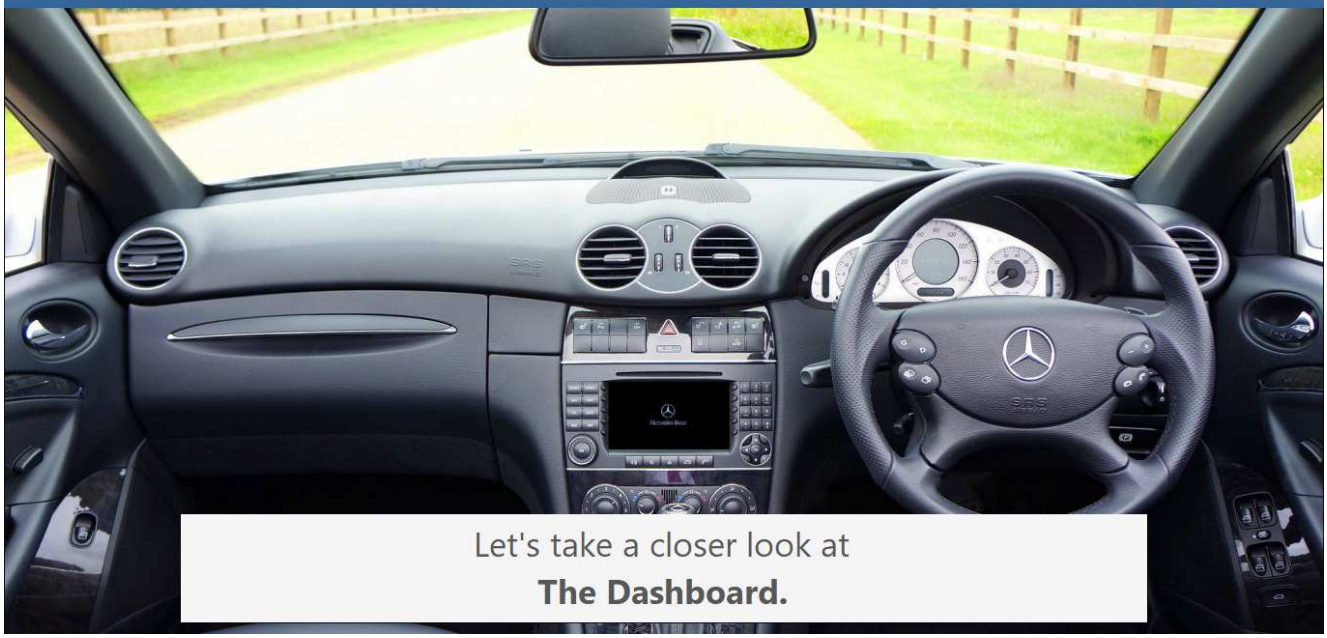
The Dashboard

Welcome to this **Perfect Driver** course. Throughout this course, we are going to look at the law, skills, techniques, and ideas to help you become a better, and safer driver.

In this lesson, we'll look at **The Dashboard.**

The Dashboard



The Dashboard

The Car Dashboard

While most car dashboards contain the same basic information, the layout, colors, and sizes of the various controls and instruments change from manufacturer to manufacturer, and even model to model.

In this lesson, we'll look at a couple of examples, and some of the standard controls you'll see on all cars. Note that we cover the **gearstick** and **parking brake** in the **Manual vs Automatic** lesson.

The Dashboard

Lights, Blinkers, and Wipers. Different cars have the controls for lights, blinkers and wipers in different positions. Most appear just behind the steering wheel, attached to the steering column.

Some have controls mounted directly on the dashboard. Wherever they are, you need to know before you start driving so you can turn them on in an instant without taking your eyes off the road.

The Dashboard

Blinkers and Lights. The device that controls blinkers and lights is normally found behind the steering wheel on the right. We say normally, as in some overseas models, the blinkers and lights control may be on the left.

Some cars have a device mounted to the dashboard to control lights.

