

Guide for Supervising Drivers



April 2018



Learner Kit

Graduated Licensing System

HELPING YOUNG DRIVERS BE SAFER DRIVERS

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Road laws change from time to time. Requirements for
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of the **Road to Solo Driving** book and the current licence
test brochures in preparation for your licence test. It is your
responsibility to ensure that you have the most recent edition
of this book and any update sheets. If you are in doubt, check
with any of the VicRoads Customer Service Centres.

This book is a guide only and is not legal advice.

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How to use this book

This book is your guide to helping your learner driver become safer.

As a supervising driver, the best thing you can give your learner is lots of on-road experience. This book provides information to help you achieve this.

Your learner has been given a **Learner Kit** containing a **Guide for Learners** with a **Learner Log Book** and this **Guide for Supervising Drivers**.

The **Guide for Learners** book includes information about how learners should progress through the four stages of learning to drive and some tips for supervising drivers. It also includes the **Learner Log Book**. Learners under the age of 21 who apply for a probationary licence must complete this Log Book and supervising drivers must sign it as proof that the learner has driven for at least 120 hours, including 20 hours at night.

All supervising drivers must also complete their details in the List of Supervising Drivers in the **Learner Log Book**. A supervising driver will also have to complete the Declaration of Learner Log Book Completion after the learner has logged 120 hours of driving practice.

Supervising drivers and the Learner Log Book

As part of your role as a supervising driver, you need to work with your learner driver to properly fill in the **Learner Log Book**.

It is important that you and your learner both read the instructions in the Learner Log Book carefully.

In particular, a supervising driver will need to:

- sign each log entry
- fill in their details in the List of Supervising Drivers
- if necessary, fill in the details in the Declaration of Learner Log Book Completion after your learner has completed at least 120 hours practice, including 20 hours at night.

Make sure that your signature in the List of Supervising Drivers is exactly the same as your signature in each log entry or the driving time may not count towards the 120 hours.

If the Learner Log Book is not completed correctly or a completed Declaration of Learner Log Book Completion is not provided, your learner will not be able to take their on-road drive test. Your learner will lose his/her booking and test fees, and a minimum six week wait could apply before they can take their drive test.

This book is a companion to the **Guide for Learners**. As partners, you and your learner should use both books throughout the learner period.

Use the information in the **Guide for Learners** to help plan driving sessions as your learner progresses through each stage of learning to drive.

Use this book as a source of extra information to help in your important role as supervising driver.

Your partnership for success

Learning to drive involves a partnership between your learner, a professional driving instructor and yourself. Most learners have some professional driving lessons and rely on their supervising driver for most of their practice.

You need to plan practice sessions with your learner. You and your learner can also work with a professional driving instructor for extra guidance.

You can sit in the back seat on one or two professional driving lessons, or ask the instructor's help when moving into more complex driving situations.

Check out the online resource for supervising drivers, **Lessons from the Road**. It is designed to help you support your learner driver. It features eight short videos with lots of tips and advice on your role as a supervisor. It's at vicroads.vic.gov.au

Your role as a supervising driver

You can make a big difference to your learner driver's safety.

Supervising a learner driver is a challenging experience. It can also be very rewarding. You'll help a young person develop the skills and attitudes they need to become a safer driver.

Being a supervising driver is like being a sports coach. Your job is to give your learner opportunities to practice driving under your supervision.

You'll work together to plan driving practice sessions so your learner develops safe driving skills in different driving situations. You will gradually increase the level of difficulty when your learner is ready.

You're not an instructor, but you will have to give lots of advice early in the learner period. You can work with a professional driving instructor at any time – whenever you or your learner need some extra assistance.

At the end of the learner period, you can be satisfied that you've made a significant difference to the safety of your learner driver.

Finally, remember learner drivers rarely have crashes.

Rules and tips for supervising drivers

You must have a full (non-probationary) car licence.

You must carry your licence with you, sit in the front passenger seat and ensure that L plates are on the front and rear of the car. L plates must be visible from a distance of 20 metres.

You must not have a BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration) of .05 or above. You cannot drink a beverage containing alcohol while supervising.

To be able to provide quality driving practice, it is important that you are alert and neither tired nor stressed. Don't use your mobile phone.

Lessons from the Road

Check out **Lessons from the Road**, an online resource to help parents and other supervising drivers fulfil their vital role as supervisors of learner drivers. The resource, also useful for learners, has an online mentor who guides the viewer through eight short videos about learning to drive.

Visit vicroads.vic.gov.au for videos, tips and support.



Strategies for new drivers

New drivers have a much higher risk of crashing than more experienced ones. After 12 months of driving, new drivers almost halve their initial crash rate and their safety continues to improve for several years after licensing.

