- check that you've got enough petrol or diesel to complete the test.

The testing officer will check the vehicle's tyres, lights, horn, body work, mirror positions etc. If the vehicle isn't roadworthy, even if it has a current warrant of fitness or certificate of fitness, the test won't proceed. The testing officer can't take you out for the test in a vehicle that doesn't meet safety requirements.

If your vehicle doesn't meet any of the requirements listed above, the test will be cancelled. You'll need to book and pay for another test, and the test fee won't be refunded

## What does the test involve?

Please note that because this is a test situation, only you and the testing officer can be in the vehicle during the test. Under exceptional circumstances you *may* be able to have someone else present, but this must be approved beforehand by your nearest Land Transport New Zealand regional office.

The practical test is divided into three types of zone:

### 1 Warm-up zone

The warm-up zone gives you time to settle into driving before testing begins. While the testing officer will not be actively marking the full test during this brief time, any breach of road rules will be recorded and will affect your test score.



## 2 Observation zones

Observation zones are the parts of the route where your driving behaviour is graded.

During the observation zones the testing officer decides whether your behaviour is satisfactory or unsatisfactory in the following areas:

- **Search:** This includes regular visual scanning of the road to the front, back and sides for hazards. It includes using rear-view mirrors and turning your head to check.
- **Speed control:** This includes the suitability of your speed for the driving conditions; smooth braking; and acceleration.
- **Direction control:** This includes steering, positioning the vehicle and signalling.

## 3 Recording zones

Recording zones are the parts of the route where your driving behaviour is recorded by the testing officer.

The testing officer will assess your driving and record each aspect of it as either 'satisfactory' or 'unsatisfactory'.

Each time you do something correctly, your score will build.

Where the same 'unsatisfactory' behaviour is observed in different observation zones, your score sheet will be marked 'unsatisfactory' for each separate observation. You may score an 'unsatisfactory' behaviour even though the same driving behaviour may have been carried out correctly on another portion of the test route.

The same behaviours won't always be observed in each observation zone. This is because your behaviour will be determined by the driving conditions. Learning to adopt safe driving practices in various driving conditions is a skill that you must develop.

## What happens at the end of the test?

At the end of the test, the testing officer will:

- summarise the number of unsatisfactory driving behaviours scored
- inform you of the result
- review the unsatisfactory behaviours with you and discuss their importance to safe driving.

## What happens if I pass the test?

If you pass the test, you will earn your restricted licence and may drive under the conditions specified. You will be given a temporary restricted licence, valid for 21 days, to use until your photo driver licence arrives in the mail.

## Why might I fail the test?

You might fail your practical test if you:

- score too many 'unsatisfactory' marks over the whole test route
- try to use a vehicle that isn't roadworthy
- arrive late for the test
- fail to follow the directions given by the testing officer
- cause a crash
- drive recklessly or dangerously
- overtake illegally at no-passing lines
- overtake without maintaining at least 100m of clear road in front of you throughout the entire manoeuvre
- fail to keep left (except when you're overtaking)
- can't control the vehicle and the testing officer has to touch the vehicle's controls to prevent a crash

## What role does the testing officer play during the practical test?

The testing officer will concentrate their attention on your overall driving behaviour in each observation zone and carry out four activities:

- observing
- giving directions
- recording
- keeping a watch on safety.

## Common problems identified by testing officers

Testing officers have identified some common problems people sitting the restricted licence practical test have. These include:

- arriving in a vehicle that doesn't meet warrant of fitness requirements
- arriving late (so the test has to be re-booked and another fee paid)
- being unprepared for the practical test
- being unable to show the testing officer their learner licence at the time of the practical test
- not bringing all the right documents when applying to take the test.

## What are the conditions for a restricted car licence?

- You must always have your restricted licence with you when you're driving.
- You can drive on your own, but not between 10 pm and 5 am. Between these times you must have a supervisor in the front passenger seat who holds a full car licence, and has held it for at least two years.
- If you sat the test in an *automatic vehicle*, your licence will say that you can only drive automatic vehicles.
- You must not carry passengers unless you have a supervisor with you. The only passengers you can carry without a supervisor are:
  - your spouse (or person you live with as if you were married)
  - children who live with you and are under the care of you or your spouse (you or your spouse support them financially)
  - relatives who live with you and who are on a social security benefit (domestic purposes, widow's, invalid's, unemployment or sickness)
  - someone you look after as their primary care-giver.
- If you're under 20 years old, the legal alcohol limit is 30 mg/100 ml of blood. This is effectively a zero limit — consuming even *one* drink may mean you can be charged with drink driving. If you're over 20, the legal alcohol limit is 80 mg/100 ml of blood.

## Penalties

All drivers must carry their licence when driving. You could be fined \$55 if you can't produce your driver licence when a Police officer asks you to do so.

If you drive with passengers or drive between 10pm and 5am without a supervisor, you risk a ticket at the roadside, a fine of \$400 and 25 demerit points. If you're summonsed to appear in court the fine could be up to \$1,000, as well as 25 demerit points.

Licences are suspended for three months if you get 100 or more demerit points within two years (and in addition to more court action, vehicles can be impounded for 28 days if you're caught driving with a suspended licence).

## Where can I find out more?

For more information:

- refer to the latest version of the *Road code* for full details on how to get your restricted licence. Copies are available from bookshops, driver licensing agents and libraries.
- visit our website:  
[www.landtransport.govt.nz](http://www.landtransport.govt.nz)
- phone our Driver Licensing Call Centre:  
0800 822 422
- write to us:  
Land Transport New Zealand, P O Box 2840, Wellington.

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