



Department for Transport

Driver and rider testing and instructor statistics: January to March 2017

About this release

This release presents the numbers and pass rates for driving and riding theory and practical tests conducted in Great Britain to 31 March 2017, and Approved Driver Instructor (ADI) register statistics.

These statistics are derived from data held by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).

The DfT are proposing changes to the frequency of this release. See p6.

In this publication

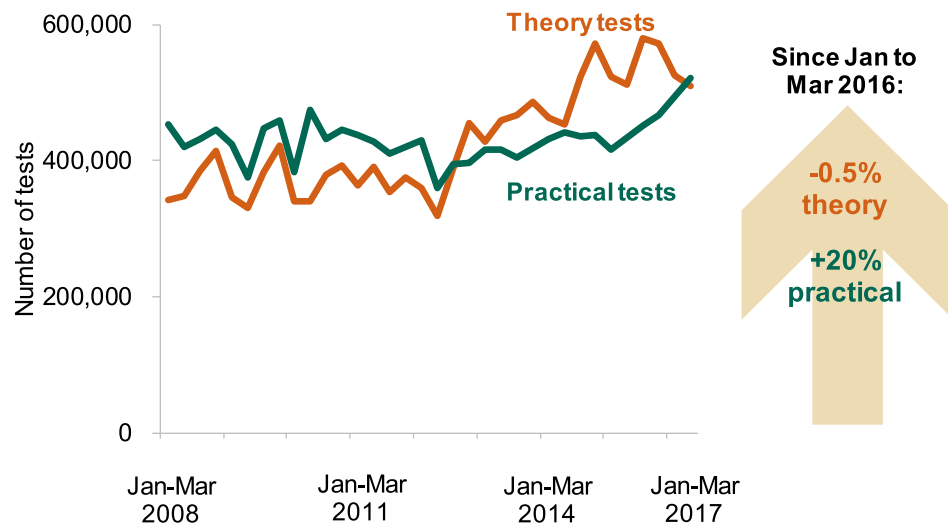
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Next published:

June 2018

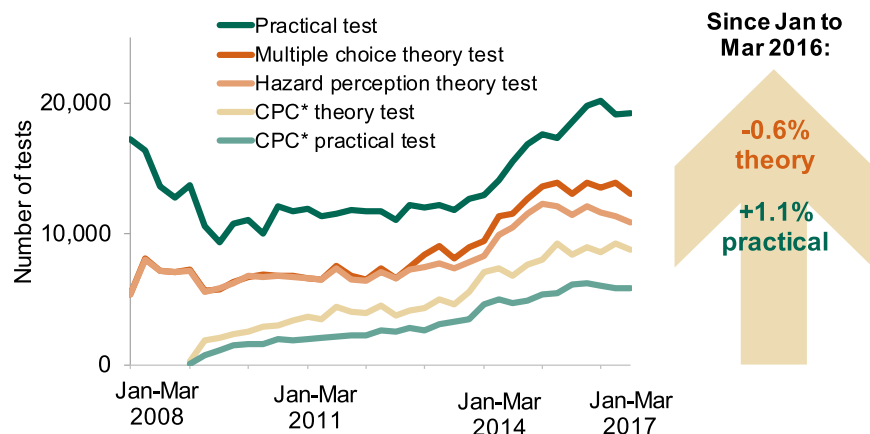
Over a million practical and theory driving tests were conducted during January to March 2017, an increase of 9% from the same period in 2016.

Practical and theory tests: GB, quarterly, 2008-2017



Large Goods Vehicle vocational practical tests continue to increase compared with the same period in 2016, however the rate of increase year-on-year is now much lower than it has been for the last few years.