Common crashes involving probationary drivers include:

- running into the back of another vehicle
- turning right at intersections
- being hit by a right turning vehicle
- single vehicle crashes.

Crashes are rarely just bad luck.

Many of these crashes can be avoided if learners get lots of experience and practice some key safe driving behaviours:

- leaving a safe space and following distance from other vehicles
- good speed control, adjusted to match traffic conditions and the road environment
- choosing a safe gap in traffic when turning and merging.

Encouraging safe behaviours is an important part of your work with your learner driver.

It's also important to help your learner understand that other road users don't always give way, behave as expected or act legally.

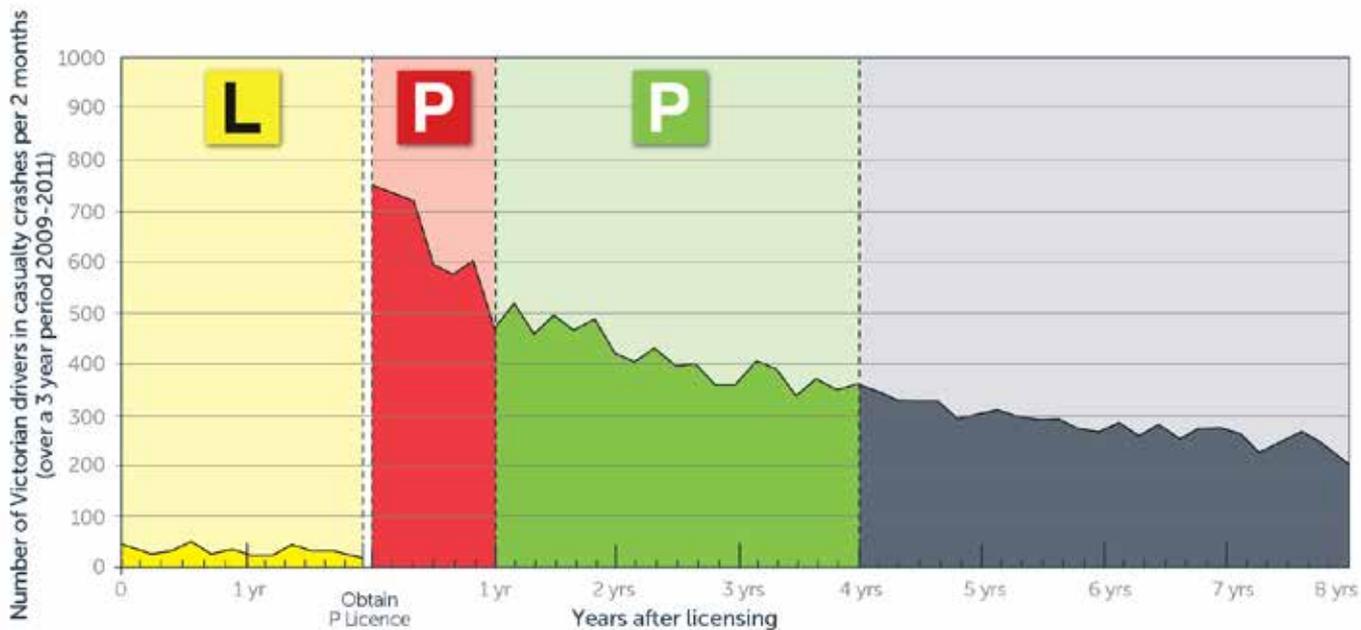
Pages 8 and 9 give some specific tips for avoiding the four common crash types involving new drivers.

Driving safely at all times can't be emphasised enough. Neither can the impact of:

- drink driving
- drug driving
- speeding
- fatigue
- not wearing seat belts.

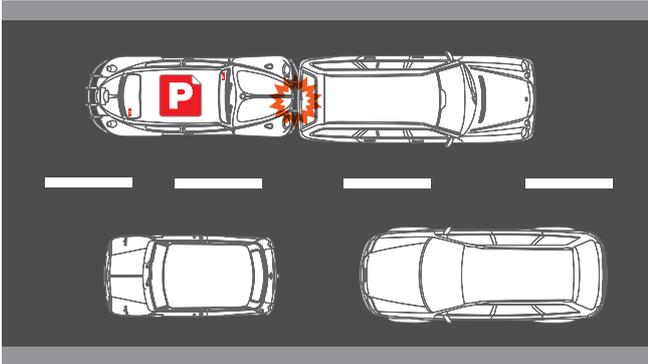
All five are potential killers. Make sure your learner understands how dangerous these are and the importance of driving within the law.

