

# THE PARENT'S GUIDE to TEEN DRIVING

New York State  
Department of Motor Vehicles



[www.dmv.ny.gov](http://www.dmv.ny.gov)

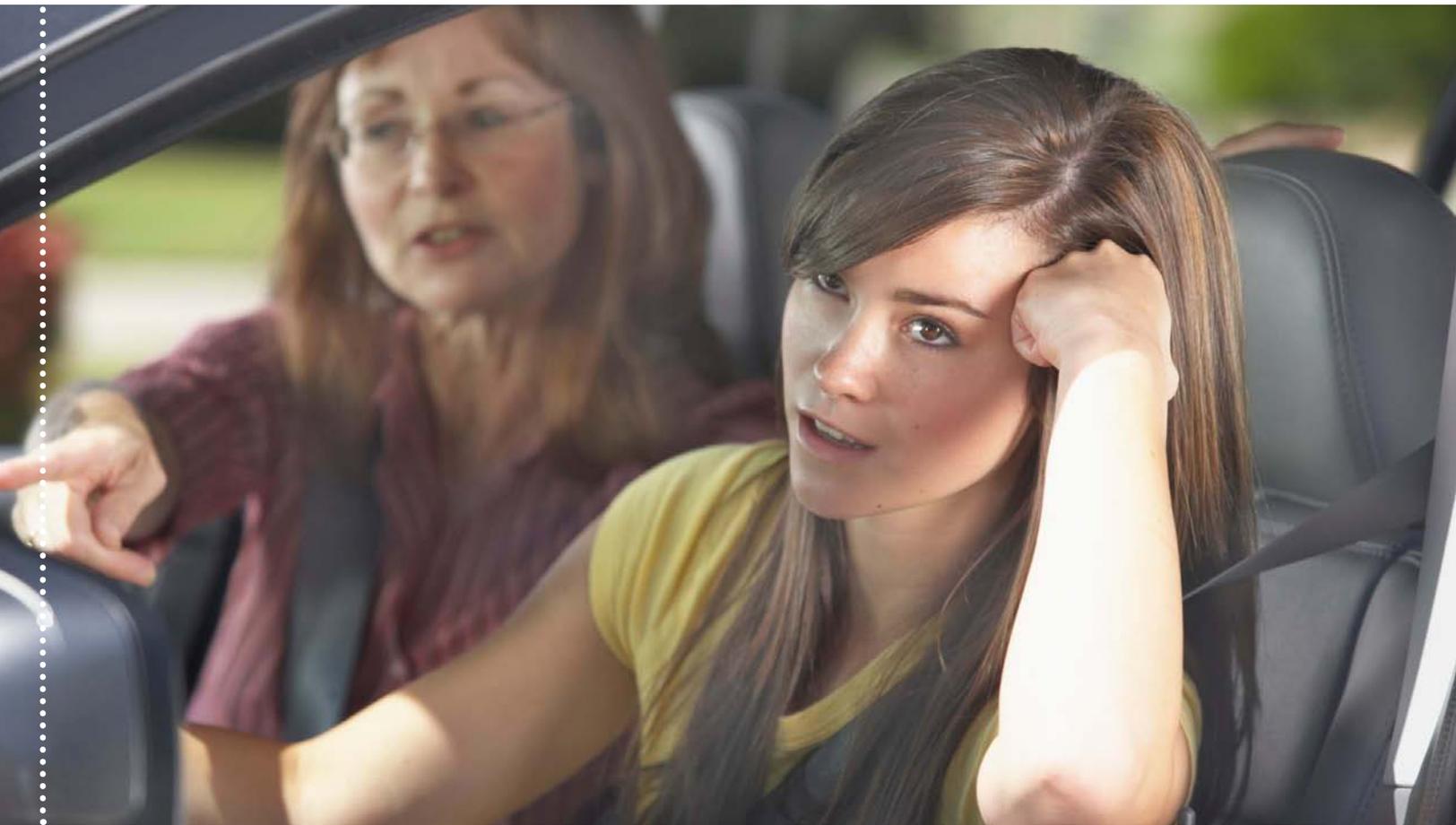


# PARENT GUIDE TO TEEN DRIVING

## WHY IS THIS GUIDE NECESSARY?

Learning to drive is a significant step for teens, leading to adulthood and increased freedom. When teens reach the age of 16, getting a driver's license often becomes a priority for them. Your teen has completed the first step in this important process: the Junior Learner Permit. This is a critical time for your teen to understand the responsibility that comes with the adult privilege of driving and that the development of safe-driving skills is a crucial part of the process of learning to drive.

As a parent or guardian your main concern is your teen's safety. Compared to drivers of all ages, teens are at a higher risk of fatal crashes due to immaturity and inexperience behind the wheel. The first year of driving is the most dangerous for your teen, and as your teen gains experience this risk begins to decrease. During the learning process, parental involvement is important in the development of safe-driving habits, and believe it or not, teens have said that parents have the greatest influence on the decisions they make. In fact, according to a [study](#) conducted by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia



Research Institute, **teens who described their parents as authoritative (highly supportive and involved, set rules, and monitor) reported fewer risky driving behaviors and half the crash risk in the last year as teens who described their parents as less involved.** For this reason it's important that practice sessions go beyond teaching basic skills such as parallel parking and the three point turn. Keeping your new driver as safe as possible involves a combination of hours of practice, open communication between parent and teen, knowledge of the specific laws for drivers under the age of 18, and making sure your teen follows these laws.

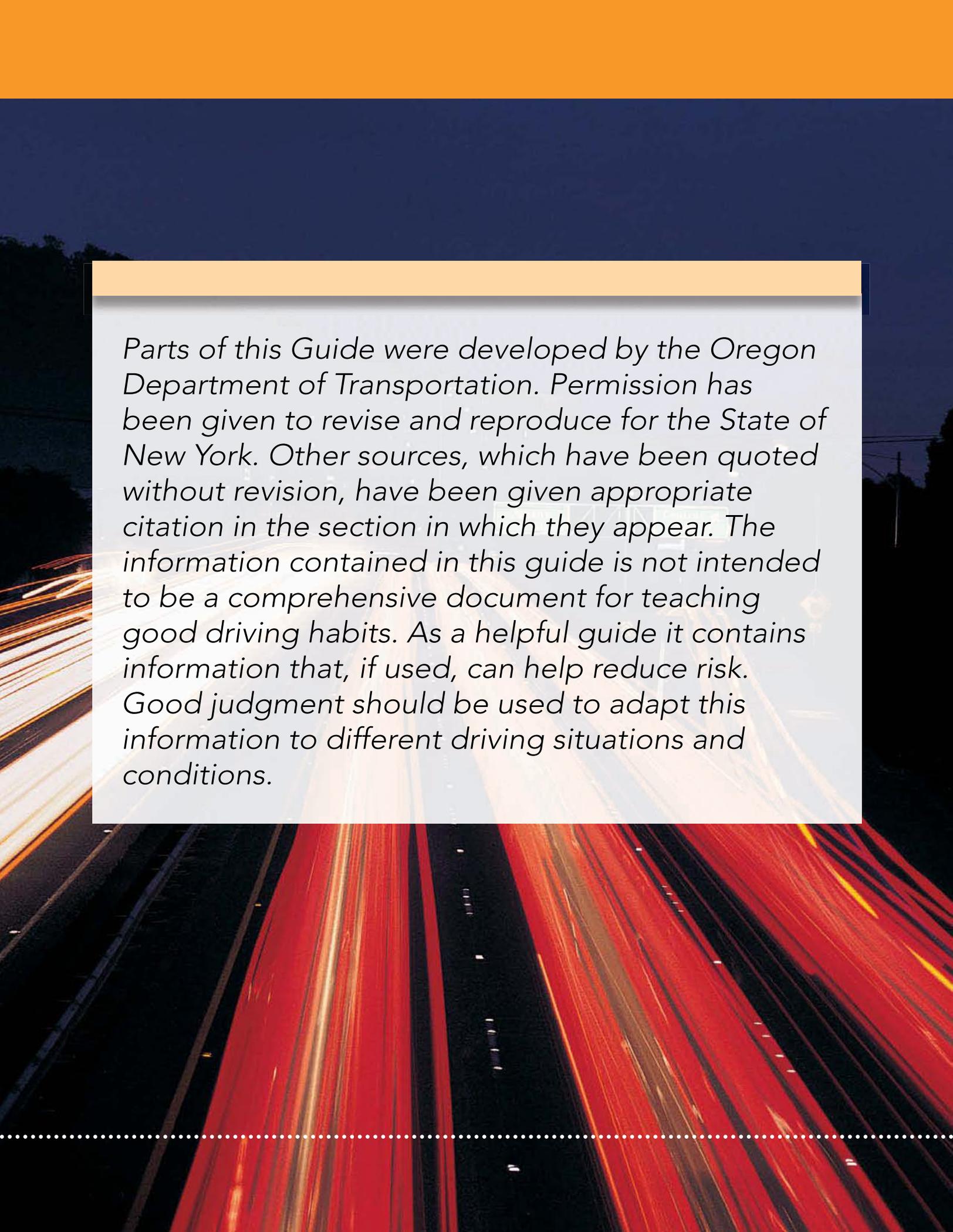
We have developed this guide in order to provide you with the information necessary to keep your teen driver safe, not only for the first years of driving, but hopefully for a lifetime. Pay special attention to the Graduated Drivers License law (we have provided information at the end of this book, highlighting the regional restrictions, for you to print and hang in a spot where they can easily be seen) and the personal driving log. Please remember, as a role model for your teen driver, you will have the greatest influence on your teen's attitude towards responsible driving. We hope this guide serves as a valuable resource for you as your teen begins the journey to become a licensed driver.





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*Parts of this Guide were developed by the Oregon Department of Transportation. Permission has been given to revise and reproduce for the State of New York. Other sources, which have been quoted without revision, have been given appropriate citation in the section in which they appear. The information contained in this guide is not intended to be a comprehensive document for teaching good driving habits. As a helpful guide it contains information that, if used, can help reduce risk. Good judgment should be used to adapt this information to different driving situations and conditions.*

# TEEN PERCEPTIONS ON RISK

Research has shown that teens' perceptions of risky driving situations do not equal reality. A 2006 study of over 5,000 high school students conducted by The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia & State Farm Insurance Companies revealed that:

- While 60 percent of teens believe inexperience heavily influences safety, only 15 percent consider themselves or their peers to be inexperienced.
- Teens base "experience" on licensure rather than on miles driven or exposure to difficult driving circumstances.
- Only 10 percent of teens correctly view peer passengers as potentially hazardous.
- A greater percentage of teens believe certain passenger behaviors increase risk, such as "acting wild" (65 percent) and encouraging the driver to speed (62 percent).
- Only 25 percent of teens view cell phone use while driving as very dangerous.
- 79 percent of teens recognize that text messaging is a very dangerous behavior while driving.
- The majority of teens defined speeding as driving at least 10 miles per hour over the posted speed limit when in truth, going even one mile per hour over the speed limit is considered speeding.
- Caucasian teens are more likely than Hispanic or African-American teens to see their peers racing or speeding, and do not rank these behaviors to be risky.
- African-American and Hispanic teens view drinking alcohol while driving as less risky than Caucasian teens do. They also observe the behavior more often than Caucasian teens.

