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Hello,

My name is Ray Seagrave and I own **Complete Driver Training** one of the most popular driving schools in the Warwickshire and West Midlands areas. I am here to help, please take some time to connect with me socially via:-

Facebook: www.facebook.com/completedrivertraining

Twitter: (clutchtobite)

Plus you can also contact me via my **website:** www.complete-driver.co.uk

About me

I am a fully qualified driver trainer and teach full licence holders as well as learner drivers. I have a high Grade A Driving Standards Agency (DVSA) teaching grade and have achieved a number of recognised qualifications in personal coaching and coaching for driver development. I have been a people trainer for over 20 years helping others to achieve and be the best they can be, teaching pupils every day to pass their driving test **FIRST TIME!** Being ORDIT registered I also teach people to become driving instructors and carry out training with fully qualified instructors to improve their teaching skills.

Having driven for some of the largest national driving schools in the country, I decided that I would go independent and start my own school some time ago because of all the recommendations I was getting and the fact that I could give higher quality instruction.

I am a member of industry professional bodies including the Driving Instructors Association (DIA) and the Motor Schools Association (MSA). I am also a full member of the Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) and RoSpa, the country's top two Advanced Driving Training organisations. I am a police trained advanced driver having been trained to the highest level. I am also signed up to the Driving Standards Agency's (DVSA) professional code of conduct.

So how does this benefit you?

Well, all driving instructors are NOT the same. I do this for a living and not just part time in my spare time. I take teaching people to drive very seriously. The best instructors are those who are professional, friendly, and reliable, those that understand you as a person, how best you learn and change how they teach so you learn faster.

I work hard at being a DVSA Grade A instructor and professional driver trainer which means that I provide high quality instruction that is tailored to your needs and learning style. This usually means that I save my pupils often hundreds as they pass their driving test quicker than if taught by some of the cheaper or less qualified instructors you may see around who may take longer to get you to test standard. You want to be trained by the best that can give you the best value for money right?

Learning to drive and the driving test

Through my own experience and the experiences of all those I have taught to pass their driving test. I know that passing your driving test will be one of the most satisfying, challenging, perhaps nervous, exiting and confidence building things you will ever, ever do.

Learning to drive can be a great changer of people and can have a profound impact on how they lead the rest of their lives. The confidence learning to drive gives you can have a profound effect on



challenges you face in the future. I have had some pupils who thought that passing their driving test would be impossible for them. Yet they turned the impossible into the possible, passed and are now realising their driving dreams.

One of the things my own parents taught me is that in life there is no substitute for hard work and with the right approach and motivation to do well and stick with it, you can pretty much achieve anything. The same is true for learning to drive.

There are in fact NO short cuts to passing your driving test and so there shouldn't be. Driving is a dangerous occupation and anyone trying to take a short cut is completely missing the point. These will only serve to make you a worse, less safe driver, rather than a safe, excellent driver who has very few (if no) accidents, low insurance premiums, no points or endorsements and keeps themselves and others around them safe.

What follows are a collection of things that you can do that will help to pass your driving test. These are spread across what you can do before the test, on the day of your test and then what happens next after your test. Follow these top tips closely and not only will you have a great chance of passing you will have a very good chance of passing on the first attempt.

Stay safe,



Ray Seagrave

DVSA ADI (car), DVSA (ORDIT), DIA(member), MSA(member), IAM(member)

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WAY BEFORE TEST DAY

1: Find an instructor and take some lessons

This seems like an obvious one. Driving with your mum or dad or your partner is good practice but should not be the only thing you do before you take your driving test. That's because you may pick up unsafe, bad driving habits. So, to really make sure you are doing everything correctly and safely, you'll need the expert help of a fully qualified driving instructor.

Any instructor you decide to go with should be approved and registered with the Driving Standards Agency (DVSA). That though is only the minimum thing you should be looking for. It is also a mistake to choose a driving instructor based them being the cheapest. There is a reason some driving instructors are cheap. Cheap lessons often lead to cheap, low quality instruction which may lead to you taking longer to pass and cost you more in the long term. For more information on researching and choosing the right driving instructor for you, go to my website here: www.complete-driver.co.uk

2: Make sure you are ready to take the test

The biggest driving test tip is not to book a driving test unless you feel ready! If you don't feel confident, check with your driving instructor whether you are ready for your driving test.

Practicing as much as possible before the driving test can help you to become more comfortable behind the wheel and confident when you're out and about. You should only apply for a driving test when you feel confident that you will pass (it can be pretty expensive otherwise).

You'll be ready when you can confidently drive safely without any help from your driving instructor. You would have had enough practice to be able to drive on busy roads at all times of the day and deal with other vehicles and hazard you may face in plenty of time without having to brake suddenly. You should also be totally confident with your reversing manoeuvres, performing each of them without any mistakes, first time every time. If you are still getting help and advice from your instructor then you are not ready. During the test, you need to drive without any help, so it's this standard you need to be at which will determine if you are test ready.

3: Practice in all conditions

You can't predict what the weather will be like on the day of your test. So you should ask your Driving Instructor to take you out in as many conditions as possible. By driving in wet, dry, slippery, raining, dark, foggy, bright, and even icy conditions you will pick up valuable experience that will pay off on test day and beyond.



4: Practice on all types of roads and different times

Don't limit your practice to the area around your local test centre. Make sure you drive on all the different types of roads and different speeds up to 70mph before taking your test. Driving on a variety of roads and conditions will make you a more capable driver.

If your schedule allows try and have lessons at different times of the day.

If you've never driven at night, in the rush hour or you've never driven in the wet or at dusk you're not going to have a feel for all the conditions. So come rain or shine, dark or daylight, get out there and build your experience in the conditions you'll be driving in once you pass.

5: Practice your manoeuvres as often as you can.

Practicing your manoeuvres as often as you can will help you feel more comfortable when doing them in the test. Getting to know how a vehicle moves and feeling comfortable with the controls will make for a perfect smooth manoeuvre and help with any nervousness issues you may experience during your test.