Crash profile of new drivers



Types of crashes and tips for new drivers

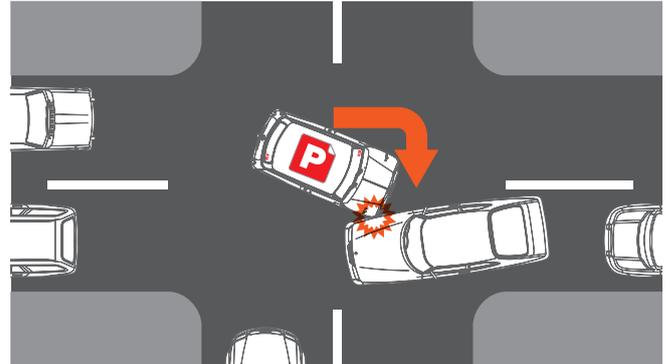
Rear end crash



Tips for new drivers:

- Increase following distances.
- Reduce speed.
- Travel at speeds suitable for traffic conditions.

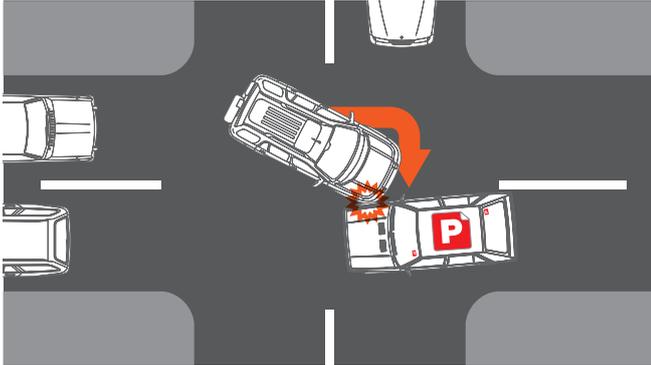
Turning right crash



Tips for new drivers:

- Reduce speed and slow down before entering intersections.
- Wait for a safe gap before turning.
- Make eye contact with other drivers.
- If you can't see if any traffic is coming – WAIT!

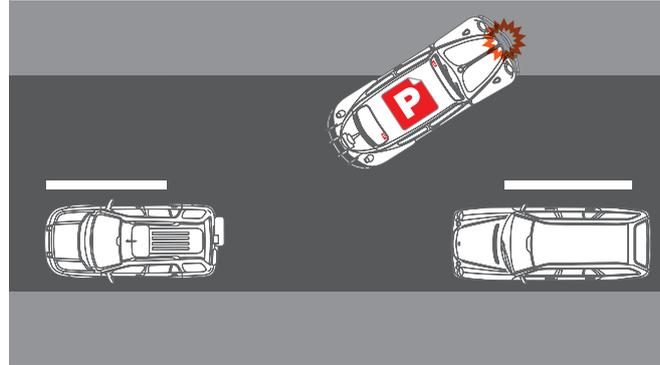
Hit by right turning vehicle



Tips for new drivers:

- Slow down before entering intersections.
- Look out for vehicles turning across your path.
- Don't change lanes near intersections.
- Make eye contact with other drivers.
- Don't assume another driver will give way to you.

Single vehicle crash



Tips for new drivers:

- Always stay under the speed limit.
- Travel at speeds suitable for traffic conditions and the road environment.
- Slow down on unfamiliar roads and areas.
- Don't go beyond your own driving skills or your car's limits.

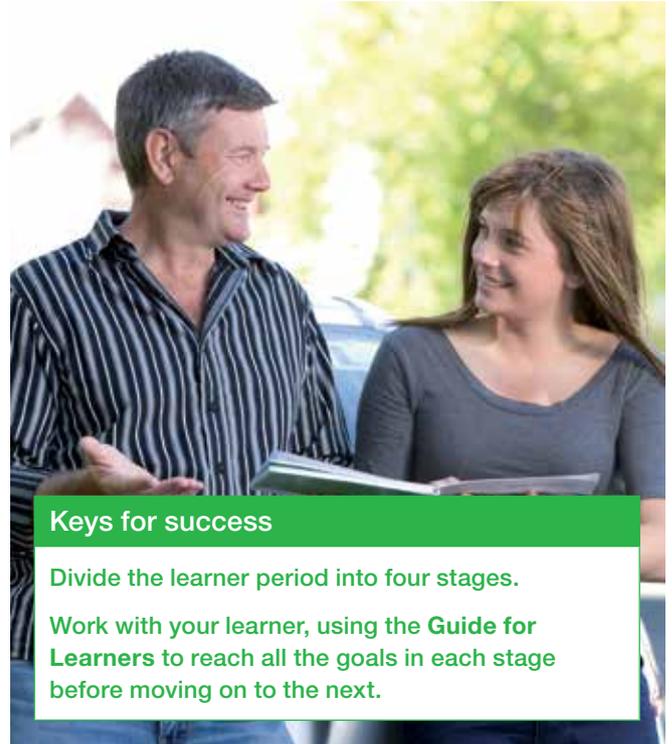
The four stages of learning to drive

Most learners in Victoria will need to get at least 120 hours of supervised driving experience, including 20 hours at night, to apply for a probationary licence. This gives them a chance to develop safer driving skills gradually.

