Section 13
On-road Driving

This Section Covers

- **How You Will Be Tested**

You will drive over a test route that has a variety of traffic situations. At all times during the test, you must drive in a safe and responsible manner.

During the driving test, the examiner will be scoring you on specific driving maneuvers as well as on your general driving behavior. You will follow the directions of the examiner. Directions will be given to you so you will have plenty of time to do what the examiner has asked. You will not be asked to drive in an unsafe manner.

If your test route does not have certain traffic situations, you may be asked to simulate a traffic situation. You will do this by telling the examiner what you are or would be doing if you were in that traffic situation.

13.1 – How You Will Be Tested

13.1.1 – Turns

You have been asked to make a turn:

Check traffic in all directions.
Use turn signals and safely get into the lane needed for the turn.

As you approach the turn:

Use turn signals to warn others of your turn.
Slow down smoothly, change gears as needed to keep power, but do not coast unsafely. Unsafe coasting occurs when your vehicle is out of gear (clutch depressed or gearshift in neutral) for more than the length of your vehicle.

If you must stop before making the turn:

Come to a smooth stop without skidding.
Come to a complete stop behind the stop line, crosswalk, or stop sign.
If stopping behind another vehicle, stop where you can see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead of you (safe gap).
Do not let your vehicle roll.
Keep the front wheels aimed straight ahead.
When ready to turn:

Check traffic in all directions.
Keep both hands on the steering wheel during the turn.
Do not change gears during the turn.
Keep checking your mirror to make sure the vehicle does not hit anything on the inside of the turn.
Vehicle should not move into oncoming traffic.
Vehicle should finish turn in correct lane.

After turn:

Make sure turn signal is off.
Get up to speed of traffic, use turn signal, and move into right-most lane when safe to do so (if not already there).
Check mirrors and traffic.

13.1.2 – Intersections

As you approach an intersection:

Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
Decelerate gently.
Brake smoothly and, if necessary, change gears.
If necessary, come to a complete stop (no coasting) behind any stop signs, signals, sidewalks, or stop lines maintaining a safe gap behind any vehicle in front of you.
Your vehicle must not roll forward or backward.

When driving through an intersection:

Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
Decelerate and yield to any pedestrians and traffic in the intersection.
Do not change lanes or shift gears while proceeding through the intersection.
Keep your hands on the wheel.

Once **through** the intersection:

Continue checking mirrors and traffic.
Accelerate smoothly and change gears as necessary.

13.1.3 – Urban/Rural Straight

During this part of the test, you are expected to make regular traffic checks and maintain a safe following distance. Your vehicle should be centered in the proper lane (right-most lane) and you should keep up with the flow of traffic but not exceed the posted speed limit.

13.1.4 –Lane Changes

During multiple lane portions of the test, you will be asked to change lanes to the left, and then back to the right. You should make the necessary traffic checks first, then use proper signals and smoothly change lanes when it is safe to do so.

13.1.5 – Expressway

Before entering the expressway:

Check traffic.
Use proper signals.
Merge smoothly into the proper lane of traffic.

Once on the expressway:

Maintain proper lane positioning, vehicle spacing, and vehicle speed.
Continue to check traffic thoroughly in all directions.

When exiting the expressway:

Make necessary traffic checks.
Use proper signals.
Decelerate smoothly in the exit lane.
Once on the exit ramp, you must continue to decelerate within the lane markings and maintain adequate spacing between your vehicle and other vehicles.

13.1.6 – Stop/Start

For this maneuver, you will be asked to pull your vehicle over to the side of the road and stop as if you were going to get out and check something on your vehicle. You must check traffic thoroughly in all directions and move to the right-most lane or shoulder of road.

As you prepare for the stop:

Check traffic.
Activate your right turn signal.
Decelerate smoothly, brake evenly, change gears as necessary.
Bring your vehicle to a full stop without coasting.

Once stopped:

Vehicle must be parallel to the curb or shoulder of the road and safely out of the traffic flow.
Vehicle should not be blocking driveways, fire hydrants, intersections, signs, etc.
Cancel your turn signal.
Activate your four-way emergency flashers.
Apply the parking brake.
Move the gear shift to neutral or park.
Remove your feet from the brake and clutch pedals.