6: Get extra experience!

It is often very helpful to also get extra tuition from parents or relatives who will allow you to drive their vehicle. Even without tuition you are gaining extra experience of operating a vehicle. Learner Driver Insurance can protect the vehicle from any damage you may cause and will make sure the vehicle owner's insurance is not affected by any problems you may have. This can be very affordable from as little as £2 to £3 per day!

7: Don't just drive on test routes.

A good instructor should not have you driving on test routes alone. You want to learn on all types of roads, don't you? That's because after your test you have a licence to drive anywhere in the country. You want to be able to do this safely and confidently. So, expect a good instructor to have you driving around the whole of the local area and including Motorway (if close by).

It will be useful to learn how to deal with the most complicated junctions in your area, so you get an idea of where any tricky bits are that you may encounter on the day. If you have practice enough driving around the local area you should not be concerned with any route the examiner may take you on as your driving skill will be able to cope with anything the examiner throws at you.



8: Have your instructor give you a 'An assessment drive'

To give you a really good idea of what test day will be like driving under test conditions ask your instructor to give you an assessment drive (or series of them). Unlike a normal driving lesson, an assessment is just like the real test and is completed without interruption or instruction from your driving instructor. You get your result at the end of the session. This approach is great preparation for dealing with anxiety, nerves, the driving test and beyond.

During your assessment your instructor, like the driving test examiner, wants to see your normal driving skills. Having several assessed drives will help you familiarize with the test format and to get used to cope with possible mistakes as you make them. If possible have an assessment drive at the same time of your scheduled test to have a good idea of what sort of traffic volume you will find on test day.

9: Booking your driving test

Your instructor will help you book your test if you wish or you can book it using the DVSA on-line booking service or over the telephone. It should not matter where you book your test as you should be ready to pass on any road in any conditions. Some might say that you should avoid early mornings or busy times of day or if your test centre is in a very busy area book a test during school holidays when traffic is generally quieter. That's ok however; I say that it really should not matter as you should be ready and able handle anything. If you are worried about driving in traffic because that is when you make the most mistakes, then it could be argued that you are not fully ready for your test.

I would suggest taking your driving test at a time that suits you when you are at your most alert. For some this is in the morning others the afternoon. You will have less to deal with at quieter time of the day rather than morning or afternoon rush hour and this will make things a little easier for you. It shouldn't matter what time you book.

10: Practice your 'Show Me Tell Me' questions

Before the actual driving test starts, your examiner will ask you a couple of safety check questions more commonly known as the 'Show Me-Tell Me' questions. The examiner will either ask you to 'show' him/her something or 'tell' him/her something. There are 19 possible questions they may ask you about your vehicle so it's best that you get to know the car you will be driving on test day. Some questions might refer to things under the bonnet of your car others refer to the controls inside your car. Your instructor will give you the questions and all the answers that you may be asked relating to your driving school car. I have pictures of different parts of the vehicle which I also give my pupils, so they can easily identify the various parts and controls.

It's best that you study to get these questions right on the day. You do not want to get your test off to a bad start by worrying that you may have answered a question wrong or be embarrassed that you



think you may have got a question wrong. Best to get the test off to a great start so take some time to study these so you are confident that you can get this bit of the test right.

11: Refresh the Highway Code

It may have been two years since you took your theory test so brushing up on your highway code as you learn and revisiting it if you are unsure about something is essential. If you are unsure about anything you have encountered on the road during your lessons make sure you ask your instructor. Be confident that you understand all the rules and regulations associated with lines, signs and junctions.

Knowing that you know your signs and your highway code when on your test will greatly settle your nerves and give you the confidence required to drive in a relaxed and safe way. This is noticed by your examiner!

12: Using your own car?

You can use your own car for the driving test providing you are insured to drive it for the test. You will need a fully qualified driver to be with you on the day of your test. You will also need to make sure that your car is NOT on the DSA list of vehicles you cannot use due to vehicle recall notices. Go here:

<https://www.gov.uk/practical-driving-test-for-cars/recalled-vehicles>

Make sure your car is clean, tidy and in good condition and all the lights and windscreen wipers work and all your tires are roadworthy and legal. You will need to fit a second internal rear-view mirror for the examiner and your 'L' plates should also be properly attached and clean.

13: Keep it to yourself!

It's a good idea not to tell everybody that you're doing the test, telling everyone when you've scheduled your test for is definitely not a wise move. Not only will you put more pressure on yourself to pass but there is a good chance they'll start sharing their own horror stories with you. If you're still at school or have a large group of regular friends where there is real competition to get your licence first. You will feel the pressure if they don't know. As well-meaning as your friends are, even a single good luck text could make your stomach flip and the butterflies kick in. What would happen then if you kept getting them right up to your test? If you've simply got a couple of friends or family in the know then you may feel less pressure. Best advice is to only share the news once you've passed.

14: Keep Your Documents Safe.

The documents you will need for your driving test to identify you on test day include: your photo card Provisional Driving License the plastic card and the green paper counterpart. A copy of your test booking (sent to you via email) and your theory pass certificate letter confirmation. Keep them safe as you will need to present them on test day.



Get provisional driving licence and your theory test certificate ready the day before the test, looking for these items an hour before your test can be quite stressful. Without these items, the driving test will be cancelled, and you'll lose your fee.

15: Ignore the Rumours.

Everyone hears them. Horror stories about test day. Stories about 'not liking the examiner' or 'I don't know what he was talking about I never did that'. Please try not to listen to them. A lot of the time people only talk about what happened on the test when they've failed. Ask yourself when was the last time you heard someone talk about how they actually succeeded in their driving test? The driving test is not half as bad as you think or you can make it out to be. If you have done a mock test or a series of mock tests there should be no surprises. You will be self-analytical and self-critical so if you did something during the test that you know you shouldn't have done then you will know about it.

