

Drivers and cyclists must stop before the line and yield to pedestrians until pedestrians have completely crossed the road and cleared the roadway.



Diagram 3-8

Two solid lines painted on the pavement guide traffic away from fixed objects such as bridge piers or concrete islands. Yellow and black markings are also painted on the objects themselves as warnings.



Diagram 3-9

Summary

By the end of this section, you should know:

- How pavement markings are used to control traffic
- What the different colours and types of markings are used to indicate

Keeping Your Driver's Licence

Ontario has a one-piece driver's licence. The licence card has a photograph and signature of the driver. All drivers in Ontario should have a one-piece licence card.

You must carry your licence with you whenever you drive.

Renewing your licence

You will get a renewal application form in the mail. Take the form into any ServiceOntario Centre in the province. They are all equipped to take photographs. You will be asked to sign the form, show identification, pay a fee and have your photograph taken. You will get a temporary licence on the spot if your application and documents are in order, and your permanent one will be mailed to you. You must carry it with you whenever you drive and produce it when a police officer requests it.

If you do not get a renewal application form in the mail when your licence is due for renewal, call the Ministry of Transportation. You are responsible for making sure you have a valid driver's licence. You can renew an expired car or motorcycle driver's licence within one year without taking any tests.

If your licence has been suspended, cancelled or expired for more than three years, you will be required to re-apply for a licence in Ontario and meet all the requirements of graduated licensing, including passing all the required tests.

Senior drivers age 80 or older

Licensing

If you are 80 years of age or older, you are required to renew your driver's licence every two years. This renewal process helps keep seniors mobile and independent longer, while helping to ensure that unsafe drivers are identified and appropriate actions are taken.

You need to undergo a driving-record review, complete a vision test and participate in a 45-minute group education session, followed by an in-class screening component. The in-class screening component will help better assess your fitness to drive.

You may be required to pass a road test before being able to renew your licence, or you may be able to renew but will have to follow up and submit medical information. The driver improvement counsellor at the group education session will discuss this with you.

There is no charge for any of the licence-renewal requirements. You only have to pay the licence-renewal fee.

More information that specifically addresses the concerns of senior drivers can be found at [Ontario.ca/seniordriver](https://www.ontario.ca/seniordriver) (<https://www.ontario.ca/driving-and-roads/renew-g-drivers-licence->

80-years-and-over) . You can also call the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Contact Centre at (416) 235-2999 or 1-800-387-3445.

How aging affects driving safety

- Reduced vision - especially at night
- Difficulty judging distance and speed
- Limited movement and range of motion
- Slower reaction time
- Difficulty focusing attention for long periods of time
- Easily distracted
- More time needed to understand what you see and hear
- More use of prescription and/or over-the-counter drugs that may impair your driving ability

What you can do to make your driving safer

Your health is a key factor in your ability to drive. To help you handle the demands of safe driving:

- Check with your doctor or pharmacist to make sure current and new medications will not negatively affect your ability to drive. Over-the-counter drugs and combinations of drugs can also impair your driving.
- Report to your doctor:
 - vision changes, unexplained dizziness or fainting spells;
 - frequent, chronic or severe pain.
- Avoid driving if you're experiencing pain. It can decrease your ability to concentrate and limit your movement behind the wheel.
- Have your hearing and eyes checked regularly. Peripheral vision and depth perception tend to decline over the years.
- Your doctor can recommend an exercise program to improve flexibility and maintain strength, which can help your ability to drive safely.

- Consider taking a driver's course to refresh your knowledge of the rules of the road and safe driving practices.

Ask yourself: How's my driving?

Take this test and ask yourself these questions:

- Am I experiencing an increasing number of near collisions?
- Have I been directly involved in minor collisions?
- Do I have difficulty driving through intersections, judging distance or seeing pedestrians, road signs or other vehicles?
- Do I have difficulty concentrating while driving?
- Do I get lost or disoriented on familiar roads?
- Do I have difficulty coordinating hand and foot movements?
- Am I experiencing vision problems, especially at night?
- Do I get nervous behind the wheel?
- Do other motorists frequently honk at me?
- Do family members express concern about my driving ability?
- How important is driving to me?

Your answers to these questions can help you decide whether to continue to drive, cut back to certain times such as daylight hours or stop driving altogether. If you have checked one or more of the warning signs and are concerned about your driving ability, talk to your doctor or family and get their opinions.

At the group education session, you will learn more about these topics on senior driver safety.

Graduated licensing requalification

Under graduated licensing, novice drivers (Class G1, G2, M1 and M2) progress through a two-step licensing process by completing the mandatory time periods for each level and passing the required road tests. Except for Class M1, novice drivers have five years to complete the graduated-licensing process. However, if your Class G1, G2 or M2 licence is about to expire and you have not completed the process, you can regain or retain the

same class of licence by passing a test and paying the five-year licensing fee. This is called “requalification.” A notice is sent to Class G1, G2 and M2 drivers before their licence expiry date to inform them of their options. If you do not complete the graduated-licensing process or requalify before your G1, G2 or M2 licence expires, you will not have a licence to drive, and you must reapply for a Level One licence.

Changing your name or address

You must tell the Ministry of Transportation within six days of changing your name or address.

You will need a new licence when you change your address. You can change your address on the ServiceOntario (<http://www.serviceontario.ca>) website or you can take the change of information to a Driver and Vehicle Licence Issuing Office, or mail it to the Ministry of Transportation, P.O. Box 9200, Kingston, ON, K7L 5K4. The ministry will send you a new licence. When you get it, destroy your old licence and carry the new one with you whenever you drive.

