



**NORTHERN
TERRITORY**
GOVERNMENT

MOTOR VEHICLE REGISTRY (MVR)

Your guide to basic driving procedures in the Northern Territory

January 2020

Learner Drivers' Guide



**Learner Drivers' Guide –
Your guide to basic driving procedures
in the Northern Territory**

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disclaimer

This guide is not intended to be used as a legal document. It is intended as a guide only, and its aim is to set out, in simple form, the main legal requirements a driver is required to observe in everyday driving in the Northern Territory, as well as other useful information for drivers.

This guide is not the law, but is a guide to some of the laws relating to driving in the Northern Territory. Be aware that:

- The statements in this guide are not precise legal interpretations of the road traffic laws.
- Any diagrams, pictures or examples are included for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to be definitive.
- Not every law is covered in this document.
- Laws are subject to change from time to time. The information in this book is believed to be correct at the time of original publication but may not accurately reflect the current law.
- This document only covers the Northern Territory and while many laws and regulations are uniform across Australia, some laws are different in other places. When driving/riding interstate please familiarise yourself with other states' road rules and demerit point systems before you travel.

If you require a more detailed statement of the law, Northern Territory legislation can be found on the nt.gov.au website.

The information in this publication is provided in good faith and is believed to be accurate at the time of publication. The Territory will not be liable for any loss sustained or incurred by anyone relying on this information.

Other Publications

- Road User's Handbook
- Motorcycle Riders' Handbook
- Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook

Introduction

This Learner Drivers' Guide provides learner drivers with basic driving procedures and information to help them to progress to a provisional class C licence.

If you do not have your learner licence yet, there is information in this guide to help you get it. Please read 'how to obtain a class C learner licence' on page 1.

Once you have a learner licence you can take to the road with your supervising driver. Before you start on the huge task of learning how to drive you will need to decide who is going to teach you, and who will get into the car with you as you practice your skills between structured lessons. For younger learner drivers it might be your mother, father, big brother/sister or a professional driving instructor. For mature learner drivers it might be your husband or wife, a friend, or a professional driving instructor. The choice is entirely yours.

How you are taught to drive is extremely important. For that reason, some lessons with a professional driving instructor who is aware of modern driving practices and training techniques could be helpful. It is important that you find a driving instructor you are comfortable learning with. If for any reason you are not comfortable with your chosen driving instructor, you can change instructors.

If you choose to have lessons with an instructor you should also get as much practice as possible between professional lessons. Ask parents, relatives or friends who hold an open licence to take you out to practice each new driving skill. That way, you can maximise the benefits from each paid lesson and minimise the cost of getting your licence. For some people, learning entirely with relatives and friends may be an alternative to learning with a driving instructor.

The method of driving described in this Learner Drivers' Guide is considered the safest and most efficient way to drive a motor vehicle. It is called the 'system of vehicle control'. This Guide sets out all aspects of the system of vehicle control and can assist your supervising driver to help you to get it right.

Although there is no minimum number of supervised driving hours required before a learner can get their provisional licence in the Northern Territory, learners should try to get as much practice as they can before moving on to driving unsupervised.

Remember that learning to drive well takes lots of experience that will only come with time and lots of practice in different driving situations and conditions. Use every time you drive as an opportunity to learn, and try to practice with an experienced driver as often as you can.

Learner drivers with 100 or more hours of supervised driving practice reduce their risk of crashing once they are on their Ps by about one third.

Motor vehicle crashes in Australia cause thousands of families pain and suffering each year. Many crashes can be avoided by following the road rules and driving in a safe and responsible manner.

Remember, you must obey the road rules at all times. If you do not, you could lose your licence, or worse, crash.

Drive safely and enjoy travelling on Territory roads.

How to use this guide

The Learner Drivers' Guide sets out basic driving processes in a step-by-step format to help you learn to drive a car.

Before you attempt to drive, make sure you have read the Road Users' Handbook carefully to help you understand your responsibilities and the Northern Territory road rules.

After attempting each driving process, take the time to make some notes in this guide. This will help you remember key points and work out what you need to practice more.

Contact information for MVR offices can be found at the back of this handbook.

This publication is also available for free on the NT Government website at nt.gov.au.

The licensing system

The Northern Territory licensing system helps to make travel on our roads safer for all road users. It provides rules and conditions for licence holders and penalties for drivers who do not meet their responsibilities. The licensing system also ensures that licence holders have the required knowledge and skills to safely operate the vehicle they are licensed to drive or ride.

To drive on public roads in the NT you must be licensed and have the correct licence class for the type of vehicle you are driving.

To legally drive on public roads in the NT:

- you must have the right class of licence for the vehicle
- you must hold a current NT licence if you are an NT resident
- you must hold a current interstate licence if you are visiting from interstate
- if you are visiting from overseas, you must hold a current licence from your country, and if your licence is not in English you must also carry an International Driving Permit or an official English translation of your overseas licence.

You cannot drive on public roads in the NT if you have:

- a licence that is expired
- a licence that has been cancelled or suspended
- had your driving privileges withdrawn in the NT
- been disqualified from driving by a court of law in Australia or overseas.

Heavy penalties apply for driving a vehicle without a licence.

If you have been in the NT for more than three months and wish to continue to drive, you must apply for an NT licence.

Exclusion from insurance or benefits reductions may apply if you are deemed a resident of the territory and have not transferred your interstate or overseas licence.

The C class graduated licensing system

The Northern Territory has a graduated licensing scheme for new drivers. The scheme helps to prepare inexperienced drivers for a lifetime of safe and efficient driving.

To be allowed to drive or ride you must hold the correct licence class for that vehicle.

A class C licence allows the licence holder to drive a vehicle that is no more than 4.5t Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM).

New drivers are required to pass both the learner and provisional licence stages before obtaining a full licence.

A new driver will progress through four stages to obtain a full licence.

Stage 1



Pass the driver knowledge test to obtain a learner licence.

Stage 2



Practice driving, with supervision, for a minimum of six consecutive months.

100 or more hours of supervised driving practice will reduce your risk of crashing once you are on your Ps by about one third compared to learners with only 40 hours of supervised driving experience.

Stage 3



Pass the driving test to obtain a provisional licence.

Stage 4



If you are under 25 years old, you will need to hold your provisional licence for at least two years before you can upgrade to a full licence. If you are 25 or older, your provisional licence needs to be held for at least one year.

If your licence is suspended or cancelled during your provisional period, you may need to spend a longer time with a provisional licence once your suspension is lifted, or you will need to start the provisional period again if your provisional licence is cancelled.

At the end of your provisional period you can apply for a full licence. Phone the MVR Contact Centre on 1300 654 628 or renew your licence online using MVR Quick Pay at www.mvr.nt.gov.au.

Remember that learning to drive well takes lots of experience that will only come with time and lots of practice in different driving situations and conditions. Use every time you drive as an opportunity to learn, and continue practicing with an experienced driver as often as you can.



how to obtain a class C learner licence

Become an MVR customer

The first step to getting your class C learner licence is to become an MVR customer. You will need to:

- be at least 16 years of age
- provide evidence of your identity (prove who you are)
- provide evidence of your residency (prove that you live in the NT)
- have your photo taken by an MVR officer.

For information about evidence of identity and residency requirements, please contact MVR on **1300 654 628** or visit the nt.gov.au website.

Applying for a learner licence

To apply for a learner licence at MVR you must:

- be an MVR customer
- be at least 16 years of age
- pass an eyesight test
- pass a knowledge test
- pay the learner licence fee.

You can also apply for a learner licence through the DriveSafe NT program. For more information visit drivesafe.nt.gov.au website.

DriveSafe NT is the Northern Territory Government's Driver Education and Licensing Program and is available to Territory residents over the age of 16.

Driver Knowledge Test (DKT)

Passing the Driver Knowledge Test (DKT) will prove that you have an understanding of the road rules in the Northern Territory.

To prepare for the DKT, even if you go through DriveSafe NT program, you should study the Road Users' Handbook carefully. All the information you need to pass the DKT is in the Road Users' Handbook.