So don't be put off by rumours of people failed for wearing the wrong shoes or nightmare examiners giving out dangerous faults for nothing and put all your energy into learning the skills to pass.

16: Warm Up!

On the day of the test, arrange to have a final driving lesson around the area of the test centre beforehand. This will help you to warm up and get into the swing of things. It will also help you to be aware of any new road works and other obstructions in the area. You may want a final practice all the manoeuvres and have a short drive around the test centre to spot possible problems such as road works or similar hazards. An hour warm up lesson immediately before your test, will get you in the swing of driving, however too long may cause fatigue towards the end of your test.

17: Fill Up!

If you are using your own car don't forget to check the cars fluids. Makes sure you fill up with screen was and fuel. If you can't complete the test because you run out of gas you'll fail the test.



ON THE DAY OF YOUR TEST

18: Try to Relax!

If your driving instructor has told you that you are ready for the test, then that should be a confidence boost in itself. He or she is a professional and will only say this if they are confident that you are ready and that you are able and capable of DOING IT.

19: Get some sleep!

Sleep well - Never underestimate a good night sleep, this can boost your concentration levels and bring out the best in your ability. If you are suffering from driving test day nerves take deep breathes and try to think about what you need to do for things to well rather than what could go wrong. Give yourself plenty of time to prepare on the day of your test. Keep positive.

20: Chill out!

Many tests are failed due to the candidate being excessively nervous. Try not to let your nerves get the better of you. Put the driving test into perspective. A great many people nationally do not pass their driving test on the first attempt. In fact, a great many take two or three attempts to do it. Try not to put too much pressure on yourself to pass as this will not help and could make things worse. If you do happen to be unsuccessful this time, then it can simply be booked and taken again.

Also, the examiner isn't expecting you to drive like a professional. He is expecting you to make mistakes. He just wants to see you drive safely. The driving part of the test will only last around 30-40 minutes. To you, it will seem like 5 minutes. It goes very fast.

21: Don't Drive any Differently.

It's natural to feel slightly nervous on the day of your driving test. Don't let this worry you too much. Breathe deeply and stay calm and drive. Drive as you have been driving with your driving instructor. Don't think you have to drive any differently just because an examiner is sitting next to you. If you do this could in fact unsettle you and have a negative impact on the drive.

22: Try to stay Calm.

You don't need to be the world's best driver to pass a driving test; you just need to be safe and competent. Stay calm and focus on this. And remember, if you fail, you can always take the test again.



23: Eat something.

Make sure you eat before your test it can help settle your nerves if you keep to your normal routines. By not eating you can increase your stress levels. Having something to eat before you take your test will help you maintain focus on what is on the road ahead, what the Driving Examiner is asking you to do next and not your rumbling stomach. Having a bite to eat beforehand can give you the energy to do the test. In addition to this it's worth considering having a cup of coffee or caffeine-based energy drink as this can give you the focus you need whilst on test. However, don't over-do the caffeine - usually one cup is more than enough otherwise you may get jittery and find it difficult to drive. One of my pupils suggested staying clear of sugar sweets. Also, that bananas are great for brain power helping with that all-important concentration.

24: Visualise, plan for it to go well.

Many top athletes use 'visualisation' techniques to prepare before big events. Close your eyes, pretend you are behind the wheel, and go through your last mock test drive and all the test manoeuvres in your head.

Imagine yourself trying not to think about what can go wrong trying to think about what you need to do to make it go right. Keeping focussed, relaxing, planning well ahead, and not rushing into things, being sure before pulling out of junctions or roundabouts. Taking my time, always consider where the best position for the car is and remember my mirror checks and signals before any change of speed or direction.

25: Dress comfortably for the test.

This sounds like common-sense; however, you'd be surprised how an everyday item of clothing can restrict your movement whilst driving. Our advice is to wear a comfy pair of trousers, trainers and a t-shirt. Some pupils wear their normal driving shoes, so nothing feels different underfoot on the pedals.



ON ARRIVAL AT THE TEST CENTRE

26: Get to the Test Centre Early.

Arrive at the test centre at least 5 - 10 minutes early to give yourself the time you need to check-in, go to the toilet, and take a few deep breaths to relax yourself. Some test centres do have restrictions on how early you can arrive so as to avoid congestion. Your driving instructor will get you there as early as possible to give you enough time to relax.

TIP: If you are taking the test in your own car without an instructor then please phone the test centre a few days before to ask what would be the earliest you could arrive.

27: On Arrival.

When you arrive, your instructor will ask you to either reverse park into a bay in the test centre car park or (if they do not have their own car park) on the road outside the test centre. You will then make your way to the test centre waiting room.

TIP: Make sure when you leave the car you have locked it and you have all your documents and your car keys. It looks a little embarrassing if you have left your documents in the car and you have to rush back get them.

28: In the Waiting Room.

When you are in the waiting room take a seat and try to relax. Your anxiety levels are likely to rise as soon as the door to the waiting room opens and the examiners all walk through. Be prepared for this. Have your documents ready in your hand or placed on a table (usually in the middle of the room).

TIP: Try to relax by taking a few deep breathes and tell yourself – “I am ready” – “I can do this” – I am ready – I can do this! Get rid of any negative thoughts. Keep positive thinking around what you need to do to pass rather than mistakes that might happen that would cause you to fail.

29: When your name is called.

All the examiners taking tests at that time walk into the waiting room together. Your examiner will call out your name and ask you to read a declaration on your green test sheet that they use for the test and then ask you to sign it in the top left-hand corner. While you are doing this the examiner will look over your documents and identify you by looking at your photo licence. They will also ask if you are still at the same address as the one on your licence.