When your name changes, you need a new licence. Take the documents you must show (see the chart on this page) and your current licence to a Driver and Vehicle Licence Issuing Office. A new photograph will be taken. You will get a temporary licence to use until your permanent licence is mailed to you. Carry it with you whenever you drive.

There is no charge for getting a new licence because you change your name or address.

The chart on this page shows the documents you will need to change the name on your driver’s licence.

Reason For Name Change	Documentation Required
Marriage	Government Issued Marriage Certificate Change-of-Name Certificate
Common Law Alliance	Change-of-Name Certificate
Adoption	Court Order for Adoption Change-of-Name Certificate
Under the <i>Change of Name Act</i>	Change-of-Name Certificate

Driver's licence laws

It is illegal to:

- Lend your licence
- Let someone else use it
- Use an altered licence
- Use another licence as your own
- Have more than one Ontario driver's licence
- Use a fictitious or imitation licence

The demerit point system

The demerit-point system encourages drivers to improve their behaviour and protects people from drivers who abuse the privilege of driving. Drivers convicted of driving-related offences have demerit points recorded on their records. Demerit points stay on your record for two years from the date of the offence. If you accumulate too many demerit points, your driver's licence can be suspended.

New drivers - demerit-point system for Level One and Level Two drivers

Two or more points

You will receive a warning letter.

Six points

You will receive a second warning letter encouraging you to improve your driving behaviour.

Nine or more points

Your licence will be suspended for 60 days from the date you surrender it to the Ministry of Transportation. You can lose your licence for up to two years if you fail to surrender your licence. After the suspension, the number of points on your record will be reduced to four. Any extra points could again bring you to the interview level. If you reach nine points again, your licence may be suspended for six months.

As a Level One or Level Two driver, you will have your licence suspended if you accumulate nine or more demerit points during a two-year period.

Note: If you are a novice driver and are convicted of violating any novice condition, an offence that is associated with four or more demerit points or receive a court-ordered suspension for an offence that would have resulted in four or more demerit points, you will receive the appropriate penalty and Novice Driver Escalating Sanction licence suspension. However, the demerit points will be recorded as zero on your record, and will not be counted towards the accumulated demerit point system.

Fully licensed drivers - demerit-point system for fully licensed drivers

Six points

You will receive a warning letter recommending that you improve your driving skills.

Nine points

You will receive a second warning letter encouraging you to improve your driving behaviour.

15 points

Your licence will be suspended for 30 days from the date you hand over your licence to the Ministry of Transportation. You can lose your licence for up to two years if you fail to surrender it. After the suspension, the number of points on your driver's record will be reduced to seven. Any extra points could again bring you to the interview level. If you reach 15 points again, your licence will be suspended for six months.

Table of offences

Here are the demerit points for driving offences.

Seven points

- Failing to remain at the scene of a collision
- Failing to stop for police

Six points

- Careless driving
- Racing
- Exceeding the speed limit by 40km/h or more on roads with a speed limit of less than 80km/h
- Exceeding the speed limit by 50 km/h or more
.....
- Failing to stop for a school bus

Five points

- Driver of bus failing to stop at unprotected railway crossing

Four points

- Exceeding the speed limit by 30 to 49 km/h
.....
- Following too closely
- Failing to stop at a pedestrian crossover

Three points

- Exceeding the speed limit by 16 to 29 km/h
.....
- Driving through, around or under a railway crossing barrier
- Driving while holding or using a hand-held wireless communications/entertainment device or viewing a display screen unrelated to the driving task
- Failing to yield the right-of-way
- Failing to obey a stop sign, traffic light or railway crossing signal
- Failing to obey traffic control stop sign
- Failing to obey traffic control slow sign
- Failing to obey school crossing stop sign
- Failing to obey the directions of a police officer
- Driving the wrong way on a divided road
- Failing to report a collision to a police officer

- Improper driving where road is divided into lanes
- Crowding the driver's seat
- Going the wrong way on a one-way road
- Driving or operating a vehicle on a closed road
- Crossing a divided road where no proper crossing is provided
- Failing to slow and carefully pass a stopped emergency vehicle
- Failing to move, where possible, into another lane when passing a stopped emergency vehicle
- Driving a vehicle equipped with a radar detector
- Improper use of a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane
- Improper opening of a vehicle door

Two points

- Failing to lower headlight beam
- Prohibited turns
- Towing people - on toboggans, bicycles, skis, for example
- Failing to obey signs
- Failing to share the road
- Improper right turn
- Improper left turn
- Failing to signal
- Unnecessary slow driving
- Reversing on a highway
- Driver failing to wear a seatbelt
- Driver failing to ensure infant passenger is secured
- Driver failing to ensure toddler passenger is secured

- Driver failing to ensure child is secured
- Driver failing to ensure passenger under 16 years is wearing seatbelt
- Driver failing to ensure that a passenger under 16 years is sitting in a seat that has a seatbelt

Other ways to lose your licence

To promote safe driving for Ontarians, the province has some of the strictest driving laws regarding driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs, careless driving, "stunt" driving, fleeing police or a collision scene, and so on. In addition to lengthy suspensions for driving offences, court sanctions can quickly escalate and include fines in the tens of thousands of dollars, reinstatement fees, licence restrictions, lifetime bans and even jail time.

Suspensions

Your licence may also be suspended for the following reasons:

- Escalating sanctions
- Zero Blood-Alcohol Concentration (BAC) for novice and young drivers
- Medical suspension
- Discretionary *HTA* suspensions
- Mandatory *HTA* suspensions
- Administrative driver's licence suspension (ADLS)
- "Warn-range" suspension
- Novice-driver violations

Escalating sanctions

Escalating sanctions for novice drivers would apply if any of the following occurrences have taken place within a five-year period:

- Any repeat violations of novice restrictions
- Any *HTA* convictions for four or more demerit points
- Court-ordered licence suspensions.