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\**Enhancing Education to Keep Teens Safe on the Road (2011)*  
The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute

## HELPFUL LINKS

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Research Institute:

<http://www.teendriversource.org/>

NYS DMV Resources for the Younger Driver:

<http://dmv.ny.gov/youngerdriver/default.html>

NYS Department of Motor Vehicles:

<http://dmv.ny.gov>

National Highway Traffic Safety Association:

[\\*Set the Standard](#)

[\\*Parental Responsibility Toolkit](#)

National Safety Council:

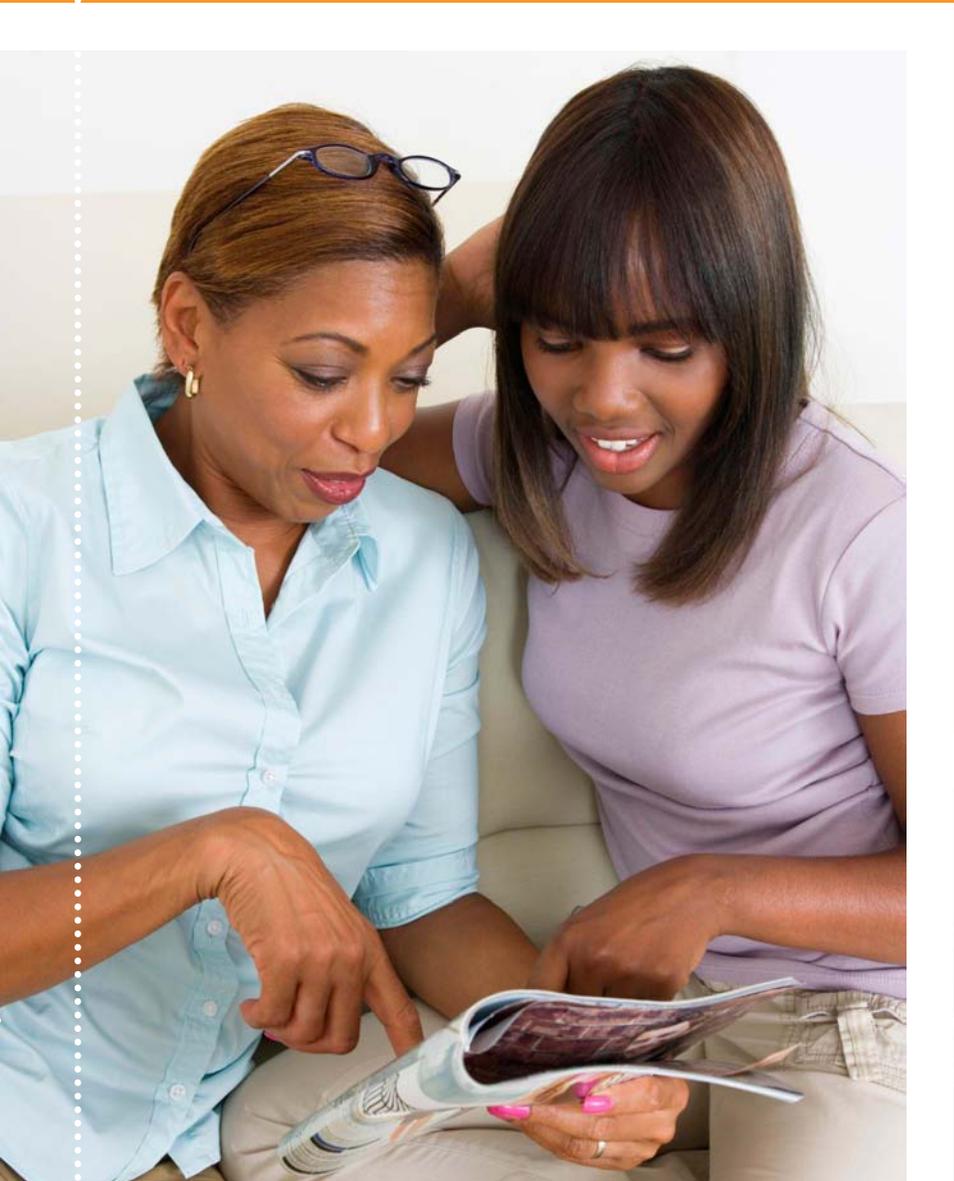
[\\*Alive at 25 Program](#)

[\\*Teen Driver](#)

# KEEPING YOUR YOUNG DRIVER SAFE

## SETTING THE RULES

The best time to set the rules and expectations for your teen's behavior is before they begin driving. Your teen should have a clear understanding of when they are allowed to use the car, where they can and cannot drive, and which friend, if any, is allowed to ride in the car with them. The Graduated Driver Licensing law is a great foundation to begin with. In addition, drawing up a contract with your teen, outlining your rules and expectations, and stating specific consequences for breaking these rules will help you to avoid confusion later on. We have provided a contract on the following page for your use. You can use the contract as it is, or use it as a guide to assist you and your teen in drawing up your own agreement that will fit your specific needs.



# AGREEMENT

## Agreement Between Parent(s)/Guardian and Teen Driver

As a teen driver I agree to the following rules:

- I will always wear my seat belt and require all of my passengers to do so.
- I will not use my cell phone to talk or text while driving. I will only use my cell phone in the car for emergencies.
- I will obey the speed limit at all times. Under no circumstances will I drive recklessly, aggressively, or engage in any form of street racing.
- I will never drive after using ANY alcohol or drugs.
- I will never be a passenger in a car in which the driver has been using any alcohol or drugs, is driving recklessly or aggressively or is engaging in street racing.
- If I am ever in a dangerous or uncomfortable situation, as a driver or a passenger, I will call home for a ride or call a taxi without fear of punishment.
- I understand the Graduated Licensing Law and how it affects my driving privilege. I will abide by all of the restrictions at all times.

Failure to comply with any of the rules in this agreement will result in a loss of my driving privilege for a length of time, to be determined by my Parent(s)/Guardian, based on the severity of the infraction.

As the Parent(s)/Guardian of a teen driver I/we agree to the following:

- I will enforce the rules of this agreement at all times.
- I have read and understand the Graduated License Law and how it applies to my teen driver. I will enforce all of the restrictions at all times.
- I will take the time to train my teen driver so they will become a safe and responsible driver.
- I will provide a safe ride home for my teen driver any time of the day or night without punishment.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.

Newly Licensed Driver \_\_\_\_\_

Parent(s)/ Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

## SHOW SUPPORT

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Parents should let their teens know they can be counted on for help and support. Although the concept of support may be different from family to family, some ways for parents to show they can be relied upon include:

- Be the scapegoat to help them save face with friends. If necessary let your teens describe you as totally unreasonable. When they want to do the right thing, but don't want to be seen as different, let them blame you! Repeating the rules on a regular basis will help your teens know them.
- Make sure your teens' friends and parents know your tough rules. ("No way! My dad would kill me if I did that." ... "You're right. Your dad would kill you!")
- Always give your teens an easy way out. Give them a safe escape route when faced with social situations that they perceive as uncomfortable or dangerous. Let them follow your rules without embarrassing themselves.
- Create a code word. Help teens get out of unsafe situations by calling or texting you with a previously agreed-upon code word that signals trouble. Be sure to have your phone on-hand when your teens are "out." When you hear or see that word, pick them up right away.
- Don't interrogate your teens about the situation. Just give them a ride and allow them to tell you what happened on the way home.

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## SETTING AN EXAMPLE

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Your teen is watching every move you make behind the wheel and chances are they have been doing this since they were in a car seat. If you set rules for your teen and don't follow these rules yourself, your teen probably won't follow them either. Remember, teens will imitate a parent's behavior!

As we become more experienced with driving, we are tempted to take more risks or perform tasks that take our attention away from the road. Consider how some of these things may be perceived by your young driver:

- **Speeding:** It's tempting to speed through traffic when you are late for an appointment, but remember the faster you are going the longer it takes your vehicle to stop in an unexpected situation.
- **Talking on Your Cell Phone** (or using your blackberry, typing on the laptop, or texting): Multi-tasking is part of our lives today. The problem is that performing other tasks while driving or sitting in traffic takes your attention away from the road, sometimes for longer than you think. It only takes three seconds of distraction for a crash to occur. A caution for hands-free cell phone use: this is not necessarily a safe form of chatting in the car. Dividing your attention between the task of talking and the task of driving can cause the same driving behaviors exhibited by someone with a blood alcohol content of .08! It's important to keep your eyes and your mind on the road!



- **Drowsy Driving:** Being a parent and being tired go hand in hand. It's important to remember that driving when you are drowsy can affect your reaction time. It's better to save the trip for later if you think you are too drowsy to drive.
- **Rowdy Crowd in your Car:** This may sound familiar. You have three teens in your car and are off to the mall. An argument breaks out in the backseat, and the front-seat passenger wants to hear her favorite CD, but she can't get the CD player to work, so she asks you to do it. You turn around to attend to the argument in the back of the car, while at the same time adjusting the stereo and you are driving! Keeping your focus on the road and insisting your passengers don't create distractions will teach teens the responsibility that comes with driving.



## TALKING WITH YOUR TEEN ABOUT DRIVING

Open communication between parents and teens is necessary in keeping young drivers safe behind the wheel. It is essential that parents talk to their teens on a regular basis about the driving privilege and emphasize the importance of safe driving habits, not only for the teen's safety but for the safety of their peers and others on the road.

Some ideas for discussion:

- Encourage your teen to share their driving experiences with you; the good ones and the not so good. Open and informal conversations will create honesty and trust between you and your teen. This will also give you an opportunity to talk about the things they are doing well, and the things they need to improve on.
- Do some storytelling of your own. Talk to your teen about a crash you were involved in, or being a passenger in a car in which the driver's behavior was making you uncomfortable. Discuss how you felt and how you reacted to the situation. What do you wish you had done differently?



- While you are in the car with your teen, talk about other drivers on the road. Point out drivers who are following the rules of the road and those that aren't. Talking about other drivers' behavior while it is happening in front of both of you will provide an opportunity for coaching your teen on safe driving skills, and will help to teach your young driver how to predict what other drivers may do.
- Have an open discussion with your teen about alcohol/drug use and driving. It's critical to emphasize the dangers alcohol/drugs can pose to any driver, especially inexperienced drivers. It is recommended that this conversation include severe consequences for impaired driving. (The loss of driving privileges, for example). It is also recommended that you reassure your teen they can call you at any hour of the day or night if they find themselves in a situation with an impaired driver.



# DRIVING WITH YOUR TEEN

## PREPARING FOR SUPERVISED DRIVING WITH YOUR TEEN

Inexperience is one of the top risk factors for young driver involved crashes. Sixteen and 17 year old drivers simply don't have enough behind-the-wheel experience to make informed decisions and properly assess risks. **Often times, as parents, we make the assumption that a responsible teen will be a skilled driver. However, it is important to remember that demonstrating responsible behavior and gaining enough experience to be a skillful driver are two very different things; a "good teen" doesn't equate to an experienced driver.** In fact, the only way a teen can gain the experience needed to become a safe driver is through hours of practice, most of which is encouraged to be done with a parent or guardian. We have provided some helpful tips for preparing for supervised driving with your teen.

*If you are unsure about practice driving with your teen, or if you have tried and you don't feel comfortable conducting the practice sessions, there are other options available to you and your teen. Perhaps another family member or a commercial driving school can provide the lessons. The important thing is that your teen receives the practice needed to become comfortable and experienced behind the wheel.*

- **Practice, and then practice some more.** Take your teen driving on a regular basis in a variety of different situations. Don't just practice when the weather is nice; chances are they won't be driving only on nice days

*In New York City, supervised driving practice for permit and junior license holders must be conducted in a car equipped with dual brakes. Parents in these areas also have the option of enrolling teen drivers in a driving school to complete behind-the-wheel practice time or conducting practice driving in one of the upstate areas which do not require dual brakes.*

when they get their license! Allow your young driver to experience rain or low visibility so that you can teach him or her how to handle a vehicle when conditions are less than perfect. Supervised practice after sunset is important as well, since night driving is especially risky for novice drivers.

**Hint:** *According to New York State GDL law, your teen must complete 50 hours of supervised driving with 15 of those hours at night (after sunset) certified by the teen's parent/guardian before graduating to the next level of licensure. These 50 hours of practice are a **minimum** requirement; try to practice with your teen as much as possible. **If your teen decides to take driver education, the parent certified supervised driving time is still required.** We have provided a personal driving log for you to use in conjunction with the Certification of Supervised Driving [\(MV-262\)](#).*

- **Keep it short and have a plan.** It is helpful to plan out each practice session before getting into the car. Try to have a lesson plan prepared and know the route you are going to follow. Also, try to have an alternate route planned in case you encounter construction or a detour. The practice sessions should last no more than one hour, and should have a definite beginning and conclusion. Make sure to end each session, when you are parked, with a discussion about the lessons you covered, what went well and what you plan to try again in future lessons. Give your teen plenty of opportunity to talk about the lesson and offer input on the areas where more practice may be needed.
- **Encourage your teen to talk.** During each practice session encourage your teen to describe the things they are seeing and the actions they are about to take while they are driving. This is known as "Commentary Driving" and can help you to see if your teen is paying attention to the important things while behind the wheel. The comments could go something like: "Car turning right ahead...approaching red light... foot off of gas...." During the first few sessions you should provide the comments in order to teach your teen things to watch for, and actions that should be taken. Slowly allow your young driver to take over the role of speaker until Commentary Driving is naturally happening without your help. Explain to your teen that this is something that will eventually take place silently as experience is gained and when driving solo.



