



**DRIVE TO  
SUCCEED**

How to make your teen's supervised driving practice count.



## Your teen driver's best protection is you.

Motor vehicle crashes are the number one cause of death for teens in America today. Every year, nearly 6,000 teens are killed and more than 300,000 are injured in crashes. The Allstate Foundation believes those numbers are unacceptable. That's why we're committed to helping parents prepare their teens to drive and protect them once they're on the road.

When parents play an active role in helping their teens learn to drive and set driving guidelines, they can reduce their teens' chances of being involved in a crash. And, believe it or not, teens say their parents have the strongest influence on their driving behavior. So it's vital that you take the lead in this rite of passage for you and your teen.

Designed to supplement your teen's driver education curriculum, this brochure offers valuable information, advice and a lesson plan for you to use to help your teen gain valuable driving experience.

## **Before you hit the road:**

- Check with your teen's driver education teacher to determine what skills your teen should practice.
- Before each session, discuss with your teen the route you'll take and the skills he or she will demonstrate.
- Ask your teen to explain how to perform the new skills that will be practiced during each session.

## **While your teen is driving:**

- Use the vanity mirror of the passenger sun visor as your rearview mirror.
- Give simple and clear directions, well in advance of any maneuver.
- Occasionally ask your teen to comment out loud on what he or she is seeing and thinking about. This will help you know if your teen is paying attention and thinking ahead.
- Watch your teen's arms — if they aren't relaxed, your teen may be overstressed. If you think your teen is too nervous, take a break and resume training later.
- Be generous with your praise.
- Don't distract your teen by talking too much.
- Turn off the car radio or mp3 player.
- If your teen does something incorrectly, ask him or her to move the car safely off the road before discussing the mistake and how to correct it.
- Use a calm voice and be patient — remember you once had to learn to drive, too.

## **After each driving lesson:**

- Evaluate the session together.
- Give your teen a chance to point out his or her mistakes before you share your feedback.
- Praise your teen for what she or he did correctly.

# Practice, practice, practice.

More states are requiring teens to have a certain amount of adult-supervised driving time as a condition for getting a license. These state requirements vary, but many experts recommend that parents provide their teens with at least 50 hours of practice behind the wheel, including at least 10 hours of nighttime driving.

A vacant parking lot is the ideal spot for your first few lessons. But, be sure your new driver also experiences a variety of driving situations.

Here's a suggested lesson plan for your supervised driving sessions, including a checklist of skills your teen should master.

Lesson	Number/ Length of Sessions	Key Skills to Practice
<b>Basic driving skills in an empty parking lot</b>	2 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Checks around car for dangerous conditions or situations</li><li>• Understands all controls, gauges and safety devices on dashboard and throughout car</li><li>• Without being reminded, checks and adjusts: seats, headrests, mirrors, safety belts, heating or air conditioning, lights and passenger safety belts before driving</li><li>• Starts, drives and stops smoothly</li><li>• Makes accurate left and right turns from both stopped and moving positions, using signals correctly</li><li>• Drives in reverse (straight and turns)</li></ul>
<b>Driving in light traffic in daylight</b> (25 – 35 mph)	4 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aware of surroundings, watches for trouble and plans next move</li><li>• Keeps speed consistent</li><li>• Makes full stop at stop signs</li><li>• Follows safely behind other vehicles</li><li>• Checks mirrors and blind spots</li><li>• Makes right and left turns with proper use of signals</li><li>• Navigates easy intersections</li><li>• Yields right of way appropriately</li></ul>

