

PRACTICE DRIVING TIPS

Be a good role model. Teens learn from watching their parents.

- Always buckle your safety belt properly and make sure everyone in the vehicle is buckled safely.
- Obey traffic laws.
- Don't drink and drive.
- Don't drink aggressively.
- Pay attention. Minimize distractions.

Use "Commentary Driving"

Ask the new driver to comment on what he/she sees - speed limits, road signs, traffic signals, road conditions, potential hazards - and what driver response is needed. This process works best if the adult driver demonstrates it first for the teen.

Helpful Guidelines

- Select the route in advance and make a practice run without your teen.
- Make sure your teen understands the objectives of each session before you begin driving.
- Practice in an empty parking lot before moving to streets.
- Progress from residential streets to light traffic to heavy multi-lane traffic and the freeways.
- Monitor traffic (ahead, around, behind).
- Give directions to turn at least on block in advance.
- Use "right" to mean a direction only, not to confirm that something is correct.
- Be specific.
- Use a calm voice and be patient. Remember that mistakes will happen in any learning process.
- Praise your teen's driving accomplishments.

Include these in your practice.

- **Driving preparation:** dress appropriately (proper shoes, sunglasses); adjust seat and mirrors; use safety belts; start the engine; check gas gauge; check for traffic, signal and move when safe.
- **Basic maneuvers:** moving forward; steering; turning; stopping; backing.
- **Interacting with other vehicles:** turn signals; changing lanes; blind spots; using mirrors; maintaining a safe following distance; monitoring traffic in all directions.
- **Light traffic:** looking ahead; entering/exiting traffic; choosing the proper lane; accepting and yielding right-of-way.
- **Heavy traffic:** adjusting speed and position; using turn lanes; left turn yields.
- **Parking and turning:** angle, hill, parallel parking; U-turns; 3-point turns.
- **Rail Crossings:** obey lights and crossing gates; crossing tracks safely.
- **Freeways:** using on-ramps and off-ramps; merging; lane and speed choice.
- **Driving in darkness:** using lights; appropriate speed.
- **Adverse weather:** adjusting speed for rain, fog, wind, dust, snow; using lights.
- **Handling hazards:** obstacles on the road; using flashers; using anti-lock brakes.



HELPING TEENS TAKE TO THE ROAD

Driving is a complex and often demanding task, even for the best drivers. More supervised practice helps young drivers become more skilled behind the wheel and gives parents greater peace of mind.

Some resources to help teens practice their driving skills include:

New Mexico Department of Transportation,
Traffic Safety Division's web site for graduated driver licensing is
www.transportation.unm.edu/youth/GDL.html or
call (800) 541-7952.

New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department,
Motor Vehicle Division's web site is
www.mvd.newmexico.gov

AAA's Teaching Your Teens to Drive is available for purchase by calling
(800) 327-3444.

This 13 lesson program includes a 50 minute video and handbook that helps teens learn driving such as:

- Basic vehicle control
- Position and speed adjustment
- Passing and changing lanes
- Visual search habits
- Freeway and night driving
- Driving on slippery surfaces
- Reducing risks

Check with your insurance company to see if they provide any programs or guidelines to help teenagers learn to drive.

This information is provided to explain New Mexico's graduated licensing program. MVD is the final authority on driver licensing provisions and exceptions to these provisions.

Data Sources:

- AAA New Mexico
- Motor Vehicle Division
- Traffic Safety Division
- UNM's Division of Government Research
- Reference New Mexico State Statute N.M.S.A. 66-5-8. Provisional licenses; instruction permits; driver education students; temporary licenses.

Cover photo by: Martin Perea, New Mexico Department of Transportation.

The New Mexico Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Division, has statutory authority over all private driver education schools and instructors. The Division also certifies all public high school driver education instructors.

Please contact the NMDOT Traffic Safety Division at 1-800-541-7952 for any questions or concerns regarding driver education programs in New Mexico.



To obtain additional brochures, call:

NMDOT

1-800-541-7952

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Drivers with an INSTRUCTION permit or PROVISIONAL license will have their time extended 30 days for each adjudication or conviction of a traffic violation.

Traffic violation is expanded to mean:

- Failure to obey traffic control devices
- Failure to obey traffic control signals
- Speeding
- Failure to Yield
- **NEW** Child not in restraint device or seat belt
- **NEW** Failure to properly fasten seat belt
- Homicide by vehicle
- Injury to pregnant woman by vehicle
- Driving while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs
- Refusal to submit to chemical tests
- Reckless Driving
- Careless Driving
- Racing on Highways
- **NEW** Using a mobile communication device while driving a motor vehicle (unless driver holds a valid amateur radio operator license issued by FCC and is operating an amateur radio)
- **NEW** "Mobile communication device" means wireless communication device that is designed to receive and transmit voice, text, or image
- **NEW** Driving means being in actual physical control of vehicle (does not include being lawfully parked)
- **NEW** Buying, attempting to buy, receiving, possessing or permitting oneself to be served alcoholic beverages



TEEN DRIVERS
A GUIDE TO
NEW MEXICO'S
GRADUATED
DRIVER LICENSE

For more information please contact NMDOT Traffic Safety Division at (800)-541-7952