Sanctions – dangerous behaviours

The risk of a fatality or serious injury is almost five times greater for vehicles crashing at 50 km/h or more above the posted highway limit. The increase in risk is even greater on roads with lower posted limits. For example, on roads with a posted limit of 60 km/h or less, the risk of a fatality or serious injury is almost eight times greater for vehicles colliding at 50 km/h or more above the posted limit.

Other types of aggressive driving include:

- driving 40 km/h or more above the posted speed limit on roads with a speed limit less than 80km/h
- driving 50 km/h or more above the posted speed limit
- driving a motor vehicle to prevent another vehicle from passing
- intentionally cutting off another vehicle
- street racing
- driving stunts

The use of a connected nitrous-oxide system while driving on a highway is prohibited.

For information on the regulation, you can visit the [ontario.ca/laws](https://www.ontario.ca/laws) (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws>) .

Sanctions – careless driving

Careless driving is defined as: driving without due care, attention or without reasonable consideration for other persons using the highway; and, anyone, who chooses to put themselves and other road users at risk by driving aggressively or carelessly. If convicted of careless driving a driver can face tough sanctions.

Zero Blood-Alcohol Concentration (BAC) for novice and young drivers

All drivers who are 21 and under, regardless of licence class, must have a BAC level of zero when operating a motor vehicle. You will receive a 24-hour roadside driver-licence suspension. If convicted, you could face a fine and at least a 30-day licence suspension.

Medical suspension

All doctors must report the names and addresses of everyone 16 years or older who has a condition that may affect their ability to drive safely (for example, a stroke, heart condition or dizziness, among others). Doctors report this information to the Ministry of Transportation, and it is not given to anyone else. Your driver's licence may be suspended until new medical evidence shows that the condition does not pose a safety risk.

Mandatory *HTA* suspensions

Your licence will be suspended:

- If you fail to stop for a police officer (a minimum of five years)
- If you don't pay a traffic fine when ordered by the court

Administrative driver's licence suspension (ADLS)

Your licence will be suspended **immediately** for 90 days:

- If your BAC is more than 80 milligrams in 100 millilitres of blood (.08)

- If you fail or refuse to give a breath, blood, oral fluid or urine sample when asked by police
- If you fail or refuse to perform physical co-ordination tests or submit to a drug evaluation when required by police

This suspension takes effect at the roadside or police station. It is separate from any criminal charges or prosecution that may also take place.

"Warn-range" suspension

Drivers who register a blood-alcohol concentration in the "warn range" of .05 to .08 pose an immediate danger to themselves and other road users. If caught driving in the warn range, you will receive an immediate driver's-licence suspension at the roadside:

- For three days for a first occurrence
- For seven days for a second occurrence, and you must undergo a remedial alcohol-education program
- Substantially increased penalties and sanctions for each subsequent occurrence

Novice-driver violations

Drivers holding novice licences must follow the specific rules for their class of licence. If you violate any of the graduated-licensing conditions, your licence will be suspended for 30 days. This suspension takes effect from the time you surrender your licence. You can lose your licence for up to two years if you fail to hand it over.

Your licence will be cancelled:

- If you fail a driver's re-examination
- If you don't pay your reinstatement fee or administrative monetary penalty following a suspension
- If your cheque for licence fees are not honoured by your bank
- If you voluntarily surrender your driver's licence to the Ministry of Transportation, or it is surrendered or returned by another jurisdiction

Criminal Code suspensions

You will receive a one-year licence suspension the first time you are convicted of a Criminal Code offence. Subsequent offences increase substantially to a lifetime ban from driving. Convictions will remain on your driver's record for a minimum of 10 years.

Your licence will be suspended if you are convicted of any of the following Criminal Code offences:

- Driving or having care and control of a vehicle, including boats, when your BAC is more than 80 milligrams per 100 millilitres of blood (.08)
- Refusing to submit to a breath test for alcohol
- Failing or refusing to provide a breath sample for roadside testing
- Failing to remain at the scene of a collision
- Dangerous driving
- Causing death or bodily harm by criminal negligence
- Failing to stop for police

Remedial measures

There are several types of remedial measures. The mandatory Back on Track program is for all drivers convicted of impaired, driving-related Criminal Code offences. Drivers with more than one "Warn Range" conviction will be required to take an alcohol-education and/or alcohol-treatment program. If your driver's licence has been suspended because of a Criminal Code conviction, your licence will remain suspended until you have completed the remedial requirements.

Driving under suspension

You may not drive, under any circumstances, when your licence is suspended. If you are convicted of driving while your licence is suspended for an *HTA* offence, you will face fines in the thousands of dollars. The court may order you to spend up to six months in jail. Six months will be added to your current suspension as well. If you are found guilty of driving while your licence is suspended for a Criminal Code offence, you can face fines of tens of thousands of dollars and spend time in jail.

Driving while prohibited

This is a prohibition order under the Criminal Code conviction. When convicted of violation of the order, you will get a suspension of one year for a first offence or two years for a subsequent offence.