Lesson	Number/ Length of Sessions	Key Skills to Practice
<p><b>Driving in moderate traffic in daylight</b> (multiple-lane highways traveling at 35 – 50 mph)</p>	5 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enters and exits highway smoothly</li> <li>• Responds to traffic signs, lights and pavement markings</li> <li>• Navigates busy intersections</li> <li>• Changes lanes</li> <li>• Passes on multiple-lane highways</li> <li>• Understands what to do when being passed</li> <li>• Uses shared or multiple turn lanes</li> <li>• Yields to other drivers (at intersections or for emergency vehicles, funerals, etc.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expressway driving in daylight</b></p>	2 one-and-a-half hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enters and exits expressway during non-peak hours and then during rush-hour traffic safely</li> <li>• Uses defensive driving skills: identifies dangerous situations and changes speed, position and path as necessary; demonstrates awareness of other drivers' blind spots</li> </ul>
<p><b>Driving in light traffic at night</b> (25 – 35 mph)</p>	2 one-and-a-half hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increases following distance and space around car</li> <li>• Adjusts speed as conditions change</li> <li>• Properly uses headlights</li> </ul>
<p><b>Driving in moderate traffic at night</b> (multiple-lane highways traveling at 35 – 50 mph)</p>	4 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjusts to glare from oncoming traffic or in rearview mirror</li> </ul>
<p><b>Expressway driving at night</b></p>	3 one-hour sessions	

Lesson	Number/ Length of Sessions	Key Skills to Practice
<b>Driving in adverse weather conditions in daylight</b> (bright sun, rain, fog, snow and ice)	3 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognizes and responds to dangerous/changing conditions and situations</li> <li>• Gradually decreases speed as needed</li> <li>• Leaves more space around car for maneuvering</li> </ul>
<b>Driving in adverse weather conditions at night</b>	3 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learns how to use cars with and without anti-lock brakes</li> <li>• Understands how to use wipers and defroster when needed</li> <li>• Avoids getting into a skid or spin</li> <li>• Recovers from skid or spin</li> </ul>
<b>Driving in a complex environment in daylight</b> (urban traffic)	3 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maneuvers through challenging intersections</li> <li>• Performs three-point turns</li> <li>• Turns around by pulling into driveway (on right and left side of street)</li> </ul>
<b>Driving in a complex environment at night</b>	4 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Backs into a driveway</li> <li>• Performs U-turns</li> </ul>
<b>Typical driving teen will do during the first month after receiving a license</b> (for example, to school or neighborhood activities)	5 one-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks in and maneuvers out of perpendicular, angled or parallel parking space</li> <li>• Understands car maintenance requirements</li> </ul>
<b>Mixture of driving environments with independent decision making</b>	4 two-hour sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains focus for at least an hour of driving</li> <li>• Obeys all traffic laws, including speed limits</li> <li>• Uses directions to get to unfamiliar locations</li> <li>• Reads and uses maps/GPS systems when needed</li> </ul>

## A few more things to consider...

You and your teen have put in your time on the road, but before you rush to get that license:

- **Decide if your teen is ready.** Not all teens should drive solo when the law says they can. Some characteristics to look for when determining if your teen is ready for a license:
  - good judgment in general
  - ability to resist peer pressure
  - control of emotions
  - ability and willingness to follow state driving laws and your rules
  - comfort and self-assurance (not overconfidence) behind the wheel
- **Understand your state's laws.** Every state has Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws that restrict newly-licensed teens from driving in high-risk times and situations until they gain valuable on-the-road experience. Familiarize yourself and your teen with the laws in your state.
- **Establish your family's rules.** As a supplement to your state's GDL laws, complete a Parent-Teen Driving Contract that outlines your own rules about when, where, how and with whom your teen may drive — and consequences for breaking them. You can download a copy at [www.ProtectTeenDrivers.com](http://www.ProtectTeenDrivers.com). According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, the most important rules are to restrict night driving starting at 9 or 10 p.m. and allow only one teenage passenger for the first year after your teen is licensed.
- **Stick together.** Be sure to encourage other parents in your community to set appropriate rules for their teens so you can present a united front.
- **Keep talking.** Continue to discuss the risks and responsibilities of driving with your teen even after he or she gets a license. Be sure to encourage your teen to speak up and discourage risky behaviors — both as a driver and a passenger.

## For more information...

Sources of information in this brochure and resources for additional teen driving materials include:

- **The Allstate Foundation**  
([www.ProtectTeenDrivers.com](http://www.ProtectTeenDrivers.com))
- **The American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association**  
([www.adtsea.iup.edu](http://www.adtsea.iup.edu))
- **Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration's Rookie Driver program**  
([www.mva.state.md.us](http://www.mva.state.md.us))
- **The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**  
([www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov))



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