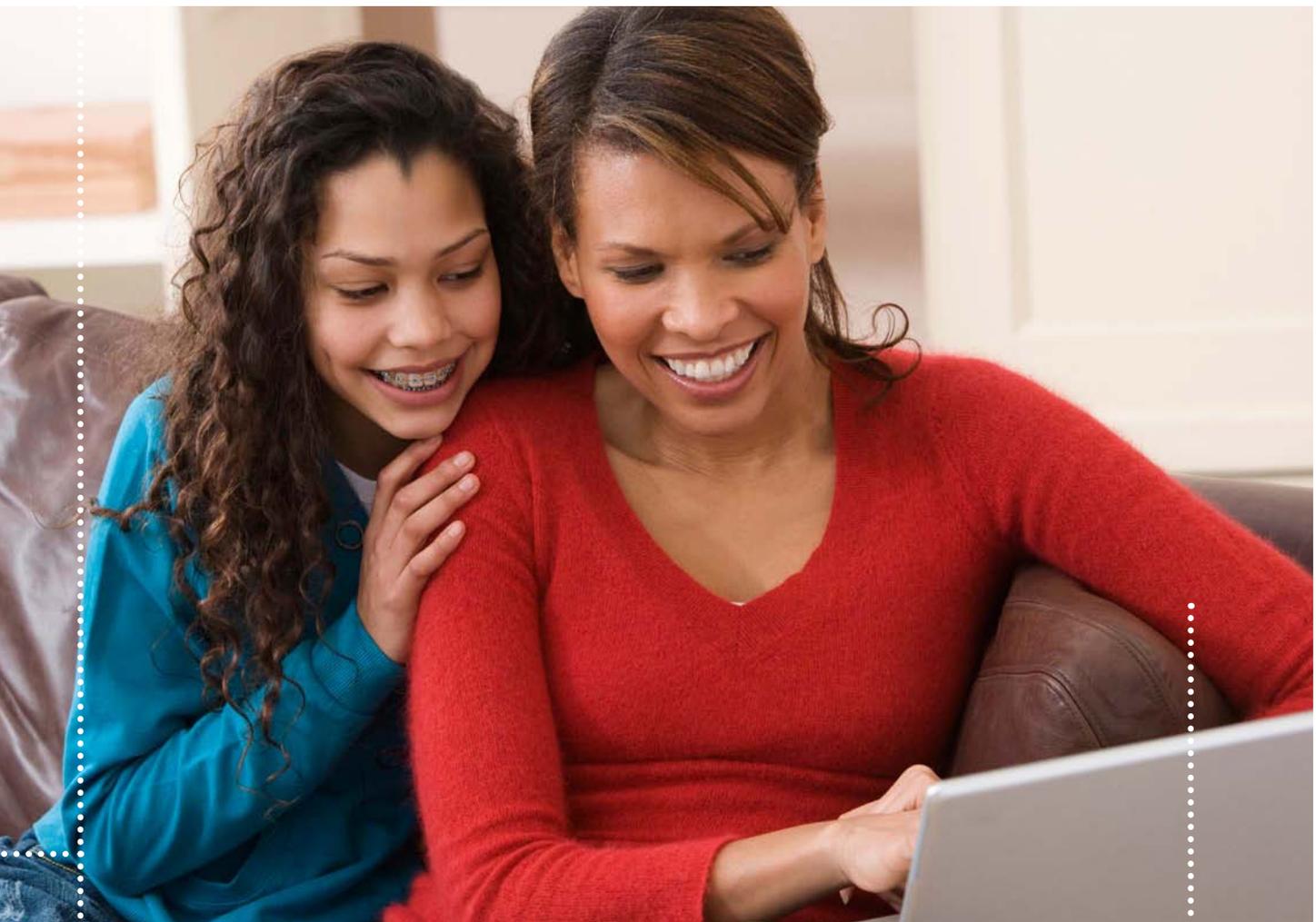
- **Be patient and positive.** Practice with your teen only when you are both in the mood to do so. Schedule a time for each session; try to avoid unplanned sessions. If you or your teen are feeling tired, upset or just generally aren't in the mood, reschedule. Always offer correction the moment it is needed and be positive when giving direction. If your teen does something incorrectly, explain the correct method and then have the young driver try again, immediately. Creating a calm and positive atmosphere will help to make the practice sessions rewarding for you and your teen.
- **Be prepared to take control if necessary.** In order to become comfortable taking control of the vehicle if your teen panics or loses control, practice the following in a parking lot with your teen in the driver's seat, before your first practice session:
  - Practice steering the car from the passenger seat with your left hand.
  - Use the mirror on the passenger side visor as a rear view mirror. Also adjust the right outside mirror so you can use it to monitor traffic behind you from the passenger seat.
  - If the parking brake is located between the seats, practice using it to stop the car slowly.
  - Practice regaining speed control by shifting the car from drive to neutral from the passenger seat.

## SUGGESTED LESSONS

On the following pages we have provided some lesson plans focusing on some of the challenging driving situations you will face with your new teen driver. **The lesson plans we have included should be used in addition to your practice driving sessions and are not intended to be a complete set of lessons.** Remember to use the personal driving log we have provided in the section following the suggested lessons. It will help you to keep track of the practice sessions you have completed and keep notes of your teen's progress. Also, be sure to use the [Certification of Supervised Driving \(MV-262\)](#) to certify the required supervised driving time necessary for him/her to take a road test.

Please refer to the [New York State Driver's Manual](#) for an explanation of traffic signs and roadway markings before your first practice session with your teen.

Good Luck!



## BEFORE YOU EVEN BEGIN

It is important that you and your teen understand the safety features in each of your vehicles. Together, read your vehicle manuals for information on, and proper usage of, vehicle safety features.

### Seat Belts

New York State Law requires the driver and all passengers must wear a seat belt, one per person. All children under age four must ride in federally-approved child safety seats. If the child is more than 40 pounds in weight, they must use a proper child restraint system such as a booster seat.

- Until their 8th birthday, children must use a proper child restraint system.
- Children more than four feet nine inches tall are allowed to use a seat belt and shoulder harness.
- It is recommended that children age 12 and under ride in the back seat.

### Air Bags

Air bags and seat belts are designed to be used together. Air bags and seat belts keep you in the safest positions during a crash. Depending on your vehicle, you may have front and/or side air bags. Air bags can deploy at speeds of up to 200 mph and temperatures of almost 500 degrees. The deployment and deflation happens faster than the eye can see. Front and side impacts will activate appropriate air bags.

#### *Proper Use*

- Read your vehicle manual to learn where air bags are located and when and how they deploy.
- Sit 10-12 inches from the steering wheel.

### Anti-Lock Brakes (ABS)

Most vehicles manufactured in the last 10 years have anti-lock brake systems. ABS is designed to help a driver maintain control during emergency braking situations by keeping the tires from locking up. However, it does not make a vehicle stop more quickly. In fact, the rolling traction may produce longer stopping distances on some dry or limited traction surfaces such as loose gravel or fresh snow. Some vehicles are equipped with ABS on all 4 wheels. Others, such as light pickup trucks only have ABS on the rear wheels. Check your vehicle manuals to determine if you have ABS and on which wheels.

## How Do You Use ABS?

- With ABS on all 4 wheels, do not pump the brakes. Maintain firm pressure on the brake, and if needed, steer away from the hazard using a minimum amount of steering.
- With ABS on the rear wheels only, the front wheels can lock up. Pump the brakes to avoid lock-up.

*Refer to your owner's manual to determine the proper use of the ABS your vehicle is equipped with.*

## Some other safety features that your vehicle may be equipped with include:

Electronic Stability Control • Tire Pressure Monitor • Traction Control  
All Wheel Drive • Daytime Running Lights • Fog Lights

Instructions for proper use and maintenance can be found in your owner's manual.

## Vehicle Functioning

In addition to safety features, you and your teen need to be familiar with all vehicle controls and other indications that the vehicle is functional.

## Vehicle Controls

In each of your vehicles, have your teen practice and then demonstrate the ability to operate each of the following without looking at the controls:

- Gear Selector
- Turn signals
- Headlights, low and high beams
- Climate controls
- Defrost, front and back
- Door locks
- Window controls
- Parking brake, set and release levers
- Brake and gas pedals

## Vehicle Readiness

In each of your vehicles, have your teen practice and then demonstrate the ability to determine the readiness of each of the following:

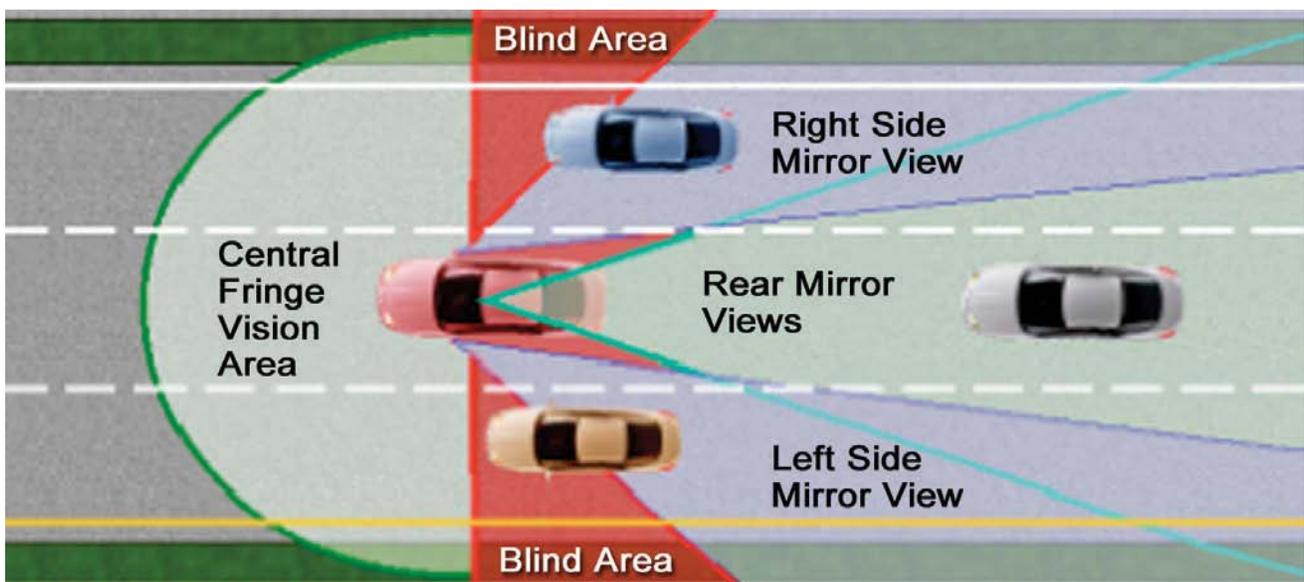
- Windows and headlights clear
- Tires properly inflated
- Mechanical condition checked regularly
- Loose objects secured in the trunk/backseat
- Parking brake works
- Signal lights and brake lights work

## Blind Spots

Coach your teen to regularly monitor and be aware of blind spots. He/She should:

1. Check to the rear with the inside rearview mirror.
2. Check to the sides with the side view mirrors.
3. Make a blind spot check in the area slightly beyond the driver's peripheral field of vision.
4. Look out of the rear side windows, not the back window, when checking the mirror blind spot areas (See the red areas beside and to the rear of the car in the example.)

New drivers have the tendency to move the steering wheel in the direction they move their heads. Watch for this movement and correct if necessary.



## An Exercise to Become Familiar with Blind Spots

The following exercise illustrates the area around the car the driver cannot see:



- While your teen is sitting in the driver's seat with the engine off, get out of the car and stand close to the front bumper facing the driver.
- Begin taking steps backward and have your teen tap the horn when he or she can see your feet.
- Place a cone or cup in that spot. This is the pavement area in front of the vehicle that cannot be seen when looking out of the windshield.
- Ask the driver to use the inside mirror and/or to look over the right shoulder, and repeat this process to the rear of the vehicle.
- Walk backwards from the passenger doors on the left and right sides of the vehicle and place cups or cones to mark the side areas visible to the driver.
- Have your teen measure these distances and record them.

## Top 11 Young Driver Errors

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Before you get behind-the-wheel with your teen, make sure you know the following common teen driving errors:

- Not watching the road ahead
- Driving five or more miles per hour too fast for conditions
- Driving too fast through a curve
- Not checking all directions at an intersection/failure to yield right of way
- Lack of attention at an intersection and being struck by another driver
- Quick turn not performed correctly/ overcorrection
- Focusing on the area directly in front of the vehicle/failure to look ahead
- Failure to see possible hazards on the side of the roadway
- Following too closely
- Willfully taking right-of-way
- Distracted

## FIRST SESSIONS BEHIND THE WHEEL

The basic driving skills in this section are the cornerstone to safe and responsible driving. Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate these basic driving skills.

### **Automatic or Manual Transmission**

A new driver should first learn the basic controls in a car with automatic transmission and then transfer to a standard-shift vehicle.