Vehicle-Impoundment Program

To counter the dangerous behaviours of impaired and suspended driving, Ontario law includes seven-day vehicle impoundments for:

- Drivers operating a vehicle while under a *Highway Traffic Act* licence suspension
- Drivers caught without a required ignition interlock
- All drivers caught with a BAC over .08, or who fail/refuse to comply with a demand made by a police officer under the Criminal Code of Canada

If you are caught driving while your licence is suspended for a Criminal Code offence, the vehicle you are driving will be impounded for a minimum of 45 days. These vehicle impoundments apply regardless of whether the vehicle is borrowed from a friend or family member, business, employer or is rented. The owner of the vehicle must pay the towing and storage costs before the vehicle will be released.

The Vehicle-Impoundment Program makes vehicle owners responsible for ensuring that anyone driving their vehicles is not suspended. People loaning or renting their vehicles can verify that a driver's licence is valid by phone or online. You can also get a driver's abstract at any Service Ontario centre. There is a nominal fee for each licence checked.

Impaired driving

Driving when your ability is impaired by alcohol or a drug is a crime in Canada. Your vehicle does not have to be moving; you can be charged if you are impaired behind the wheel, even if you have not started to drive.

In circumstances involving possible impairment by a drug or a combination of alcohol and a drug, police can require a driver to:

- provide breath samples
- perform standardized field sobriety tests
- conduct a drug recognition evaluation
- provide oral fluid, urine or blood samples for screening

If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

If you are 21 years of age and under, you must not drive if you have been drinking alcohol. Your blood- alcohol level must be zero.

For more information on impaired driving measures in Ontario, please visit the Ministry of Transportation website at: www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/impaired-driving.shtml (<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/impaired-driving.shtml>)

Alcohol

The police can stop any driver to determine if alcohol or drug testing is required. They may also do roadside spot checks. When stopped by the police, you may be told to blow into a machine that tests your breath for alcohol, a roadside screening device, or perform physical co-ordination tests.

If you cannot give a breath sample or it is impractical to obtain a sample of breath, the police officer can require you to provide a blood sample instead. The police may also

require a driver to provide, blood, oral or urine samples. If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

Drugs

Criminal Code and *HTA* sanctions apply to drivers impaired by alcohol or a drug. In circumstances involving possible impairment by drugs or a combination of alcohol and a drug, police can require a driver to perform physical co-ordination tests and submit to a drug evaluation, and then require a driver to provide blood, oral fluid or urine samples. If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

Some drugs that your doctor may prescribe for you and some over-the-counter drugs can also impair your driving. Here are some points you should remember:

- If you use prescription medicines or get allergy shots, ask your doctor about side effects such as dizziness, blurred vision, nausea or drowsiness that could affect your driving.
- Read the information on the package of any over-the-counter medicine, including cold, allergy, sedative or diet pills.
- Drugs and any amount of alcohol together can have dangerous effects, even several days after you have taken the drug.
- Do not take a chance; ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Consider the consequences of impaired driving

Ontario leads the way in combating drinking and driving through some of the toughest laws and programs in North America, including licence suspensions, heavy fines, vehicle impoundment, mandatory alcohol-education and -treatment programs, and the ignition interlock program. Depending on your number of prior convictions, you may be fined up to \$50,000, serve time in jail or lose your licence permanently.

For impaired driving that causes injury or death, the penalties are even more severe. If you are convicted of impaired driving causing bodily harm, you may be sentenced to up to 14 years in prison. Impaired driving causing death can carry a sentence of imprisonment for life.

If you drink and drive and are involved in a collision, you may suffer serious injury or cause serious injury to someone else. Your insurance company might not pay for your medical or rehabilitation costs, or for the damage to your or the other person's vehicle. Your insurance costs may rise significantly. You may have to pay substantial legal costs as well.

If you are required to drive on the job, a licence suspension could mean losing your employment.

Driver-improvement interview

The other remedial-measures program is for drivers convicted of non-drinking-and-driving-related Criminal Code offences who have no previous alcohol-related convictions. You must undergo a Ministry of Transportation driver-improvement interview.

If you have not completed the driver-improvement interview by the time your Criminal Code suspension expires, your licence will be further suspended until you have completed the remedial requirements.

This program also applies to Ontario residents convicted of driving-related Criminal Code offences in any other province of Canada, or equivalent offences in the states of Michigan and New York, as well as to out-of-province drivers who are convicted in Ontario.

Summary

By the end of this section, you should know:

- Your responsibility to maintain a valid driver's licence with the most correct and up-to-date information
- How the demerit-point system works for new and fully licensed drivers
- The driving offences that result in a loss of points upon conviction.
- Common circumstances where your licence can be cancelled or suspended
- How alcohol and drugs affect your ability to drive
- The consequences that can result from a suspended licence including reinstatement fees, remedial measures, ignition interlock, vehicle impoundment and jail time

Your Vehicle

All motor vehicles on Ontario roads must be registered, insured and maintained to meet certain basic safety standards. If you own a vehicle, you are responsible for making sure it meets the requirements. People who buy and sell vehicles also have certain responsibilities.

- Maintaining your vehicle (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/maintaining-your-vehicle>)
- Vehicle insurance and registration (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/vehicle-insurance-and-registration>)
- Buying or selling a used vehicle (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/buy-or-sell-used-vehicle-ontario>)
- Towing (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/towing>)
- Test yourself - Sample knowledge test questions (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/test-yourself-sample-knowledge-test-questions>)

Maintaining your vehicle

It is illegal to drive a vehicle in dangerous condition. But maintaining your vehicle also makes sense from an economic point of view: it can mean better gas mileage and a better price when you sell it. Maintaining your vehicle also helps to protect the environment.

A police officer or Ministry of Transportation inspector can examine your vehicle, its equipment and any trailer attached to it, at any time. If the vehicle is found to be unsafe, it may be taken off the road until the problem is fixed.