Victoria has a Graduated Licensing System that aims to help:

- prepare new drivers for the demands of solo driving through extended learning
- protect probationary drivers by keeping them out of high risk driving situations
- motivate probationary drivers to adopt safe driving practices and to drive within the law.

The new system is explained in the **Guide for Learners**. You can also find more information at vicroads.vic.gov.au



Keys for success

Divide the learner period into four stages.

Work with your learner, using the **Guide for Learners** to reach all the goals in each stage before moving on to the next.

You should divide the learner period into four stages:

S1

Stage 1 is about controlling the car. It's the shortest stage and aims to get your learner to start, stop and steer safely in quiet areas without traffic.

S2

Stage 2 is about applying new car control skills and looking out for other road users on quiet low speed roads with little traffic.

S3

Stage 3 takes longer and uses the Stage 1 and Stage 2 skills on busier roads and in more difficult driving situations. Now the learner starts becoming a real driver. They learn to deal with traffic and other hazards to become safer in varied driving situations.

S4

Stage 4 takes a long time and can be the longest stage. It involves the learner practising to be a solo driver. They still have L plates on the car and a supervising driver beside them, but they'll learn to make most of the driving decisions on their own. The aim is to build up lots of different experiences where they act like a solo driver.

The **Guide for Learners** and the online resource for supervising drivers, **Lessons from the Road**, (vicroads.vic.gov.au) describes each stage and how to achieve the goals your learner should reach before moving on to the next stage. The goals in each stage are listed over the page.

Stage 1: Controlling the car

Your learner's goals

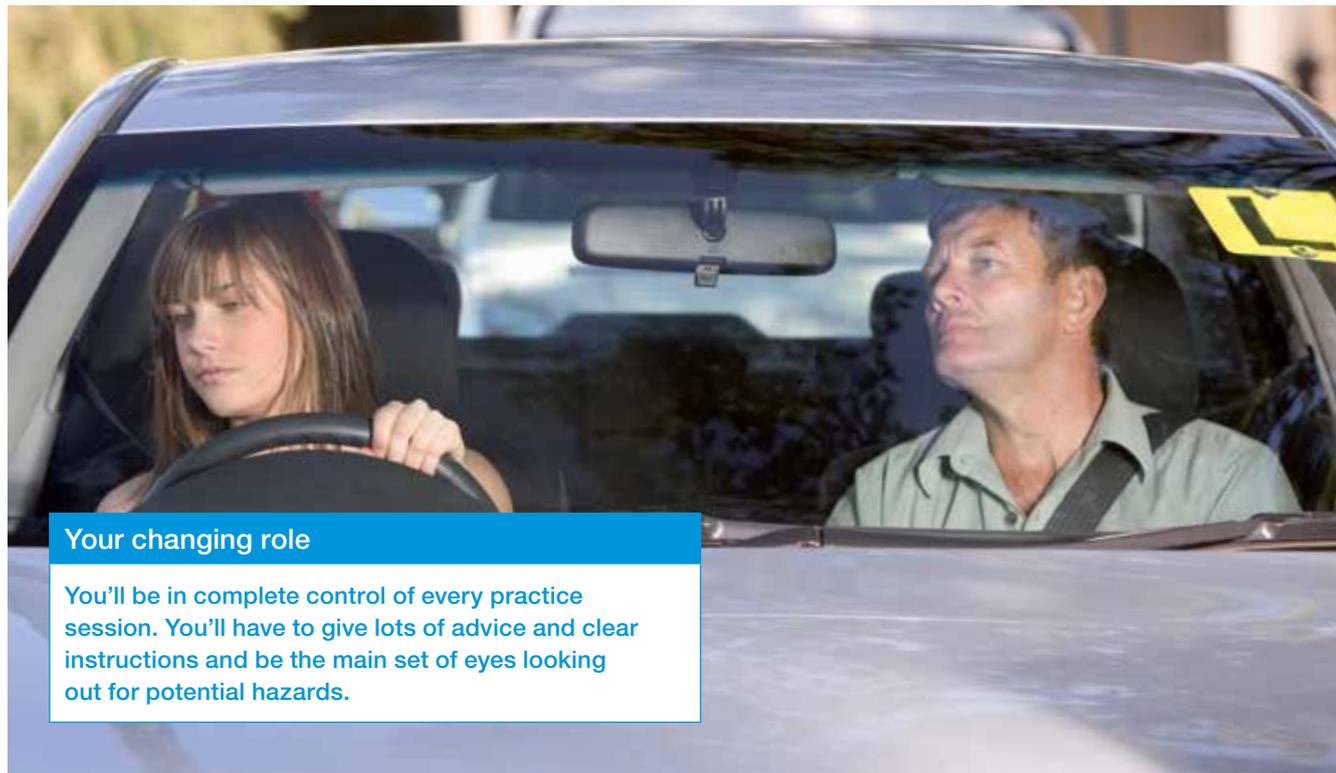
Your learner will be ready to move onto the next stage when they can do each of the things listed here.