When studying the Road Users' Handbook, be careful not to skip any sections. All the information is relevant to you.

You can test your knowledge of the road rules by taking the practice DKT on the mvr.nt.gov.au website.

Where to go for the Driver Knowledge Test (DKT)

A DKT can be taken at any MVR office up to one hour before the MVR office closes.

How the Driver Knowledge Test works

The DKT consists of 30 questions, randomly selected from a question bank of over 300 questions.

During the test you are not allowed to:

- receive any assistance
- refer to any resource materials that would help you to pass the test (such as this guide, other books, notes or websites)
- use a mobile phone or other communication device
- speak or signal to any other person (except the registry officer when necessary)
- leave the test area.

People caught cheating will fail the test immediately and be banned from taking another DKT for two weeks.

Unsuccessful Driver Knowledge Test

If you do not pass the DKT, you can try again as many times as you need to in order to pass it. You cannot attempt the DKT more than once per day.

The next time you attempt a DKT you will be given a different set of questions to answer.

You should only re-attempt the test when you are ready. To check if you are ready test your knowledge by taking the practice Driver Knowledge Test on the mvr.nt.gov.au website.

Study! Each attempt of the DKT incurs a fee.

To test your road rules knowledge you can go online and try the practice test on the MVR website. You are able to test yourself as many times as you like.

Applicants requiring assistance

Special needs

If you have special needs, such as a physical or mental impairment, you or your representative should discuss your needs for taking the test with the MVR before booking a DKT. This allows time for the necessary arrangements to be made for you on the day of the test.

Difficulty reading and writing English

If you have difficulty reading or writing English, you can choose to attempt a verbal (spoken) test, with or without an interpreter.

An interpreting service is provided by Interpreting and Translating Service NT (ITSNT). If you are not an Australian resident or citizen, you may need to pay a fee directly to ITSNT for this service.

Arrangements for verbal testing services can be made by calling **1300 654 628**.

Renewal of a learner licence

If your learner licence is nearing expiry and you are not ready to sit the driving test to obtain a provisional licence you can re-sit the theory test to renew your learner licence for another two years. If you wait until after your learner licence has expired to re-sit the theory test, you will also need to wait another six consecutive months before you can sit the driving test.

DriveSafe NT

DriveSafe NT is a driver education and licensing program across the Northern Territory.

DriveSafe NT equips Territorians with essential knowledge of road rules, safe driving practices and attitudes.

It provides access to professional, modern driver training, supervising drivers and works towards being safer on our roads.

DriveSafe NT gives participants various subsidies towards gaining their learner licence and progressing to a provisional licence, including:

- course materials
- classroom based theory education
- licence fees
- test fees
- subsidised driving lesson e-vouchers
- St John Ambulance NT online first aid course – first@scene
- access to online tools to track and manage progress

Enrolment fees apply.

DriveSafe NT has been designed so that all elements of the program can be completed over a six-month period in line with the minimum current learner licence holding period. However, participants can take up to two years to complete the program.

DriveSafe NT participants are encouraged to take their time and get as much driving practice as they can before continuing to their provisional licence and completing the program.

You can still enrol in DriveSafe NT if you already have your learner licence.

For more information about the DriveSafe NT program, visit www.drivesafe.nt.gov.au, call **1800 121 411** or email drivesafeinfo.dipl@nt.gov.au.

Licence restrictions for class C learners

As well as complying with all road rules and traffic laws, there are some additional requirements for class C learner licence holders:

- **Blood/Breath Alcohol Concentration (BAC/BrAC):** Your BAC/BrAC must be zero. This means you cannot have any alcohol in your system when you drive a vehicle.
- **Displaying L plates:** L plates must be clearly displayed on the front and back of the vehicle. If towing a trailer, an L plate must also be displayed on the back of the trailer.
- **Licence:** You must carry your learner licence at all times while driving.

Remember, your learner licence will be suspended if you incur five or more demerit points within 12 months, or 12 points within a three year period.

- **Licence class:** You can only learn to drive the type of vehicle allowed by your licence class.
- **Mobile phone:** You must not use any function of a mobile phone while driving, including hands-free or loudspeaker options.
- **Seatbelts:** You must make sure all people in the vehicle are wearing seatbelts or approved restraints.
- **Speed limit:** You must not drive faster than 80 km/h at any time, regardless of the sign posted speed limit, and you must observe the speed limit where it is below 80 km/h.
- **Supervision:** A person who has a full Australian licence (not a learner or provisional licence or an overseas licence) must sit next to you at all times.

Towing - You are allowed to tow trailers.

The driver accompanying a learner driver

Your supervising driver lays the foundations for your future driving development, so how you are taught to drive is extremely important. For that reason, lessons with a professional driving instructor who is aware of modern driving practices and training techniques could be helpful.

It is also a good idea to get as much practice as possible between professional lessons. Ask parents, relatives or friends who are fully licensed to take you out to practice each new driving skill so that you will be better prepared for your next lesson. That way, you can maximise the benefits from each paid lesson and minimise the cost of getting your licence.

For your own peace of mind, important factors in selecting a driving instructor include making sure the instructor holds Professional Indemnity and Public Liability Insurance and is fully qualified to provide the training you seek.

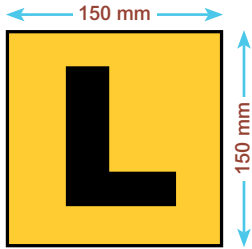
All professional driving instructors in the NT that provide driver training in return for payment must be registered.

Driving instructors are bound by the Conditions of Registration and the Code of Practice for Driving Instructors in the Northern Territory.

Your supervising driver must obey the following rules at all times while the learner is driving the vehicle (including parking practice):

- hold a current full driver licence (not provisional).
- be seated immediately next to the learner.
- fully supervise the learner and take responsibility for the learner's actions—the licensed driver is deemed to be the driver for most legal purposes.
- professional driving instructors must have a blood/breath alcohol concentration (BAC/BrAC) of zero.
- fully licenced supervising drivers must have a BAC/BrAC of lower than 0.05%.

L plate rules



L plates consist of a black letter 'L' against a yellow background. The minimum size for L plates is shown in the diagram.

L plates must be displayed and clearly visible at the **front and rear** of the vehicle (rear only for motorcycles).

If you are towing a trailer, an L plate must also be displayed on the back of the trailer.

The L plates must be easily seen by other road users and must not block or obscure the driver's view.

The L plates should be displayed vertically on the vehicle – not facing upwards on the bonnet or boot. Brackets for mounting L plates next to the number plate can be purchased at most automotive supply stores.

Roof-mounted L plates do not replace the L plates that must be displayed at the front and rear of the vehicle.

Where an L plate is displayed in the window of the vehicle, make sure that the angle of the window, or any tinting or louvers on the window, or anything on the outside of the vehicle (like spoilers or items in the tray of a ute) does not obscure other road users' clear view of the L plate.

L plates must not be displayed when the driver of the vehicle is not a learner driver.



Appropriate placement of L plates on a car

Your notes:

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basic safe driving knowledge

Driving is a complex task that requires the use and coordination of many different skills. This guide provides only the basic steps. There is much more to driving than just being able to make a vehicle go, stop, or turn a corner.

There are many factors that can lead to a crash and the severity of injuries that may be sustained from a crash. Drink/drug driving, your vehicle, road and weather conditions, speed, fatigue and distractions can all contribute to your risk of a crash - you need to drive within your driving skills and experience, to the road conditions, your vehicles capability and the weather conditions to lower your risk of being involved in a crash.

Safe driving tips

- Look at the drivers of cars approaching you rather than at the car itself, because you will notice if they are distracted and can drive accordingly.
- Try to work out the likely intentions of other road users, allow for the possibility of them doing something else!
- Always be ready to give way to other road users (safer for you and them).
- Think of your brakes as your first line of defence in an emergency (avoid the impulse to swerve).

When braking is required, the initial pressure on the pedal should be very gentle. This will light up the brake warning lamps and give anyone following you as much warning as possible that you plan to slow down or stop.

- Maintain a good crash avoidance space around your vehicle.