### **Steering Control**

Modern vehicles require very little steering to turn. Look at the steering wheel as a clock face and place your hands at 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock or slightly lower at 8 and 4. These are the desired hand positions that reduce the possibility of turning the wheel too sharply. To reduce forearm and hand injuries, hands should be placed on the lower half of the steering wheel, with knuckles on the outside and thumbs stretched along the rim of the steering wheel.

***Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate the following three steering techniques:***

### **Pull-Push Steering**

Use pull-push steering for most turning maneuvers. Put your hands in the 8 and 4 o'clock positions. Pull down with one hand and push up with the other. This results in smooth steering and reduces the potential for too much steering, which can lead to loss of control. Keep the hands and thumbs on the outside of the wheel.

### **Hand-Over-Hand Steering**

Use hand-over-hand steering when steering movements are critical, such as when (a) parking, (b) performing sharp right turns, and (c) for skid correction. Use quick movements on entry to the maneuver, and then use slow, smooth movements when straightening the wheel. Steering errors are directly related to vision errors.

### **One-Hand Steering**

Use one-hand steering for backing maneuvers that do not require full left or right turns.

# BEGINNING DRIVERS

## **Speed Control**

Speed control techniques are used to make smooth starts, stops, and turns. These techniques increase comfort in the vehicle as well as fuel efficiency. They also keep the vehicle balanced, which increases the controllability of the vehicle and decreases risk to yourself and others. Speed control techniques are described below. Cruise control is not recommended for the beginning driver.

Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate the following acceleration and braking techniques:

## **Light Acceleration**

Light acceleration is light pressure on the gas pedal. It is used to (a) make smooth starts and (b) begin turns that require a stop.

## **Progressive Acceleration**

Progressive acceleration is a steady increase in pressure on the gas pedal. It is used to get your speed up to the limit. Continue to apply the gas until you have reached your desired speed, then use steady even pressure to maintain it.

## **Cover Brake**

Cover brake is when the ball of your right foot is "hovering" over the brake. It is used in anticipation and/or preparation for braking.

## **Controlled Brake**

Controlled brake is firm, steady, even pressure on the brake pedal. It is used in non-emergency situations. Apply the brake to the point of resistance, then use steady even pressure.

## **Trail Brake**

Trail brake is a slight decrease of pressure on the brake pedal. It is used (a) during the last two seconds of a stop in order to avoid any jerky sensations, (b) to back up, (c) to inch forward, (d) to "creep" or move at walking pace, and (e) to begin a moving turn.

## **Threshold Brake**

Threshold brake is applying maximum force to the brake pedal without locking the wheels. It is used in emergency situations.

## Lane Positions

Lane positions refer to where your vehicle is in the lane (it does not refer to changing lanes). Lane positions are used to (a) communicate your intentions to other drivers, and (b) best position your vehicle for a driving maneuver.

*Make sure your teen learns, practices, & can demonstrate the following three lane positions:*

### Lane Position 1

Lane position 1 is in the center of the lane. This position allows for the best separation and distance from obstacles (such as cars, curbs, etc.) to the right and to the left. Use lane position 1 for normal driving conditions if you have no plan to change driving maneuvers.

### Lane Position 2

Lane position 2 is the left side of the lane. This position allows for the best separation from obstacles on the right and helps to improve your **line of sight**.

*[Line of sight is what you can see in any area you are looking. If you are going forward it is the area you can see in the front of the car. If you are backing, it is the area you see behind the car.]* Use lane position 2 for left turns and parking on the left.

### Lane Position 3

Lane position 3 is the right side of the lane. This position allows for the best separation from obstacles on the left and helps to improve your **line of sight**.

Use lane position 3 for parking on the right.



# BEGINNING DRIVERS

## Following Time

Following time is important for many reasons. You need adequate distance between vehicles so you can (a) see beyond the vehicle on front of you, and (b) have enough time to make adjustments to changing driving conditions ahead of you.

*Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate the ability to judge speed and distance by using the proper following time.*

## Determine Following Time

To determine following time, watch as the car in front of you passes a stationary object, such as a road sign. Then, start counting "one-one-thousand, two-one-thousand, three-one-thousand, etc.," until you reach the same object. "One-one-thousand" is approximately one second.

## Maintain 2-4 Seconds of Following Time

**Follow at 2 or more seconds** when traveling at speeds up to 30 mph.

**Follow at 4 or more seconds** when traveling under the following conditions:

- At speeds over 30 mph
- In congested traffic
- In adverse weather conditions
- When behind a motorcycle, truck, or bus

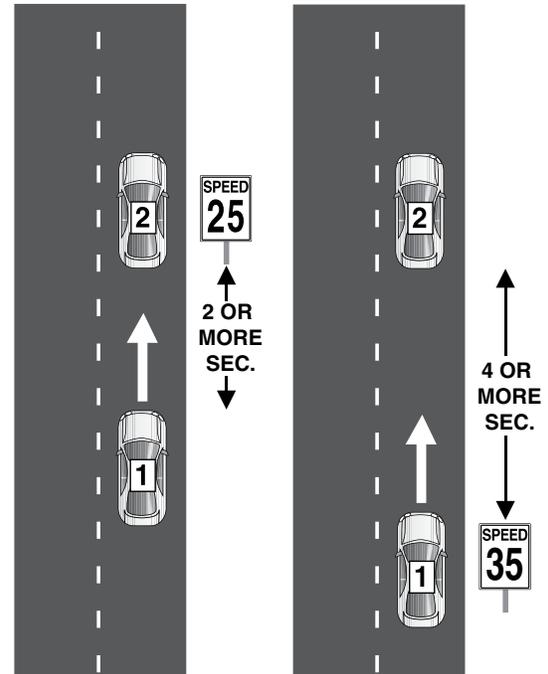
## Make Speed and Space Adjustments

- Anytime the driver in front of you reduces speed, adjust your following time so you can see at least 12-15 seconds ahead.
- When traffic or environmental conditions warrant, increase following time.
- Change position within the lane to increase line of sight.

# Definitions

## Line of Sight:

What you can see in any area you are looking. If you are going forward it is the area you can see in the front of the car. If you are backing it is the area you see behind the car.



## Searching Skills

A common cause of poor driving and crashes is not seeing the problem. *Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate searching skills including:*

- Searching intersections – 1/3 of all crashes happen at intersections
- Reading signs, signals and markings
- Reading the speedometer.

## See A Clear Path

BEFORE you step on the gas, always (a) determine what your **path of travel** will be, and (b) that your path of travel is clear before moving your vehicle in that direction.

## Turn Your Head

BEFORE turning the steering wheel, turn your head in the direction you intend to travel. When you look to see what is in your **path of travel** before you move the car in that direction, there will be no surprises or quick, unplanned maneuvers such as slamming on your brakes or sudden lane changes.

## Check Your **Blind Spot**

Do a chin-to-shoulder-turn of your head in the direction you plan to move before you (a) pull into traffic, (b) make lane changes, or (c) before you make any lateral movements.

## Do a 360 Degree Search

Physically turn your head and body to look all the way around your car before you (a) back the car or (b) parallel park.

## Search Area for Potential Problems

Look for any changes or obstacles. Search 20-30 seconds ahead of the vehicle to gather information about your **path of travel**. Search 12-15 seconds ahead of the vehicle to plan your path of travel & keep 2-4 seconds of following time.

## Check the Rearview Mirror

Check the rearview mirror (a) after seeing a change to conditions ahead of you, (b) before and after braking action, (c) while stopped in traffic, (d) before and after making turns, and (e) before and after making a lane change.

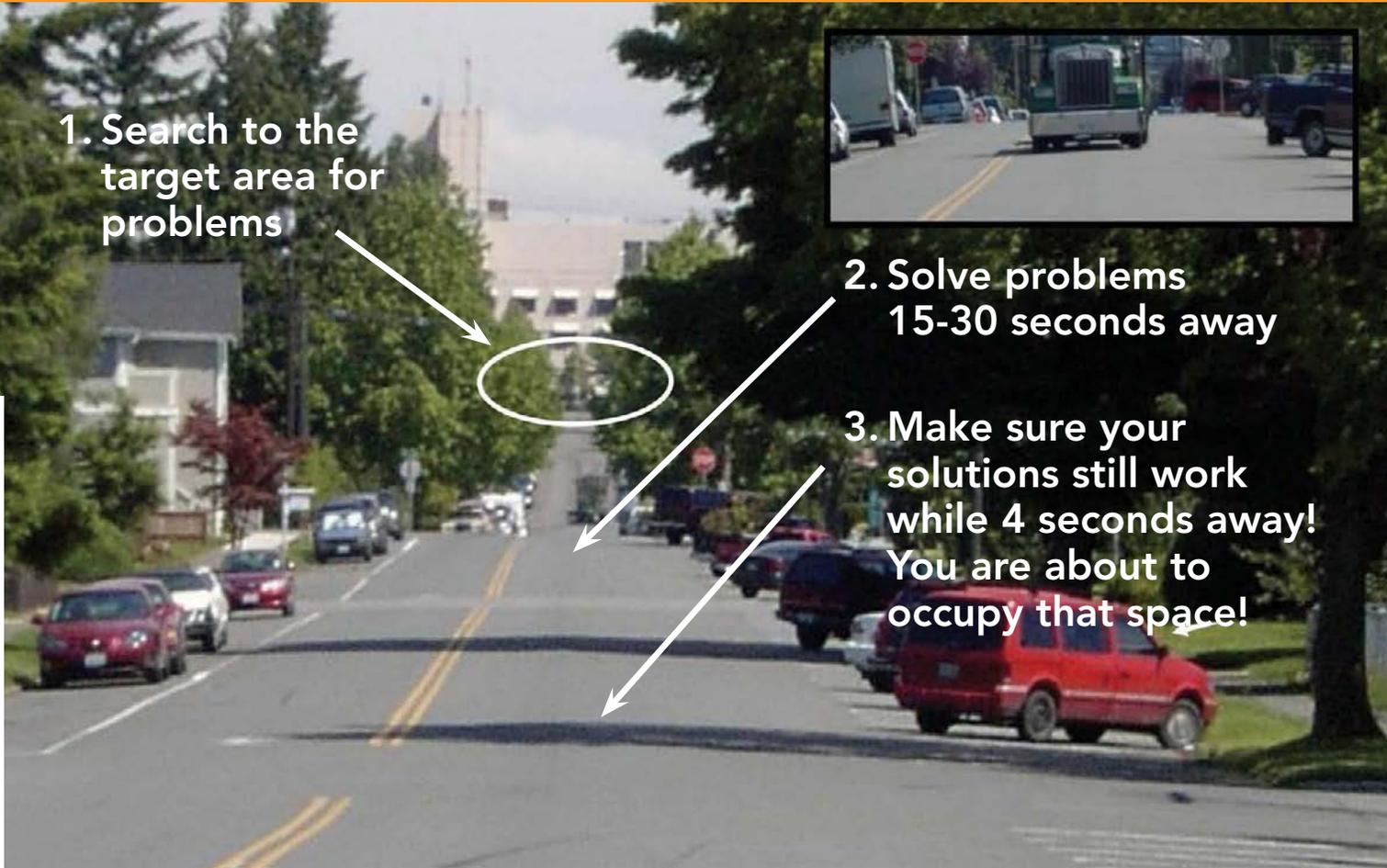
# Definitions

## Path of Travel:

The area you want the car to go.

## Blind Spot:

The area that is not visible to the driver without turning their head and looking.



1. Search to the target area for problems

2. Solve problems 15-30 seconds away

3. Make sure your solutions still work while 4 seconds away!  
You are about to occupy that space!

### Communication With Other Drivers

Always communicate your intentions to other drivers.

*Make sure your teen knows the communication options and when to use them.*

### Turn Signals

Use turn signals to communicate in which direction you plan to travel.

### Lane Positions

Use lane positions to communicate your plans to change driving maneuvers.

### Headlights

Use headlights to be more visible to other drivers day and night.

### Horn

Use the horn to alert others to you or to emergency situations. Do not use it in anger.

## **Use of Headlights**

A good practice is to always use your low-beam headlights during the day so that you are more visible to other drivers. The decision to use low- or high-beam headlights at other times depends on the circumstances. Make sure your teen understands when to use low-beam and high-beam headlights. New York State law requires the use of your headlights from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise, when visibility is less than 1,000 feet (300m) and whenever you are using your windshield wipers to clear rain, snow, sleet, etc.