The following driver habits and regular maintenance will help keep your vehicle fit and safe.

Driver Habits



Diagram 5-1

Driver habits are the things that you can do whenever you drive a vehicle. If you identify any concerns or deficiencies, further investigation or actions, including inspection and repair by a qualified mechanic, should be considered. The vehicle's owner manual often has detailed information on what to look for when inspecting your vehicle and how to address minor problems.

When approaching your vehicle look for signs of:

- Fresh damage
- Fluid leaks underneath
- Under-inflated or flat tires
- Ajar doors, hood, trunk and fuel door/cap
- Unsecured loads
- Check for ice, snow, or dirt that may interfere with vehicle lighting, steering, driver visibility, or become a hazard to other motorists should it come free from your vehicle

From the driver's seat and before driving, look for:

- Unobstructed visibility around entire vehicle

- Burned-out or dim headlamps
- Illuminated dashboard warning lights during engine start, then going out
- Loose objects in the vehicle

While driving, be alert for:

- Unusual engine or exhaust noises
- Squeaking or grinding noises when applying the brakes
- Dashboard warning lights coming on

When planning an extended trip, perform more detailed checks, including:

- Windshield wipers and washer-fluid level
- Tire pressures, condition and wear
- All lights work
- Under the hood when the engine is cold; oil and coolant levels, obvious defects with belts, hoses, and possible leaks. Using the vehicle owner's manual for more information on what to look for
- Having your vehicle thoroughly inspected by a qualified mechanic

Regular Maintenance

In order to keep your vehicle running smoothly, vehicle manufacturers often establish a schedule for regular maintenance. Scheduling of this work is normally based upon accumulated vehicle mileage or time intervals (whichever comes first). Further details may be found in the vehicle's owner's manual. Regular maintenance may include oil and filter change, other fluid checks and changes, air and fuel filter replacement, tire rotation and brake inspection. Periodically, more intensive mechanical servicing such as engine adjustments and timing-belt replacement may be required.

Winter maintenance

A well-maintained vehicle will usually start in all weather conditions.

Carry emergency supplies. These should include:

- a shovel
- booster cables
- emergency flares or warning lights
- a blanket
- a chain for towing.

Always carry extra windshield washer fluid in the winter and refill the container when necessary.

Faulty exhaust systems are especially dangerous in the winter when drivers are more likely to drive with windows and vents closed. Have your exhaust checked if it sounds noisy or rattles.

Tires



Diagram 5-2

The type of tires you have and the way they are made are critical for good traction, mileage and safety. Keep these points in mind when you buy or replace tires, and check your vehicle owner's manual or the tire manufacturer's guide for recommendations.

Tires must meet standards described in the *Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Act*. Tires deteriorate with age, even when not in use. Aged tires have reduced traction, are more prone to cracking and may fail unexpectedly while in use. Tires should not be older than 10 years.

- Replace tires when the tread is less than 1.5 millimetres deep or when tread-wear indicators touch the road. Vehicles that weigh more than 4,500 kilograms must replace their front tires when tread is less than three millimetres deep.

- Replace tires that have bumps, bulges, knots, exposed cords or tread and sidewall cuts deep enough to expose cords.
- Any tire on a vehicle must not be smaller than the vehicle manufacturer's specified minimum size. And it must not be so large that it touches the vehicle or affects its safe operation.
- You should use similar tires on all four wheels of your vehicle.
- To provide the best traction during the winter season, it is recommended that your vehicle be equipped with four winter or all-weather tires with the same tread pattern.
- If you live in northern Ontario, you can legally use studded tires on your vehicle.
- Scrap tires are a serious environmental concern. Proper maintenance will extend the life of a tire and delay its disposal. Some tips for longer wear: maintain the right air pressure; inspect tires for wear; rotate tires regularly and practice good driving habits.

Vehicle insurance and registration

Auto insurance – it's the law!

Ontario has compulsory automobile insurance. This means every vehicle registered in the province must be insured.

You must show proof that you have insurance coverage before you can register a vehicle or renew your registration. The Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario (FSRA), regulates insurance in Ontario. Visit [FSRA's website \(https://www.fsrao.ca/\)](https://www.fsrao.ca/) for more information on auto insurance.

Registration

Vehicle registration includes licence plates and a vehicle permit.

Licence plates in Ontario are based on a plate-to-owner system. This means that vehicle licence plates move with the vehicle owner, not the vehicle. When you sell or change vehicles, you must remove your plates.

If you do not intend to use them on another vehicle, you may return your plates to a ServiceOntario centre.

Learn more about buying, selling and registering a vehicle.

(<https://www.ontario.ca/page/register-vehicle-permit-licence-plate-and-sticker>)

New residents

New Ontario residents have 30 days to register their vehicles. To get a permit and Ontario licence plates, go to a ServiceOntario centre. You must bring along:

- A safety standards certificate
- Proof of insurance
- Vehicle Import Forms, if you have brought the vehicle in from another country
- The vehicle permit, or ownership, from where you used to live

Protect yourself from auto insurance fraud

By being vigilant, Ontario drivers can help put a stop to fraudsters who abuse the automobile insurance system. Keep this in mind to protect yourself from auto insurance fraud.

When Buying Auto Insurance:

- Use a licensed insurance company, agent or broker. The Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario (FSRA), an agency of the Ministry of Finance, regulates insurance in Ontario. Visit FSRA's (<https://www.fsrao.ca/>) website, to check whether an insurance company or agent is licensed. The Registered Insurance Brokers of Ontario (RIBO) is the self-regulatory body for insurance brokers in Ontario. Visit RIBO's (<http://www.ribo.com>) website, to check whether an insurance broker is licensed.