Crash avoidance space (road positioning)

A low-risk driver maintains what is called a 'crash avoidance space' around the vehicle at all times. Crash avoidance space is simply the clear space needed around a vehicle to reduce or avoid the risk of a crash.

The crash avoidance space is managed by the driver adjusting the vehicle's speed and position on the road.

Always check your mirrors before making any change to your speed or position.

Front crash avoidance space

To determine the crash avoidance space to the front of the vehicle, you need to take into account two key factors: reaction time and response time.

Reaction time is the time you as the driver needs to:

- see the information (the hazard)
- recognise what the information means
- decide on a response
- activate that response.

A driver who is fit, concentrating and alert and not distracted or affected by alcohol, drugs or fatigue will still require about 1.5 seconds to react to a hazard.

Response time is the time required to take action to respond to a situation or avoid the hazard. Generally, at least 1.5 seconds is needed to respond.

In most situations, braking should be the only response. Swerving is rarely appropriate because it can result in a more severe crash, such as a head-on collision if the driver swerves into the oncoming traffic.

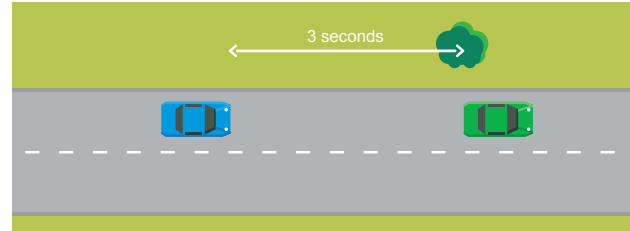
A total of at least three seconds crash avoidance space (a three-second gap between your vehicle and the one you are following) is needed to react and respond to a situation in front of you. You will need even longer in poor conditions, such as in rain or darkness.

How to calculate your crash avoidance space

To calculate a three-second crash avoidance space when following another vehicle, use this basic technique:

As the rear of the vehicle in front of you passes an object at the side of the road, such as a power pole, tree or sign, start a three-second count of 'one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three'.

There should be three seconds before the front of your vehicle reaches the same object.



Potential for something to move into the crash avoidance space

The three-second gap can also be used in situations where there is potential for something to move into your crash avoidance space. For example, a car in an adjacent street could fail to give way and pull out in front of you.

A safe, low risk driver, experienced in maintaining a three-second following distance, is able to mentally judge a three-second crash avoidance space in front of their vehicle. If there is a chance that a hazard will enter your crash avoidance space, reduce your speed to create a buffer.

It is necessary to maintain the crash avoidance space for all potentially hazardous situations, including blind corners and crests.

Road positioning (buffering)

Position your vehicle on the road to increase the crash avoidance space around all sides of your vehicle and reduce the risk of a crash (referred to as 'buffering').

Buffering is a simple concept that really just means moving away from hazards.

Buffering could include:

- using the left or second lane rather than the right lane to reduce the risk from oncoming vehicles
- moving to the left of your lane at the crest of a hill to create extra space between you and any vehicles or hazards that you might not be able to see on the other side of the hill
- moving away from parked cars to avoid pedestrians and doors opening
- moving to the right lane when passing hazards on the left side of your vehicle.

Crash avoidance space when stopped

When you are stopped it is important to leave a crash avoidance space between vehicles. Making sure that there is a clear space between vehicles will reduce the risk of a crash from being pushed forward into the vehicle in front or from the vehicle in front rolling backwards.

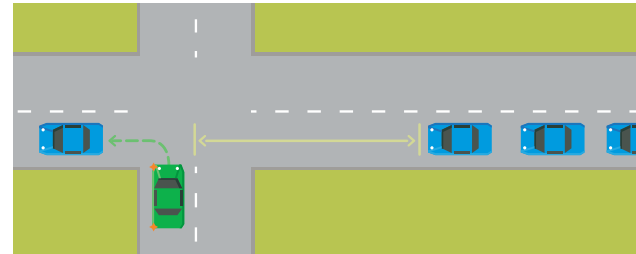
Stop in a position behind other vehicles that allows you enough space to steer around the vehicle in front if needed. This will not be always be practical. In some cases it might be safer to stop closer to the vehicle in

front, such as when stopped in a turning lane to prevent blocking the flow of traffic in continuing lanes and avoid rear-end collisions.

Crash avoidance space when entering traffic

When deciding when to enter or cross a line of traffic, such as pulling into traffic or at an intersection, a safe driver will not impact on the crash avoidance space of other road users.

This means that when entering a line of traffic you should make sure there is enough space for you to enter the line of traffic and accelerate to reach the speed of the rest of the traffic without other road users needing to adjust their crash avoidance space.



Crash avoidance space when entering traffic – turning left into flow of traffic

Crash avoidance space at intersections

When approaching and making a turn at an intersection you must maintain your crash avoidance space and make sure your vehicle does not impact on the crash avoidance space of others. This can be done by positioning your vehicle correctly on the approach and when travelling through an intersection.

When turning left:

- Approach the intersection as far left as possible. On roads marked with lanes, this means from the left lane, or any marked left-turn lane. On unmarked roads this means from as close to the left edge of the road as possible.
- Make the turn staying as far left as possible. On roads marked with lanes, do not change lanes within the intersection.

When turning right:

- Approach the intersection as close to the centre line of the road as possible on unmarked and single-lane roads. Approach in the marked right-turn lane on multi-lane roads.
- While waiting to turn right across traffic, the wheels of your vehicle should be kept straight. This will help stop you being pushed into oncoming traffic if another vehicle crashes into the rear of your vehicle.
- Make the turn by steering to the right of an imaginary centre of the intersection, or, if lane lines are marked, stay within the lane.
- As you exit you must keep to the left of the centre of the road, or within the same lane if lanes are marked.

Crash patterns for learner drivers

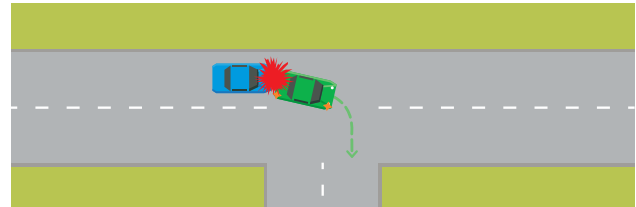
Crash patterns for learner and newly licensed drivers are different from those of experienced drivers.

Most new driver crashes fall within five main crash types, as shown on the following pages.

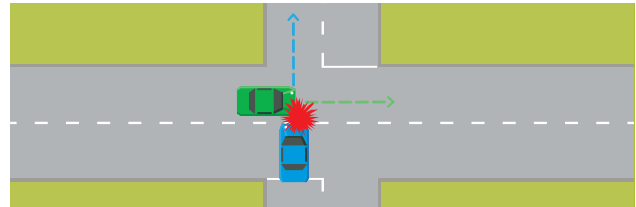
Many of these types of crashes can be prevented if the driver maintains the crash avoidance space, is alert and drives to the conditions.

The five most common crashes are:

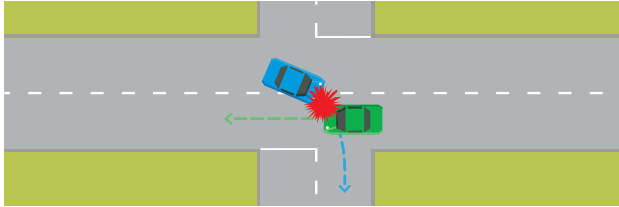
1. Colliding with the rear of another vehicle



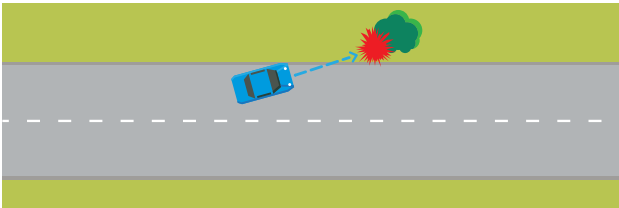
2. Colliding with the side of another vehicle



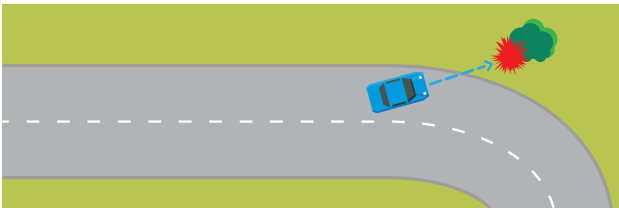
3. Colliding with another vehicle coming from the opposite direction



4. Running off the road on a straight section and hitting an object or parked vehicle



5. Running off the road on a curve or bend and hitting an object or parked vehicle



Remember to:

- **Maintain your vehicle**
(never drive an unregistered vehicle).
- **Wear your seatbelt**
(it could save your life one day).
- **Pay attention to other road users**
(people are unpredictable).
- **Drive with caution**
(be prepared for hazardous situations).

