



# Driving Tactics: Basic Driving Skills

Teacher's  
Guide



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## Introduction

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This Teacher's Guide provides information to help you get the most out of *Driving Tactics: Basic Driving Skills*. The contents in this guide will allow you to prepare your students before using the program and present follow-up activities to reinforce the program's key learning points.

This program is part of a three-part series that helps soon-to-be drivers become familiar with standard car operation and driving techniques, such as how to start a car, pull into traffic, obey traffic signs and signals, and take important safety precautions. It introduces them to the interior and exterior parts of a vehicle, and provides easy direction on how they can maintain the overall condition of any car. Finally, *Basic Driving Skills* teaches young people how to safely share the road with a variety of vehicles, including motorcycles, bicycles, and trucks.

## Learning Objectives

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After viewing the program, students will be able to:

- Recognize the attitudes and behaviors associated with and critical to driving.
- Detail the results and dangers of thoughtless and unskilled driving.
- Explain basic vehicle control tasks.
- Describe basic driving skills and rules of the road.
- Identify traffic control devices.
- Demonstrate an understanding of driving and road safety.

## Educational Standards

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### National Standards

This program correlates with the National Health Education Standards: Achieving Health Literacy from the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards. The content has been aligned with the following educational standards and benchmarks from this organization.

- Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.
- Distinguish between safe and risky or harmful behaviors in relationships.
- Analyze the short-term and long-term consequences of safe, risky, and harmful behaviors.
- Demonstrate the ways to avoid and reduce threatening situations.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to use goal-setting and decision-making skills to enhance health.

National Health Education Standards, *by the Joint Committee on National Health Education Standards, 1995. Reprinted with permission.*

### Technology Standards

The activities in this Teacher's Guide were created in compliance with the following National Education Technology Standards from the National Education Technology Standards Project.

- Technology productivity tools: Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.

*The National Education Technology Standards reprinted with permission from the International Society for Technology Education.*

## Program Overview

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*Driving Tactics: Basic Driving Skills* covers what young drivers should do when they first get their license or learner's permit; the mental preparedness and attitudes required for responsible and safe driving; operating a manual transmission; steering, turning and parking; driving in traffic; and preparing to share the road with bicycles, motorcycles, and large trucks.

## Main Topics

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### Topic 1: Before You Start

This section of the video underscores why a young person should practice driving as soon as she or he receives a learner's permit or driver's license. Practicing with an adult or a friend who is an experienced driver is the best way to build driving skills and confidence. This section briefly explains the Graduated Driver's License that certain states require of teenage drivers.

### Topic 2: Your First Test Drive

This section provides step-by-step instructions for what a driver should do when he or she takes the car out for a first run—from fastening seatbelts to properly controlling the steering wheel. It also reminds new drivers to prepare mentally for this test drive.

### Topic 3: Manual Transmission

In this section, viewers learn how to shift gears with a manual transmission.

### Topic 4: Steering and Turning

This section lays out the different types of turns a driver makes—right and left turns, and backing up—and effective steering techniques that allow for flawless and safe turns.

### Topic 5: Basic Parking

This section focuses on parallel parking techniques.

### Topic 6: Driving in Traffic

This section highlights on-road driving, which involves becoming familiar with traffic signs and devices such as traffic signals and roadway markings, and learning how to navigate an intersection and a railroad crossing. It touches on "right of way" on the road, particularly for pedestrians, about whom drivers must be especially mindful.

### Topic 7: Sharing the Road

This section reminds the new driver that once basic driving skills are mastered, learning how to navigate the road with drivers of various types of vehicles is the next step. It reinforces the importance of drivers being physically and mentally alert while driving, maintaining patience while developing driving skills, and driving safely.

## Fast Facts

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- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15- to 20-year-olds.
- Almost a third of drivers aged 15 to 20 who died in motor vehicle crashes had been drinking alcohol or riding with someone who had been drinking.