Practical and theory LGV tests: GB, quarterly, 2008-2017



*Certificate of professional competence

Theory and practical tests: All vehicle types

All theory tests, Jan to Mar 2017

509,340 conducted **266,573** passed **52.3%** pass rate

Compared to Jan to Mar 2016:

+0.5% +0.6% +0.6 percentage points

All practical tests, Jan to Mar 2017

521,420 conducted **251,912** passed **48.3%** pass rate

Compared to Jan to Mar 2016:

+20.0% +19.3% -0.3 percentage points

Table 1. Theory and practical tests: GB, Jan-Mar 2017 compared to same quarter 2016

	January to March 2017			Compared to: January to March 2016		
	Tests conducted	Tests passed	Pass rate (%)	Tests conducted	Tests passed	Pass rate (percentage points)
Car						
Theory	456,274	228,627	50.1	-0.7%	0.3%	0.5
Practical	478,061	223,770	46.8	21.0%	20.3%	-0.3
Motorcycle						
Theory	14,995	10,827	72.2	8.8%	8.8%	0.0
Practical module 1	11,185	8,039	71.9	16.3%	14.8%	-0.9
Practical module 2	10,678	7,614	71.3	17.2%	17.2%	0.0
Large Goods Vehicle (LGV)						
Theory - multiple choice	13,018	8,642	66.4	0.1%	1.0%	0.6
Theory - hazard perception	10,882	9,019	82.9	-5.0%	0.6%	4.5
Theory - CPC*	8,766	5,848	66.7	4.3%	3.0%	-0.8
Practical - vocational	19,179	11,113	57.9	3.3%	6.8%	1.9
Practical - CPC*	5,817	5,178	89.0	-5.5%	-4.8%	0.7
Passenger carrying vehicle (PCV)						
Theory - multiple choice	2,077	1,383	66.6	-6.0%	-8.2%	-1.6
Theory - hazard perception	1,690	1,447	85.6	-15.4%	-9.5%	5.6
Theory - CPC*	1,638	780	47.6	-1.7%	-9.0%	-3.8
Practical - vocational	2,317	1,376	59.4	3.5%	5.9%	1.4
Practical - CPC*	821	729	88.8	-0.7%	2.1%	2.5

*Certificate of professional competency (CPC) test passes are required in addition to all other LGV or PVC tests to drive professionally (i.e. as the main purpose of one's job).

For further information on all vehicles see tables [DRT0101](#) and [DRT0102](#). For specific vehicle tests:

Theory car
[DRT5201](#)
Practical car
[DRT0201-03](#)

Theory motor-cycle
[DRT5401](#)
Practical
[DRT0401](#)

Theory LGV
[DRT5501-02](#)
Practical LGV
[DRT0501-02](#)

Theory PCV
[DRT5601-02](#)
Practical PCV
[DRT0601-03](#)

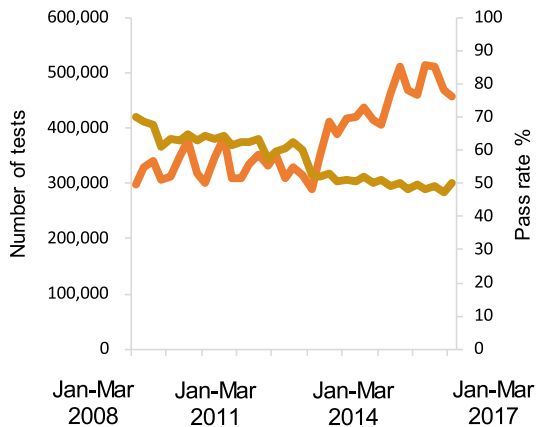


Car tests

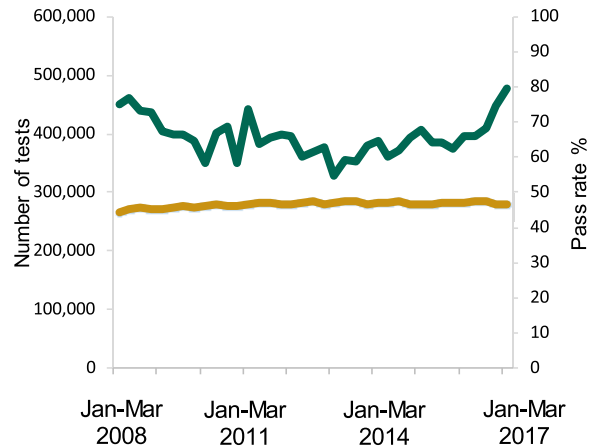
Car tests made up **90%** of theory and **92%** practical tests during January to March 2017.

