



OBTAINING A DRIVER'S LICENSE IN VIRGINIA

Learner's permit information <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/drivers/#eligibility.asp>

Driver's Study Guide: <https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/dmv-manuals/#/>

45-Hour Parent/Teen Driving Guide:

https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/driver_education/parent_teen_driving_guide.pdf

Eligibility for a learner's permit and 180-day temporary provisional driver's license

- To obtain a learner's permit, your child must:
 - have parent permission;
 - be at least 15 years and 6 months old;
 - provide proof of identity, residency, and legal presence (be a US citizen or legally authorized to be in the US); and
 - pass the learner's permit sign and knowledge tests.
- Approximately 50% of the teens who take the learner's permit test do not pass it on their first attempt. After the third failure, your child must complete a classroom driver education course or take an eight-hour re-examination course before being able to take the learner's permit test a fourth time. Teens should be encouraged to take the learner's permit test PRIOR to completing classroom driver education. If your child passes a classroom driver education course after failing the learner's permit test three times, your child can take the permit test for the fourth time. Hopefully, your child will use DMV's online study guide, https://www.dmv.virginia.gov/general/#ske_intro.asp, and pass the test on the first attempt! DMV offers the learner's permit test at the DMV's Customer Service Centers and some public high schools.
- Your child must hold a learner's permit for nine months, or until the learner's permit holder turns 18 (whichever comes first). A learner's permit allows your child to practice driving with a licensed driver at least 21 years old or with a licensed family member at least 18 years old.
- To obtain a driver's license in Virginia, your child must be at least 16 years and 3 months old; practice driving with a learner's permit for at least nine months; complete 45 hours of guided practice, at least 15 of which were after sunset; and successfully complete a state-approved classroom and in-car driver education program.
- The in-car teacher/instructor will administer the road skills test. If your child successfully passes the road skills test, meets all licensing requirements, and the parent grants the school permission, the in-car teacher/instructor will issue a 180-Day Temporary Provisional Driver's

License to your child, which is a valid Virginia driver's license when accompanied by a learner's permit.

To reduce young driver crashes and save lives, the Virginia General Assembly enacted the following graduated driver licensing (GDL) restrictions for teens with a learner's permit and provisional driver's license:

- Virginia law prohibits driving with more than one non-family passenger less than 21 years old until the student has held a provisional license for one year. After the first year, the holder of a provisional license may operate a motor vehicle with up to three nonfamily passengers who are less than 21 years old when (i) the student is driving to or from a school-sponsored activity, or (ii) a licensed driver who is at least 21 years old is occupying the seat beside the driver, or (iii) in cases of emergency.
- Virginia law requires passengers younger than 18 years old who are occupying the front or rear seats of a vehicle to use safety belts.
- Virginia law restricts licensed drivers younger than 18 years old from operating a vehicle between midnight and 4 a.m., except when driving (i) to and from work; (ii) when accompanied by a parent or person in loco parentis, or by a spouse who is 18 years old or older; (iii) to or from an activity that is supervised by an adult and is sponsored by a school or by a civic, religious, or public organization; (iv) in cases of emergency when responding to fire or some other emergency as a volunteer firefighter or rescue worker.
- Virginia law requires drivers younger than 20 years old to attend a driver improvement clinic if convicted of a demerit point offense (moving violation), or a seat belt or a child safety seat violation.

If you are age 18 or older, and you have never held a driver's license issued by Virginia, another state, a U.S. territory, or foreign country, or cannot show proof that you previously held such a license, you must show proof that you have:

- passed an approved driver education course, or,
- held a learner's permit at least 60 days before taking the DMV [road skills test](#).

At any age, as a first time driver, you will be required to provide documents to prove identity, legal presence, Virginia residency, and, if you have one, Social Security number. Use the interactive [document guide](#) to determine which documents you will need to bring to DMV when you apply, or refer to "Acceptable Documents for Obtaining a Driver's License or Photo ID Card" ([DMV 141](#)).