TIP: If your old address appears on the licence have this changed in plenty of time to get it back from the DVLA before your test. If this is not possible should you pass you will have to apply for your new



photocard licence via the post office. If it's your current address on your provisional licence the examiner will keep it and apply for your new photocard licence for you. Changing your address and getting a new card before the test will save you a job to do after the test. Your new licence will follow in the post around 2/3 weeks. The examiner will explain this to you in the car.

30: Try and enjoy your test.

If you have prepared well then, it's ok to be a little confident but not over confident. Try to enjoy your test. Remember that the examiner is human too. Greet them politely and with a smile. The examiner is on your side, after all, they would much rather tell you that you have passed not failed.

31: Introductions.

After looking at your documents the examiner will return them to you and ask that you take them with you. He will also ask if you want your instructor (or the qualified driver you brought with you) to accompany you on the test, an observer. This could be your mum, dad, a friend, or the person that taught you to drive. He will also ask if you want them to join you in the car at the end of the test for the result and feedback.

The benefits to having someone with you the DVSA highlight in this YouTube video:

<https://bit.ly/2O5vBhh>

The examiner will then ask you to accompany him/her to your car. He/she will introduce themselves giving their name and politely ask what they should call you. Your full name appears on the licence and you may wish to be called by a short version of your name: e.g. Jan instead of Janet or Jim instead of James.

TIP: Keep your documents close by as the examiner will take them from you at the end of the test if you pass. In their place he will give you your test pass certificate and send your provisional off to the DVLA for you so they can issue you with your Full driving licence.

32: Taking someone with you.

The choice whether you have your instructor or the person accompanying you in the back on test is entirely yours. I ALWAYS give my pupils the option of having me in the car with them if they think this will help them. A good instructor will be happy to give you any additional moral support should you need it and will always give you the option. They know for some it will help on the day. It is your choice.

Some pupils however, think having another person in the back will put more pressure on them and that is absolutely fine. It's all about how you feel whether it will help you or not. In this case I am entirely happy to remain at the test centre.



It is very useful for your instructor or the person who taught you to drive to join you for the feedback at the end as this will give him/her the benefit of knowing where some of the mistakes were made and areas the examiner feels you need improvement.

TIP: If you can make a decision about taking someone with you on test before test day arrives. You don't need the pressure to make that decision on the day. Don't feel you have to have someone else in the back to see how you drive if you feel uncomfortable about it. Your driving instructor will know from the feedback at the end what route you have taken and what mistakes you have made. He/she does not need to witness those mistakes to know how the drive went. Do what you need to do to feel comfortable.

33: Remember your eyewear!

On the way outside at the start of the test the examiner will ask you to read a vehicle registration number. Make sure you have remembered your glasses or contact lenses as you must be able to read the plate and wear them whenever you drive. If you have problems with the eyesight test you will fail your test and have to retake it.



ON THE DRIVING TEST

34: *Don't Rush When Getting into The Car.*

Relax and don't rush getting into the car take a few deep breathes. When you get in make sure you are comfortable, remove your jacket / jumper /cardigan if you think you may get too warm, you should have already adjusted your seating position, mirrors, etc. on the drive to the test centre. Making sure this is correct **BEFORE** you get to the test centre is one less thing to worry about on the test.

35: *Fasten Your Seatbelt!*

Make sure you fasten your seat belt before moving of. Not doing this will result in a test fail.

36: *Just another lesson.*

Essentially the test is going to be exactly like the driving lessons you have been taking. If it helps deal with the pressure of the test, think of it as just another driving lesson, just with a different instructor.

37: *Directions.*

As with your driving lessons you had with your instructor. Your examiner will give you clear and concise instructions to move off, turn left or right, stop, perform one of the set manoeuvres and drive without direction for a section of the test (independent drive). At the start of the test the examiner will explain that unless he/she tells you to turn left or right you should follow the road ahead. Remember the main purpose of a mock test was to help you to prepare you for the test. So how the test is conducted should be no surprise and will make you feel a little more comfortable about what is likely to happen.

38: *Listen Carefully.*

Listen carefully to the examiner's instructions before the test starts and on the drive. It's really important to pay close attention to everything your examiner tells you so that you can react in plenty of time. If you are not sure about a direction or what the examiner has asked you to do, don't be afraid to ask. Examiners are as helpful as possible and they will repeat the directions promptly. You don't want to find yourself approaching a junction unsure of which way you should be turning, for example.



39: Show me-tell me: Under the Bonnet.

Make sure you know how to open the bonnet of your car. There is a tricky latch you need to operate to open the bonnet completely. You do not want to get into an embarrassing moment if the examiner asks you to open the bonnet and you are unable to. Make sure you know how for your own car or ask your driving instructor to show you how.

40: Show me-tell me: Controls

You can watch the official DVSA video here : <https://bit.ly/2OHtC3N>

You should understand the function of all controls and switches, especially those that have a bearing on road safety. These include:

- indicators,
- lights,
- windscreen wipers,
- demisters,
- heaters

You should be able to find these controls and operate them correctly when necessary, without looking down.

TIP: Make sure your driving instructor has explained all the controls to you and you are familiar with how they all work. The operation of some of these may come up in a show me, tell me question before the test.

41: Show me-tell me: Safety

You should understand the function of all controls and switches, especially those that have a bearing on road. Make certain the doors are shut properly. Make sure you always adjust the:

- seat,
- head restraint,
- mirrors,
- Seat belt.

It is important that you are comfortable and can reach all the controls. Before you start the engine ensure the handbrake is on and the gear lever or selector is in neutral or park. If you need to restart your engine quickly, for example after a stall, you must make sure that you keep the vehicle under control.



42: Stay Cool, stay clear.

Putting the cars air conditioning on will not only keep you cool in the summer, it will stop the windows steaming up in the winter.

43: Be seen on test.

Make sure if the light levels drop due to bad weather conditions that you put your side lights or main beam headlights on. In foggy conditions you may have to put on your fog lamps.

44: Is It Raining?

Make sure if it is raining that you put your front and rear wipers on. You will get a driver faults if you are not using them when you need to.