Figures 1 & 2. Car tests: GB, quarterly, 2008 to 2017

Theory tests conducted



Practical tests conducted



The number of theory tests taken started increasing in 2013, whilst pass rates declined. This is attributed initially to the introduction of new theory test questions and no longer publishing learning materials. This has lowered the pass rate and has led to more retakes, with the pass rate continuing a slow decline.

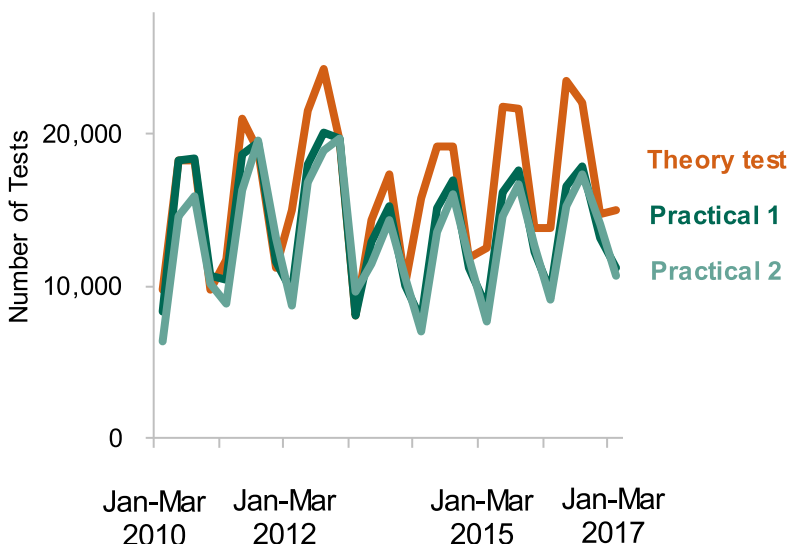
Practical test numbers for January to March 2017 have returned to pre-recession levels for the first time, and were 6% higher than in January to March 2008.

Practical tests were 21% higher than for the same period in 2016, partly due to an increase of available examiners that has decreased waiting times over the last few quarters.



Motorcycle tests

Figure 3. Motorcycle tests: GB, quarterly, 2008 to 2017



Motorcycle test numbers are highly seasonal, reflected in the big peaks and troughs in Figure 3.

There was a surge (and subsequent drop) in all tests before 19 Jan 2013, when restrictions on engine sizes for riders under 24 were implemented.

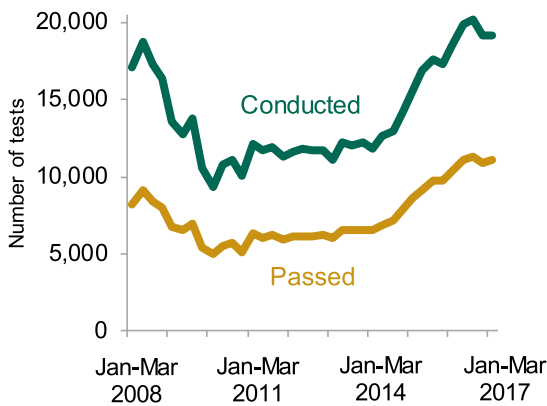
Numbers have been increasing annually since.