When instructed to resume:

Check traffic and your mirrors thoroughly in all directions.
Turn off your four-way flashers.
Activate the left turn signal.
When traffic permits, you should release the parking brake and pull straight ahead.
Do not turn the wheel before your vehicle moves.
Check traffic from all directions, especially to the left.
Steer and accelerate smoothly into the proper lane when safe to do so.
Once your vehicle is back into the flow of traffic, cancel your left turn signal.

13.1.7 – Curve

When approaching a curve:
Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
Before entering the curve, reduce speed so further braking or shifting is not required in the curve.
Keep vehicle in the lane.
Continue checking traffic in all directions.

13.1.8 – Railroad Crossing

Before reaching the crossing, all commercial drivers should:

Decelerate, brake smoothly, and shift gears as necessary.
Look and listen for the presence of trains.
Check traffic in all directions.

Do not stop, change gears, pass another vehicle, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is in the crossing.

If you are driving a bus, a school bus, or a vehicle displaying placards, you should be prepared to observe the following procedures at every railroad crossing (unless the crossing is exempt):

As the vehicle approaches a railroad crossing, activate the four-way flashers.
Stop the vehicle within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
Listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train. If operating a bus, you may also be required to open the window and door prior to crossing tracks.

Keep hands on the steering wheel as the vehicle crosses the tracks.
Do not stop, change gears, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is proceeding across the tracks.
Four-way flashers should be deactivated after the vehicle crosses the tracks.
Continue to check mirrors and traffic.

Not all driving road test routes will have a railroad crossing. You may be asked to explain and demonstrate the proper railroad crossing procedures to the examiner at a simulated location.

13.1.9 – Bridge/Overpass/Sign

After driving under an overpass, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted clearance or height was. After going over a bridge, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted weight limit was. If your test route does not have a bridge or overpass, you may be asked about another traffic sign. When asked, be prepared to identify and explain to the examiner any traffic sign which may appear on the route.

13.1.10 – Student Discharge (School Bus)

If you are applying for a School Bus endorsement, you will be required to demonstrate loading and unloading students. Please refer to section 10 of this manual for procedures on loading and unloading school students.

During the driving test you must:

Wear your safety belt.
Obey all traffic signs, signals, and laws.
Complete the test without an accident or moving violation.

You will be scored on your overall performance in the following general driving behavior categories:

13.1.11 – Clutch Usage (for Manual Transmission)

Always use clutch to shift.
Double-clutch if vehicle is equipped with non-synchronized transmission.
Do not rev or lug the engine.
Do not ride clutch to control speed, coast with the clutch depressed, or "pop" the clutch.

13.1.12 – Gear Usage (for Manual Transmission)

Do not grind or clash gears.
Select gear that does not rev or lug engine.
Do not shift in turns and intersections.

13.1.13 – Brake Usage

Do not ride or pump brake.
Do not brake harshly. Brake smoothly using steady pressure.

13.1.14 – Lane Usage

Do not put vehicle over curbs, sidewalks, or lane markings.
Stop behind stop lines, crosswalks, or stop signs.
Complete a turn in the proper lane on a multiple lane road (vehicle should finish a left turn in the lane directly to the right of the center line).
Finish a right turn in the right-most (curb) lane.
Move to or remain in right-most lane unless lane is blocked.

13.1.15 – Steering

Do not over or under steer the vehicle.
Keep both hands on the steering wheel at all times unless shifting. Once you have completed shift, return both hands to the steering wheel.

13.1.16 – Regular Traffic Checks

Check traffic regularly.
Check mirrors regularly.
Check mirrors and traffic before, while in and after an intersection.
Scan and check traffic in high volume areas and areas where pedestrians are expected to be present.

13.1.17 – Use of Turn Signals

Use turn signals properly.
Activate turn signals when required.
Activate turn signals at appropriate times.
Cancel turn signals upon completion of a turn or lane change.