45: Keep thinking positive and remain confident!

Think positive – When you get out of bed in the morning simply tell yourself that you're going to get through the day calmly - if you get up with the right frame of mind it can make all the difference in the world. Remember - as long as you feel confident when driving there is no real reason why you shouldn't pass.

Before you turn the engine on to start your test remove all the negative thoughts and consider the test is only a short 30-40 minute drive where you will show the examiner that you can drive alone. If you are ready to pass your test then it's about showing someone else other than your instructor how well you can drive.

46: Believe in your ability!

Believe - It's important to believe in your ability and drive exactly as you have learnt. Remember: Try not to put on a special show. Just drive how you have been taught.

47: Speak Clearly.

Speak up! So you're driving along and the Driving Examiner asks you to do something, and you don't quite hear him or her... Ask what was said, don't clam up and try to guess the instruction, ask the examiner to repeat what they just said so that you can confidently carry out their instruction.



48: Check your Blind Spots!

Always check your mirrors and if necessary indicate before stopping or moving off during your driving test. Look carefully over your right shoulder each time before you pull away from the curb to check your blind spot. Failure to do that will almost certainly mean a driver fault and if repeated a number of times will definitely lead to a test fail!

49: Drive as smoothly as possible.

Giving yourself and your driving examiner as smooth a drive as possible is a very wise move. Remember - they will want to see how you drive normally so don't do anything you wouldn't normally do. Think ahead to plan your braking to avoid sudden stops.

50: Think and Plan ahead.

Try to keep focused on planning ahead and what you need to do. Look as far up the road as possible scanning up and down and from side to side. Talk yourself through everything ahead instead of leaving it till you get there. This will prepare you for what's coming up ahead. Observing all road signs and hazards and talking yourself through your routines and any actions you need to take well in advance.

51: Don't Look DOWN!

By now you should not be looking down at the gear stick to change gear or to check what gear you are in. Doing so during your driving test will take your eyes off the road. You should be constantly scanning the far, middle and near distance. If you need to know what gear you are in, put your hand on the stick without looking down. You should be able to tell what gear you are in from the position of the gear stick in relation to the speed you are travelling at and the sound of the engine.

52: Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre (MSM)

Update yourself on what is happening around by checking your mirrors regularly, including your door mirrors when changing direction. If you see a parked car or line of parked cars on the left – Remember a left mirror check is needed when moving back over to the left. You may forget this when passing a large number of cars on the left.

Keeping yourself updated with what is behind and around you will help you prepare if you find yourself having to slow down or change direction at short notice.



53: Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre (MSM)

Always indicate correctly and in good time, this helps other road users to know your intentions. Use your mirrors before you change speed (up or down), change gear, stop or move off and whenever you change direction in your driving test.

54: Know The Speed Limit!

Make sure you know the speed limit of the road you are on or about to turn into. Tests can easily be failed if you are travelling too far above or below the limit. Look for signs that change the speed limit on the road you are travelling. Repeater signs that keep you updated about the speed limit of the road you are on and signs at the beginning of every road you are entering, including exits off roundabouts.

Getting into a good habit of knowing the speed limit of the road will keep you and your passengers safe and will mean that you do not pick up any fines or endorsements for speeding.

55: Try not to be hesitant!

The objective for any junction is 'go if it is safe to go'. That means that you do need to stop at every junction unless it is necessary. On the way down to a junction or a roundabout, have in your mind where you should stop if necessary however, say to yourself "can I go, can I go, rather than, "where should I stop?" This will set your mind on going if safe rather than stopping then having a look.

If you stop at a roundabout or a junction when it's obvious that you're clear to go, you may pick up marks for hesitancy. However, where the road sign tells you to "Stop", you must do so.

56: Keep Your Distance!

Don't get too close to stationary vehicles or obstructions. Always keep a look out for pedestrians stepping out onto the road. On narrow roads with limited room, you should reduce speed so you can cope easier with the unexpected. Remember - less space, less pace. The smaller the gap, the lower the speed, the lower the gear. Remember that in wet, snowy or icy conditions your separation gap between you and the vehicles ahead needs to be greater. Don't know what that gap should be? Look it up in the Highway Code. When stopping remember the phrase 'Tires and Tarmac', leave the correct gap when stopping behind the car in front.

57: 'Self talk' yourself through the test.

Focus on what's happening well ahead of you and, talk yourself through what might happen. On the drive catch yourself doing things right. Praise yourself for it. Repeat to yourself "that was ok, that was good. Keep calm, you are doing ok". At the end you will be surprised to realize how short the test is!



58: Dealing With Mistakes.

Do not panic! If you make a mistake, feel overwhelmed, feel you are not sure what to do next, or simply get a blank mind during your test, these things can happen to anybody anywhere and at any time! This does not mean you cannot drive, it means you have experienced an overload of pressure or nerves, and what you do next will account for your driving skill. Take a deep breath, remain calm, assess any mistake you may have just made and move on. Try not to dwell on a mistake as this will take your mind off the rest of the drive and you are much more likely to make more mistakes.

During the test it is likely that you will make some mistakes this is quite normal. In fact is very rare to complete a test with a clean sheet. Many learners dwell on this during the test, turn into a bundle of nerves and then before you know it, you're more minors and even serious faults. The examiner isn't expecting you to drive like a professional or perfectly. That is why the driving test allows for 15 driver faults.

If you make a mistake, move on and forget about it. The chances are it will be a minor fault and nothing to worry about. If you happen to make an error during a manoeuvre such as nudging a curb for instance, say to the examiner that you are going to pull forward to correct this. If you can't correct it, ask the examiner to try the manoeuvre again. Time permitting, he or she may well let you and you still stand a very good chance of passing. In other words, persevere and don't give up!

59: You stalled – So What?

Stalling - If you stall the car, get it started again as soon as possible. Stalling per se does not constitute a fail, unless you stall in a dangerous situation i.e. on entering a roundabout or pulling out of a junction. In these cases you are an obstruction to other drivers.