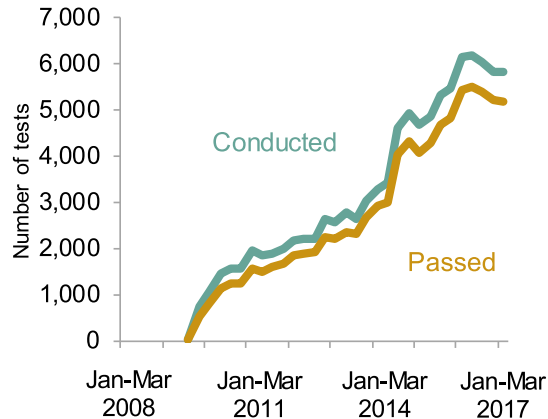
Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) tests

Figures 4 & 5. Practical LGV tests: GB, quarterly, 2008 to 2017

LGV practical tests (vocational)



LGV CPC practical tests



The recent rapid increases in LGV tests peaked in 2016, with January to March 2017 showing a more modest 3.3% increase in practical vocational tests from the same period in 2016, and practical CPC tests decreasing by 5.5%.

There are two types of practical LGV and PCV tests:

'Vocational' tests

To obtain a licence to drive a PCV or LGV on the road (a 'vocational' licence), a candidate must pass two theory tests and a practical test.

CPC tests

It has also been necessary to hold a Certificate of Professional Competence to drive professionally since 10 September 2008 for PCVs and 10 September 2009 for LGVs. This requires an additional theory (case study) and practical (safety demonstration) test.

Professional drivers already holding a vocational LGV licence before these dates qualified for Driver CPC automatically under 'acquired rights'.

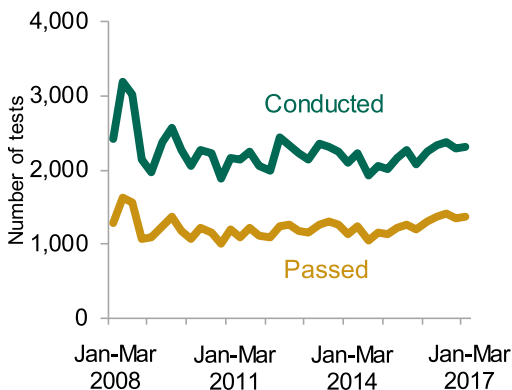
All professional drivers must also do 35 hours periodic training every 5 years to retain their CPC.



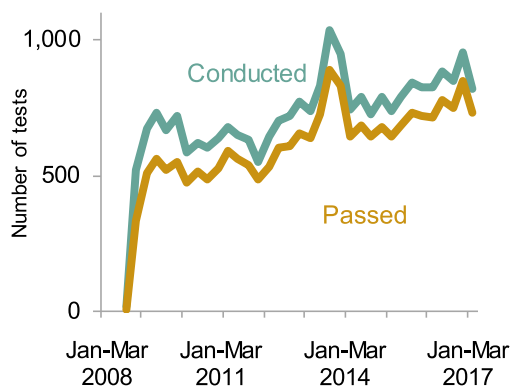
Passenger Carrying Vehicle (PCV) tests

Figures 6 & 7. PCV tests: GB, quarterly, 2008 to 2017

PCV practical tests (vocational)



PCV CPC practical tests



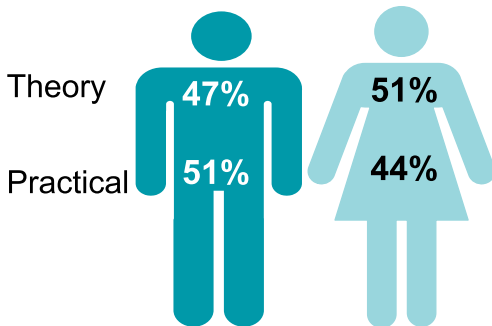
PCV practical test numbers have risen more slowly, and all but the practical vocational test have decreased for January to March 2017 compared to the same period in 2016. Although percentage changes in PCV tests can be large, absolute numbers of PCV tests are small.

Pass rates for LGV and PCV practical tests have remained stable over this time, though the pass rates are far higher for CPC tests than for vocational.



