

Information update

October 2019

Graduated Licensing System

Helping young drivers be safer drivers

What is the Graduated Licensing System?

The Graduated Licensing System (GLS) is designed to help improve the safety of young drivers.

There have been significant reductions in the road toll but young drivers continue to have more casualty crashes than any other group of drivers on the road.

The facts are simple:

- Each year about 90 people are killed and 1,800 are seriously injured in crashes involving 18-25 year old drivers.
- Probationary drivers are involved in casualty crashes at three times the rate of more experienced drivers.
- More young people die from road crashes than any other causes in Victoria.

Experience shows that it is possible to have a significant effect on the safety of young drivers through the licensing system.

The GLS structures the licensing process so that learning to drive is fully supported and restrictions are placed on risky solo driving situations.

How does the system work?

Young driver crashes are caused by many factors such as inexperience, driving in high risk situations such as driving late at night or with multiple passengers, and unsafe behaviours such as speeding, drink or drug driving and inattention from distractions like mobile phones. The GLS addresses these factors through the following requirements.

Learner permit for 12 months

A person can apply for their learner permit when they are aged at least 16 years, and must pass a computerised learner permit knowledge test. If aged less than 21 years at the time of applying for a probationary licence, the person must have held a learner permit for a minimum of 12 months.

120 hours of supervised driving

Learner drivers aged less than 21 years when applying for their probationary licence must complete at least 120 hours of on-road supervised driving in a variety of conditions, including 10 hours of night driving. These hours must be recorded in the official VicRoads Learner Log Book.

Drive Test and Hazard Perception Test

All learner drivers applying for a probationary licence must pass a challenging on-road Drive Test and computerised Hazard Perception Test.

P1 and P2 probationary licences

Victoria has a two stage probationary driver licence. A P1 licence is issued for the first 12 months followed by a P2 licence for three years. If you are 21 or over when you obtain your probationary licence you will become a P2 licence holder. P1 licence holders must display a red P plate. P2 licence holders must display a green P plate.

P drivers can't drive probationary prohibited vehicles

A vehicle is a probationary prohibited vehicle (PPV) if it has:

- a power to mass ratio of greater than 130 kilowatts per tonne, or
- an engine that has been modified to increase the vehicle's performance (other than a modification made by the manufacturer in the course of the manufacture of the vehicle), or



- been declared a PPV by a notice published in the Victorian Government Gazette.

Exemptions may be available for undue hardship.

For more information go to vicroads.vic.gov.au

If you drive a probationary prohibited vehicle, you will be fined and incur three demerit points.

Peer passenger restriction

A driver on a P1 probationary licence is not permitted to carry more than one peer passenger (aged 16 to under 22 years of age). Peers do not include siblings and this rule does not apply when supervised by a fully licensed driver in the front passenger seat.

Support measures for learner drivers, parents and supervisors

- A Learner Kit and 120 hour Learner Log Book. The Learner Kit includes advice to learners and their supervising drivers about how to make the best use of the learner period. The Learner Log Book is used by learners to record practice sessions and lessons.
- The 'Keys Please' school program for learners and the online resource 'Lessons from the Road' for parents and learners provide information on how to make the most of the learner period. Go to vicroads.vic.gov.au
- The Road to Solo Driving handbook.
- The L-Site interactive website. Go to lsite.vicroads.vic.gov.au
- The TAC 'Drive Smart' training program to help with hazard perception skills, available from the TAC.

The four stages approach to learning to drive

VicRoads recommends that learners and supervising drivers divide the learner period into four stages. These stages provide a way to gradually introduce the learner to complex driving situations when they are ready, and provide supervisors and learners with a tool to help track improvements and progress.

Stage 1 – Controlling the car

The first stage is short and involves the learner developing simple skills to control the car including: moving off smoothly; smooth low speed cornering; slowing down and stopping smoothly at a chosen location; reversing in a straight line and around a curved path; and smooth and efficient use of gears in low speed driving (manual cars).

Stage 2 – Driving on quiet low speed roads

This stage focuses on hazard identification and driving safely on roads with little traffic (such as quiet suburban areas) including: negotiating turns and roundabouts safely; smoothly slowing down when approaching intersections; obeying give way, stop and traffic lights; leaving a safe space between their car, other cars and the kerb; reversing out of a driveway; completing a three-point turn; and angle and parallel parking smoothly and safely.

Stage 3 – Complex driving situations

This stage sees the learner move into more complex driving situations, such as driving on main roads at quiet and then busier times, driving at night and/or in wet conditions and driving on higher speed roads. Learners should be planning their driving routes, detecting and avoiding potential hazards and keeping safe following distances in busy traffic.

Stage 4 – Rehearsing solo driving

This is the final and longest stage of the learner period. Learners in this stage should be driving in many different driving conditions, on all types of roads and in all types of weather and traffic. Learners should be able to handle complex tasks such as: merging on a freeway; changing lanes in busy areas and overtaking; making hook turns; and driving on busy intersections. They should be able to manage moderate levels of distraction in the car such as passengers and music.



**Learner drivers
One year minimum**

Encourage and support:

- supervised driving experience in a variety of conditions
- gradual introduction to more complex driving experiences (see checklists in Learner Kit).