I have seen candidates stalling at the very beginning of their test and, on some occasions, the examiner was lenient enough to not mark it as they understand that nerves are at their peak in that moment. If you stall deal with it, handle it properly and you will still pass.

60: Observation mistakes.

The majority of driving tests are failed due to lack of appropriate observation. Failing to look properly when pulling out into a gap at junctions or roundabouts features highly in the test fail statistics. Make sure you have looked enough to be absolutely sure you can pull out.

61: Lane Change Mistakes.

If you do happen to take the wrong lane for example, then try and get into the correct lane safely using the MSM routine. If you can't safely get into the correct lane, then stay where you are. The examiner will simply take you a slightly different route.



62: Avoiding serious driving errors.

A serious or dangerous driver error is one that could lead to an accident. Here the examiner for safety may have to momentarily take control of the vehicle or take action to avoid danger. If you can't drive without making serious errors, you will have little or no chance of passing the test. You will avoid these if you have good control of the car good gap judgement and excellent observations. On the run up to your driving test a few weeks before you should not be making these types of errors. If you are you are not quite ready to take the test.

63: The test is not over till it's over!

You might feel you've done something that has failed you already following a mistake. I have had plenty of pupils who have thought this and the examiner has passed them. Some after they made the mistake that they thought had failed them. Then relaxed a little and the rest of the drive went better for them and they passed. You should not pre-judge the outcome of the test whilst on the drive. If you have addressed any mistakes correctly and done all you can to maintain the safety of yourself and other road users, the examiner may think that you have done everything properly and therefore wont fail you. The point here is that you should carry on throughout your driving test with the same level of confidence as when you first started, as until you hear what the examiner has to say, you just can't be sure of the outcome of your actions. Stay relaxed and keep up the good work!

64: Never Give Up!

Never give up - If you make a mistake, put it behind you and carry on. The mistake may not be as serious as you thought, however giving up may lead to a fail. Keep Calm and Carry On!

65: Watch out for the unexpected!

Keep a look out for things that can easily catch you out. Be wary at zebra crossings - many people will turn suddenly to cross without looking. Look out for and give way to pedestrians on corners who may start to cross as you turn into the road. When in a queue of traffic look out for the brake lights of cars three or four cars ahead of the one in front of you. Take extra caution when turning right at mini roundabouts that any traffic ahead on the opposite side of the road or traffic approaching from your left is definitely stopping for you.

66: Watch out for cyclists!

If you have to overtake cyclists during your driving test, give them plenty of clearance (about the width of an average-sized car). Don't follow them too closely. Try to complete the overtake reasonably briskly so that you don't hold up other traffic for longer than necessary. Make sure you can see clearly that no other cars are coming towards you.



TIP: Pay particular attention when overtaking cyclists when you intend to turn left into the next side road. Make sure you have judged there to be enough room to safely over take, slow down for the junction and turn left WITHOUT the cyclist having to slow down to avoid you.

67: Ignore what the examiner is doing!

Keep your attention on your driving and don't bother with what the examiner is writing. Don't try and take sneaky peeks at the test sheet. This will only serve to take your eyes off the road unnecessarily and might cause you to miss something that might lead you to fail your test! The examiner will be marking the test sheet for a whole number of reasons, not just to mark down a driving fault. Sometimes they tick certain boxes that are related to what manoeuvre they might have done or what test route they are on, what a stage they are at.

68: Independent Driving.

The independent part of the driving test last around 20 mins and is your chance to show the examiner you can drive on your own without any 'turn left or turn right' prompts from the examiner.

More information on this is contained in a video here: <https://bit.ly/2OHvjyb>

This is actually a very simple part of the driving test. This part of the test proves to the examiner that you can easily spot and understand traffic signs and follow directions when they are given to you. If you forget where you should go, simply ask the examiner and he/she will confirm the directions to you. If you take the wrong direction but you do it correctly no faults will be recorded, and the examiner will guide you back on route.

If you aren't entirely sure what direction the examiner asks you to take, ask him/her to repeat. They don't mind this in the slightest.

You cannot fail your test for going the wrong way, providing that you go the wrong way correctly. However, this is area where tests can be failed. An example how this might happen would be: The examiner has given you a direction which you are following then you realise that you are in the wrong position or the wrong lane. You panic and without thinking you change lanes without using your mirrors, signals or checking your blind spot when it was necessary. Being in the incorrect lane isn't going to fail your test. Abruptly changing lanes without appropriate observation is.

You may also be asked to follow a sat nav. The examiner will bring his own and place it on the dashboard of your vehicle.

69: Keep your approach speed appropriate.

Many tests are failed due to the speed at which junctions are approached. When you are approaching a junction make sure you look well ahead and assess. If the junction looks busy, open or closed. This should determine at the speed at which you should approach. Approach junctions nice and slow to



give yourself time to think what you need to do. Remember the MSPSL routine. If you are unsure that it is safe to go, then it probably isn't so wait. No 50/50 decisions. Be absolutely sure you have taken in all the information before you decide to go.

70: Making Progress.

Not making progress (not travelling at the speed limit when safe to do so) is an area that can lead to errors on your test. If for example the speed limit is 30mph, the road is free from hazards and is relatively straight, then drive at 30mph. Driving too slow for the conditions can be dangerous and can also fail your test.

71: Take your time!

A great many fail the test because they think the examiner will think they're too slow. Driving out of a junction in front of an approaching car or so desperate to get round the cyclist that you end up dangerously close. If in doubt, then wait till you know it is safe.

72: Safe to go?

If you don't know, you don't go - If you're not sure it's safe to proceed, plan to stop the car. Being ready to stop will avoid harsh braking.

73: Drive Safe!

The number one rule is to be safe – if the examiner feels unsafe then you will almost certainly fail.

74: Drive at an appropriate speed!