Some cars have automatic lights that turn on when low light is detected.

The Dashboard

Wipers. The device that controls the car wipers is normally found behind the steering wheel on the left. We say normally, as in some overseas models, the wiper controls may be on the right.

Some cars have automatic wipers that turn on when rain is detected.

The Dashboard

Windows. All cars nowadays have electric windows. There is a window control on each door, plus a master window control normally located either on the dashboard or the driver door, which allows the driver to control all windows.

The Dashboard

Digital. Some dashes are largely or fully digital. They display a lot of information, and look like something from a space shuttle.

The Dashboard

Standard Dash. Below is a sample car dashboard, containing all of the essential information you need to know when driving.

The Dashboard

Fuel Gauge. Here, we've highlighted the fuel gauge. It tells you how much fuel, approximately, is left in the tank. Many cars have electronic systems that will tell you how far you can travel before your fuel supply is exhausted.

The Dashboard

Tachometer. The tachometer tells you how fast the engine is turning over, in revs (revolutions) per minute. In most automatic cars, this is not really an important fact to keep track of. Some drivers of manual cars use the tachometer to know when to change gears.

The Dashboard

Tachometer. As you accelerate, and you or the car changes gear, the needle on the tachometer will jump around quite a bit. Once you each a comfortable speed, the needle will calm down. Cars will normally idle (like at traffic lights) at between 1000 and 2000 rpm (revs per minute).

The Dashboard

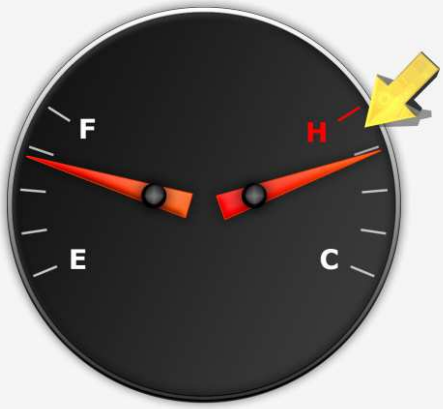
Getting the needle into the red zone is called **redlining** - and not recommended.

The Dashboard

Speedometer. This is probably the most important gauge of all. The position of the needle tells you how fast you are going, in km/h.

It is vital to glance at this from time to time to ensure you are not speeding.

The Dashboard



Oil Temperature. This gauge displays what is essentially the engine temperature. If this reaches the red zone (or H) (hot), something is wrong - pull over and arrange to get your car checked out.

Your engine may be damaged if driven too hot or without proper lubrication.

The Dashboard

Odometer. The **Odometer** is a device that records how many kilometres you car has driven. It cannot be reset, not legally.

Every time you sell or advertise a car to sell, you must include an odometer reading by law.

The Dashboard

Trip Meter. Normally situated near the odometer, the trip meter is a device used to measure how far you've driven. You can reset this device to 0 at any time, so if you reset it before a journey, at the journey end you'll see how far you have travelled.

Some cars may have two trip meters - and some cars may have a digital trip meter system.

The Dashboard

Electronics. Most cars will also have an array of electronic options - telling you not only the amount of fuel left, but your average fuel consumption, speed, and much more.

The Dashboard

Finding the Controls. Let's have a quick quiz of where certain controls are found on within a car.

This is not a scored test, just an exercise to help you learn.

The Dashboard

Finding the indicator. Use your mouse to locate the *indicator* in this car.

The Dashboard

Finding the Wipers. Use your mouse to locate the *windscreen wiper controls* in this car.

The Dashboard

Find the Gearstick. Use your mouse to locate the *gearstick* in this car.

The Dashboard

Find the Window Controls. Use your mouse to locate the *window controls* in this car.

The Dashboard

Find the Stereo Controls. Use your mouse to locate the *stereo/radio* controls in this car.

The Dashboard

The Horn. Where is the *horn* in this car located?

The Dashboard

Find the Rear View Mirror. Use your mouse to locate the *rear view mirror* in this car.