To get a better understanding of what to expect and how best to start supervising your learner, use the online resource for supervising drivers, **Lessons from the Road**, at vicroads.vic.gov.au

In quiet locations, away from traffic:

Stage 1 goals

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Set up the car for driving | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Know where the controls are | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Start the car | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Move off smoothly | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Slow down and stop smoothly at a chosen location | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Corner smoothly at low speed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Stop the car on a slight slope and move off again using the handbrake | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Use the gears smoothly and efficiently in low speed driving (for manual cars) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reverse in a straight line and around a curved path | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Your changing role

You'll be in complete control of every practice session. You'll have to give lots of advice and clear instructions and be the main set of eyes looking out for potential hazards.

Stage 2: Driving on quiet low speed roads

Your learner's goals

Your learner will be ready to move on to the next stage when they can do each of the things listed on the facing page.

The online resource for supervising drivers, **Lessons from the Road**, has tips and advice about Stage 2. It can help make moving from one stage to the next easier. See **Lessons from the Road** at vicroads.vic.gov.au

Your changing role

You're still in control. Your learner will be working on detecting potential hazards, but you'll still give advice, point out potential problems and give clear instructions. Your learner will need to drive safely. This means they need to choose the right speed, use mirrors and head checks, notice and avoid potential hazards and keep safe distances from other vehicles. It also means driving in a way that makes the supervising driver (or any passengers) feel relaxed.

In fine weather, in the rain and at night:

Stage 2 goals

☀️ Dry daytime driving ◻️ Wet weather driving 🌙 Night time driving

Move from the kerb safely and stop at the kerb safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Turn right at quiet intersections safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Use their mirrors correctly and do head checks (look over their shoulder and through the rear side windows when necessary)	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Drive within the speed limit and at a safe speed for the conditions	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Observe potential hazards when moving off	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Leave a safe space between their car and other vehicles and the kerb	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Drive on straight, quiet, low speed roads safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Start and stop on hills	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Drive around curves on quiet, low speed roads safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Complete a three point turn and parallel park smoothly	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Turn left at intersections safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Reverse out of a driveway or out of a parking spot safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Negotiate roundabouts (in quiet, residential streets) safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Detect and respond to potential hazards in quiet streets (such as parked cars, other traffic, cyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians, children or pets)	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Smoothly slow down when approaching intersections	☀️ ◻️ 🌙	Obey give way, stop signs and traffic lights	☀️ ◻️ 🌙
Travel through quiet intersections safely	☀️ ◻️ 🌙		

Stage 3: Complex driving situations

Your learner's goals

Your learner will be ready to move on to the next stage when they can do each of the things listed on the facing page.

Remember you can check out **Lessons from the Road**, the online supervising drivers' resource. This has tips and advice about starting to drive in more complex situations. Find this online resource at vicroads.vic.gov.au

Your changing role

At the beginning of this stage, you're still in control. You will gradually move from less complex to more complex driving situations.

You'll start on low speed roads and gradually build up to higher speed roads.

Your learner will be working hard to detect potential hazards and handling busy traffic.

You'll give advice, help with route choices and talk about potential hazards your learner may have missed.

Your learner will begin to take control after they have gained experience in complex driving situations.



In fine weather, in the rain and at night:

Stage 3 goals	☀️ Dry daytime driving ◌ Wet weather driving 🌙 Night time driving
Enter busy traffic safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Drive on straight and curved main roads safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Keep in their own lane and change lanes safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Negotiate and turn at traffic lights safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Smoothly slow down and choose a suitable speed when approaching intersections and curves	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Drive on lower quality roads safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Plan their own driving routes for normal driving trips	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Overtake others safely on divided multi-lane roads	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Detect and avoid potential hazards	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Drive within the speed limit and at a safe speed in busy traffic	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Select safe gaps when entering or crossing traffic	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Keep safe following distances in busy traffic	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Drive on high speed roads safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Handle busy roundabouts safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Cope with busy intersections safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙
Turn across oncoming traffic safely	☀️ ◌ 🌙

Stage 4: Rehearsing solo driving

Your learner's goals

Your learner will be ready to sit their licence test once they have mastered each of the things listed on the facing page.