You should drive at a speed suitable for each road and not unnecessarily hold up traffic. Driving too slow is likely to be marked as a driving fault on the test report.

75: Control your steering!

You will need to steer correctly for the speed you are driving at with enough steering to maintain control and road position as you drive and turn corners and bends. The tighter the turn then the slower the speed, with the correct gear selected. Hitting the kerb can also be marked as a steering fault.



76: Manoeuvre: Reversing Around a corner.

Like all manoeuvres good observations all around is very important during this manoeuvre. You reverse around the corner under control and stay reasonably close to the kerb without hitting it or going too wide.

77: Positioning Correctly.

You must make sure you're in the correct position for the direction you're travelling or heading for. Plan well ahead and get in the correct lane early. Look early for road signs and markings.

78: Signal correctly.

Make sure you apply signals at the correct time warning others of your intentions and not so early as to confuse them of what your intentions are.

79: Moving Off.

On your test your examiner will have you pull up and move off at least 3 or 4 times. It is a legal requirement of the test that he do this at least twice. Other times he/she will be pulling you up to explain a manoeuvre they may wish you to carry out.

TIP: Make sure you move off checking mirrors and any blind spots, without causing anyone to change speed or direction as move off from the side of the road. If not done correctly this will certainly result in a driver error including a serious error if you have not pulled out safely causing another vehicle to slow.

80: STOP!

This can be a common way of failing your test on routes that have them. You must stop at a junction with a STOP sign and at a solid white stop line. Failure to do so is a serious driver error and an instant test fail.

81: Pedestrian Crossings.

When queuing in traffic make sure you plan your approach to pedestrian crossings controlled by traffic lights. If pedestrians are waiting to cross, watch for the lights to change. Make sure you keep the crossing clear stopping at the stop line rather than stopping on the crossing. Same applies for a zebra crossing leave them clear.



82: Mirror use.

You must use the mirrors well before changing speed and or direction and act on what you see. It is really important that both the interior and the relevant door mirrors are checked, especially when changing lanes.

83: Coasting.

Do not allow the vehicle to coast, by running on in neutral or putting the clutch pedal down. There should be no need to look down at the gear lever when changing gear.

84: Harsh Steering.

Avoid harsh steering, or steering too early or too late as it may cause you to hit the kerb or swing out towards another road user.

85: Observations and junctions.

The number one reason why people fail their driving test is due to the lack of sufficient observations at junctions pulling out when it is not safe to do so. You must give priority where necessary and not cause anyone to change speed or direction.

86: Reversing Manoeuvres (General)

When reversing on any of your manoeuvres, keep looking round for other road users including pedestrians. You should not continue reversing as another road user is passing, unless they are passing so far from you that you would not cause them to slow or pedestrians to stop. You must complete any manoeuvre within a reasonable time, so if it's busy, consider reversing a little at a time between each moving hazard, rather than sitting there for ages waiting for a totally clear road that may never occur. If traffic is clearly stopped and holding back for you, get on with the manoeuvre so you're out of their way as soon as possible.

If during a manoeuvre you feel that you have missed your point of turn, simply pull forward and explain the examiner that you need to try again so that they are aware of what you are doing. There is a difference in "kissing" and "hitting" the kerb. The first case does not constitute a fail, provided that you have made effective observations.

If you feel you're completely messing up a manoeuvre, simply pull forward and start again. As long as you haven't done anything wrong, such as touching the kerb or failing to make effective observations, you can still pass.



87: Manoeuvres: Turn In The Road.

This manoeuvre is no longer tested however, you should definitely be taught this as part of your training.

Your instructor will normally put you on a road where you should be able to perform this manoeuvre in 3 moves. If another vehicle approaches while you're performing a turn in the road during your driving test, don't panic. Make eye contact with the other driver first - if it's clear that he is waiting for you, check all around and then continue calmly with your manoeuvre. Otherwise wait until the other vehicle has driven past you before proceeding. In addition, while you should do your best to complete a turn in the road in three movements, you will not automatically fail your driving test if you take more than three. The important point is to look out for other road users and complete it at a reasonable pace. Use reference points to make sure you know when to turn and stop on both sides of the road. This way you will never hit the curb and will give you the maximum space you will need to do the manoeuvre in 3 moves. Your instructor should be able to give you the reference points for the car you will be driving if you need them to help you.

88: Manoeuvre: Turn in the road - Observations!

You should be able to carry out this manoeuvre under good control of the vehicle with full and effective all round observation, including the rear view check on reversing which is often missed.

89: Manoeuvres: Reversing around a corner.

This manoeuvre is no longer tested however, you should be taught this as part of your training.

During the manoeuvre if you think you're heading for the kerb when reversing round a corner and can't correct it, stay calm. Make all round observations first, then pull forward a little steering left and correct yourself. This is a much better approach than carrying on and hitting the kerb! (Top tip: Angle your left mirror down so you can clearly see the curb and edge of the car, makes it much easier and is fine to do on the exam- just remember to keep looking around!)

90: Manoeuvres: Parallel Park & Pull up on the right.

Parallel Park: The instruction the examiner might give "What I would like you to do is pull up alongside the car ahead, reversing back to park behind it, finishing no more than two car lengths back and a reasonable distance from the curb."

During the manoeuvre if you have turned the wheel all the way to the right (full lock) and you think you're still going to hit the curb as you pull up behind the target car. Stop, keep calm and think how you are going to steer to correct the car. Correct the position of the car by looking all around then pulling forward a little steering left briskly until the front of the car moves a little to the left. From here you can put the car back into reverse and after looking around once more, steer briskly right and then



left to position the car alongside the curb. Make sure whenever you are moving forward or backward to check all around before you move. If you see approaching vehicles stop and assess the situation only proceeding if it is safe to do so.