The Dashboard

Find the Rear View Mirrors. Use your mouse to locate either of the *rear view mirrors*.

The Dashboard

Dashboard lights. Your car has a series of dashboard lights that only light up when there is a problem. They can represent low coolant level, low oil level, airbag issues, and many more issues.

If you see an unfamiliar light displayed on your dashboard, check the car manual or online to see what it represents. It may be something simple, like wiper fluid, but also something more important - so check it out immediately.

On most cars, some of these lights will appear as you start your engine, and this is normal. It is where they appear for a little longer, or while driving, when there is a potential issue.

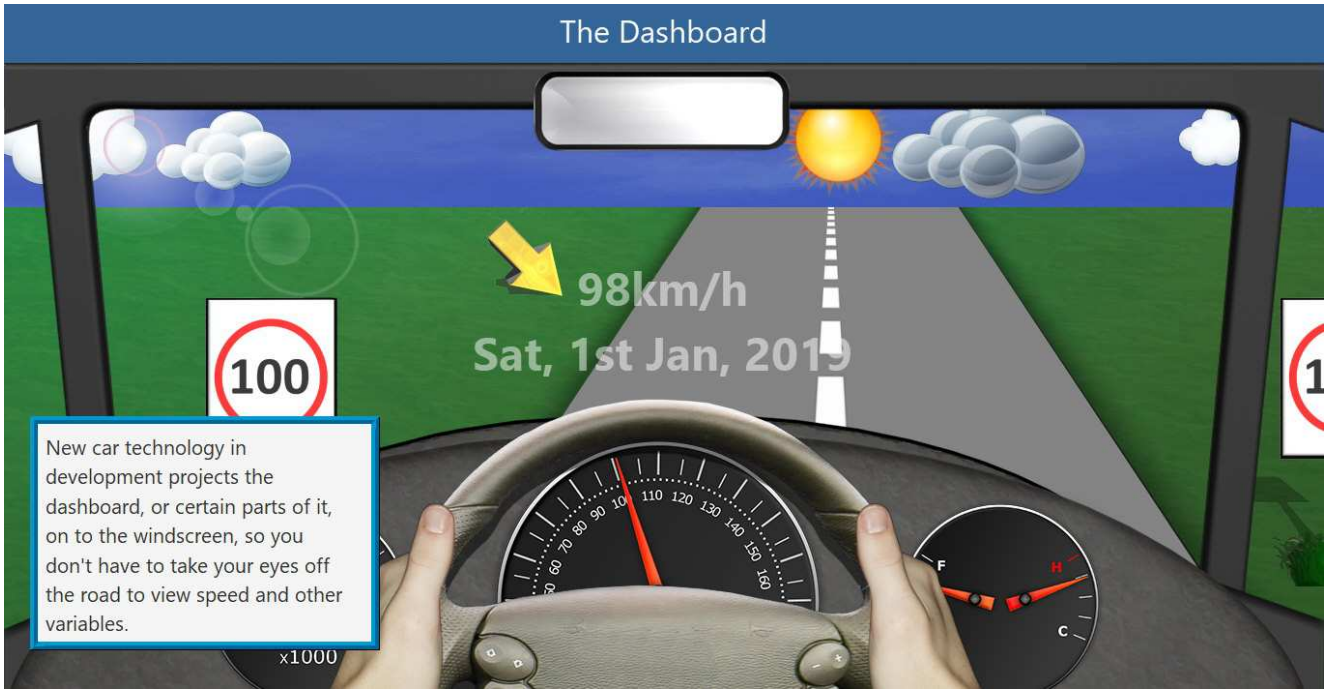
The Dashboard

Dashboard Lights On. In the example below, this light on the dashboard indicates that the driver *seat belt* has not been buckled.

The Dashboard

Dashboard Lights On. In the example below, this light on the dashboard indicates that the *parking brake* is still on, and the driver seatbelt is unbuckled. The green light indicates the headlights are on, and the red light is a battery indicator.