Stage 4 is about preparing for independent driving. You will still be supervising your learner, but now you're more of a passenger. Most of the responsibility and decision making belongs with your learner.

- Move slowly into this stage. There's still more practice and learning to do.
- Gradually reduce the amount of advice you offer.
- Provided that driving conditions aren't too challenging, offer to let your learner drive if you need to go somewhere by car.

This is a good time to gradually build up wet weather, freeway and rural road experience, but only introduce one new environment at a time.

Getting plenty of practice is still the most important thing, but your learner will be thinking about the on-road drive test. You can help them to prepare by reading the VicRoads brochure

What you need to know about your Drive Test.

Your changing role

Your learner should be rehearsing being a solo driver with the benefit of your support and experience.

You'll still offer advice from time to time and point out potential hazards.

This means you need to be alert to assist your learner whenever needed. So, don't drive if you're tired or drowsy, take regular breaks and have powernaps if you need them. Don't use your mobile phone.

Visit vicroads.vic.gov.au to assist you and your learner through Stage 4, which is often one of the longest stages.

In fine weather, in the rain and at night:

Stage 4 goals	☀️ Dry daytime driving ◌ Wet weather driving 🌙 Night time driving		
Drive safely in light and heavy traffic			
Detect and respond to hazards			
Keep a safe distance from other traffic			
Choose safe and legal speeds			
Leave a safe gap when turning across other traffic			
Drive safely on a variety of road types and in different conditions			
Choose their own driving routes to get from their starting point to their destination			
Drive safely making the range of decisions as expected of a solo driver			
Make safe decisions about driving – such as when to drive and when not to, and taking safe routes			
Handle unexpected situations safely			
Understand how to use a car safely as part of their normal everyday transport			
Manage moderate levels of distraction in the car, such as passengers and music, and know when and how to reduce distractions to stay safe			
Handle complex tasks such as merging on a freeway, reversing from a driveway, parallel parking and changing lanes in busy areas, hook turns and busy intersections			

How to be a driving coach

You're not meant to be a driving instructor. If your learner needs an instructor, pay for a professional with specific training in this area.

Your job is to guide your learner through the gradual approach outlined in the **Guide for Learners** and give them practice opportunities that match their experience, skill and confidence levels. You might also need to motivate your learner sometimes.

This might sound like the job of a sports coach and that's the best way to think about your role. As a coach, you'll work with your learner to encourage them to learn.

Coaches have to be role models. If you don't drive safely, your learner is likely to pick up some of your unsafe driving habits. It's worth having a critical look at your own driving behaviours before you get too far into the learner period.

Hints for being a great coach

You need to keep the following in mind:

- Learning to drive is hard. It seems easy once you've done it for a few years, but it can be a challenge for learners, even those with good coordination skills.
- Have realistic expectations because your learner will make mistakes. Sometimes they'll have trouble applying their new skills to challenging situations.
- Let your learner know (often) that you expect it will take lots of practice to become a safer driver.
- Keep reinforcing the message that developing skills takes lots of time and practice. It helps to keep overconfidence under control.
- Work with your learner. When you're planning practice sessions and driving routes early on, get them involved. Check that they're happy with each session and ask their suggestions about what to include.
- Don't be afraid to take over driving if the conditions change. If your learner doesn't have much experience in the rain and you drive into a storm, take over so you both stay safe. Your learner shouldn't drive beyond their ability.
- You will have to give critical feedback sometimes. If it's important, do this while driving, but sometimes it's better to suggest parking somewhere safe to talk. This way you can provide feedback without interfering with your learner's concentration.

- Learning a new skill is difficult and criticism can lead to a defensive reaction. Minimise this with the following:
 - Keep positive and include praise when your learner does well.
 - Ask your learner what they think of their own driving, rather than make a direct criticism.
 - Focus on the importance of safety rather than criticising their driving skill.
- Stay alert. As the supervising driver, you need to be ready to provide advice and warnings throughout the learner period, and especially if your learner driver approaches potential hazards. Keep this in mind even after your learner driver is experienced enough to undertake longer, more complex trips. It's important that you've both had a good night's sleep before you head off. If you or your learner start feeling tired or drowsy you need to stop driving. Take regular breaks and have power naps until you're feeling refreshed enough to continue. Don't use your mobile phone.

What car should a new driver buy?

Some supervising drivers can afford to buy their newly licensed driver a car or they might want to offer advice on a car their newly licensed driver is buying. It's one way your new driver can gain some independence, but you should take care that their choice of car will keep them as safe as possible.

Look out for safety features such as airbags and Anti-lock Braking Systems (ABS) and Electronic Stability Control (ESC). Newer cars tend to be safer and mid-sized cars are usually safer than very small cars.