Night driving

When driving at night you need to be able to see and be seen clearly by others. Compared with daylight driving, visibility at night is extremely limited. Even with the best street lighting combined with the most efficient headlights; your ability to see at night is significantly reduced.

Before driving at night, make sure you have:

- good lights
- clean windows.

It is a legal requirement to have your headlights switched on when driving your vehicle between sunset and sunrise and when weather conditions make it necessary.

Isolated patches of light and then dark areas will strain your eyes and cause them to constantly adjust, which makes it difficult to see.

At night time, including dusk and dawn, many serious crashes occur because of limited visibility and fatigue.

If the light of an approaching vehicle dazzles you, slow down and look at the edge of the road until your eyes have adjusted or the vehicle has passed. If a vehicle approaches you from behind with their high beam headlights on, you can adjust your internal mirrors to avoid being dazzled.

In low-light areas always reduce your speed and keep a careful look out for pedestrians and cyclists.

If there is no street lighting and no other vehicles close by, then you can use your headlights on high beam. You must change to low beam as soon as you see an approaching vehicle so you do not dazzle the other driver.

High beam can be used on any road, but you must dip your headlights to low beam when an approaching vehicle is within 200 metres, or when the other vehicle's headlights dip, whichever is sooner. You should always dip your headlights when following another vehicle.

It is important to adjust your driving to night time conditions. Your driving speed at night should be adjusted to the range of your headlights. Drive so that you can stop well within the distance you can see.

Dip your headlights before negotiating a crest or curve.

Driving posture and techniques

The key to good driving technique is smoothness, and the secret to smoothness is good preparation.



The steering wheel should be adjusted low, facing the driver's chest rather than the face.

Adjust the head restraint for your height. See the vehicle owner's manual.

Keep your arms bent; thumbs should be on the rim of the steering wheel.

Keep your knees slightly bent.

Have the seat fairly upright to fully support your back and shoulders.

Sit deep in the seat with your backside against the back of the seat.



Brace your body
using your left foot

Driving posture

When you first get into a car, take the time to adjust the seat and controls to suit your height and build. Correct driving posture reduces fatigue, improves your control of the vehicle and allows the safety features of the vehicle to operate effectively.

Seatbelts

For seatbelts to work effectively they should be adjusted 'low, flat and firm':

- Low – placed below your hips to fully secure your body weight.
- Flat – no twists, turns or folds.
- Firm – when you drive, pull the belt firm regularly to remove any slack.

Airbags

Airbags are a supplementary restraining system (SRS) designed to be used in conjunction with seatbelts. To get the most benefit from the driver's airbag, the steering wheel should be adjusted low, facing the driver's chest rather than the face.

Braking technique

Correct braking is done in two stages. First put light pressure on the brake pedal and pause (set up the brakes), and then progressively apply the necessary braking pressure (squeeze).

Two-stage braking (set up and squeeze) improves braking effectiveness, reduces the likelihood of skidding and provides better control.

Harsh or excessive braking pressure may cause skidding and a loss of control, particularly on wet or gravel roads.

Steering technique

There are two main steering techniques: 'push/pull' and 'hand over hand'.

With the **push/pull technique**, one hand pulls the steering wheel into the other hand. The right hand stays on the right half of the steering wheel; the left hand stays on the left half.

With the **hand over hand technique**, the hands are continually crossing over on top of the steering wheel.

Regardless of which steering technique you use, some general rules apply:

- steering must be smooth and progressive
- keep both hands on the outside of the steering wheel and thumbs along the rim
- use your hands to slow down and guide the wheel when it automatically returns to the centre position after a turn
- reduce speed before steering and wait until the vehicle begins to straighten before accelerating.

Footwear

It is strongly recommended that you wear enclosed footwear when driving.

Thongs and other footwear without an enclosed heel are not considered safe because they can interfere with the operation of the pedals.

Safe Driving Tips

Driving with road trains and heavy vehicles

Some safety tips to keep in mind when driving with road trains or heavy vehicles.

- **Stopping safely**

Do not cut in front of road trains when they are slowing down at traffic lights or when out on the highway. They need more road space than you to slow down and stop. Be patient and keep everyone safe.

- **Do not overtake a turning vehicle**

Road trains and other heavy vehicles need extra room when turning, be patient and follow the signs. Do not move into the blind spots to the left of the road train cabin or drive directly behind the trailer. If you can't see the road train mirrors, the driver can't see you.

- **Roundabouts and traffic lights**

Stay clear when behind a road train at roundabouts and traffic lights. Road trains often make wide turns and sometimes need the entire road to maneuver. To reduce traffic disruptions, road train drivers often slow down significantly to avoid having to come to a complete stop.

- **Road positioning**

Like most heavy vehicles, a road train often uses the entire lane, so avoid travelling right on the center line. Stick to the left side in your lane to give yourself ample space. Park well clear of the roadway and use your parking lights during times of low visibility. Be sure to use your hazard lights if you are in a hazardous position.

Driving with Cyclists

Bicycles are classed as vehicles and, therefore, cyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as all other road users. They deserve the same respect and courtesy.

Always look for cyclists and expect the unexpected:

- give cyclists space when sharing the road as sometimes they need to ride out of a lane to avoid a hazard or obstacle
- when travelling 60km/h or less, you must leave a minimum of one metre passing distance when overtaking a cyclist
- when travelling over 60km/h, you must leave a minimum of one and half metres passing distance when overtaking a cyclist
- look for cyclists hand signals, so you are aware of their intentions
- watch for pedestrians and cyclists when leaving or entering a driveway
- cyclists riding two abreast must be overtaken as if you are overtaking a car.

If you do not have good visibility of the footpath when reversing out of your driveway, use the horn to warn cyclists and pedestrians that you are entering the roadway.

Remember - wider of the rider - keep your distance when passing cyclists.

Police

You must always obey any direction you are given from a police officer. If you are requested to pull over, you must immediately pull over and stop in the nearest safe location.

When you hear a siren or see the flashing blue or red lights of an emergency vehicle (such as a police, fire or ambulance vehicle) you must give way. This means get out of the way so the emergency vehicle has a clear passage through traffic.

Generally, if you hear a siren or see the flashing lights, pull over to the left until the emergency vehicle passes.

Your vehicle and driving conditions

Before you drive make sure your vehicle is safe and roadworthy. You should be confident that it will get you to your destination safely. Check:

- all fluid levels are correct (fuel, water, brake, radiator, battery)
- all lights, wipers and washers are in working order
- tyres and spares are inflated as specified
- the vehicle is not overloaded
- your vehicle registration is current and covers you for the entirety of the journey.

Plan for regular stops if you are taking a long trip.

Tyres:

Instructions on how to change your tyre will be in the vehicle manual. Choose a safe place to change your tyre so you can be easily seen by oncoming traffic. A flat, straight section off the road is the best place. Pull off the road and turn on your hazard lights.

Road Works:

- Slow down and look for any hazards.
- You must obey any signal from a traffic controller and give way to any worker.
- Speed limit signs at work zones are enforceable and must be obeyed.