After an Auto Collision:

- Collect as much information as possible. Take photos of the collision scene. Get the names, addresses, phone numbers, licence plate and driver's licence numbers, and insurance information from all those involved in the collision, including passengers in the other vehicle(s).
- Be suspicious of referrals. Be wary if you are pressured or offered money by a tow truck operator to go to a particular body shop, lawyer, paralegal or health-care

provider. Contact your insurance company for information on towing and where to take your vehicle to be repaired.

- Refuse to sign blank forms in advance of receiving any services or health-care treatment related to your collision.
- Demand detailed repair and medical bills for any goods and services related to your collision, and review them carefully.

Visit the Financial Services Regulatory Authority of Ontario (FSRA) website (<https://www.fsrao.ca/>) for information on how to avoid, detect and report auto insurance fraud.

Towing

This chapter tells you what you need to know to tow a trailer behind a car, van or small truck in Ontario. This includes licence and registration requirements, trailer size and characteristics, as well as safety tips to follow when towing a trailer.

Before you attempt to tow a trailer, consider the size, power and condition of your vehicle. Make sure it is capable of towing both the trailer and the load you intend to carry, and that your trailer and hitch meet all the requirements described in this chapter.

Towing a trailer brings unique challenges to drivers. Almost half of the reported collisions while towing a recreational vehicle are single-vehicle collisions. Another 20 per cent involve rear-end collisions. In collisions where the driver was determined to be at fault, about 30 per cent of the drivers had “lost control” of their vehicle.

Licence and permit

You must have a valid driver's licence (Class G1, G2 or G) or higher class of licence to tow a trailer with a gross vehicle weight of up to 4,600 kilograms. If your trailer and load exceeds the size and weight specified in the *Highway Traffic Act*, you may need a higher class of licence or an oversize vehicle permit to tow it. For questions about the Oversize/Overweight Program, please contact the Ministry of Transportation's permit office: by telephone 416-246-7166 or Toll-free: 1-800-387-7736 or visit the Oversize/Overweight Permit Office website (<https://www.ontario.ca/page/get-oversizeoverweight-permit>) .

It is against the law to tow more than one trailer behind non-commercial vehicles.

Registering your trailer

A trailer is considered a separate vehicle. Before you can tow one on any public road, you must register it and pay a one-time registration fee at a ServiceOntario centre. When you register your trailer you will receive a licence plate and vehicle permit. Attach the licence plate to the back of your trailer where it is clearly visible. Always carry your permit, or a copy of it, to show to a police officer when asked.

Make sure your trailer is in good condition

Your trailer must be in safe operating condition. If it is not, a police officer may remove your trailer from the road until it is made safe to operate.

Brakes

If your trailer has a gross trailer weight, vehicle and load of 1,360 kilograms or more, it must have brakes strong enough to stop and hold the trailer.

Lights

Your trailer must have:

- a white licence plate light
- a red tail light
- two red reflectors at the rear of the trailer, as far apart as possible

If your trailer is wider than 2.05 metres, it must also have:

- two yellow clearance lights, one on each side at the front of the trailer, as far apart as possible, to let drivers coming toward you know the width of your trailer
- two red clearance lights, or reflectors, one on each side at the rear of the trailer, as far apart as possible, to let drivers behind you know the width of your trailer

Your trailer must have mud guards, fenders and flaps or be designed in such a way that it does not spray or splash traffic travelling behind you.

If the load in your trailer blocks your vision to the rear, you must have additional mirrors that provide a clear view of the road to the rear. Load your trailer carefully so that nothing comes loose or falls off while you are moving.

Attaching your trailer

Your trailer must have two separate ways of attaching to your vehicle so that if one fails or comes loose, the trailer will stay attached.

If safety chains are used, they must be crossed under the tongue to prevent the tongue from dropping to the road if the primary hitch accidentally disconnects. The chain hooks must have latches or devices that will not accidentally become detached.

No passengers

You may not carry any person in any trailer, including a house or boat trailer, when it is being towed.

Trailer hitch

Use a good-quality trailer hitch. The class of trailer hitch you use depends upon the gross weight of your trailer - the gross weight being the total weight of the trailer and its load. Make sure you use the right trailer hitch for the weight of your trailer. It should be securely attached to your vehicle following the manufacturer's recommendations.

The hitch-ball should be installed so that when the trailer is attached and tightened, it is level with no tilting. If the hitch pulls down the rear of your vehicle, you may need to use a load-equalizing trailer hitch. You may also be able to shift some of the load in the trailer to the rear to reduce the load on the rear of your vehicle.

In addition to a ball and hitch, be sure to use safety chains or cables strong enough to hold the trailer and load, in case the ball and hitch accidentally come apart.

Loading your trailer



Diagram 5-4-1

When loading your trailer, strap everything down inside, as well as outside. It is an offence to have a load that may become dislodged or fall off. Do not overload your trailer. Too much weight in the trailer can put a strain on your vehicle and damage your tires, wheel bearings and axle. When carrying a boat on a trailer, do not carry cargo in the boat unless your trailer is designed and equipped for the extra weight.

The distribution of the weight in your trailer is also very important. Generally, more of the trailer load should be in front of the trailer axle than behind it for proper hitch weight. About five to 10 per cent of the trailer's total weight should be supported on the hitch, within the weight limit marked on the hitch. Poor load balance can cause your trailer to sway or fishtail. The ball and hitch may also become separated, especially if there is too much weight in the rear of the trailer.