You don't have to spend a lot of money to buy a safe first car. Used car safety ratings are available at vicroads.vic.gov.au. These ratings indicate how well a car will protect all road users in the event of a crash, including cyclists, pedestrians and other drivers. Car buyers should purchase cars that offer 'better than average' protection as a minimum. You can also see how safe other vehicle models are at howsafeisyourcar.com.au

Probationary drivers are not permitted to drive probationary prohibited vehicles. You can find out more at the VicRoads website vicroads.vic.gov.au

Coping with stress



Many supervising drivers get anxious about their role and it can be quite stressful sitting as a passenger in your own car with a beginner driver in control.

A bit of stress is perfectly normal. It can help you stay alert and aware of what's going on in and around the car.

Too much stress during your driving sessions is not good. You can reduce the stress levels and help make the experience positive.

- Stress builds up partly because of how you think about problems.
 - You can talk yourself into being more stressed with thoughts such as 'I can't stand this', 'That was awful' or 'What a stupid mistake'.
 - You can reduce your own stress by changing this type of thinking. Instead, tell yourself 'I can cope with this', 'That was a silly mistake but that's how people learn' and so on.
 - You'll never stop the stress or concern entirely (and you should always stay alert), but it's much easier to cope when you're less stressed.

- Avoid driving sessions when either of you feels tired or hassled. Don't have a session if you've just had an argument with your learner.
- It's risky driving when you're stressed or tired, and it's good to teach your learner the need to be calm to drive safely.
- If the drive does get stressful, stop the car and let things cool down a bit. If necessary, take over the driving task.
- Plan driving routes together so they match your learner's ability and experience. Resist hurrying things up by moving into traffic too soon.
- If you or your learner feel uncomfortable with a new driving situation, go back a step or two for more practice before trying again.
- Let yourself get used to your new role and to being your learner's passenger.
- Consider going for a drive with your learner and a professional driving instructor. Instructors are experienced at teaching people how to drive and can offer useful advice. Some driving schools offer discounts or free lessons if a parent attends a lesson with a learner.

Helping your learner through the ‘tricky bits’



Learners can have problems with some driving activities. If you're aware of them, you can include extra practice opportunities for them in your sessions, but only include this when your learner is ready.

Surveys of learners and their parents suggest the most common difficulties are:

- scanning intersections for turning vehicles, pedestrians and other hazards
- choosing following distances
- judging gaps in traffic
- judging the position of their own vehicle on the road
- judging speed
- driving on high speed roads
- driving in rain and fog
- changing lanes
- city driving (including hook turns at intersections)
- merging onto freeways
- heavy traffic
- roundabouts.

You'll both find lots of helpful information on dealing with these situations in the **Road to Solo Driving** handbook, available from VicRoads and most newsagents.

Your professional driving instructor can also help with hints and advice on any areas of uncertainty.

Many learners have difficulty grasping some important safety concepts. It might help to talk with them about the following dangers:

- anticipating hazards
- driving when tired
- driving when emotional, stressed or upset
- distractions such as passengers, radio noise, looking at maps or using a mobile phone while driving
- speeding
- overconfidence
- following other vehicles too closely
- moving into small gaps in traffic.

Remind your learner that some of these dangers are not just hazardous, but also illegal. Once they have a licence, penalties may apply for carrying more than one peer passenger, using a mobile phone while driving, speeding or following other cars too closely.

Keys for success

Remember safe driving skills can be difficult to master, so give your learner the time they need.

When you're working with your learner, emphasise the specific challenges a new driver faces.

Remember to check out **Lessons from the Road** at vicroads.vic.gov.au for more tips and advice.

Commentary driving

Your role is to give your learner lots of practice opportunities and help them structure their driving sessions so they start simply and get more complex.

You're not expected to be a teacher or instructor. However, you will need to give advice. It may help, then, to have a way to pass on suggestions about safe driving in specific situations.

This technique is called commentary driving. Basically, you describe aloud what you're doing as you drive in a specific situation, then do the same while your learner drives.

The technique has three steps:

1. Demonstrate driving in the specific situation yourself and give a commentary out loud to your learner.
2. While your learner drives in the same situation, describe aloud what you'd do. Keep practising until your learner completes each step safely and smoothly.

3. Give your learner the task by having them drive and talk at the same time. This will be challenging and should only be tried when your learner has mastered the driving situation.

If you use this approach, make sure the commentary isn't disruptive and that it focuses on key issues. Think about the following:

- Help get the hang of commentary driving by practising the technique when you're driving alone.
- Focus on one skill at a time, such as leaving the kerb, approaching an intersection or entering a roundabout.
- Practice the skill yourself a few times and notice what steps you perform.
- Be particularly aware of things that are automatic for you, such as slowing down, changing gears, indicating, and looking out for other vehicles and hazards.