Road Hazards:

- Wind, rain, fire, smoke from bushfires, debris and many different animals can be road hazards (kangaroos, dingos, buffaloes, horses, cats and dogs). Animals are most active at sunrise, sunset or at night.
- You may encounter sections of the road that are unfenced which can lead to animals or live stock being on or near a road. If you encounter an animal on the road you should slow down and sound your horn but **do not swerve** around them as this can lead to losing control of your vehicle and the possibility that it may roll over.
- If you are forced to drive off the side of the road, do not over correct or brake heavily. Slow down and return to the road when the vehicle is travelling at a safe speed and the road is clear of other traffic.
- When you encounter a road hazard, slow down.

Dust and Smoke:

Driving on dry unsealed dirt roads will always produce dust as you drive. Bushfires can often generate dense smoke. As dust and smoke can reduce your visibility as you drive you should:

- Always drive with your headlights on low beam, this will make you more visible to oncoming traffic and traffic ahead of you.
- Never overtake if you cannot see what is coming the other way through the dust or smoke. Be patient, reduce your speed and stay alert – you may catch up to the vehicle in front but not see them through the dust or smoke.
- Do not stop unnecessarily as there may be another vehicle behind you. If you need to stop and it is safe to do so, pull off to the side of the road.
- Do not move to the centre of the road, stay on the left hand side at all times.
- Dust and smoke can linger in the air if there is no wind. If it lingers, keep your speed to a minimum until you have clear vision and remember, BE PATIENT.

Corrugations:

Dry unsealed dirt roads and dirt tracks may have corrugations which can make driving hazardous.

- A corrugated dirt road is a road with a series of regular bumps or ripples with short spacing's in the road surface.
- Always be cautious when driving on corrugations and slow down when rounding curves as speed may cause loss of traction and control of your vehicle or trailer, and significantly increase your braking distance.
- Try to avoid overtaking on corrugations – BE PATIENT.

Flooded Roads:

- In heavy rain it is safer to slow down or pull off to the side of the road. Always use your headlights in these conditions.
- If you encounter a flooded road, check the depth, strength of the water flow and the possibility of obstructions before proceeding or wait until the water has subsided. Do not travel on roads that are closed – heavy penalties apply.
- Regularly updated road condition reports are available by phone on 1800 246 199 or by visiting the NT road report website or Facebook page.

Bogged:

Should you get bogged, try the following:

- Engage 4WD if you haven't already (remember to lock your hubs if need be).
- Try reversing out.
- Let some air out of your tyres and try to drive out. Remember once you are out, to pump your tyres back up using your air compressor.
- Place sticks, bushes or other material under the tyres and then try to drive out.
- Wait with your vehicle for another vehicle to come along and pull you out using a snatch strap or load rated rope. Do not use the tow ball as an anchor point.
- If you are still bogged, stay with your vehicle until help arrives.

Breakdowns:

If your vehicle breaks down while driving:

- Switch on your hazard lights or use some other device to warn other road users of the hazard.
- Have any passengers leave the vehicle and stand in a safe place away from the vehicle on the side of the road.
- Push your vehicle off to the side of the road if it is safe to do so.
- Avoid working or standing on the traffic side of your vehicle.



basic driving procedures

This section sets out the basic skills a learner driver must learn and be able to demonstrate without help before they attempt the practical driving test.

Basic driving procedures

The procedures in this section should be practiced until they become automatic.

When practising them, remember to check your mirrors constantly and signal your intention before moving off, changing course, slowing down or stopping.

The supervising driver must be in the vehicle and sitting next to the learner driver at all times while the learner is driving the vehicle (including parking practice).

System of vehicle control

The method of driving described in this section is the safest and most efficient way to drive a motor vehicle. It is called the 'system of vehicle control'.

A safe and experienced driver will automatically use the system of vehicle control when approaching and negotiating road or traffic hazards or other potentially dangerous situations.

Examples of hazards include:

- intersections, roundabouts and traffic lights
- lane changing and overtaking
- actions by other road users that could affect you.

The system of vehicle control is a series of actions that drivers should follow when approaching any hazard.

The following sequence of actions sets out the system of vehicle control

- Select your **course**: choose the safe and legal path.
- Check your **mirrors** and **signal/indicate**: check your mirrors for any vehicles following and/or overtaking you, and warn them about what you plan to do by using your indicator (blinker).
- **Brake**: adjust your speed so that you will arrive at the hazard travelling at an appropriate speed to negotiate it.
 - **Decision point**: do not release the brakes until you can see it is safe to continue. If it is not safe, you need to stop.
- When it is safe to continue, select the appropriate **gear** and check your **mirrors** (and **blind spot** if applicable) for any following or overtaking vehicles.
- **Accelerate** through the hazard: apply the appropriate level of power to leave the hazard quickly and safely.

General driving notes

'Dry steering'

'Dry steering' means turning the steering wheel while the vehicle is not moving.

Dry steering should be avoided because it can cause unnecessary wear and tear on the tyres, steering and suspension.

Friction point

In a manual vehicle, the friction point refers to the clutch and accelerator position at which engine power and the transmission engage.

A manual vehicle that is stopped and in gear will begin to move when the clutch is released past this point.

Every vehicle is different, so it is important that you find the 'friction point' in the vehicle you are driving. As a guide approximately 1500 revs should be adequate to achieve the friction point.

'Feathering' the clutch

'Feathering the clutch' is a phrase used to describe a method of controlling a vehicle's movement using the clutch during low-speed manoeuvres, such as parking.

When feathering the clutch, the driver moves their foot on the clutch pedal, near to friction point, to apply small amounts of power to move the vehicle slightly, without using the brake or accelerator.

Coasting

Coasting is when a vehicle is moving and the engine is not connected to the driving wheels.

In a manual vehicle, this happens when the driver puts the car out of gear and into neutral or pushes the clutch pedal down.

An automatic vehicle will coast when neutral is selected.

Coasting should be avoided until the vehicle is almost stationary.

Sideways pitch/roll

Sideways pitch is the amount a vehicle leans to one side when going around a corner or bend. In extreme cases, if a vehicle is travelling too fast when it takes a corner or a bend, the vehicle can roll.

Drivers should avoid excessive sideways pitch by always driving smoothly and at a speed suitable for the conditions. Some corners and bends are signposted with recommended maximum speed limits for negotiating them.

Lurch

'Lurch' is how much a vehicle pitches forward or backwards. This can happen when brakes are applied heavily or when a gear change or acceleration is not smooth.

Excessive lurch indicates that the driver is not in full control of the vehicle. It should be avoided.

Cabin drill

1. Get into the driver's seat (vehicle must be parked and the engine not running).
2. Check that the handbrake is firmly on.
3. Check that your seat is in the correct position and adjust if necessary.
4. Check all mirrors to make sure you have a good view of areas behind and around your vehicle.
5. Check your seatbelt is in the correct position and fastened.
6. Check all passengers have their seatbelts fastened.
7. Check that the steering wheel is in the correct position and adjust if necessary.
8. Check that all doors are securely closed.

Your notes:

Moving off in a manual vehicle

1. Check that the handbrake is on.
2. Push the brake pedal down.
3. Push the clutch pedal down.
4. Select first gear.
5. Check your mirrors for traffic or other hazards.
6. Indicate to signal your intention to move off.
7. Release the brake pedal and gently push the accelerator pedal to appropriate engine revs.

Appropriate engine revs will vary between vehicles but as a guide approximately 1500 revs should be adequate.

8. Bring the clutch pedal up to the 'friction point' and hold your feet still.
9. Check your mirrors again and look over your right shoulder to check that the road is clear (this is called a 'head check').
10. When the road is clear, release the handbrake as you gently release the clutch pedal and apply smooth acceleration to move off.
11. Cancel indicator (if required).

The conditions you practice in are important. It is recommended that you select a low-level traffic area to start and only move to heavier traffic areas when your confidence and ability improve.

Your notes:

Uphill starts for manual vehicles

1. Check that the handbrake is firmly on.
2. Push the clutch pedal down.
3. Select first gear.
4. Check your mirrors and signal your intention to move off.
5. Gently push the accelerator pedal to apply appropriate engine revs (1500 – 2000 RPM) (more than on level ground).
6. Gently release clutch pedal until the friction point is reached. Keep both feet still at this point.
7. Glance over your right shoulder to check that the road is clear (this is called a 'head check/shoulder check').
8. Without moving your feet, release the handbrake.
9. Gently release the clutch pedal as you apply a little more acceleration (engine revs) until the clutch pedal is fully released.