In this case, however, the car is not actually running (note the revs are at 0), and so some lights may be on for diagnostics reasons. Starting the car will confirm.


The Dashboard
98km/h
Sat, 1st Jan, 2019
100
New car technology in development projects the dashboard, or certain parts of it, on to the windscreen, so you don't have to take your eyes off the road to view speed and other variables.
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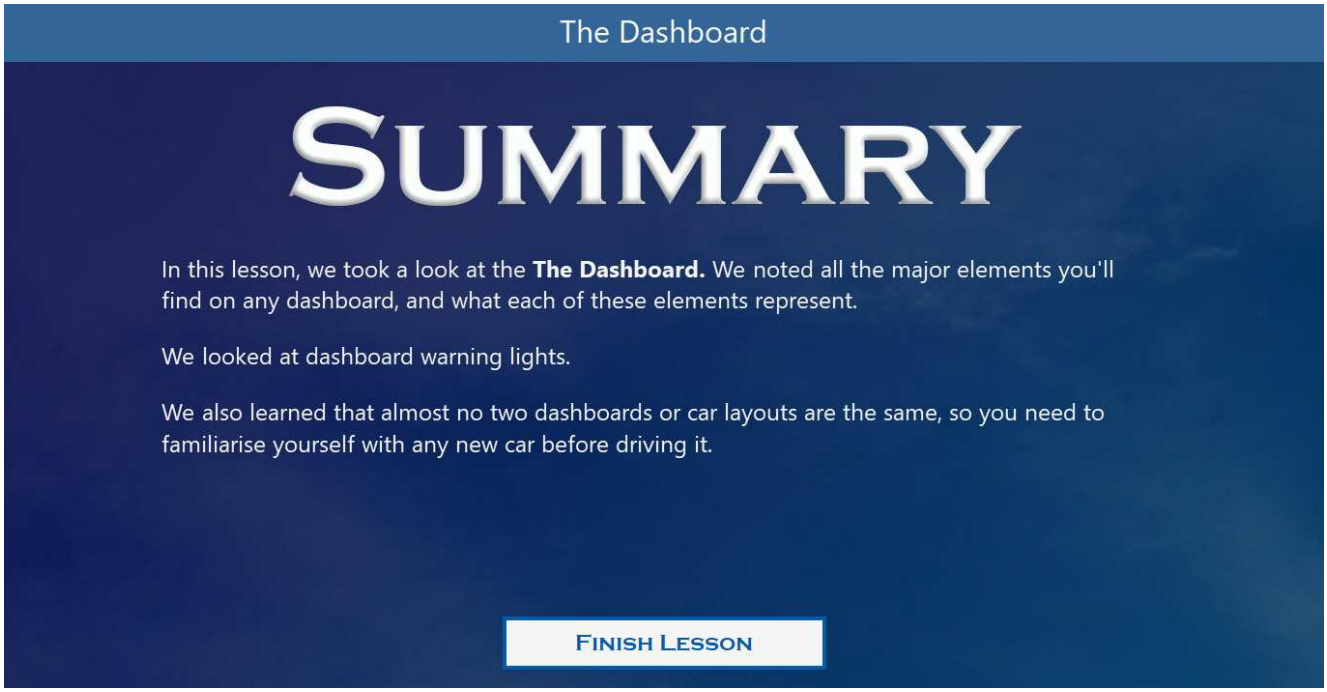
The Dashboard
SUMMARY
In this lesson, we took a look at the **The Dashboard.** We noted all the major elements you'll find on any dashboard, and what each of these elements represent.
We looked at dashboard warning lights.
We also learned that almost no two dashboards or car layouts are the same, so you need to familiarise yourself with any new car before driving it.
FINISH LESSON

The Dashboard

Signature. It is very important that you use the mouse, or touch, to *sign* the form below. This helps us record your progress accurately.

SUBMIT SIGNATURE | CLEAR SIGNATURE

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