**P1 probationary drivers
One year minimum**

Safer transition to solo driving:

- reduce high risk activities
- encourage safe driving.



**P2 probationary drivers
Three year minimum**

Consolidate safe driving skills and encourage safe driving.

Fully licensed driver

ENTRY: Minimum age of 16 years and pass a computerised learner permit knowledge test**Learner requirements**

- A minimum of 120 hours of supervised driving experience (including 10 hours at night) accurately recorded in the official VicRoads Learner Log Book with the declaration to be signed by the learner and each supervising driver.
- Must hold learner permit for a minimum of 12 continuous months.

Other learner provisions

- Display L plates and must carry learner permit when driving.
- No mobile phone use of any kind. No hands-free or hand-held, or any messaging (includes reading text messages).
- Zero BAC; accompanied by a fully licensed driver with BAC <0.05.
- No towing.
- Five or more demerit points in any 12 month period or 12 or more demerit points in any three year period may result in learner permit suspension.

GRADUATION: Minimum age of 18 years and pass an on-road Drive Test and the Hazard Perception Test**P1 requirements**

- No mobile phone use of any kind. No hands-free or hand-held, or any messaging (includes reading text messages).
- No towing (except for work or while being supervised by a full licence holder sitting beside the driver).
- No driving probationary prohibited vehicles.
- Restriction on carrying more than one peer passenger (aged 16 to less than 22 years of age).
- Zero BAC.
- Drink-driving offenders will have to fit an alcohol interlock for a minimum of six months when re-licensed.
- Most licence suspensions will result in an extension of the P1 period for six months, in addition to the period of suspension.
- Must display red P plates and carry P1 licence when driving.
- If tested in an automatic vehicle, can only drive a vehicle with automatic transmission.
- Five or more demerit points in any 12 month period or 12 or more demerit points in any three year period may result in licence suspension.

GRADUATION: A good driving record**P2 requirements**

- No mobile phone use of any kind. No hands-free or hand-held, or any messaging (includes reading text messages).
- No driving probationary prohibited vehicles.
- Zero BAC.
- Drink-driving offenders will have to fit an alcohol interlock for a minimum of six months when re-licensed.
- Most licence suspensions will result in an extension of the P2 period for six months, in addition to the period of suspension.
- Must display green P plates and carry P2 licence when driving.
- If tested in an automatic vehicle, can only drive a vehicle with automatic transmission.
- Five or more demerit points in any 12 month period or 12 or more demerit points in any three year period may result in licence suspension.

GRADUATION: A good driving record**Full licence requirements if under 26 years of age**

- Drink-driving offenders caught with a BAC of 0.05 or more will have to fit an alcohol interlock for a minimum of six months when re-licensed.
- Must carry full licence when driving.

* If you are 21 or older when you apply for a probationary licence, some of the information in this table will not apply. See the Road to Solo Driving handbook for details.

No mobile phone use

A learner, P1 or P2 probationary driver is not allowed to use a mobile phone while driving. This includes hand-held, hands-free (no speaker phone, headphones or Bluetooth), sending or reading text messages or using any other function of the phone. If you use a mobile phone while driving, you will be fined and incur four demerit points.

Seatbelts

It's your responsibility to make sure that everyone in the vehicle wears a seatbelt. If you have younger people in the car (under seven years), they must use a suitable approved child restraint or booster seat. If you or your passengers don't wear a seatbelt, you will be fined and incur three demerit points. Penalties are higher if passengers aged less than 16 years are not restrained properly. You also must not travel with more passengers than there are seatbelts.

Towing

A learner or P1 licence holder is not permitted to tow (unless for work and at the request of your employer, or for driving solely in connection with agriculture, horticulture, dairying, pastoral or commercial fishing or under supervision of a full licence holder who is authorised to drive that vehicle, and is sitting beside the driver).

Zero BAC

Learners, P1 and P2 drivers must have a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC).

Alcohol interlock

Any driver disqualified for a drink driving offence must have an alcohol interlock fitted to their car when they return to driving. An alcohol interlock prevents a car starting if the driver has been drinking.

A good driving record

A good driving record is necessary to progress through each stage of the licensing system. A poor driving record will extend the period of a P1 or P2 probationary licence for at least six months. Probationary drivers can only accumulate five demerit points in any 12 month period and a total of 12 points in any three year period before further sanctions may be imposed.

Lessons from the Road

Take a look at the online resource 'Lessons from the Road', which features a mentor who guides supervisors and learner drivers through eight short videos about learning to drive.

Go to: vicroads.vic.gov.au

Buying a safe car

Used Car Safety Ratings are available on the L-Site website - lsite.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. VicRoads recommends that car buyers purchase cars that offer 'better than average' protection as a minimum. You can also see how safe other vehicle models are at: howsafeyourcar.com.au

Rewarding responsible drivers

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

If you are under 25 and have completed your entire P1 and P2 probationary periods and have a good driving record, you may be eligible for a free three year driver licence.

To check the rules for eligibility, go to vicroads.vic.gov.au

For further information please phone **13 11 71** or visit vicroads.vic.gov.au

This is a guide only and is not legal advice

KEYS PLEASE