Heavy and improperly placed loads can pull down the rear of your vehicle, lifting the front end and affecting your steering, especially in wet and slippery conditions. It may also affect the aim of your headlights so that your low beams blind approaching drivers. The alignment of your mirrors may also be affected.

Starting out

Before each trip, check the trailer hitch, wheels, tires, lights, load distribution and load security to make sure they are safe. Check your tire pressure with the trailer loaded while the tires are still cold. When you start to drive, accelerate carefully. Drive slowly and carefully.

Curves and turns

Stay close to the middle of your lane when taking a curve. When making a right turn, check traffic. Look in your right mirror. Signal and slow down. If the turn is sharp, move ahead until your vehicle's front wheels are well ahead of the curb before turning to the right.

When making a left turn, check traffic. Signal. Proceed slowly. When you make your turn, swing wide by driving well into the intersection before turning.

Slowing down and stopping

A sudden stop can cause your trailer to jackknife or slide sideways or the load to shift. To avoid sudden stops, increase the following distance between you and the vehicle ahead. Keep out of the fast lanes and maintain a speed that will allow you to slow down and stop smoothly in any situation.

Passing

You cannot accelerate as quickly when you are towing a trailer. You also need more space because the length of your vehicle is much longer with a trailer attached. Before you pass, make sure you have enough time and room to complete the pass. Once you have passed, allow more room before you move back to your lane. Do not cut back into the lane too soon. This can cause your trailer to sway and make it difficult to control.

Being passed

If you are holding up a line of traffic, signal, pull over and let the other vehicles pass. Fast-moving trucks and buses create a strong air disturbance behind them. If a large bus or truck passes you, the wall of wind behind it may whip your trailer to the side, pushing it out of control. When you experience this, do not brake. Carefully steer your vehicle and trailer back into position. A slight increase in speed may help.

Backing up

Back up very slowly and have someone outside the vehicle direct you. Use a series of small turns to steer. It is a good idea to practise this skill off the road in an empty parking lot until you are comfortable with your ability.

To back up to the right, steer to the left. The front end of the trailer will go left, but the rear end will go right. To back up to the left, steer to the right. The front end of the trailer will go right, but the rear end will go left.

Towing disabled vehicles

If your vehicle breaks down, you should get help from a tow truck designed to tow vehicles. If you must use another vehicle to tow, use warning signals or emergency flashers and make sure you attach the vehicles securely. Someone must sit in the disabled vehicle and use the brakes to keep the tow cable tight. If the engine cannot run, don't tow vehicles that have power braking and steering. Without the engine, braking and steering is difficult and towing may lead to a collision.

Trying to start a disabled vehicle by towing is dangerous and could damage both vehicles.

Summary

By the end of this section you should know:

- The checks that need to be performed on your vehicle: daily/weekly, at its regular servicing and for its use in the winter
- How to buy the right tires for your vehicle and how to know when they need replacing
- Your responsibility to ensure that the vehicle you are driving is properly registered and insured
- Information about buying and selling used vehicles including the safety standards certificate
- Licensing requirements to properly tow a trailer or disabled vehicle
- Vehicle requirements such as brakes, lights, mirrors and trailer hitches
- The proper way to load a trailer and attach it to your vehicle
- Driving techniques for driving with a trailer attached

Test yourself - Sample knowledge test questions

The following questions will give you an idea of what to expect on the knowledge test. All knowledge-test questions follow this multiple-choice format. The answers to these sample questions are provided at the bottom of the page.

1. To get your vehicle out of a skid, you should first:

- a. ~~S~~teer straight ahead.
- b. ~~S~~teer in the opposite direction of the skid.
- c. ~~S~~teer in the direction you want to go.
- d. ~~A~~pply brakes hard.

2. When may you lend your driver's licence?

- a. ~~I~~n emergencies.
- b. ~~T~~o a person learning to drive.
- c. ~~I~~t is not permitted.
- d. ~~F~~or identification purposes.

3. What must a driver do before entering a highway from a private road or driveway?

- a. ~~E~~nter or cross the highway as quickly as possible.
- b. ~~Y~~ield right-of-way to all vehicles approaching on the highway.
- c. ~~S~~ound horn and proceed with caution.
- d. ~~G~~ive hand signal then take right-of-way.

4. Never change lanes in traffic without:

- a. ~~L~~ooking in the rear view mirror only.
- b. ~~G~~iving proper signal and looking to make sure the move can be made safely.
- c. ~~B~~lowing your horn and looking to the rear.
- d. ~~D~~ecreasing speed and giving correct signal.

5. When the driver of another vehicle is about to overtake and pass your vehicle, you must:

- a. ~~S~~peed up so that passing is not necessary.
- b. ~~M~~ove to the left to prevent passing.
- c. ~~S~~ignal to the other driver not to pass.
- d. ~~M~~ove to the right and allow such vehicle to pass.

6. When you are deciding whether or not to make a U-turn, your first consideration should be to check:

- a. ~~T~~raffic regulations.
- b. ~~P~~resence of trees, fire hydrants or poles near the curb.
- c. ~~T~~urning radius of your car.
- d. ~~H~~eight of curb.

7. It is more dangerous to drive at the maximum speed limit at night than during daytime as:

- a. ~~Y~~our reaction time is slower at night.
- b. ~~Y~~ou cannot see as far ahead at night.
- c. ~~S~~ome drivers unlawfully drive with parking lights only.
- d. ~~T~~he roadways are more apt to be slippery at night.

8. You should under all conditions drive at a speed which will allow you to:

- a. ~~S~~top within 150 metres (500 feet).
- b. ~~S~~top within 90 metres (300 feet).
- c. ~~S~~top within 60 metres (200 feet).
- d. ~~S~~top within a safe distance.