## **Low-Beam Headlights**

Use low beam headlights when traveling:

- During the day, especially at dawn or dusk
- On heavily traveled roads with traffic going in both directions
- At night in well-lit areas
- For, rainy, snow or misty conditions



### **High Beam Headlights**

Use high-beam headlights when traveling at night in dimly lit areas.

### **Switch From High to Low Beams**

Switch from high to low beams when a vehicle approaches you in the opposite direction at night. New York State law requires your headlights must be on low beam when you are within 500 feet (150 m) of an approaching vehicle, or within 200 feet (60 m) of a vehicle ahead of you, even if the vehicle ahead is in a different lane. You should also dim your lights for pedestrians approaching you. Any auxiliary fog or driving lights your vehicle has must be arranged, adjusted, or operated to avoid dangerous glare or dazzle to other drivers.

If the other driver fails to switch to low beams, you need to (a) slow down, (b) use lane position 3, and (c) move your eyes to the right edge of the road until the vehicle passes. Do not look into oncoming headlights or flash high-beam lights at others. Headlight glare can temporarily blind you.

## **Definitions**

### **Lane Position 3:**

The right side of the lane.

*The exercises in this section are designed to introduce the new driver to the basic maneuvers necessary to operate a motor vehicle.*

## **First Things First**

It is important to start at the beginning with proper procedures for entering the vehicle, making adjustments, starting the car and securing the car. Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate these driver behaviors before you start practice driving.

## **Entering the Vehicle**

### **Be Well Rested and Alert**

NEVER drive a vehicle when you are tired or sleepy, emotionally upset, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs (including prescription and over-the-counter medicines).

### **Have Key in Hand**

When you know you are going to your car, have your key out in your hand. For your personal safety, never search for your keys through your clothes or purse at your car. The goal is to have your keys in a location where you can retrieve them quickly and spend as little time as possible trying to open your car.

### **Approach with Awareness**

As you approach your car, check around and inside the vehicle. Look inside to ensure no one has entered your car and is waiting for you. You should park in well lit areas away from places where someone could be hiding (bushes, vans, etc.).

### **Lock all Doors**

Immediately after entering the vehicle, lock all doors before you insert the key into the ignition. Someone can easily jump into an unlocked car.

***Insert the Key into the Ignition But Do Not Start the Car Yet!***



# STEP BY STEP MANEUVERS

## Making Adjustments

### Adjust Seat Position

1. Place the seat to where your torso is 10-12 inches from the steering wheel and your arms are bent less than 90 degrees at the elbow.
2. Put the ball of your right foot on the brake pedal. From your foot position, make sure you (a) have full range of motion in your ankle, (b) can fully depress the brake without your heel coming off the floor and (c) can pivot on your heel to put the ball of your foot on the gas pedal.
3. Make adjustments for best vehicle control and personal comfort.

### Adjust Safety Belts

- Put the seat back up straight. Move the seat to where you are at least 10 inches from the steering wheel.
- Sit up straight with your hips and back against the seat back.
- Adjust the lap portion of the safety belt low across your hips and pelvis – **never across your stomach.**
- Adjust the shoulder portion across your chest and collarbone—**never across the front of your neck or face, behind your back, or under your arm.**
- Make sure the lap and shoulder belts are snug.

### Adjust Wheel Tilt

If you have an adjustable steering wheel, tilt it down so that the top of the wheel is no higher than the top of your shoulders.

### Adjust Head Restraint

To correctly adjust a head restraint, the top of the head restraint should reach at least as high as the top of your ear and be set back no more than three inches from your head. Close head restraints can be twice as effective in preventing injuries as those which are set back too far.

### Adjust the Mirrors

This technique significantly reduces the size of typical **blind spots**. This setting is great for eliminating headlight glare too!

- To adjust the driver side mirror, place your head against the driver's side window and adjust the mirror out until you can just see down the left side of your vehicle

## Definitions

### Blind Spot:

The area that is not visible to the driver without turning their head and looking.

- To adjust the passenger side mirror, lean your head to the right and in line with the inside rearview mirror. Then adjust the right outside mirror out until you can just see down the right side of the vehicle.
- To adjust the rearview mirror, get the best, clear, full view out the back window while in the proper sitting position – sitting straight up with your hips and back against the seat back.

**NOTE:** Mirrors do not completely eliminate **blind spots**. Always do a chin-to-shoulder turn of your head to check **blind spots** before ever making a lateral maneuver.

## Starting the Car

1. Make sure the transmission is in “PARK” and the parking brake is set.
2. Place your right foot on the brake and hold it down.
3. Turn the key halfway to the “ON” position & allow the onboard computer to boot up.
4. Check gauges and warning lights.
5. Turn the key the rest of the way to the “START” position & release immediately.
6. Turn your headlights on.
7. Turn on other necessary accessories—climate control, wipers, etc.
8. Before entering traffic, release park brake & signal. Check mirrors, look over the shoulder to check blind spot, and go when clear.

## Secure the Car After Driving

1. Place your right foot on the brake and hold it down.
2. Set the parking brake.
3. Shift the transmission to “PARK.”
4. Turn off all accessories – lights, wipers, climate control, etc.
5. Turn off the vehicle and remove your key from the ignition.
6. Lock the car doors after you exit the vehicle.

## Backing

Backing increases the risk for crash because it is much more difficult to see obstacles behind us. In addition, backing up requires more space to maneuver because your back tires do not turn. **When given the choice, position the car so you can pull forward instead.**

# STEP BY STEP MANEUVERS

*Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate proper backing procedures.*

## Common Errors

- Improper body position
- Speed too fast
- Failure to determine that path of travel is clear
- Failure to look back during the whole maneuver until the vehicle is completely stopped.
- Incorrect steering

## Parking

*Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate parking in different situations.*

What people generally understand as “parking” is legally divided into three categories: parking, standing, and stopping.

A **No Parking** sign means you may stop only temporarily to load or unload merchandise or passengers.

A **No Standing** sign means you may stop only temporarily to load or unload passengers.

A **No Stopping** sign means you may stop only in order to obey a traffic sign, signal or officer, or to avoid conflicts with other vehicles.

*Parking, Standing, or Stopping is not allowed:*

- Within 15 ft. (5m) of a fire hydrant, unless a licensed driver remains in the vehicle to move it in an emergency.
- On the road side of a parked vehicle (“double parking”).
- On a sidewalk or in a crosswalk.
- In an intersection, unless permitted by signs or parking meters.
- On railroad tracks.
- Alongside or opposite road excavations, construction, or other obstructions if your vehicle would block traffic.
- Within 30 ft. (10 m) of a pedestrian safety zone, unless another distance is marked.

- On a bridge or in a tunnel.

*Parking or Standing is not allowed:*

- In front of a driveway.
- Within 20 feet (6m) of a crosswalk at an intersection.
- Within 30 feet (10 m) of a traffic light, STOP sign or YIELD sign.
- Within 20 feet (6m) of a fire station driveway, or within 75 feet (23m) on the opposite side of the road.
- Along a curb that has been cut down, lowered or constructed for access to the sidewalk.

In addition, you may not park your vehicle within 50 feet (15m) of a railroad crossing.

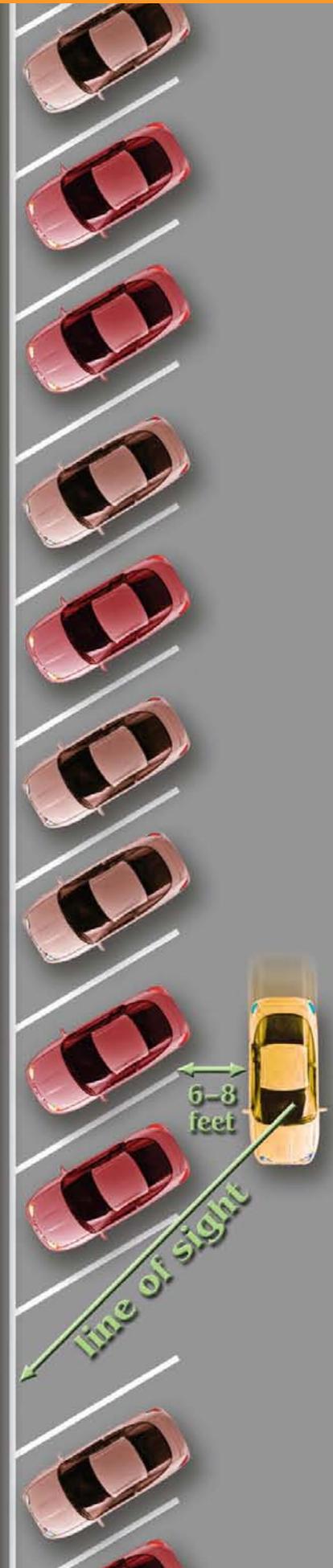
## Entering Angle Parking

*Common Errors for Entering Angle Parking*

- Failure to signal
- The vehicle is too close to parking space on the side
- Failure to see traffic in the rear
- Speed too fast
- Failure to target the center of the space

## Proper Procedures for Entering Angle Parking

1. Signal.
2. Slow or stop the vehicle at least 6-8 feet from the parking space.
3. Check your blind spot on the side of the parking space for traffic and pedestrians.
4. Begin turning when you can see the center of the parking space without your line of sight (or view) cutting across the parking line.



## Definitions

### 360 Degree Search:

Physically turn your head and body to look all the way around your car.

### Trail Brake:

A slight decrease of pressure on the brake pedal.

5. Creep (move very slowly) and turn the wheel sharply toward the center of the space.
6. Once you enter the space, straighten the wheels and center the vehicle in the space.
7. Stop even with the curb or parking line.
8. Secure your vehicle.

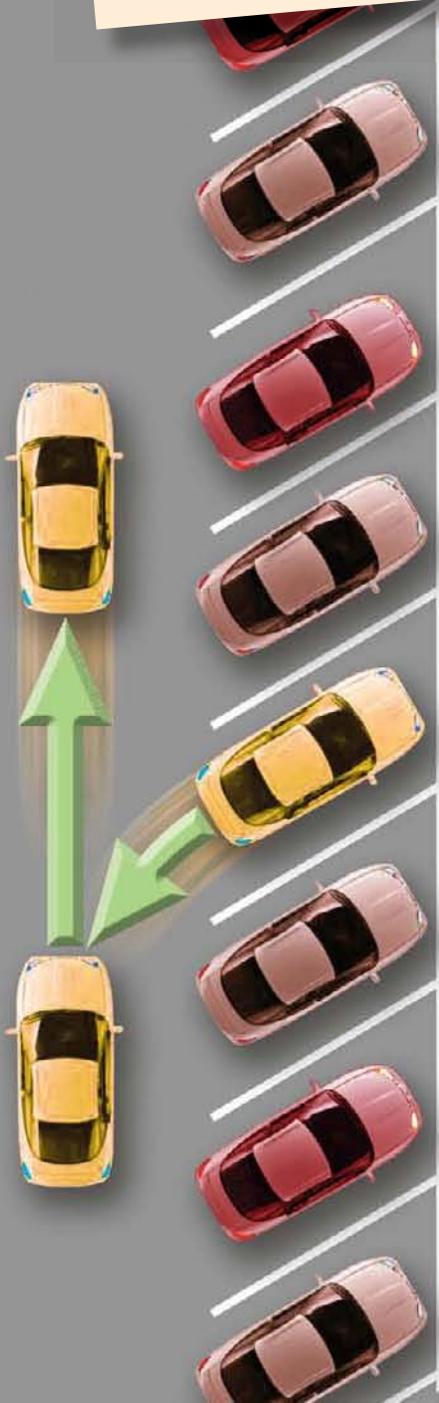
## Exiting Angle Parking

### *Common Errors for Exiting Angle Parking*

- Failure to check rear
- Failure to signal
- Speed too fast
- Failure to look back while backing
- Starting to turn before bumper is cleared

### **Proper Procedures for Exiting Angle Parking**

1. Signal.
2. With your foot on the brake, shift to "REVERSE."
3. Do a **360 degree search** and yield to all traffic and pedestrians.
4. Look over your shoulder and trail brake (do not accelerate using the gas pedal) at a walking pace.
5. Check the front of your car for clearance of the car in the next space.
6. Begin turning when your front bumper is even with the rear bumper of the parked car to your left or the dash of your car appears to clear the car to the side.
7. Continue to look to the rear while backing into the nearest lane.
8. Stop smoothly and shift to "DRIVE."