- Teens are more likely than older drivers to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns, ride with an intoxicated driver, and drive after using alcohol or drugs.
- Teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use compared with other age groups.
- Accidents are more likely to happen in everyday driving such as a drive to the mall than on a cross-country trip.
- There are more collisions involving drivers running red lights than any other kind.
- Teen drivers are especially susceptible to distractions.
- Studies have shown that for teen drivers, the risk of a crash doubles with one extra passenger.
- Many states have a Graduated Driver's License system that allows teenagers to obtain a learner's permit at the age of sixteen, but reserves full license privileges until the age of eighteen.
- A qualified licensed driver must supervise a driver with a learner's permit for a year; the permit is also required for any practice driving on public roads.

## **Vocabulary Terms**

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**accelerator:** The gas pedal. It increases speed.

**clutch:** The device that allows the driver to engage or disengage the engine and transmission.

**coolant:** An agent that produces cooling, especially a fluid that draws off heat by circulating through an engine.

**gauge:** An instrument for measuring or testing. In a car, gauges are used for gas, engine, and coolant level.

**gearshift:** A mechanism for changing from one gear to another in a transmission.

**intersection:** A place where two or more roads cross.

**manual transmission:** A motor-vehicle transmission system of interlocking gear wheels connected to a hand-operated gearshift and a foot-operated clutch.

**neutral:** A position in which a set of gears is disengaged so that power cannot be transmitted from the engine to the drive train and wheels.

**speedometer:** An instrument for indicating speed.

**tachometer:** An instrument used to measure the rotations per minute of a rotating shaft (a long, generally cylindrical bar that transmits power, as the drive shaft of an engine).

## Pre-Program Discussion Questions

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1. What basic skills does a new driver need in order to drive?
2. Why are teen drivers most at risk for automobile accidents?
3. What are some of the basic driving skills a new driver should have?
4. Why is it so important for new drivers to understand road markings and traffic signs and devices, like a traffic light?
5. What qualities and skills does a good and safe driver have?

## Post-Program Discussion Questions

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1. If you are not mentally prepared to drive, can you be a good driver? Explain.
2. Why is it important to spend time practicing before getting on the road?
3. Statistics show that teen drivers are the most at-risk for accidents and frequently demonstrate unsafe driving habits. What attitudes lead to this type of risky driving behavior? What attitudes should a driver have?
4. List and describe the very basic skills a new driver needs. How would you practice these skills? Or, if you already drive, how would you improve them?
5. Why are pedestrians of concern to drivers?
6. What does “share the road” mean with regard to driving? And what does a driver need to do to “share the road” well?

## Group Activities

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### Guiding Others

Students write a concise pocket-driving manual for teens that highlights basic driving skills, and the attitudes and mental outlook young people need to be good drivers. The manual might be used by teens to refresh their memories when they get into their cars to drive.

### Driving Knowledge Survey

Students survey other students in the school about their driving skills, attitudes, and behavior. They might create a series of surveys for specific groups: non-drivers, drivers with learner’s permits, recently licensed drivers, drivers who have been driving a short time, drivers who have been driving for over a year, etc. Students tally and publicize the results.

### Teen Driving: Strategizing Solutions

Invite a panel of local public officials, lawmakers, driving instructors, and driving-related organization representatives (AAA, MADD) to discuss with students the challenges the community faces regarding unskilled or unsafe teen drivers. Students and the panel strategize solutions to the challenges. For example, maybe all schools in the community should offer mandated driver education courses.

## Individual Student Projects

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### Speaking Statistically

Create a graph that compares and contrasts teen and adult driving data over the last decade. Categories can include car accidents, driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, speed violations, etc. Write a brief report reflecting findings and recommendations to better the teen driving statistics.

## Teaching a Lesson

Design and present a lesson plan to classmates on one basic driving skill.

## Talking it Out

Write a short dialogue between two teen drivers—one who is a responsible, skilled driver and the other who is a reckless, uninformed driver—who have each just taken a spin on the road. Each character should describe his or her ride. The irresponsible driver might boast about his or her daring feats, like running a red light. The responsible driver talks about how he or she handled a busy intersection. The conclusion of this dialog should prove the ways in which the careless driver put himself and other drivers at risk during his/her ride.

## Internet Activities

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### The All Inclusive Teen Driver Web Site

Review several Web sites dedicated to teen drivers. Determine whether they provide all the information needed to be good and safe drivers, and whether the information is presented in a way that will keep teens interested. Create a comprehensive prototype of a teen driver Web site, improving on those reviewed.

