

How to pass your road test (on the first try!)

John Christoforo, CMSC instructor

I've been working at CMSC on road test day, either in the car as a sponsor, or at our registration desk, for over 10 years. So I've seen a lot of road tests. From the thrill and satisfaction of passing...to the agony and disappointment of failure!

SO I could just remind of what you should already know – There's nothing new on the road test that you haven't already seen before....The examiner was nervous when taking his/her road test too....Obey traffic signals and know the rules of the road....etcetera, etcetera

I think the most valuable advice I can give you, if you want to maximize your opportunity to pass the road test on your first try, is to keep your driving skills sharp! I'd say that the best results on road test day comes from those students and parents who tell me that they have spent time practicing the skills we've taught in the days and weeks prior to road test.

On average, students have to wait three and more likely four weeks AFTER their last road lesson to take their first road test. We're limited by the RMV as to how many road tests we can host (by examiner availability each week) and we are completing student training at a rate which places us in this time frame.

SO, you need to use all of that time to your advantage. One of our veteran instructors observes that if you are learning to play an instrument, you can't just attend a lesson, go home and not practice for a few hours during the next week, and expect to improve upon your instrument playing skills when you come to the following lesson.

The same holds true for learning to drive. The same holds true for the time between your last lesson and your road test! You are suddenly away from the routine you've become used to while with us for the past twelve lessons, and your skills can become dull. You'll be back in the car your family drives, which may be significantly different from the cars you had lessons in. You may not readily have the opportunity to practice what we've taught you in the car.

STUDENTS: you need to plan with your parents and family when you will make the time to practice the skills for the road test (follow this link for a list of pointers we recommend regarding road test <https://centralmasafety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Helpful-Tips-for-the-Road-Test.pdf>). I do tell people on road test day, that you're not being tested on driving the car to the store, or driving home from school. You are being tested on operating the vehicle according to the rules of the road and demonstrating your ability to perform the required maneuvers. When I hear a parent say that their kid is a great driver, I know that the examiner has the final say on that.

PARENTS: we recognize that driver's education is not inexpensive, and you expect results. We also know that the costs for driving don't go down once your teen receives their license. We want you to take an active role in seeing the process to a successful completion. If your child has a four week wait between last lesson and road test, I'd recommend two hours of driving per week for your student, with the specific purpose of practicing the skills we've taught. We know that your most comfortable place in the car is not in the front passenger seat, but we hope your patience will be rewarded in due time.