



Driver and Vehicle  
Licensing Agency

INS207

What **you** need  
to **know** about a  
**Driver's  
Medical  
Appraisal**

For general information about driving go to  
[www.direct.gov.uk/motoring](http://www.direct.gov.uk/motoring)



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An executive agency of the  
Department for  
**Transport**

## Why do I need to have an appraisal?

- Our medical adviser is considering your fitness to drive and has recommended that you have a practical driving appraisal. Although the appraisal will take place at a Driving Standards Agency (DSA) test centre it is not a 'Learner driver' test. It is an appraisal of your driving and the effect, if any, your condition has on your ability to drive safely.

## What you need to do

- Read the enclosed letter. This explains how you will be contacted to arrange the appointment, and what you need to do once a date has been agreed.
- Make sure that you bring:
  - a photocard driving licence and paper counterpart, and our referral letter.
  - If you don't have a photocard licence, bring your paper licence, the referral letter and another form of identity from the list below.
  - If you don't have a licence in your possession please bring the referral letter and another form of identity from the list below.

### Acceptable Identification

Valid passport, work or college photo ID, a travel pass or photo certified (signed) by a professional person who has known you for at least two years (such as a doctor, bank manager, police officer, or teacher). If you are providing a certified photo the person signing the photo will need to complete the statement attached to the letter.

- Before the drive starts, you will be asked to accurately read a vehicle number plate. If you require glasses or corrective lenses to do this, please ensure you bring them with you to the appraisal.
- DSA encourage all car candidates to bring someone (usually their instructor) with them on the drive. We suggest that you bring along a person who holds a full driving licence. They will be invited to accompany you on your drive, which maybe of support and benefit to you. However, it is not compulsory so the choice is yours.

## Before the appraisal commences

- We will ask you to sign a declaration confirming that your driving licence allows you to drive the category of vehicle you are using at the appraisal, and that you are insured to drive the vehicle. Whether your vehicle is owned by you, hired, or belongs to a third party such as a friend, relative or driving instructor, you must ensure it is insured for the appraisal.
- If your licence restricts you to driving a vehicle which has adaptations fitted to suit your needs, you must drive the adapted vehicle.
- Some people who hold a provisional disability assessment licence (PDAL) will only be entitled to drive during the appraisal and must not drive to or from the centre.

## What does the appraisal involve?

- The appraisal will be conducted by a specially trained driving assessor who will look to establish an informal, supportive approach, to create the best environment for you to perform at your best. The assessor will check your eyesight before the drive commences by asking you to read a number plate from a minimum distance of 20 metres (20.5 metres for old style plates).
- The drive will last for about 40 minutes and will cover various road and traffic conditions. For approximately 10 minutes you will be asked to drive independently by following traffic signs, a series of verbal directions, or a combination of both.
- The assessor will put you at your ease so you can perform at your best.
- The assessor will look for a safe, competent drive over a route that encompasses a range of different hazards and is typical of what the driver may encounter every day. Safety rather than method is assessed.
- The appraisal form identifies areas of strengths and weaknesses, focussing on all relevant aspects of the drive. The form is self-explanatory and identifies the overall standard achieved in each category.
- A four level approach to each category helps you and us to understand how you performed by indicating the degree of weakness (if any) within specific areas of your driving. A copy of the appraisal form and feedback on your driving will be offered to you at the end of the drive but the assessor cannot give you a decision as to the outcome. The medical adviser will also receive a copy of the appraisal together with a short report on your drive.

## Explanation of competencies

These are the areas of driving that will be assessed.

- **Knowledge and effectively using all controls**  
You must show that you can guide and control your vehicle safely and responsibly. To do this you will need to show that you understand and can use the vehicle's controls and instruments correctly.
- **Moving off and stopping**  
You must be able to turn the engine on safely using an appropriate method. Whether on the flat or a slope, you should move off safely and under control, be able to stop safely and in an appropriate place.
- **Using all mirrors effectively**  
You must use the 'mirror, signal, manoeuvre' routine before changing direction or changing speed, and show you are aware of what is happening around you at all times.
- **Using signals correctly and effectively**  
You must show that you are considerate towards other road users. To do this you will need to show that you can communicate your intentions clearly and at the right time through using indicators, your vehicle's position (for example, what lane you are in), your horn or your lights as appropriate.
- **Responding to traffic signals, signs and road markings**  
You must show that you can respond to signs, signals and road markings as set out in The Highway Code. To do this, you will need to show that you can understand and follow all traffic signals, signs, markings and traffic-calming measures.
- **Positioning the vehicle on the road**  
You must show that you can position the vehicle correctly and in a way that communicates your intentions before turning right and left at junctions (including roundabouts). You should show you can judge your speed and positioning on bends.
- **Negotiating junctions and roundabouts and slip roads**  
You must show you are able to judge and deal with all types of junctions safely and correctly.

### ■ **Distance between vehicles**

At all times you must be able to keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you or alongside you. You will need to show that you can allow for factors such as speed, traffic, weather and road conditions.

### ■ **Appropriate speed**

You must be able to respond correctly to road signs and speed limits and show how you can evaluate and adapt to different road and traffic conditions (that is, not becoming overly hesitant or cautious, and not driving too fast for conditions).

### ■ **Reversing exercise**

You must be able to control the vehicle smoothly, safely and reasonably accurately, and show consideration to other road users.

### ■ **Identify and respond to hazards**

You should plan your drive and be aware of other road users at all times, taking particular care to consider the actions of pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. You must show that you have good awareness and can anticipate and respond appropriately.

## Eco-safe driving

This is a recognised and proven style of driving that contributes to road safety whilst reducing fuel consumption and emissions. The driver will be assessed throughout the drive on their ability to apply eco-safe principles. At the end of the drive advice on eco-safe driving may be offered but this **does not** count toward your overall appraisal level.

The overall level you have achieved will be shown as follows:

- a Consistently safe and responsible driving
- b Safe and responsible driving but with minor lapses – driver development beneficial
- c Important lapse(s) indicating driver development required to reach the minimum driving standard
- d Dangerous action(s) indicating driving is not safe

## What happens after the appraisal?

At the end of the drive the assessor will give you verbal feedback along with your appraisal report and will also send a copy, together with a short report directly to our medical adviser. The medical adviser will then consider the report and other medical information and will write to you with their decision on whether you are fit to drive.