## **Pulling into Perpendicular Parking Space**

### *Common High-Risk Errors*

- Failure to approach and align to space correctly
- Failure to search for, communicate with, or yield to other traffic
- Speed too fast
- Failure to straighten wheels and align in middle of space

## **Proper Procedures for Pulling into Perpendicular Parking**

1. Signal and get 6-8 feet from the parked cars or as far to the left of the lane as possible.
2. Check traffic behind you.
3. Creep and turn the wheel sharp to the right of the space.
4. Check your right rear fender for clearance.
5. Straighten the wheel when you are centered in the space.
6. If necessary, shift to "REVERSE" and creep back slightly turning the wheel to the left.
7. Use a forward reference point to avoid hitting a curb.

## **Parallel Parking**

### *Common Parallel Parking Errors*

- Approach too close or too fast
- Failure to shift to REVERSE
- Failure to look back while moving back
- Begin turning too early
- Failure to check front of car for clearance

# STEP BY STEP MANEUVERS

## Entering a Parallel Parking Space

1. Check the rearview mirror and signal.
2. Stop 2-3 feet beside the front vehicle and line up rear bumpers.
3. Shift to "REVERSE."
4. Look over your shoulder and **trail brake** (do not accelerate using the gas pedal).
5. Look back while creeping back and turn wheel fully toward the curb.
6. When the vehicle is 45 degrees to the curb, and your front wheels align with the back wheels of the other car, straighten the tires and slowly back up in a straight line.
7. Check the front of your car to make sure it clears.
8. When your left rear bumper is even with the rear vehicle left front bumper, turn wheels sharply left and continue to inch back.
9. When parallel to the curb, straighten wheels and center your vehicle in the space.

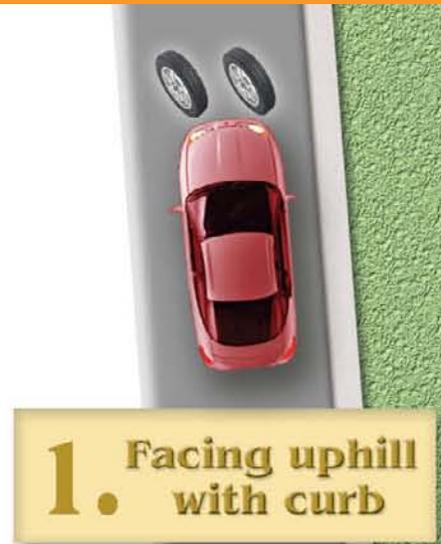
## Parking on Hills

### *Common Errors for Parking on Hills*

- Failure to search for, communicate with, or yield to other traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians when entering or exiting the roadway
- Excessive speed on approach
- Failure to set parking brake when securing the vehicle

## Good Habits/Proper Procedures for Parking on Hills

1. Choose a legal space and signal.
2. Check your rearview mirror and blind spots.
3. Apply the brake and approach parallel to and 12 inches from the curb.

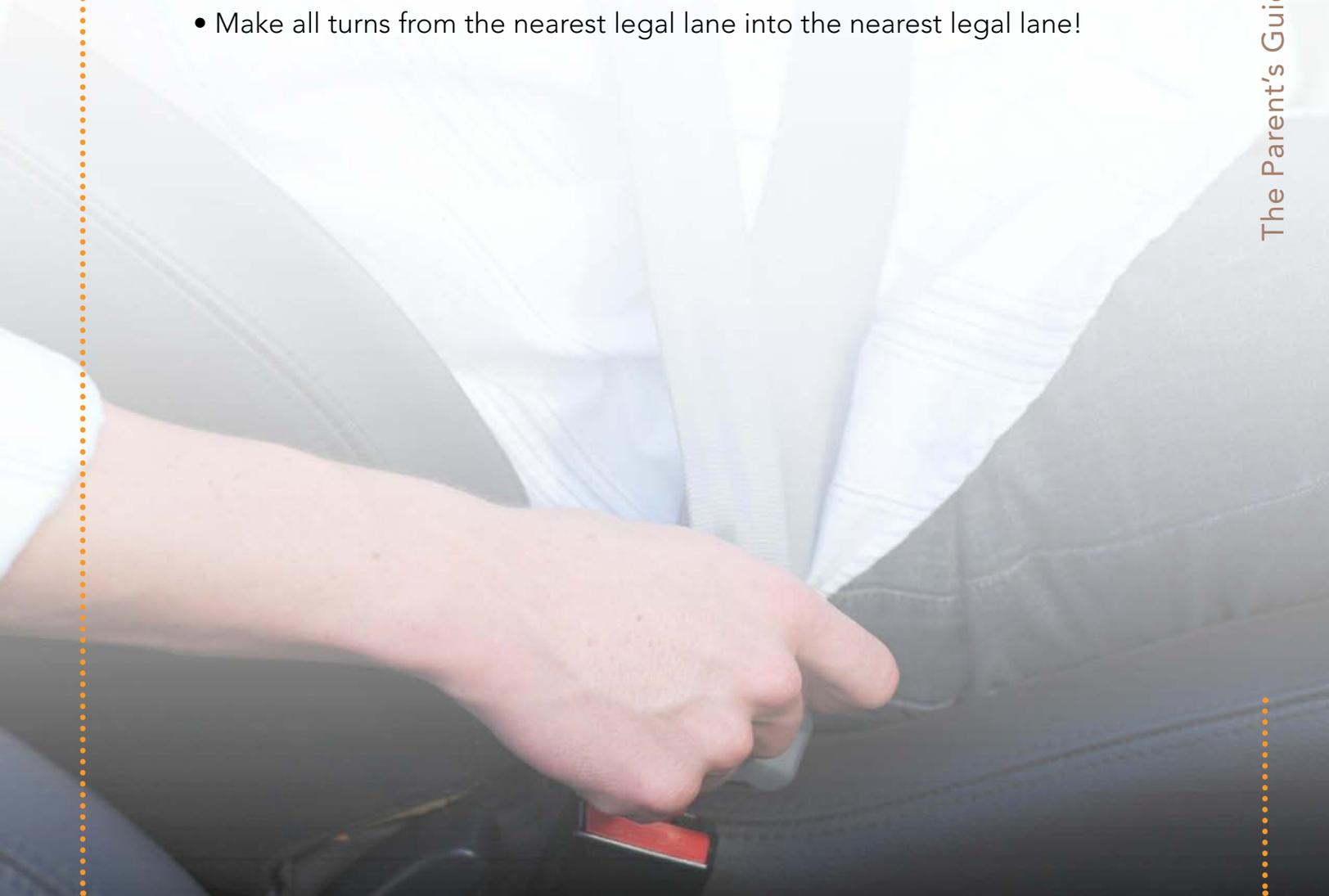


4. Make a smooth stop and shift into "NEUTRAL."
5. Turn the wheels in the proper direction
  - a. If facing up hill with curb, turn wheels left, toward the roadway (FIG. 1)
  - b. If facing down hill with curb, turn wheel right, away from the roadway (FIG. 2)
  - c. If there is no curb, turn wheels right, away from the roadway (FIG. 3)
6. Secure vehicle by shifting to "PARK" and setting your parking brake.

## Turns

Make sure your teen practices and can demonstrate precision right and left turns. As you practice, remember:

- Stop at intersections at the legal stop line. If there is no line, then stop at the crosswalk/sidewalk. If there is no crosswalk/sidewalk, then stop before the imaginary line extending from the curb line or edge of roadway.
- ALWAYS look to the left, to the front, to the right, and then to the left again before entering any intersection.
- Make all turns from the nearest legal lane into the nearest legal lane!



## ADVANCED DRIVING SKILLS

AFTER your teen masters starting and stopping the vehicle, backing, parking, and turns, THEN practice more complex driving skills. Make sure your teen learns, practices, and can demonstrate advanced driving skills to your satisfaction.

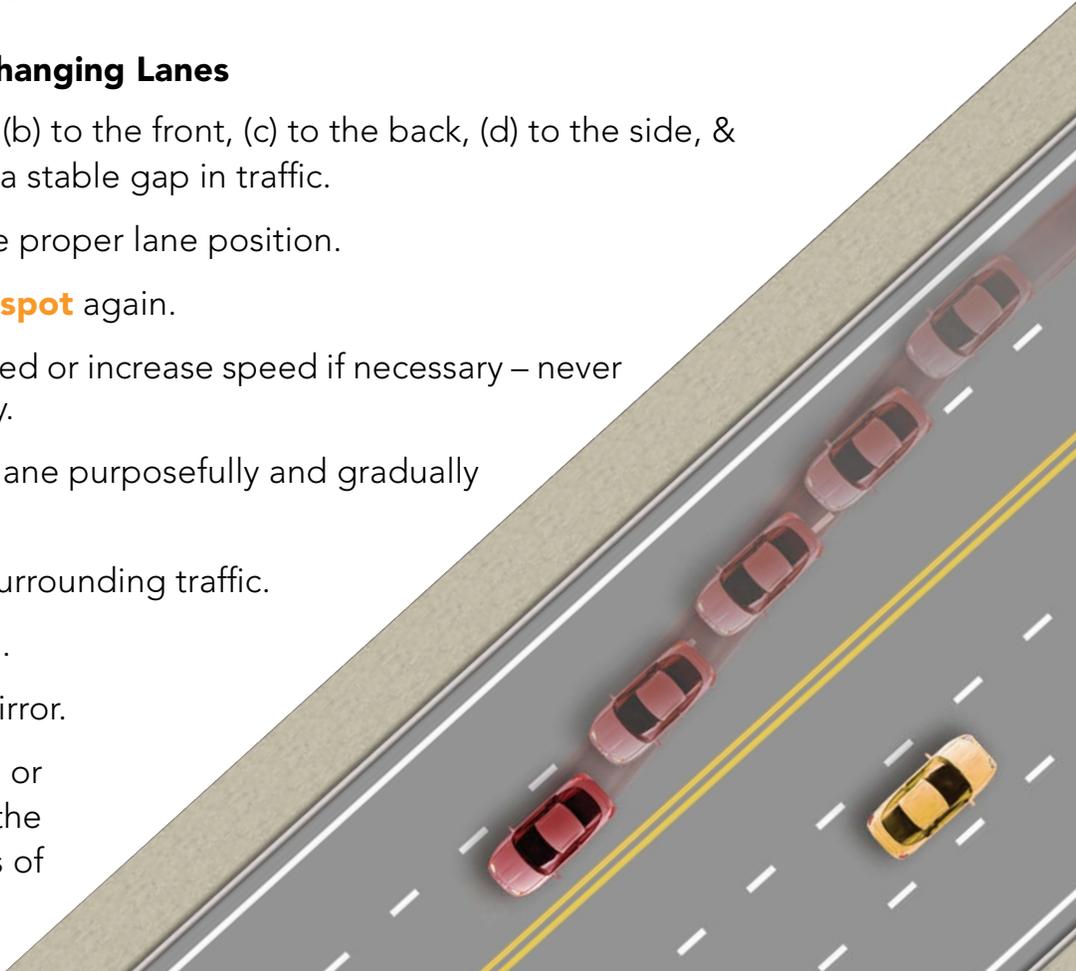
### Changing Lanes

#### *Common Errors When Changing Lanes*

- Failure to check front, rear, and sides for a stable gap in traffic
- Insufficient space or time to move into the new lane
- Failure to signal
- Steer too quickly, too much, or not smooth and gradual into the new lane
- Unnecessary slowing
- Failure to cancel signal
- Exceed speed limit
- Cross multiple lanes at one time
- Drift while checking blind spot

#### **Proper Procedures for Changing Lanes**

1. Check (a) mirrors, (b) to the front, (c) to the back, (d) to the side, & (e) **blind spot** for a stable gap in traffic.
2. Signal and use the proper lane position.
3. Check your **blind spot** again.
4. Maintain your speed or increase speed if necessary – never slow unnecessarily.
5. Move to the new lane purposefully and gradually at a slight angle.
6. Adjust speed to surrounding traffic.
7. Cancel turn signal.
8. Check rearview mirror.
9. Create separation or “open space” to the front, rear, & sides of your vehicle.



## Passing

### *Common Errors When Passing*

- Not looking ahead for a clear path
- Failure to signal
- Accelerate too soon
- Tailgate vehicle to be passed
- Speed too slow while passing
- Steer too quickly or too much into the passing lane
- Return to lane too soon
- Failure to cancel signal
- Exceed speed limit
- Pass unnecessarily
- Pass in a no passing zone

### **Proper Procedures for Passing**

1. FIRST, ask yourself if passing at the time is necessary, legal, and safe.
2. Search your intended **path of travel** far ahead to determine any obstacles.
3. Check mirrors and **blind spot**.
4. Signal in the direction of the pass.
5. Increase speed to at least 10 mph faster than the car you are passing, but stay within the legal speed limit.
6. Move smoothly into the passing lane.
7. Change signal to the opposite direction.
8. Check the **blind spot**.
9. Return to the lane when you can see the headlights of the vehicle you passed in your rearview mirror.
10. Cancel signal and resume safe and legal speed.
11. Check rearview mirror.