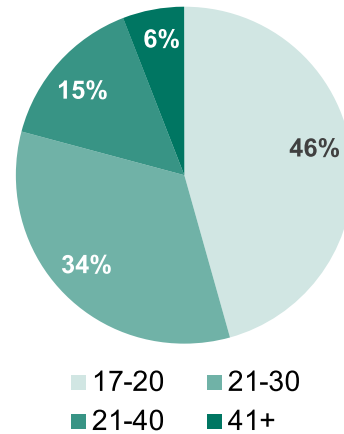
Car theory and practical tests

Figure 8. Car pass rates, by gender: GB, 2016/17



Car pass rates vary between men and women and type of test. Overall, women have a higher pass rate in the theory test, whilst men have higher rate of success in the practical test.

Figure 9. Practical car test candidates, by age group: GB, 2015/16



Almost half of candidates for car practical tests in 2016/17 were aged between 17 and 20.

The majority of candidates who passed the car practical test in 2016/17 were taking their test for the second or subsequent time. The overall pass rate declined with each test attempt; for candidates on their 6th plus attempt, the pass rate was 40%.

Men had a higher pass rate than women at every attempt. Men had a slightly higher pass rate on 2nd and 3rd attempts than on their 1st attempts.

Figure 10. Practical car driving tests by attempt, GB, 2016/17

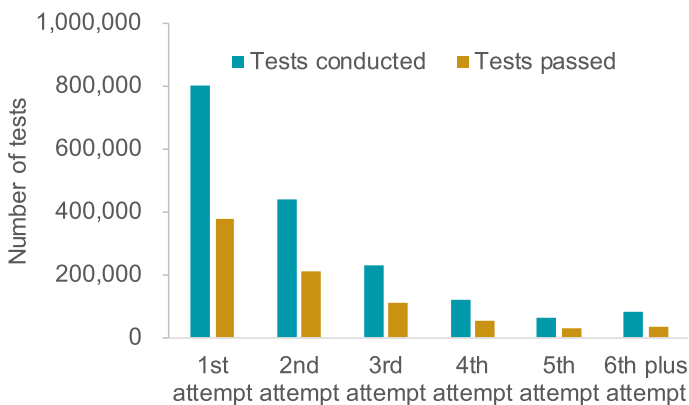
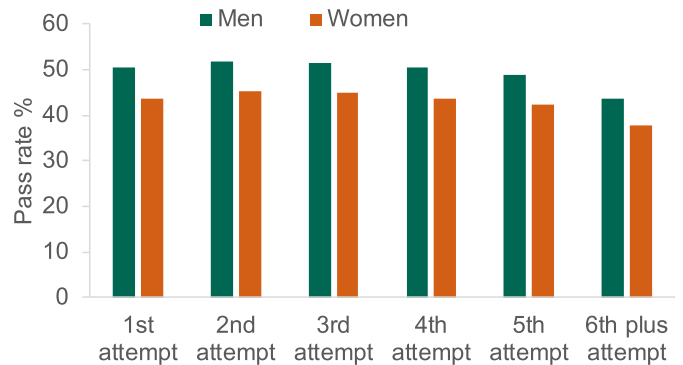


Figure 11. Practical car driving tests by attempt, and gender GB, 2016/17



Total numbers of instructors

As at 31st March 2017, there were:



39,413 ADIs on the statutory register
-1.2% compared to Mar 2016

-15.4% compared to Mar 2012



2,442 approved CBT motorcycle instructors

-1.2% compared to Mar 2016

-2.2% compared to Mar 2012

ADI tests

Figure 12. ADI tests conducted: GB, monthly, 2008-2017

There was a large peak in ADI theory tests around 2009. This may have been due to individuals considering a career change during the recession.

The number of people applying to be an ADI followed a downward pattern until 2013, where a slight upturn for theory tests began and has continued.