Some resources for this project include:

[www.teendriving.com](http://www.teendriving.com)  
[www.drivehomesafe.com](http://www.drivehomesafe.com)  
[www.roadreadyteens.org](http://www.roadreadyteens.org)

### Global Teen Drivers

Research the status of teen drivers around the world and create a comparative chart or graph that rates certain teen driving categories, such as the number of fatalities, the types of automobile injuries/fatalities, etc. Recommend strategies for a unified international approach that would improve teen driving around the world.

Some resources for this project include:

[www.childtrendsdatbank.org](http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org)  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

### Safe Cars for Drivers

What type of car should a teen drive? Research the qualities of a safe car for teen drivers and create a one-page fact sheet with tips and descriptions.

Some resources for this project include:

[www.iii.org](http://www.iii.org)  
[www.insweb.com](http://www.insweb.com)



## Assessment Questions

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**Q:** Why should a new teen driver spend time practicing driving with an experienced, licensed driver?

**A:** Practicing driving with an experienced, licensed driver helps new drivers get a firm grasp of the rules of the road and critical basic driving skills, and boosts their confidence about their driving ability.

**Feedback:** Learning to drive is a hands-on experience, best supported by an experienced driver who can walk a new driver through basic skills and familiarize him or her with the road. In some states, this is mandatory. The Graduated Driver's License system requires a new driver with a license permit to drive with a supervised driver for the first year.

**Q:** What are the most important things a teen driver should have in order to take to the road with confidence and evidenced skill?

- a) Significant on-the-road practice
- b) Respect for other drivers and pedestrians
- c) Positive mental preparedness and attitude
- d) All of the above

**A:** d)

**Feedback:** Driving is a big step in becoming an adult. It provides freedom, mobility and independence. Teens should recognize driving as a privilege, because they are responsible not only for their own lives, but the lives of others on the open road. Driving is a physical activity that requires learned and highly practiced skills, but it also demands mental alertness, a positive attitude, and a sense of responsibility.

**Q:** A driver uses \_\_\_\_\_ to shift gears on a manual transmission.

**A:** the clutch

**Feedback:** There are specified speeds at which a driver should change gears. Learning how to shift gears on a manual transmission requires practice.

**Q:** What should a driver do when backing up?

- a) Turn and check behind
- b) Turn and check to the sides
- c) Look through the back window
- d) All of the above

**A:** d)

**Feedback:** Backing up is challenging because drivers don't always have a clear view of where they are going. Rear view mirrors offer only a partial view. A driver must make sure there are no pedestrians or objects in his or her path.

**Q:** Green guide signs give information about \_\_\_\_\_.

**A:** routes and locations

**Feedback:** Traffic signs are shape- and color-coded. While a driver should know what each one means individually, recognizing their classification provides an overall sense of the important road information they give the driver.

**Q:** Why are motor vehicle crashes the leading cause of death for 15- to 20-year-olds?

**A:** Young drivers often ignore and/or are not well versed in the rules of the road, resulting in fatal car crashes.

**Feedback:** Young drivers represent among the highest rates of automobile fatalities. Almost a third of drivers aged 15 to 20 who die in car crashes have been drinking alcohol. Teens are more likely than other drivers to speed, run red lights, make illegal turns, and ride with an intoxicated driver.

**Q:** The first thing drivers (and riders) should do when they get into a car is \_\_\_\_\_.

**A:** fasten their seatbelts

**Feedback:** Most injuries in car accidents are due to the occupants of a vehicle not using their seatbelts. Teens have the lowest rate of seatbelt use.

**Q:** When making a left turn, a driver should \_\_\_\_\_.

- a) signal at the moment of the turn
- b) signal early before making the turn
- c) speed up to make the turn
- d) signal to traffic in the oncoming lane to stop so he or she can make a turn

**A:** b)

**Feedback:** Left turns are tricky because drivers have to cross an oncoming lane of traffic. It is important to slow down, signal early before making the turn, wait for an opening in oncoming traffic, and watch for pedestrians in the cross walk.