The car will either move forward or remain still; it should not roll backwards.

Your notes:

Changing up gears in a manual vehicle

Vehicle manufacturers specify a suitable range of speeds for each gear – this will vary considerably between vehicles and the reference to maximum speeds suggested below should only be used as a guide – consult your vehicle handbook for details.

Maximum Speed	Appropriate gear
25 km/h –	1st gear
40 km/h –	2nd gear
60 km/h –	3rd gear
80 km/h –	4th gear
>80 km/h	5th gear

Using the guide above to change up gears in a manual vehicle:

- Increase the speed of the vehicle until it is travelling at a speed appropriate to the next higher gear.
- Push the clutch pedal down and fully release the accelerator pedal at the same time (you should not change gears with your foot on the accelerator)
- Move the gear lever to the next higher gear, making sure the clutch pedal is fully pressed down.
- Gently release the clutch pedal up to the friction point and at the same time press the accelerator to give a little power to 'balance' engine and road speeds.
- Continue releasing the clutch pedal until it is fully released.
- Repeat changing up gears until desired gear is reached.

Your notes:

Changing up and down gears in an automatic vehicle

Automatic transmissions vary between makes and models, so it is important to study the vehicle's handbook carefully.

Automatic transmissions allow gear changes to be made without the use of a clutch pedal. In an automatic car, selecting the D-drive position with the gear selector will mean that the vehicle will change gears automatically based on the load placed on the engine while the car is being driven. Alternatively, the driver can use the gear selector to select the gear appropriate to their needs.

The selector can be set in a number of positions, depending on the make and model of car. Most automatic vehicles allow for the vehicle to be held in a low gear as well as having a neutral and park position.

In neutral position there is no connection between the engine and the transmission, and in the park position the whole transmission is locked and the car cannot be moved.

Tips for driving an automatic transmission vehicle:

- Leave the gear selector in drive when doing most general driving. This means the gears will be automatically selected depending on the car's speed and how much pressure you put on the accelerator pedal.
- Listen to the engine: when the car is moving in and out of gears you will hear and feel the change in the car.
- Be careful not to over-rev the car or you could damage your transmission.

Consider using first or second gear when driving up or down steep hills. By selecting a specific gear rather than just putting it in 'drive', the car is held in the gear you select. On long, steep hills a lower gear will help restrain the car, which could tend to 'run away' if left in 'drive'.

Your notes:

Kerbside stop in a manual vehicle

1. Select a safe place to pull over and stop or park.
2. Check your mirrors.
3. Indicate your intention to move over.
4. Push the brake pedal smoothly.
5. Push the clutch pedal down – keeping pressure on the brake pedal – and change down gears if required (refer page 32 for changing down gears in a manual vehicle).
As you are slowing and changing down gears:
 - recheck your mirrors and glance over your shoulder to check that the road is clear
 - steer your vehicle towards your chosen stopping place.
6. Pull over and bring the vehicle to a complete stop.
7. Apply the handbrake.
8. Move the gear lever to neutral.
9. Release the clutch pedal.
10. Cancel indicator (if required).

Your notes:

Kerbside stop in an automatic vehicle

1. Select a safe place to pull over and stop.
2. Check your mirrors.
3. Indicate your intention to move over.
4. Push the brake pedal smoothly.
As you are slowing:
 - recheck your mirrors and glance over your shoulder to check that the road is clear
 - steer your vehicle towards your chosen stopping place.
5. Pull over and bring the vehicle to a complete stop (keep pressure on the brake pedal).
6. Apply the handbrake.
7. Move the gear lever to park or neutral.
8. Release the brake pedal.
9. Cancel indicator (if required).

Your notes:

Turning at corners/intersections/ road junctions

1. Check your mirrors.
2. Signal your intention to turn (if required).
3. Brake smoothly to arrive at the corner at a safe speed and be prepared to stop if necessary.
4. Change down gears before reaching the corner. (refer to page 32 for changing down gears in a manual vehicle.)
5. Turn the steering wheel as necessary.
6. When the corner comes into your view and it is safe and legal to proceed, either:
 - continue steering and as the vehicle starts to straighten on to the new road, gently accelerate out of the corner (do not 'ride the clutch' around the corner)
 - or
 - refer to moving-off procedure (page 27 and 28) if you have had to stop.

There is always the possibility that before turning you will need to stop to give way. Take extreme care around corners.

Your notes:

Manoeuvres

When you have mastered the basic driving procedures you can move on to the more complex manoeuvres of reversing, U-turns, three-point turns and parking.

Reversing

When reversing it is important to always:

- look back to the rear of the vehicle to get the best view possible
- drive very slowly.

When reversing straight back or to the left look through the rear window over your left shoulder. You will need to change your normal seated position so that your back is facing your door to do this. Your right hand should hold the steering wheel at the top (the 12 o'clock position on a clock), and use your left hand to stabilise your body in that twisted position.

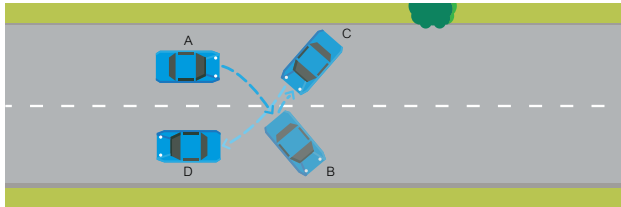
When reversing to the right look through the rear window over your right shoulder, and reverse your body's position from the above point so that your left hand is holding the steering wheel at the top.

Practice reversing in a straight line parallel to the kerb. When reversing parallel to the kerb the car should be at least half a metre from the kerb, allowing the front wheels to move freely.

Also practice reversing into and out of a wide entry, then move on to narrower lanes or your own driveway and out of carparks as you get more experience.

Make sure that you choose a place to practice reversing where there is little or no traffic.

Three-point turn



A three-point (or multi-point turn) is used when you need to turn the vehicle around to face the opposite direction and you are unable to complete the manoeuvre in a single motion.

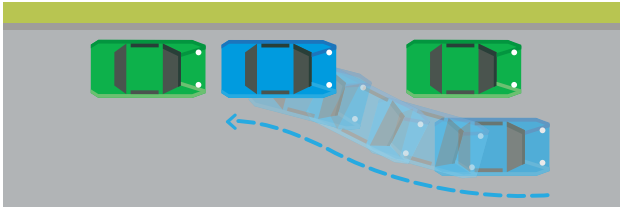
1. Use the correct process for stopping (refer to pages 34 and 36).
2. Signal your intention to turn right with your indicator.
3. When the road is clear of traffic in both directions, drive slowly forward while applying full right steering (Step A).
4. When the front wheels are within one metre of the opposite kerb, apply full left steering (Step B).
5. Stop the car before the wheels touch the kerb and apply the handbrake.
6. Select reverse gear.
7. Check in both directions to make sure the road is clear.
8. Release the handbrake and move the car slowly backwards.
9. When the rear wheels are within one metre of the kerb, apply full right steering (Step C).

10. Stop the car before the wheels touch the kerb and apply the handbrake.
11. Select first gear (or 'drive' if automatic).
12. Check the road is clear again.
13. Release the handbrake to drive forward and complete the turn, moving off on the correct side of the road (Step D).

Sometimes more than three movements may be required. This depends on the type of car and the width of the road.

Your notes:

Parallel parking



Driving into a parallel park

1. Select a parking space.
2. Check your mirrors and signal left to show your intention.
3. Slowly pull up next to (parallel with) the vehicle in front of the parking space you have selected. The rear bumper of your vehicle should be forward of the rear of the parked vehicle.
4. Check that your left indicator is on and select reverse gear.
5. Check your mirrors and constantly check for traffic or pedestrians throughout the parallel parking manoeuvre.

Extra care must be taken to make sure that the front of the vehicle does not intrude on nearby parking bays, and/or collide with any vehicles or other hazards.

