

Three Stages of Graduated Driver Licensing

As the student driver progresses through each stage, his or her driving patterns become less restricted. The restrictions imposed during the first two stages compensate for the driver's lack of experience. Once the driver has accumulated a significant amount of safe driving experience under controlled conditions, he or she "graduates" to the next stage.

Stage 1: Learner's Permit

The Learner's Permit allows the novice driver the opportunity to practice basic driving skills and safe driving practices under totally supervised conditions prior to obtaining an intermediate license.

Learner's Permit Eligibility Requirements:

- Meet the minimum age required by the state
- Pass vision and knowledge tests, including rules of road and signs and signals

The following components should be considered as part of the learner's permit stage:

Automobiles

- All driving must be supervised by a licensed adult 21 or older
- All vehicle occupants must wear safety belts
- All drivers under age 21 subject to zero tolerance Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.02 or less
- Permit is canceled if applicant is convicted of any alcohol-related offense
- Parent participation in driving process (e.g. certifying the novice driver had a minimum number of supervised hours of driving)
- Recommend novice driver receive basic driver education
- Permit is visually distinctive from other driver licenses
- Must remain crash-free and conviction-free for six consecutive months to move to the next stage
- Applicant could be subject to limitations on the speed or type of roads they are allowed to use, or the number of passengers allowed in the vehicle

Motorcycles

- Motorcycle rider must wear a helmet that meets FMVSS No. 218 and protective clothing and carry no passengers
- Recommend motorcycle rider be enrolled in a rider education course
- Motorcycle riders may apply for the next stage in 90 days

Stage 2: Intermediate License

The intermediate license provides the young driver behind-the-wheel practice under restricted conditions prior to obtaining a full license. This stage exposes the driver to more demanding situations by providing the young driver the opportunity to use his or her decision making skills by allowing unsupervised driving during lower risk times.

To be eligible for an intermediate license, the novice should:

- Successfully complete the learner's permit stage
- Meet any minimum age required by the State
- Successfully complete basic driver education
- Pass second level knowledge test, including safe driving practices
- Pass on-road driving test

The following components should be considered for the intermediate license:

- Restricted hours of driving unless supervised by a licensed adult at least 21 or older (e.g. no driving 10:00 p.m. to 5 a.m.)
- All occupants must wear safety belts
- Motorcycle rider must wear a helmet that meets FMVSS No. 218 and protective clothing and carry no passengers
- All drivers under age 21 subject to zero tolerance Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC), 0.02 or less
- License revocation for any alcohol-related offense
- Youth-oriented and more rapid driver improvement actions are taken in the event of violations or at-fault crashes
- Intermediate license is visually distinctive from learner's permit or regular license
- Must remain crash-free and violation-free for 12 consecutive months to move to the next stage
- Parent participation in driving process (e.g. certifying the novice driver had a minimum number of supervised hours of driving)
- Recommend novice driver receive advance driver education
- Recommend novice motorcycle rider receive advance driver education
- The driver could be subject to limitations on speed or road types that they are allowed on (e.g. 45 m.p.h. speed limit and no freeway driving), or the number of passengers allowed in vehicle

Stage 3: Full or Unrestricted License

The full or unrestricted license allows the applicant unlimited driving privileges.

For the novice driver to be eligible for a full license, the following components should be considered:

- Successfully complete the intermediate license stage
- Meet any minimum age required by the State
- Successfully complete advanced driver education
- Pass a second level knowledge and on-road driving skills test

The following components should be considered as part of the full license:

- All drivers under age 21 subject to zero tolerance Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC), 0.02 or less
- A provisional license for suspended or revoked drivers (all ages) requiring violation-free and crash-free driving for a specified period, prior to re-obtaining full licensure.