Pull up on the right: The instruction the examiner might give "What I would like you to do is pull up on the right when it's safe to do so please." You should find a safe, legal and convenient place on the right to do so. Signalling if necessary. When you have done this the examiner will ask you to reverse back a couple of car lengths. Make sure you carry out full and effective observations before you reverse along the curb. The examiner will then ask you to drive on.

For an example go here: <https://bit.ly/2LQOobP>

TIP: Plan ahead early the space you choose. If the traffic is heavy, make sure you show your intentions to other road users (or anyone who may benefit) by giving a signal. Use the same assessment skills you would use to pull up on the left. Your instructor will show you how to carry out this manoeuvre safely.

91: Manoeuvres: Reverse Parking Observations.

This is the second most common reason for failing a driving test. Observations whilst doing a reverse parking manoeuvre must be maintained. Failure to spot and respond to another road user or pedestrian can result in a serious error and a driving test fail.

92: Bay Parking.

If the test centre has parking bays and you have already done a manoeuvre out on the test route, then the examiner **will not** ask you to reverse into a bay. He/she will ask instead that you drive forward into a bay. At this stage the examiner is not looking for you to park perfectly between the lines although it would be nice to finish on a high so practice doing this before test day. Every test centre is different. Your instructor will advise what is normal procedure for the test centre where you will be taking your test.

While out on the test the examiner may ask you to drive forward into a bay either on the left or right and then safely reverse out. See here: <https://bit.ly/2KoB5S2>

If you have not done any manoeuvre already, the examiner will ask you to reverse into a bay back at the test centre. He will give you the instruction to do this just before you approach the test centre car park.

When you have completed the bay park manoeuvre the examiner will ask you to turn off the engine (if you have not done so already) and relax while he/she completes their paperwork.

TIP: Plan which bay you will reverse into as soon as possible when you are able to see available spaces to give you time to position the car correctly for the bay you have chosen.



93: Emergency Stop!

When carrying out an emergency stop remember to brake evenly and progressively and try to avoid locking the wheels. **TIP:** Remember to put the clutch down at the last minute or this will result in a stall. Not braking hard enough might fail your test.

94: Overtaking.

Only overtake when it is safe to do so. Allow enough room when you are overtaking another vehicle. Cyclists and motorcyclists need at least as much space as other vehicles. They can wobble or swerve suddenly. Do not cut in too quickly after overtaking. Take care when the width of the road is restricted or when the road narrows. If there is an obstruction on your side or not enough room for two vehicles to pass safely, be prepared to wait and let the approaching vehicles through. When you turn right across the path of an approaching vehicle, make sure you can do so safely. Other vehicles should not have to stop, slow down or swerve to allow you to complete your turn.

95: Positioning to stop.

Make sure you choose a safe, legal and convenient place to stop, close to the edge of the road, where you will not cause an obstruction and create a hazard. You should know how and where to stop without causing danger to other road users.

96: Clearing Stationary Vehicles.

Allow plenty of room to pass stationary vehicles and be prepared to slow down or stop. A door may open, a child may run out or a vehicle may pull out without warning. Keep a safe distance from builder's skips or other large obstructions, as you may not be able to see pedestrians or workers close to the obstruction.

97: Awareness and Planning.

You must be aware of other road users at all times. You should always think and plan ahead so that you can:

- judge what other road users are going to do;
- predict how their actions will affect you;
- React in good time.

TIP: Take particular care to consider the actions of the more vulnerable groups of road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. Anticipate road and traffic conditions, and act in good time, rather than reacting to them at the last moment.



98: Response to signs and signals.

You should understand and be able to react to all traffic signs and road markings. You must act correctly at traffic lights, and check that the road is clear before proceeding when the green light shows. Obey signals given by police officers, traffic wardens and school crossing patrols. Look out for signals given by other road users, including people in charge of animals, and be ready to act accordingly.

TIP: 20mph speed limit signs by a school can be easy to miss if you are not looking for them. Keep a look out!



AFTER THE TEST

99: Awesome YOU PASSED!

YES you did it! But that's not the end. The examiner will ask you for your documents (he/she sends these to the DVLA for you) and then he/she will complete your test pass certificate. He may also give you some feedback on some of the things that did not go quite right and improvements you can make. It is important that you listen to this feedback. With this certificate you are legally able to drive on the road. Providing that is that you are insured for the car as a full licence holder.

TIP: Your driving test is not the end of your learning it is the beginning and driving at the level you passed at should be a minimum standard you want to keep.

100: If you fail the test, Respect the decision.

When the driving test is over, the examiner will tell you whether you passed or failed. Remember you are not the Examiner! Whatever you think about your driving on the day, you must remember that the examiner has the final say. It may be that the test did not go as well as you expected or you are surprised with what the examiner has said. Do not argue with the examiner. No test result ever changed by arguing the result.

In some cases with the pressure of the test you may well have done something that you might not have noticed. Respect the decision, take on board the feedback the examiner gives and be determined to get it right on the next attempt.

TIP: Listen to feedback: If the examiner advises that you have been unsuccessful on this attempt, it is important that you take a deep breathe calm yourself and listen to the feedback. The feedback will give you important information as to what went wrong and how you might put it right on your next attempt. Your instructor will be listening to the feedback as well so this will help you on your next lesson to put some things right. Your driving test report will also show you where you made any mistakes. You can take another practical test 10 working days after this one.

101: Make sure you are insured before you drive!

Remember that you may need to check your insurance before driving to your friends to celebrate!



Finally,....

You now have some great ideas on how to approach the day of your driving test to give you the best possible chance of passing FIRST TIME!

- 1) How to prepare for the test to put you in the best possible position to take your test
- 2) What to do the day before your test and how to approach test day
- 3) How to deal with the drive to give you the best possible chance of passing

Connect with me socially on Facebook now for great regular posts on learning to drive. The link is below. Follow these tips for the best results, let me know if any of these tips worked for you be emailing me at: ray@complete-driver.co.uk

Best wishes and good luck on the day!



Ray Seagrave

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