The wheels of your vehicle should be within 30cm of the kerb in a straight position (parallel to the kerb), and you need to leave between one and two metres between vehicles.

6. Reverse slowly until your rear bumper passes the rear bumper of the parked vehicle and then turn the steering wheel to the left until the car is into the parking space and at an angle of 40 to 45 degrees from the kerb.
7. Straighten your wheels as you continue to slowly reverse into the parking space. When your windscreen passes the rear bumper of the parked vehicle in front of your parking space, start turning the steering wheel to the right.
8. Straighten the wheels again as you approach a parallel position with the kerb.
9. Move forward to position your vehicle in the middle of the space between the parked vehicles or parking lines. (When practicing this manoeuvre behind a single parked vehicle, your final position should be one to two metres from the rear of the other vehicle.)
10. Apply the handbrake and secure your vehicle.

It is a good idea to practice this manoeuvre in a quiet location using poles to simulate parked cars before moving on to practicing with actual parked cars when you are more confident.

Driving out of a parallel park

1. Check that the front wheels of your vehicle are facing straight ahead.
2. Check your mirrors for other vehicles or pedestrians.
3. Reverse very slowly in the space available.
4. Check your mirrors and signal right to show your intention to move off.
5. When it is safe, start moving off by turning the steering wheel to the right and drive slowly out of the parking space.

Do not disrupt the flow of traffic or pedestrians when leaving a parked position.

Your notes:

Angle parking

Always park at an angle of 90 or 45 degrees unless a sign or road marking indicates differently.

Driving into an angle park

1. Select a parking space.
2. Check your mirrors and signal your intention to park.
3. Brake and change down gears as required to arrive at the turn-in point slowly.
4. When you have a clear view into the parking space, either stop, or, if safe to do so, slowly proceed.
5. Turn the steering wheel quickly and enter the parking space in the middle between side marking lines (if the space is marked).
6. Straighten the steering wheel and drive straight ahead very slowly.
7. Stop before the front bumper of your vehicle goes over the kerb line but after the rear bumper (or towbar, if fitted) is fully within the parking bay.
8. Apply the handbrake and secure your vehicle.

Your vehicle should end up in the middle of the parking space and centrally between the parking lines.

It is a good idea to practise angle parking in a quiet location using poles or lines to simulate parking spaces. Only move on to practising in actual car parks between other vehicles when you have mastered the basics of the manoeuvre and you are confident you will not be putting the property of others at risk.

Your notes:

Driving out of an angle park

1. Select reverse gear.

Check your mirrors and look through back window over your left shoulder to make sure the road immediately behind your vehicle is clear. Whenever you are reversing you should be watching to the rear of your vehicle – the direction you are going – with frequent checks to both sides to make sure no unexpected hazards emerge during the manoeuvre.

2. Release the clutch (manual vehicles) or the brake pedal (automatic vehicles) to the friction point.
3. Release the handbrake.
4. Exit the parking space by slowly reversing the vehicle while turning the steering wheel either to the left or right, depending on which direction you intend to travel after leaving the parking space.

Take extra care to make sure the front of your vehicle does not intrude on nearby parking bays, and/or collide with any vehicles or other hazards.

5. When the vehicle has moved backwards out of the parking space and is facing in the direction you intend to travel, straighten the steering wheel so that when you start moving forward your vehicle will travel in the correct direction.

6. Bring the vehicle to a stop, select a forward gear, and then proceed forward in the new direction of travel.

It will be necessary to use some parts of the moving-off procedure (refer to pages 27 and 28) depending on the circumstances including how close other traffic is and whether the angle park is situated on a main road or in a shopping centre carpark etc.

Your notes:

Parking on steep hills

Parking facing upward on a hill

When a car is parked on the left kerb facing uphill:

- the car should be parked with the wheels turned to the right so that the front wheels will hold the car in position if it starts rolling backward.
- first gear should be engaged and the parking brake firmly applied.

Parking facing downward on a hill

When a car is parked on the left kerb facing downhill:

- the car should be parked with the wheels turned to the left so that the front wheels will hold the car in position if it starts rolling forward.
- reverse gear should be engaged and the parking brake firmly applied.

On one-way streets, you may be allowed to park on either side of the road. Reverse the direction of the turned wheels if parked on the right kerb i.e. turn wheels to left when parking facing uphill and to the right when facing downhill.



**obtaining a class C
provisional licence**

How to obtain a C class provisional licence

To obtain a class C provisional licence (your Ps) you must successfully complete a practical driving test. This is a formal assessment to confirm that your driving ability meets the minimum requirements to drive unsupervised.

To attempt a practical driving test you must have:

- held your learner licence for a continuous period of at least six months
- your current NT learner licence with you
- a registered and roadworthy vehicle of the correct classification for the test.

If either the driver or a passenger of the vehicle does not have a working seatbelt, the test cannot be conducted.

The practical driving test

Getting your provisional licence is based on your ability to demonstrate consistent and appropriate use of the system of vehicle control.

You must understand the major controls of a motor vehicle, complete a number of low-speed manoeuvres, be safe and efficient while driving, have good observation skills and be able to deal with hazards.

More information can be found in "A Guide to the Driving Test" available online at nt.gov.au.

Where can I do my test?

You must attempt your practical driving test at a location nearest to your usual place of residence. In special circumstances, you can ask for an exemption from this requirement if you can demonstrate an alternative location within the Northern Territory; for example, if you are studying or employed full time away from home.

When can I sit a test?

You can sit the practical test when you and your supervising driver or driving instructor believe your driving skills are adequate.

You must have held a learner licence for at least six consecutive months before you can sit a practical driving test.

If you are enrolled in the DriveSafe NT program, check with your driving instructor when you can do your test. There are DriveSafe NT program requirements that must be completed before you can book a test.

Even when you have held a learner licence for six months, you do not have to do a test straight away.

The more supervised driving practice you have, the safer you will be once you are out on the road solo.

You can book a practical driving test through an authorised driving examiner. The list of authorised driving examiners is available online at nt.gov.au.

On the day of your test

You should aim to arrive at the test starting location at least 10 minutes before the test and make sure you bring your current learner licence.

If you are using your own vehicle to do the test, check the following:

- Is the car registered, in good working condition and clean and tidy inside? Does it have plenty of fuel?
- Is the car roadworthy? The examiner will perform a basic vehicle safety check before your test begins, including the headlights, brake lights, indicators, tyres, windscreen and windscreen wipers.
- Is the speedometer working properly? Check it the day before the test. If it does not work, the examiner will stop the test because the car is deemed unroadworthy.
- Are your L plates secured on the car without blocking your view through the windows and visible to the front and rear?

What is involved in the test?

The main thing the driving examiner will be looking for during the test is correct application of the '**system of vehicle control**'. This means how well you demonstrate a systematic approach to driving safely, legally and efficiently in a variety of road and traffic conditions.

The examiner will watch for good observation skills, correct signalling procedure, smooth braking and gear changing, and whether you create and maintain adequate crash avoidance space.

Your instructor (whether you use a professional or a relative or friend) should have coached you in what is required for the test. Make sure you follow the directions in this guide, too.

Here is a list of the main areas covered during a typical test:

- Mirrors: correct use before and during any manoeuvre.
- Signalling: in good time, and remembering to cancel indicators when required.
- Approach: speed, braking and use of gears into corners, and when approaching other hazards.
- Positioning: in the lane you are travelling in and when approaching turns.
- Turning: safely, efficiently and legally.
- Observation: of traffic, pedestrians, and stationary obstacles.
- Judgement: of safe and unsafe gaps in the traffic.
- Unexpected situations: recognition of unusual situations and safely manoeuvring through them.
- Car control: competent and efficient operation of the vehicle's major controls.
- Safety margins: between your vehicle and other hazards, such as parked cars and other stationary objects.
- Progress: you must be able to keep up with the traffic flow, but not exceed the speed limit.

The driving test follows a set course with 25 zones. During the test, your driving examiner will be in the car with you directing you where to drive, and recording your performance on a score sheet.

The entire test will be recorded with a camera for images and sound. This is to ensure you receive the highest standards of service.