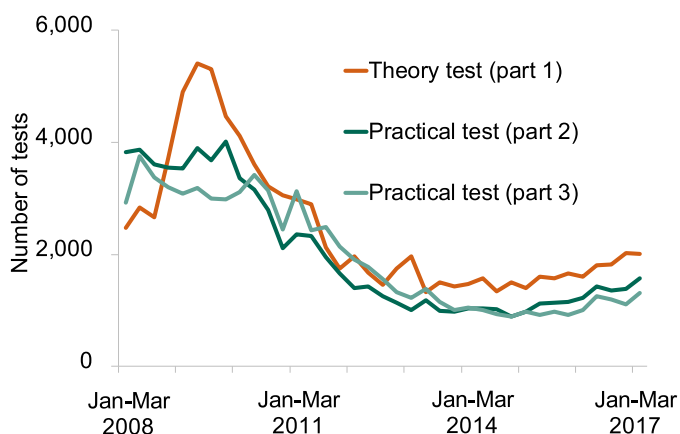
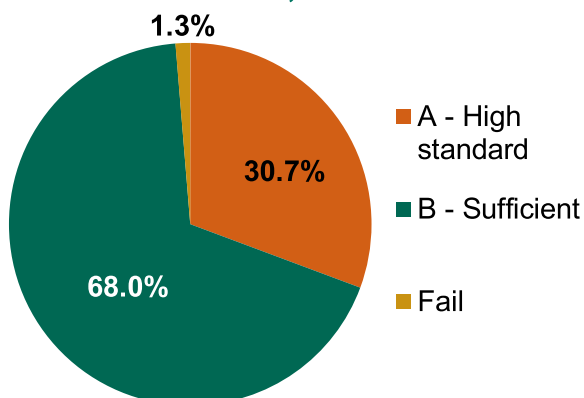


Figure 13. Grades of ADIs at most recent standards check: GB, March 2017



ADI standards checks

The current grading structure was introduced on 7 April 2014 (A, B, Fail).

The statistics shown here refer to those ADIs who have taken a check test since this date.

Definitions

ADI

An Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) is someone who has passed their ADI tests and has been added to the ADI statutory register.

ADIs must undergo a standards check during each 4-year registration period.

CBT

Most learner motorcycle and moped riders must take Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) before riding on the road.

To be a CBT motorcycle instructors are required to pass a 2-day DVSA assessment and then work for a motorcycle Approved Training Body (ATB).

CBT instructors must also undergo check tests every 4 years.

Background Notes

About these statistics

This statistical release is published by the Department for Transport based on statistics produced by the DVSA, which administers the driving test and training schemes in Great Britain. The Driver and Rider Tests and Instructors web page provides further detail of the key findings presented in this statistical release, including detailed data tables.

Practical test categories included are B (car), B1 (tricycles and quadricycles), A, A1 and A2 (motorcycles), C, C1 (medium and large goods vehicles), C+E, C1+E (medium/large goods vehicles with trailers), D, D1 (minibuses and buses), D+E and D1+E (minibuses / buses with trailers).

Official Statistics

These official statistics are not designated National Statistics. They are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference.

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the Pre-release access list.

Next release

The DfT are proposing to reduce the release schedule for this publication from quarterly to annual, with the accompanying set of data tables still being updated on a quarterly basis. The next release of statistics will be published in June 2018 and will provide information for the 2017 financial year (April 2017 to March 2018). If you wish to comment on this proposal, please use the email address: vehicles.stats@dft.gsi.gov.uk.

Additional Information

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency also publishes operational data by test centre - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/driving-test-operational-statistics>

Additional data on ethnicity of candidates are released via www.data.gov.uk. This information is not published as part of the statistical release as only circa 15 per cent of candidates declare their ethnicity. It is, therefore, highly likely that the information is subject to self-selection and reporting biases and neither the DVSA nor DfT would recommend that users rely on these data being a true reflection of the ethnicity of all candidates. The data are being provided simply for information and as they are frequently requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

For further information on the impact of the EU 3rd Directive to rider licensing please visit - <https://www.gov.uk/ride-motorcycle-moped/bike-categories-ages-and-licence-requirements>

Release of DfT statistics publications

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