- You'll be surprised how many steps are involved, in even the simplest manoeuvre. There isn't time to mention every step, so limit your commentary to the critical ones. For example, instead of describing a head check as 'Turn head to right until almost looking backwards, and check behind for cars, then turn your head back to front of vehicle', simply say 'Turn head and check for cars'.
- Get some advice from a professional driving instructor if you're not sure which skills are critical and which ones aren't.
- Remember, practice each individual skill and commentary before you try it with your learner.

Commentary driving can help, but it isn't for everyone. If you answer 'Yes' to all these questions, perhaps it's worth trying.

Commentary driving checklist

- Do you feel comfortable with the technique?
- Are you confident you know the correct, safe way to perform the driving skill you want to teach?
- Are you an effective, confident speaker?
- Is your learner comfortable with the concept of commentary driving?
- Does your learner want to try the technique?

Keeping your new probationary driver safe

The first few months of a probationary driver's driving are stressful for parents and friends. There are things you can do to reduce their risk.

Driving seems pretty easy most of the time. As long as nothing unexpected happens and your new driver drives carefully and legally, they should be safe.

However, unexpected things do happen. Sometimes drivers make mistakes or make poor judgements.

Probationary drivers are especially crash prone, particularly in their first year of driving. Here are some facts to keep in mind:

- Probationary drivers have three times the risk of being in a crash where at least one person is injured or killed.
- They have three times the risk of having a single vehicle crash, such as running off the road.

- Their crash risk in the first few months is very high compared to later in the probationary period.
- Even with 120 hours of experience as a learner, probationary drivers are still developing safe driving skills and still have a high risk of crashing.
- A quarter of first year probationary drivers involved in fatal crashes carry multiple passengers.
- First year probationary drivers have one third of their fatal crashes between 10 pm and 6 am.
- Drivers aged 18-25 years account for about a quarter of all drivers killed.

Making the most of the learner period is an important start and there are extra things you can do to help your new probationary driver stay safe.

Encourage safe driving habits

Your new solo driver can continue developing safe driving habits. Remind them of this every now and then and if they borrow your car, you can set a few rules!

- Solo drivers should start simply. When they first get their Ps, it's best to limit their driving to low risk situations in the first few months.
 - Minimise driving at night until they have been driving for a few months. Driving late at night is very high risk for new drivers. Use alternative transport whenever possible. It's a bit of a nuisance, but parents can still provide a 'taxi' service sometimes.
 - New drivers must never drive after drinking (or taking drugs). New drivers have a zero BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration) requirement for the whole probationary period because alcohol influences them more than it does experienced drivers.
 - P1 drivers must not carry more than one peer passenger (aged between 16 and less than 22 years of age).
 - Learners, P1 and P2 drivers are not allowed to use a mobile phone while driving.
- New drivers need to remember some key safety strategies:
 - Don't follow other vehicles too closely.
 - Increase the space around the car.
 - Scan intersections for hazards.
 - Wait for longer gaps when turning into or across traffic.
 - Minimise distractions, such as changing CDs and the radio.
 - Drive at an appropriate speed for the conditions, which may be below the speed limit.
 - New drivers should avoid driving when they feel tired. Fatigue is a problem for everyone, especially young drivers. If they get less sleep than they need because of study, work or partying, they'll have a higher crash risk.
 - New drivers need to remember that they're still learning! Most drivers are too confident about their safety, especially younger drivers. Experts agree that overconfidence leads to many young driver crashes. As they get more practice on the road, they do improve their skills and become safer.

Rewarding responsible drivers

The Free Licence Scheme rewards Victoria's more responsible young drivers.

Drivers who complete their entire P1 and P2 probationary periods and have a good driving record may be eligible for a free three year driver licence.

For further information on eligibility rules, go to vicroads.vic.gov.au

The road ahead

Getting a driver licence isn't a race. If your learner doesn't need a licence yet, encourage them to wait. If they've worked their way through this book and have done at least 120 hours of driving practice, they're well on the way to a probationary licence. But their learner permit is valid for 10 years, so there's plenty of time to gain the extra experience that will help keep them safer. The more practice they get as a learner, the safer they'll be.

Go for 120!

Now we've given you the tools to help your learner to get at least 120 hours of driving experience, including 20 hours of driving at night. Good luck in helping your learner become a safe and licensed driver!

Driving for a reason

Young drivers are safer when they drive for a specific purpose. They're less safe when they drive just for fun. One message you can communicate is that there's a link between your learner's safety and their general lifestyle.

Driving is part of everyone's lives. Most people integrate driving into their general lifestyle to get them from one place to another. The car is a tool they use to meet their other needs.

For others, cars and driving are central to their life and they don't need a reason to drive. This type of driving is associated with a higher crash risk.

Encourage your learner to see the car as a tool they can use when there's a reason to get somewhere.

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