There are a number of 'immediate fail' items that may lead to the test being terminated. These include:

- failing to obey traffic lights, signs or road markings
- failing to give way
- driving without due care, attention or consideration for other road users, or in a dangerous manner
- exceeding the speed limit
- intervention by the examiner or another person in the car to prevent a crash or dangerous situation, or if another person in the car provides any assistance to pass the test
- failure or refusal to follow reasonable directions from the examiner.

Further information on the driving test can be found in "A Guide to the Driving Test" available online at nt.gov.au.

Unsuccessful test attempts

Not everyone passes the practical driving test on their first attempt.

Your examiner will be happy to explain where you can improve your driving skills. Many people find this very useful.

Towing: You are allowed to tow trailers on a provisional class C licence.

Licence restrictions for provisional class C drivers

In the Northern Territory, a provisional licence is for two years (one year if you are 25 years of age or older).

If at any time during your provisional period your licence is cancelled, the full provisional period starts all over again on reissue.

If your provisional licence is suspended, the period of suspension will be added onto your provisional licence.

In some cases, a court may order an additional provisional period when the licence holder is convicted of certain traffic offences.

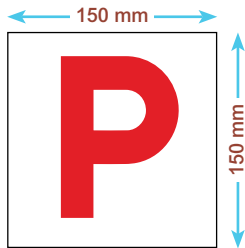
As well as complying with all road rules and traffic laws, there are additional conditions for provisional class C licence holders:

- **Blood/Breath Alcohol Concentration (BAC/BrAC):** Your BAC/BrAC must be zero. This means you cannot have any alcohol in your system when you drive a vehicle.
- **Displaying P plates:** P plates must be clearly displayed on the front and rear of the vehicle. The letter P must not be hidden. If towing a trailer, a P plate must also be displayed on the back of the trailer.

- **Licence:** You must carry your provisional licence at all times while driving.
- **Mobile phone:** You must not use any function of a mobile phone or other communication device while driving, including hands-free or loudspeaker options.
- **Seatbelts:** You must make sure all people in the vehicle are wearing seatbelts or approved restraints.
- **Speed limit:** You must not drive faster than 100 km/h, regardless of the sign posted speed limit, and you must observe the speed limit where it is below 100 km/h.
- **Supervising a learner:** You must not supervise a learner driver.

Remember, your provisional licence will be suspended if you incur five or more demerit points within 12 months, or 12 points within a three year period.

P plate rules



A P plate consists of a red letter P against a white background. The minimum size for P plates is shown in the diagram.

P plates must be displayed and clearly visible at the **front and rear** of the vehicle (rear only for motorcycles).

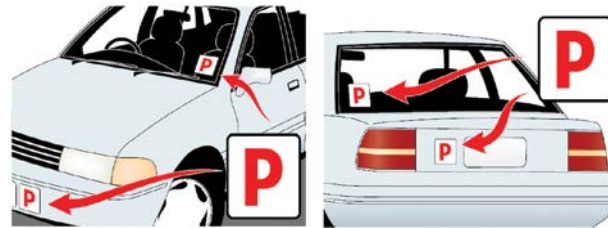
The P plates must be easily seen by other road users and must not block or obstruct the driver's view.

It is recommended that P plates are displayed vertically on the vehicle – not facing upwards on the bonnet or boot. Brackets for mounting P plates next to the number plate can be purchased at most automotive supply stores.

Where a P plate is displayed in the window of the vehicle, make sure that the angle of the window, any tinting or louvers on the window or anything on the outside of the vehicle (like spoilers or items in the tray of a ute) do not obscure other road users' clear view of the P plate.

If you are towing a trailer, a P plate must also be displayed at the back of the trailer.

P plates must not be displayed when the driver of the vehicle is not a provisional driver.



Appropriate placement of P plates on a car

If you pass your driving test in an automatic vehicle

If you pass your driving test in a vehicle with an automatic transmission, you can only drive an automatic vehicle during the first 12 months of your provisional licence. You can drive a manual vehicle during this first 12 months only if you are supervised by a full licence holder. After 12 months, you must not drive a manual vehicle until the automatic vehicle condition has been removed from your licence.

If you want to drive a manual vehicle unaccompanied before the 12-month period is up you must pass the driving test in a manual vehicle with a foot-operated clutch.

Z BAC/BrAC (zero Blood/Breath Alcohol Concentration) condition

After completing your provisional period, you must continue to observe the zero Blood/Breath Alcohol Concentration (BAC/BrAC) requirements for a further 12 months or until you turn 25, whichever is sooner.

Your notes:

supervised driving logbook

Supervised driving logbook

Safe and successful learners put in lots of hours behind the wheel in all sorts of driving conditions and situations.

Although there is no minimum number of hours a learner driver must spend driving before they can attempt their driving test and get their Ps in the Northern Territory, using a logbook is a great learning aid.

Learner drivers with 100 or more hours of supervised driving practice reduce their risk of crashing once they are on their Ps by about one third.

The supervised driving log is your personal record of the driving practice you do with family and friends. By completing a logbook such as the one in this handbook you can keep track of how you are going and make sure you are getting practice in a wide range of driving conditions.

Try to complete an entry in the logbook every time you drive, even if it is only a five-minute drive to the local shops. You might be surprised at how quickly those short trips add up to hours of practice, and you will become a better driver as the hours and experience add up.

Filling in the supervised driving logbook

Instead of writing full details of the road and driving conditions each time you practice, you could use the abbreviations below.

Make sure you make notes of the manoeuvres you have attempted on your drive. You should also make notes about how you felt doing something or things you think you might need more information or practice with. This will help you remember to raise them later with your driving instructor or supervising driver.

Abbreviations

Road conditions	Driving conditions	
	Weather	Traffic density
MR – Major road/highway	F – Fine	L – Light
U – Unsealed road	S – Sunset/sunrise	M – Medium
M – Minor road	R – Rain	H – Heavy

Date	Time			Location	
	Start am/pm	Finish am/pm	Hours/mins driven	From	To
Sub-total					

Conditions			Supervisor's name	Comments/notes/manoeuvres attempted
Road	Weather	Traffic		

Date	Time			Location	
	Start am/pm	Finish am/pm	Hours/mins driven	From	To
Sub-total					

Conditions			Supervisor's name	Comments/notes/manoeuvres attempted
Road	Weather	Traffic		

Date	Time			Location	
	Start am/pm	Finish am/pm	Hours/mins driven	From	To
Sub-total					

Conditions			Supervisor's name	Comments/notes/manoeuvres attempted
Road	Weather	Traffic		

Date	Time			Location	
	Start am/pm	Finish am/pm	Hours/mins driven	From	To
Sub-total					

Conditions			Supervisor's name	Comments/notes/manoeuvres attempted
Road	Weather	Traffic		

MVR offices

MVR Contact Centre

The MVR Contact Centre can assist with all general enquiries. To speak to an operator, call **1300 654 628** Monday to Friday between 8am and 4pm.

Website: mvr.nt.gov.au

Email: mvr@nt.gov.au

Post: GPO Box 530 Darwin NT 0801

Office locations

To find a Motor Vehicle Registry office and office hours, please visit mvr.nt.gov.au or phone the MVR Contact Centre on **1300 654 628**.

For more information on road safety and programs, please contact **Road Safety** on **1800 720 144** or visit the website at www.roadsafety.nt.gov.au.

Feedback

In the interest of all road users and to further improve this publication, the department wants your feedback. When your feedback is received it is recorded and will be considered in the next review of this publication.

Please provide your feedback in the following format:

- subject: 'Learner Drivers' Guide – Feedback'
- reference to the relevant section
- feedback/suggestion

Please consider the impact on all road users when making a suggestion.

Please send via post, email or fax to:

Manager Driver Licensing

Motor Vehicle Registry Darwin

Post: GPO Box 530 Darwin NT 0801

Email: MVR.Licence@nt.gov.au

Fax: 08 8999 3103

This publication is reviewed when there has been a significant change to legislation or a number of changes are required (on average a revision is conducted every three to five years).

To check you have the most up-to-date version of this publication, please visit the nt.gov.au website.



nt.gov.au