## Entering the Interstate Highway

### *Common Errors When Entering the Interstate Highway*

- Speed too slow
- Failure to signal
- Failure to yield to other vehicles already on the highway
- Failure to check traffic to front and rear
- Drift while checking traffic
- Poor gap judgment
- Turn steering wheel too sharply
- Failure to cancel signal

## Proper Procedures for Acceleration Lane

1. Check ALL mirrors.
2. Keep four or more seconds of space to the front of you.
3. Accelerate smoothly & briskly to match the flow of traffic.

## Proper Procedures for Merging

1. Communicate your intentions with signal and lane position.
2. Check front, rear, and blind spot for a stable gap in traffic in your intended path of travel.
3. Merge smoothly into the gap in traffic.
4. Adjust speed to surrounding traffic.
5. Cancel turn signal.
6. Check rearview mirror.
7. Create separation of "open space" to the front, rear, and sides of your vehicle.

## Exiting the Interstate Highway

### *Common Errors When Exiting the Interstate Highway*

- Failure to see exit ramp in advance



- Reduce speed before exit ramp
- Failure to signal
- Failure to check rearview mirror
- Failure to reduce speed on exit ramp
- Failure to cancel signal
- Cut over from left lane at the last minute

## Proper Procedures for Exiting the Interstate Highway

1. Plan for the exit – read the signs.
2. Move to the appropriate lane well in advance.
3. Signal and check rearview mirror.
4. Maintain speed until you enter the exit lane.
5. Enter the exit ramp and use controlled braking. Reduce speed to posted speed or less.
6. Beware of velocitation and adjust your speed and lane position in preparation for stopping and/or turning.
7. Check the rearview mirror.

### Note: Adjust procedures for the following:

- Traffic stopped on the exit ramp
- Short deceleration lane
- Very slow ramp speed
- Other drivers following you at high speed or close distance

## Railroad Grade Crossings

### Common Errors for Railroad Crossing

- Does not take railroad crossing seriously
- Failure to look and listen for oncoming trains

## Definitions

**Velocitation:** the fact that you are going faster than you think you are when you exit the freeway. Make sure you do frequent speedometer checks to help adjust your speed.



- Failure to ensure all tracks are clear
- Stop too close to the tracks
- Race to beat crossing arms when lights flash

## Proper Procedures for Railroad Crossing

1. Slow down, whether the lights are flashing or not, and check the rearview mirror for traffic behind you.
2. Look and Listen for oncoming trains.
3. Determine the number of tracks and check each track in both directions.
4. If a train is approaching or the crossing lights are blinking, stop at least 15 feet from the tracks or at the stop line.
5. When the tracks are clear as far as you can see in both directions, cross the tracks.

## School Zones

- Stop and remain stopped when a school crossing guard signals you to stop.
- Be alert at all times for children, bicyclists, and pedestrians in a school zone.
- Follow the signs or flashing lights that warn you that you are approaching a school or school crossing.
- Obey the slower speed limits.

## These Signs Mean School Zone or Crossing Ahead:



## Crosswalks

Pedestrians are vulnerable users of the roadway and drivers must use responsible driving behavior at all crosswalks. There is a crosswalk at every intersection, even if it is not marked by painted lines (unmarked). Drivers must not stop with any portion of their vehicle overhanging the crosswalk and must not block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light or stop sign.

Never pass another car that is slowing or stopped at a crosswalk. The driver may be waiting for a pedestrian to cross the road. This is a frequent cause of death to pedestrians.

## Night Driving

### *Preparation*

Give your teen planned and practical night driving experience. Set up a time when you and your teen will be free from other obligations. Night driving should be undertaken in a relaxed atmosphere. Select a local route that your beginning driver has driven before. Have in mind those experiences that need to be covered.

## Night Driving and Headlights

Understand the limitations of the high- and low-beam headlights and how those limitations affect one's ability to gather critical information, make the best speed choices and understand the space and time required to stop the vehicle.

Switch to low beam when approaching another vehicle. If the other driver fails to switch to low beam, slow and move to lane position 3. Don't look directly into the headlights and look to the right edge of the road until the vehicle passes.

You need 2-4 seconds to stop. If you can't see beyond your vehicle's headlights during this range, slow down. You may be "driving blind."

**High-beam headlights** in good condition illuminate approximately 350 feet.

**Low-beam headlights** in good condition illuminate approximately 182 feet.

- Traveling at 50 mph with low-beam headlights a driver is able to see approximately two-and-a-half seconds of illuminated roadway (182 feet) and needs a total of 190 feet to stop the vehicle.
- At 30 mph a driver is able to see a little more than four seconds ahead with low-beam headlights and eight seconds ahead with high-beam headlights.
- Traveling at 60 mph with high-beam headlights a driver is able to see only four seconds ahead.

- To gather critical information drivers need to see 12 to 15 seconds ahead. Look well beyond the headlights in illuminated areas. In rural areas choose speeds that afford you the best opportunity to get the information you need to make critical decisions.

## Skid Recovery

Skidding can happen at any time, on any surface, during braking, accelerating, or steering. Drivers are no longer supposed to “steer in the direction of the skid.” New drivers are taught to “steer toward the **target area**.” This allows you to focus on the front of the vehicle and the path that you want your vehicle to travel.

## Proper Procedures for Skid Recovery

1. As you drive, you should always focus on the **target area**.
2. The instant you detect the vehicle skid, turn the steering wheel back toward the **target area** without hesitation.

**Note:** It is important to get the vehicle back on its **path of travel** before it gets 15-25 degrees off. That is your point of no return. Once the skid reaches that angle, the vehicle is going to keep going in the direction of the skid. **Don't give up**—stay off the pedals, keep your eyes on the **target area**, and keep working to get the car back under control.

## Driving in Bad Weather

- Drive at reduced speeds
- Leave more space between your vehicle and those ahead
- Drive with your headlights on
- Don't use cruise control

## Review some important points with your teen, including:

- Paying attention to wet leaves on the road, and how this can affect stopping/braking.
- How to safely deal with black ice, when to look for it, and how to identify it on the roadway.
- How to move a vehicle that is stuck in the snow.
- How to use “jumper cables” if the vehicle will not start.
- How to safely deal with windshield wipers that become coated with ice while driving in an ice storm.

- Speed control when driving in fog.
- How to safely deal with standing water on the roadway.

Teach your teen to drive confidently in a variety of challenging situations and with extreme caution. It's important that your teen understand that driving in poor conditions should be approached seriously and at the same time understand it is something they are capable of doing with enough practice.







# GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING LAW

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## GRADUATED LICENSING

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As the parent or guardian of a teen driver, one of the most important things you can do is become familiar with New York State's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) law. GDL is a proven method to helping teens become safe drivers; research tells us that the most comprehensive GDL programs are associated with reductions of 38 percent in fatal injury crashes, and 40 percent in personal injury crashes for 16-year-old drivers. New York State enacted a GDL law in 2003 to reduce the number of car crashes involving teen drivers. In February 2010, changes were made to strengthen the law making it one of the strongest GDL laws in the United States.

Through Graduated Driver Licensing, drivers under the age of 18 years old are slowly introduced to the responsibility of driving. This is done through the gradual phasing in of driving privileges using three stages of licensure, and specific restrictions for each stage. The GDL system is structured to allow the new driver time to develop responsible driving behavior at each stage before moving on to the next level, until eventually full driving privileges, without restrictions, are reached. GDL laws limit risk for young drivers by placing restrictions on high-risk situations such as nighttime driving and the number of passengers under age 21 permitted in the vehicle.

On the following pages we have provided an explanation of the GDL phases in New York State. In the back of this guide you will find information regarding the regional restrictions for each stage according to the area of the state a person is driving in. While Graduated Licensing is intended to provide a safe learning experience for your teen, only you can decide whether your teen is ready to take on the responsibility of driving. We recommend that you use this law to help develop further restrictions of your own, as you see necessary. If you don't feel your teen is ready to move to the next level, you may require additional supervised behind-the-wheel practice before allowing your young driver to move on. You are the parent!

### Step 1: Junior Permit

In order to get a junior permit a teen must be at least 16 years old, and the following rules apply when the teen is driving:

- A junior permit holder must be accompanied by a supervising driver at least age 21 that has a valid license to operate the vehicle being driven.
- The only passenger allowed in the front seat is the supervising driver.
- A junior permit holder may not drive with more than **one passenger** under age 21 unless the passengers are members of the driver's immediate family, **or** the supervising driver is the junior permit holder's licensed parent/**guardian**,

person ["in loco parentis,"](#) driver education teacher or driving school instructor.

- The driver and each passenger must wear a seat belt: one seat belt per person.

**\*\*A junior permit is subject to special regional restrictions which are outlined in the back of this workbook and on the [Resources for the Younger Driver](#) website. The special regional restrictions depend upon the area of the state in which the junior permit holder is driving.**

Before a road test can be scheduled, a junior permit must be valid for a minimum of six months and the junior permit holder must complete 50 hours of supervised driving, with at least 15 of those hours at night (after sunset). The supervised practice driving must be certified by a parent or [guardian](#). The Certification of Supervised Driving ([MV-262](#)) must be given to the examiner at the road test.

### **Violations:**

A junior permit will be [suspended](#) for 60 days if a junior driver is convicted of a serious traffic violation (generally three points or more) or two other violations committed while holding a junior permit.

A junior permit will be [revoked](#) for 60 days if a junior driver is convicted of a serious violation (generally three points or more) or two other violations committed within the first six months after receiving driving privileges back following suspension.

\*Please refer to page **53** for a complete description of penalties and points.

### **Step 2: Junior License:**

When a junior permit has been valid for a minimum of six months, your junior driver will be allowed to schedule a road test. If your teen passes the road test a junior license will be issued with the following restrictions:

- A junior license holder may not drive with more than one passenger under age 21 unless the passengers are members of the junior driver's immediate family, or if accompanied by the junior driver's licensed parent/[guardian](#), person ["in loco parentis,"](#) driver education teacher, or driving school instructor.
- The driver and each passenger must wear a seat belt: one per person.

**\*\*A junior license is subject to special regional restrictions which are outlined in the back of this workbook and on the [Resources for the Younger Driver](#) website. The special regional restrictions depend upon the area of the state in which the junior driver is driving.**

**Violations:**

A junior license will be **suspended** for 60 days if a junior driver is convicted of a serious traffic violation (generally three points or more) or two other violations committed while holding a junior license.

A junior license will be **revoked** for 60 days if a junior driver is convicted of a serious violation (generally three points or more) or two other violations committed within the first six months after receiving driving privileges back following suspension.

\*Please refer to page **53** for a complete description of penalties and points.

**Step 3: Senior License:**

At age 17, a junior driver is eligible for a senior license (Class D) if the junior driver has completed a state-approved high school or college driver education course.

- If the eligible teen is a junior permit holder, the teen must bring a Certificate of Completion (MV-285) and Certification of Supervised Driving (**MV-262**) to the road test and surrender the forms to the Motor Vehicle License Examiner. If the road test is passed the junior driver will receive a Class D license.
- If the eligible teen has a junior license the teen must bring a Certificate of Completion (MV-285) and the junior license to any motor vehicle office. The certificate and junior license must be surrendered to receive the senior license. Otherwise, upon age 18, the junior driver will automatically receive a senior license through the mail.

***\*\*If a junior driver does not convert a junior license to a senior license the junior driver is subject to junior license restrictions until age 18, even if the junior driver carries a completion certificate.\*\****



# DRINKING, DRIVING & YOUR TEEN

You may be surprised to learn that drinking and driving is not among the top risk factors for drivers ages 16–18 years old. Inexperience, speed, distractions, and seat belt use are much more prevalent for drivers in this age group. However, when young drivers are between the ages of 18-24, alcohol becomes a higher risk factor, and talking to your teen now about the importance of never drinking and driving is a critical part of teaching them safe driving habits. Your teen should understand that even one drink can affect their judgment and reaction time, which can cause a fatal crash. Driving after consuming any amount of alcohol is never acceptable.

New York State has specific drinking and driving laws that affect your teen. As a parent you should become familiar with these laws and the impact they can have on your teen's driving privilege.

## **Zero Tolerance Law**

This law makes it illegal for a driver under age 21 to have consumed any alcohol. A police officer may temporarily detain your teen to request or administer a chemical test to determine Blood Alcohol Content (BAC). If your teen's BAC is .02 to .07 percent, he or she could be charged under Zero Tolerance and notified to appear at a DMV hearing. If the judge's finding supports the charge, the penalty is a six-month license suspension, a \$125 civil penalty, and \$100 suspension termination fee. Each additional offense will result in your teen's license being revoked for at least one year or until age 21, whichever is longer, plus a \$125 civil penalty, and a \$100 license re-application fee.



