

Driving Test Methodology

How is the Practical Driving Test assessed?

Where the candidate makes an error, the examiner has to assess what caused the fault and determine the degree of seriousness at the time. The 22 error categories are listed below.

1. **Eyesight Test**

You are committing an offence if you are unable to read a new style registration plate from a distance of 20 meters. The old style plate has to be read from a minimum distance of 20.5 meters. Examiners will estimate a longer distance than this.

2. **Precautions before starting the engine**

Leaving in gear with the clutch up and starting the engine

3. **Use of the Controls**

Accelerator - Uncontrolled use / Excessive engine revs

Clutch - Not depressing the clutch pedal before stopping / Uncontrolled engagement after changing gear

Gears - Clutch Coasting / Looking down when changing gear resulting loss of steering control /

Selecting the wrong gear for the road and traffic conditions

Footbrake - Uncontrolled use resulting in pulling up too early or too late / Late or harsh braking / Missing the brake pedal completely

Handbrake - Applying whilst in motion / Not applying where necessary resulting in rolling forwards or backwards / Allowing the vehicle to 'creep' with an automatic / Unable to release fully

Steering - Unable to maintain a steady course in normal driving / 'Swan Neck' turns when turning right / At a normal stop, mounting and dismounting the kerb / Not following the contour of the kerb at a bell mouth junction / Late steering to avoid an obstruction / Failing to correct the steering soon enough after left-right turns / Under and over steering on turns

4. **Move away**

Safely - No blind spot checks / incorrectly timed checks / Moving away unsafely / Blind spot check only over the left shoulder / Pulling away with the left signal on

Under Control - Stalling / Repeated stalling / Moving off with the handbrake applied / Rolling backwards when attempting to move off / Not engaging a gear and attempting to move off /

Attempting to pull away in too high gear

5. **Emergency Stop**

Promptness - Late or slow reaction to the signal

Control - Applying the handbrake before stopping / Skidding out of control / Missing the foot pedal / Letting go of the steering wheel

6. **Reverse to the Left or to the Right**

Control - Poor co-ordination of controls / Stalling / Mounting the pavement or kerb /

Turning the steering wheel the wrong way / Going wide after the corner / Finishing at an acute angle / Scrubbing-brushing-touching the kerb / Taking an excessive amount of time to complete the maneuver

Observation - No blind spot checks / No observation at or before the point of turn / Excessive use of the door mirrors / Not looking directly behind / Not responding to passing or approaching vehicles / Not reacting to pedestrians / Waiting unnecessarily for other roads users

7. **Turn in the Road**

Control - Poor co-ordination of controls / Mounting the pavement or kerb / Stalling / Turning the wheel the wrong way / Taking an excessively long time to complete the maneuver

Observation - No blind spot checks / Not looking to the left or right before reversing or pulling forwards / Not looking directly behind / Not responding to passing or approaching vehicles / Not reacting to pedestrians / Waiting unnecessarily for other road users

8. **Reverse Parking**

Control - Poor co-ordination of controls / Scrubbing-brushing the kerb / Unnecessary shunting backwards and forwards / Getting too close to the object car / Mounting the pavement

Turning the steering wheel the wrong way / Parking too far from the kerb / Stalling / Not completing within two car lengths / Finishing at an acute angle to the kerb

Car Park - Poor co-ordination of controls / Ending up straddling two bays / Unnecessary shunting forwards and backwards / Turning the steering wheel the wrong way / Stalling

Observation - No blind spot checks / Relying too much or entirely on the mirrors / Ineffective observation / Looking but not responding to other vehicles or pedestrians / Waiting too long for other users in the car park

9. **Use of Mirrors well before**

Signaling-Changing direction-Stopping / Not using the exterior mirror's when essential / Using the mirrors but not responding to the information / Not using the mirrors at all / Pulling up with no mirror checks / Increasing speed with no mirror checks / Late use of mirrors

10. **Giving Appropriate Signals**

Where necessary - Omitting to re-apply when it self cancels / Omitting to give a signal where necessary

Correctly - Signaling unnecessarily / Wrong arm signals / Omitting to cancel after use Incorrect (i.e. left for right, right for left) / Flashing the headlights at another driver to proceed or turn / Having the hazard lights on whilst on the move / Unnecessary use of the horn / Beckoning pedestrians / Misleading signal before intended left and right turn

Properly Timed - Giving late exit signals at roundabouts / Arriving at a junction and then signaling / Signaling after starting the maneuver / Signaling far too early or too late

11. **Response to Signs and Signals**

Traffic signs - Going to the wrong side of a keep left sign / Non-compliance with a Stop sign /

Non-compliance with a No Entry sign / Driving in a Bus Lane when times on the sign prohibit its use / Not complying with Mandatory signs

Road markings - Unnecessarily crossing the solid white center lines / Not conforming to directional arrows / Stopping in a yellow box junction when the exit is not clear

Traffic lights - Waiting at a green filter light when safe to proceed / Not conforming to a red light / Late reaction to the amber traffic light / Remaining at the stop line when safe to move forwards

Traffic controller - Police / Traffic warden / School crossing patrol / Other persons directing traffic

Other road users - Not reacting appropriately to the signals given by other road users

12. **Use of Speed**

Driving too fast for prevailing road, traffic and weather conditions / Breaking the speed limit

13. **Following Distance**

Getting too close to moving vehicles / Pulling up too close to vehicle ahead

14. **Maintain Progress by**

Driving at an appropriate speed for the road and traffic conditions -Holding up following traffic

Avoiding undue hesitation - Stopping unnecessarily at junctions and other hazards / Not proceeding when it is safe to do so at junctions

15. **Junctions**

Approach speed - Approaching too fast / Approaching too slow

Observation - Not taking effective observation before emerging / Looking both ways but still emerging to effect other road users

Turning right - Positioning too far to the left / Positioning too far to the right / On major to minor stopping short of the turning point / Incorrect position before turning right

Turning left - Positioning too far to the right or too close to the kerb / Swinging out prior to reaching the corner / Positioning in an unmarked in appropriate lane to turn left

Cutting Right Corners - Cutting corners, from major to minor roads

16. **Judgment when**

Overtaking - Cutting in after overtaking / Attempting to overtake in a hazardous place / Unsafe overtaking

Meeting Traffic - Failure to show proper judgment when meeting approaching traffic

Crossing Traffic - Turning right across the path of oncoming road users

17. **Positioning**

Normal driving - Too close to the kerb / Too far from the kerb / Not using bus or cycle lanes when the times allow its use / On dual carriageways driving in the right hand lane / Cutting across the normal road position when going ahead at roundabouts

Lane discipline - Straddling lanes marked on roundabouts when going ahead or when turning / Straddling a bus lane

18. **Clearance to Obstructions**

Driving too close to stationary vehicles and obstructions

19. **Pedestrian Crossings**

Approaching too fast / Not reacting the lights at a pedestrian controlled crossing / Pulling away well before the crossing is clear of pedestrians / Not stopping when necessary / Beckoning pedestrians to cross

20. **Position for Normal Stops**

Normal stop not made in a safe position / both nearside wheels on the kerb-pavement /

Over a driveway / at a bus stop / Too far from the kerb / Too near to a junction /
Opposite other parked vehicles

21. Awareness and Planning

Failure to judge what other road users are going to do and react accordingly

22. Ancillary Controls

Failure to use ancillary controls when necessary / Unable to operate controls / Not able to locate or operate essential ancillary controls / Loss of control whilst operating ancillary controls