**Q:** Why are collisions more likely to occur at intersections?

**A:** Drivers tend to run red lights and drive into oncoming traffic.

**Feedback:** Stopping at a red traffic light seems obvious, but there are more collisions involving drivers running red lights than any other kind. Make sure to stop at red lights and be sure that other drivers have also stopped.

**Q:** What does it mean to “share the road”?

**A:** It means drivers must practice safe driving skills that keep other drivers and pedestrians safe, and understand how to negotiate the road with different types of vehicles such as trucks, bicycles, and motorcycles.

**Feedback:** Drivers must be aware of other vehicles on the road. For example, bikes and motorcycles are sometimes hard to see. A driver needs to check blind spots before passing (that means using mirrors *and* glancing over the shoulder). Sharing the road also means slowing down for bicyclists and giving them more space on the road, keeping a safe distance from trucks, and watching for pedestrians.

## Additional Resources

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### WEB SITES

#### Teen New Drivers' Website

[www.teendriving.com](http://www.teendriving.com)

#### Teens Health: Driving Safety

[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)





## **Driver's Education Links**

Click on "Teen Life"

[www.dmoz.org/Kids\\_and\\_Teens](http://www.dmoz.org/Kids_and_Teens)

## **Drive Home Safe**

<http://drivehomesafe.com>

## **Road Ready Teens**

[roadreadyteens.org](http://roadreadyteens.org)

## **National Institute for Driver Behavior**

[www.nidb.org](http://www.nidb.org)

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)

### **American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association**

[www.adtsea.iup.edu](http://www.adtsea.iup.edu)

### **Drive For Life**

[www.safedrivingtest.com](http://www.safedrivingtest.com)

### **Insurance Institute for Highway Safety**

[www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org)

## **BOOKS**

### **Everything You Need to Know About Being a Teen Driver**

Adam Winters

Rosen Publishing Group, 2000

ISBN: 0823932877

### **License to Drive**

Alliance for Safe Driving

Thomson Delmar Learning, 1999

ISBN: 0766803023

### **Safe Young Drivers: A Guide for Parents and Teens**

Phil Berardelli

Nautilus Communications; 2nd ed edition, 2000

ISBN: 0967519144

## Other Products

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### Driving in Bad Weather

- VHS/DVD

You're driving along and suddenly hit a patch of glare ice and start to skid. What do you do? You drive into a severe thunderstorm and water is left standing on the road. Do you adjust your driving in any way? You suddenly encounter thick fog on the highway and can't see beyond your headlights. Should you switch on your high beams? These and many other situations are discussed and demonstrated as we watch a new driver experience some unpleasant surprises. An excellent way of experiencing common weather-related driving problems from the point of view of the driver. A MeridianProduction. (17 minutes)

Item #25236 • Meridian Education Corporation • [www.meridianeducation.com](http://www.meridianeducation.com) • 1-800-727-5507

### Driving Safely: Reason on the Road

- VHS/DVD

Viewers will follow a new driver as various situations are encountered. We see common driving behaviors like tailgating, not using turn signals, cutting cars off, and other inconsiderate behavior from inside as well as outside the car. Not only do viewers see how dangerous such behavior can be, but experts also give insight into how some incidents can escalate into violence. Finally, the SAFE process is explained and demonstrated: Scan, Anticipate, Figure, Execute. This is an excellent perspective for all new drivers and a good refresher for experienced ones. A Meridian Production. (15 minutes)

Item #25237 • Meridian Education Corporation • [www.meridianeducation.com](http://www.meridianeducation.com) • 1-800-727-5507

### Practicing Basic Control Tasks Behind the Wheel

- VHS/DVD

Filmed on actual roadways, this engaging video systematically demonstrates low-risk methods of parking, entering traffic, steering, backing up, and turning around. The program's host, a calm and likeable driving instructor, reinforces the techniques while encouraging students to continually practice them. He also addresses a variety of dangerous road conditions and suggests using the Three Seconds Rule to maintain the proper following distance. In addition, he offers tips like coasting before braking and avoiding jackrabbit starts as ways of squeezing the most miles from a tankful of gas...as well as tips on avoiding the kinds of collisions that most commonly happen with an inexperienced driver behind the wheel. A Meridian Production. (17 minutes)

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