### Driving While Ability Impaired (DWAI)

If your teen's BAC is .05 percent but not more than .07, the police have the option of charging your young driver with driving while ability impaired (DWAI), and may prosecute the arrest in criminal court, instead of Zero Tolerance. And if your teen is convicted of an alcohol-related traffic violation, in addition to any fines, fees, penalties or surcharges that must be paid for a traffic conviction, a driver responsibility assessment payment will also be required for three years. Besides putting themselves, passengers or other drivers on the road at risk of death or serious injury, driving while under the influence of drugs or alcohol can cost you or your teen serious money!

### Driving While Intoxicated (DWI)

If your teen's BAC is .08 or greater the police will charge your young driver with driving while intoxicated (DWI). If charged with DWI your teen will be prosecuted in criminal court and will face any fines, fees, penalties or surcharges associated with a DWI conviction. In addition, a driver responsibility assessment payment will also be required for three years. If your teen is found to be driving while intoxicated and has any passengers under the age of 16 riding in the vehicle, the young driver will be charged under Leandra's Law.

### Leandra's Law

On December 18, 2009 the Child Passenger Protection Act was signed into law. Known as [Leandra's Law](#), this legislation makes operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated (.08 or higher blood alcohol content), or under the influence of drugs, with a passenger under the age of 16 a [class E felony](#) offense. Individuals charged under Leandra's Law automatically have their license suspended while awaiting prosecution. Effective August 15, 2010 courts must order anyone found guilty of driving while intoxicated, including first time offenders, to install and maintain an [ignition interlock device](#) on any vehicle owned or operated by the driver. The ignition interlock must remain on the vehicle for a minimum of six months.



## WHEN YOUR TEEN PASSES THE ROAD TEST

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For the first six months after your teen passes the road test “New Driver Probation” is in effect. This means that if your teen is found guilty of committing any two moving violations during this six month period license privileges will be suspended for 60 days. License privileges will also be suspended for 60 days if your young driver is found guilty of committing a single, more serious violation during the probation period, including speeding, tailgating, unauthorized racing, or reckless driving.

### Did you know....

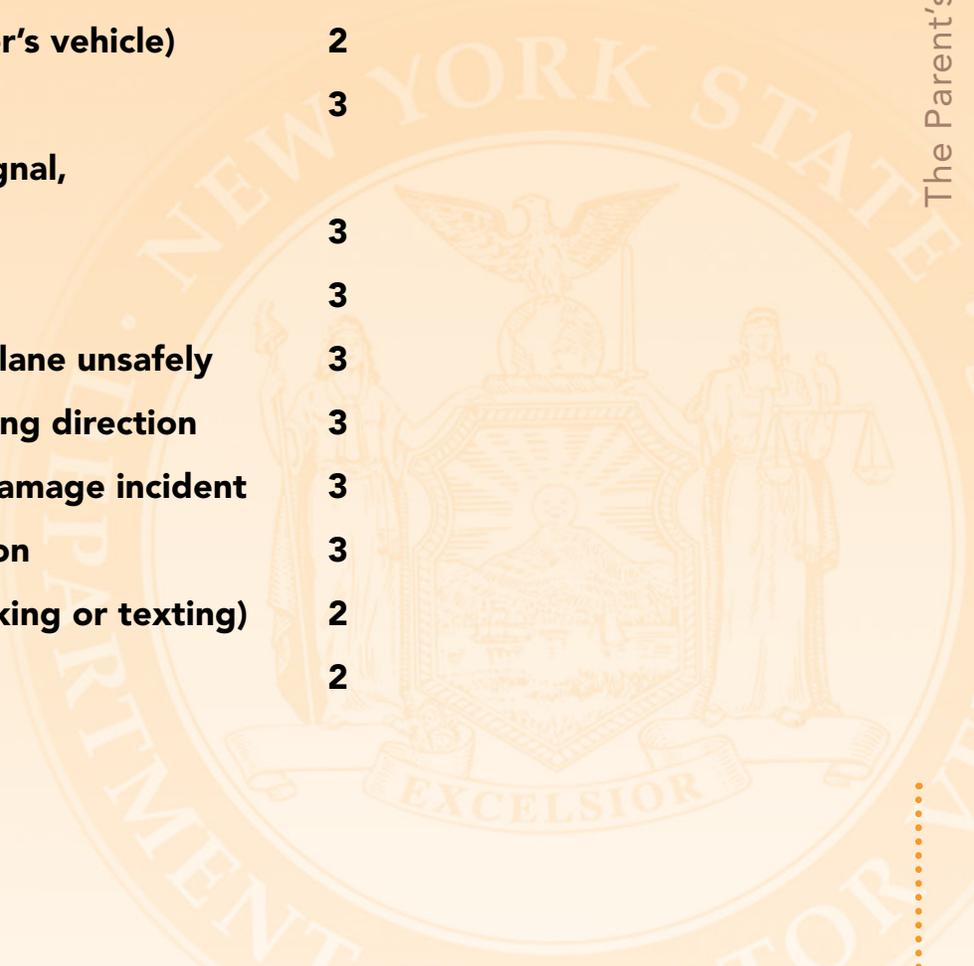
- Even something considered a “minor” violation (going only 5 miles over the posted speed limit, for example) can result in suspension of driving privileges during “New Driver Probation.”

Listed in the on the next page are traffic violations and the point value they carry. When a person is found guilty of a traffic violation the points are added to the DMV license record using the date the violation occurred.



# VIOLATIONS

<b>VIOLATION</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
Speeding (MPH over posted limit)	
1 to 10	3
11 to 20	4
21 to 30	6
31 to 40	8
Over 40	11
<b>Reckless driving</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Failed to stop for school bus</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Followed too closely (tailgating)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Inadequate brakes (private car)</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Inadequate Brakes (employer's vehicle)</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Failed to yield right-of-way</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Disobeying traffic control signal, STOP sign or YIELD sign</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Railroad crossing violation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Improper passing, changing lane unsafely</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Driving left of center, in wrong direction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leaving scene of property damage incident</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Child safety restraint violation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Any cell phone violation (talking or texting)</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Any other moving violation</b>	<b>2</b>



# TEEN ELECTRONIC EVENT NOTIFICATION SERVICE

**Teen Electronic Event Notification Service (TEENS)** is a program offered by the Department of Motor Vehicles which allows parents of minors under the age of 18 to be notified of violation convictions, license suspensions, reported crashes, and tickets that are added to the minor's license record.

License records of those enrolled in the program are checked on a daily basis, and anytime one of the events mentioned above shows up, written notification is sent to the parent/guardian of that teen. Through this program, parents/guardians can ensure that they are informed of their teen's driving behavior during those first critical years of driving. Parents/guardians can use this program as a tool for coaching and training, as well as an alert that their teen may not be ready for the full privilege of driving.

Enrollment in the Teen Electronic Event Notification program is voluntary and there is no fee. There are three easy ways for parents/guardians to enroll:

- Online at : <https://my.dmv.ny.gov>;
- At a DMV office when your teen applies for a Permit or Non-Driver Id; or
- Fill out the enrollment form [\(MV-TEENS\)](#) and return it to the address listed on the form.

Enrollment will automatically end on your teen's 18th birthday.

[Frequently Asked Questions](#) about the **TEENS** program.

## Withdrawal of Consent

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As a parent, you are often faced with difficult decisions. One of these decisions may involve whether to continue to allow your teen to drive. Your teen may have passed the road test, but may display unsafe driving habits when you are in the car; or you may feel he or she lacks the maturity needed to be a safe driver at this time. Maybe your teen is too nervous at this point to learn to drive. Whatever the circumstance, you do have the option to [withdraw your consent](#) for driving privileges if your young driver is under the age of 18.



# REGIONAL RESTRICTIONS AT-A-GLANCE

## New York City (5 Boroughs) - Junior Permit

**5 AM - 9 PM** - You must drive only under the direct supervision of your:

- Parent
- **Guardian**
- Person **"in loco parentis"**
- Driver Education Teacher
- Driving School Instructor

The person above must be at least age 21 and have a license valid for the vehicle being driven. The vehicle being driven must have dual controls (dual brakes).

**9 PM - 5 AM**– You must **NOT** drive.



## Long Island (Nassau & Suffolk) - Junior Permit

**5 AM - 9 PM** - You must drive only under the direct supervision of your:

- Parent
- **Guardian**
- Person **"in loco parentis"**
- Driver Education Teacher
- Driving School Instructor

The person above must be at least age 21 and have a license valid for the vehicle being driven. **9 PM - 5 AM**– You must **NOT** drive.



## Upstate (All Other Counties) - Junior Permit

**5 AM - 9 PM** - You must drive only under the direct supervision of a person who is age 21 or older and has a license valid for the vehicle being driven. **9 PM - 5 AM** You must drive only under the direct supervision of your:

- Parent
- **Guardian**
- Person **"in loco parentis"**
- Driver Education Teacher
- Driving School Instructor

The person above must be at least age 21 & have a license valid for the vehicle being driven.

# REGIONAL RESTRICTIONS AT-A-GLANCE

## New York City (5 Boroughs) - Junior License

### 5 AM - 9 PM

You must **NOT** drive.

### 9 PM - 5 AM

You must **NOT** drive.



## Long Island (Nassau & Suffolk) - Junior License

### 5 AM - 9 PM

You may drive alone only directly between your home and [employment](#), a work-study program, a course at a college, university, or registered evening high school, a driver education course, or while engaged in farm employment.

Other than when you are allowed to drive alone in a situation listed above, you may drive between the hours of 5am and 9pm only under the direct supervision of your licensed parent, [guardian](#), person ["in loco parentis,"](#) driver education teacher, or driving school instructor.

The person who supervises your driving must be at least 21 years old and have a license valid for the vehicle being driven.

### 9 PM - 5 AM

You may drive alone only directly between your home and a work-study program, a course at a college, university, or registered evening high school, a driver education course, or while engaged in farm employment.



## Upstate (All Other Counties) - Junior License

### 5 AM - 9 PM

You may drive without being accompanied.

### 9 PM - 5 AM

You may drive alone only when traveling directly between your home and employment or a school course.

All other driving must be accompanied by your licensed parent, [guardian](#), or person ["in loco parentis,"](#)

# DEFINITIONS

**Accompanying Driver:** For the purpose of the road test, an accompanying driver is a driver who is at least 21 years old and holds a license valid for operating the vehicle you will drive during the road test.

**Employment:** A place of business at which you are paid to work on a regularly scheduled basis. You may not drive during work or as part of your work duties, such as deliveries.

**Guardian:** A person who has, on a regular and extended basis, assumed the character of parent and is discharging parental duties as a result of the death, disability, or absence of the natural parent.

**Ignition Interlock Device:** This device, purchased and installed at the expense of the motorist, is connected to a motor vehicle ignition system and measures the alcohol content of the operator's breath. As a result, the vehicle cannot be started until the driver provides an acceptable sample breath. If a court requires a driver to install an ignition interlock device, this restriction will be reflected on the license document, denoted as "interlock device." While using the interlock device, the motorist may be eligible to hold a conditional license. This license will be revoked if the motorist fails to comply with the court's terms, or for conviction of any traffic offense other than parking, stopping or standing.

**In Loco Parentis:** A person who has, on a regular and extended basis, assumed the character of parent and is discharging parental duties as a result of the death, disability, or absence of the natural parent.

**Medical Appointment:** Applies to necessary medical treatment for you or a member of your household.

**Revocation:** The cancellation of the driving privilege. To get a new license or permit, one must re-apply to the Department of Motor Vehicles once the revocation period is over. A re-application fee may apply. The application may be denied if the driver has a poor driving record or refuses to meet DMV requirements.

**School Course:** Instruction, education or training that is licensed or approved by a state agency or department, or training conducted by the U.S. Armed Forces. The term "school course" does NOT include extracurricular activities, attending a school sporting event which you will not receive school credit for, or social events for which no scholastic credits are given.

**Suspension:** The driving privilege has been taken away for a period of time. A suspension termination fee may be required to have the driving privilege restored.



**New York State  
Department of Motor Vehicles**  
6 Empire State Plaza  
Albany, NY 12228

*NYS Department of Motor Vehicles*

## **Resources For The Younger Driver**

6 Empire State Plaza • Albany, NY 12228

Visit the [Resources for the Younger Driver](#) Website