Answer Key: 1-c, 2-c, 3-b, 4-b, 5-d, 6-a, 7-b, 8-d

The Level Two Road Test

Statistics show that new drivers of all ages are far more likely than experienced drivers to be involved in serious or fatal collisions.

To help new drivers develop better, safer driving habits, Ontario introduced graduated licensing in 1994 for all drivers applying for their first car or motorcycle licence. Graduated licensing lets you gain driving skills and experience gradually, in lower-risk environments. The two-step licensing system takes at least 20 months to complete and includes two road tests. Passing the Level Two (G2) road test gives you full Class G driving privileges.

While the Level One road test deals with basic driving skills, the Level Two deals with advanced knowledge and skills that are generally gained with driving experience. When you take the test, the examiner will give you directions. As you complete the driving tasks, the examiner will watch to make sure you successfully perform the actions associated with them.

The G2 road test includes a component of expressway driving. To proceed, you must complete and sign a "Declaration of Highway Driving Experience" to ensure that you have sufficient expressway driving experience to complete this component. On the form, you will indicate how many times in the three months before the road test you have driven on a freeway and/or a highway with a speed limit of at least 80 km/h. You are required to indicate what was the average length of these trips (for example, under 5 kilometres, between 5 and 15 kilometres, over 15 kilometres). Freeways include: 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 409, 410, 416, 417, 420, 427, Queen Elizabeth Way, Don Valley Parkway, Gardiner Expressway, E. C. Row Expressway and the Conestoga Parkway. If you do not have sufficient highway driving experience, the examiner must declare the road test "out-of-order" and cancel it. You will lose 50 per cent of your prepaid road-test fee. In order to reschedule, you will have to pay the 50 per cent of the road-test fee lost through the out-of-order. Make sure you obtain the required highway driving experience before rescheduling your test.

To help you prepare, this chapter tells you the various tasks and actions that you will be expected to perform in your Level Two road test. This is only a guide. For more information on the driving tasks, you should review chapters 2 and 3.

To help clear the backlog of in-vehicle passenger road tests resulting from COVID-19 restrictions and closures, the G road test has been temporarily modified.

Until further notice, the G road test will not include these elements that are already covered in the G2 road test:

- parallel parking

- roadside stops
- 3-point turn
- driving in residential neighbourhoods

The test will still include all of the fundamental elements such as:

- driving on major roads and expressways including merging on and off, maintaining appropriate speed and space, signalling and more
- turns, curves and lane changes
- intersections
- driving in business areas

Learn more about what's included in the G road test

(<https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/level-two-road-test>) .

Left and right turns



Diagram 6-1-1

The approach

This driving task begins when the examiner tells you to make a left or right turn, and ends at the point just before you enter the intersection. Make sure you take the following actions:

Traffic check

Before slowing down, look all around you. Use your rearview and side mirrors to check traffic behind you. If you change lanes, remember to check your blind spot by looking over your shoulder.

Lane

Move into the far left or far right lane as soon as the way is clear.

Signal

Turn on your signal before slowing down for the turn, unless there are vehicles waiting to enter the road from side roads or driveways between you and the intersection. Wait until you have passed these entrances so that drivers will not think you are turning before the intersection.

Speed

Steadily reduce speed as you approach the turn. In a vehicle with manual transmission, you may downshift into a lower gear as you slow down. Do not coast with your foot on the clutch pedal.

Space

While slowing down, keep at least a two to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you.

If stopped

You will need to do this driving task if you cannot complete your turn without stopping, either because the way is not clear or you face a stop sign or red traffic light. Remember to follow these actions:

Stop

Come to a complete stop. Do not let your vehicle roll forward or backward. When traffic conditions allow, move forward to check that the way is clear or to start the turn. If you have to stop after you have passed the stop line, do not back up.

Space

When stopped behind another vehicle at an intersection, leave enough space to pull out and pass without having to back up. Leaving this space protects you in three ways: it lets you pull around the vehicle in front if it stalls; it helps prevent you from being pushed into the vehicle ahead if you are hit from behind; and it reduces the risk of collision if the vehicle ahead rolls backward or backs up.

Stop line

If you are the first vehicle approaching an intersection with a red light or stop sign, stop behind the stop line if it is marked on the pavement. If there is no stop line, stop at the crosswalk, marked or not. If there is no crosswalk, stop at the edge of the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, stop at the edge of the intersection.

Wheels

When waiting to make a left turn, keep your front wheels straight. With your wheels turned left, your vehicle could be pushed into oncoming traffic. When waiting to turn right, keep the wheels straight if there is a risk of being pushed into pedestrians crossing the intersection. At a large intersection with curved sidewalks where you are turning right, angle your vehicle to follow the curb so that no other vehicle can fit between you and the curb.

Making the turn

The driving task involves your actions as you make the turn. Remember to do the following:

Traffic check

If you are stopped, waiting for a green light or for the way to be clear, keep checking traffic all around you. Just before entering the intersection, look left, ahead and right to check that the way is clear. If there is any doubt about the right-of-way, try to make eye contact with nearby drivers or pedestrians. If it is possible for another vehicle to overtake you while you are turning, check your blind spot before starting to turn. You have not properly checked traffic if another vehicle or pedestrian has the right-of-way and must take action to avoid your vehicle.

Both hands

Use both hands to turn the steering wheel throughout the turn. You are most at risk from other traffic when turning. Using both hands on the wheel gives you maximum steering control when you need it most. An exception to this is if you have a disability that prevents you from using both hands.

Gears

In a vehicle with manual transmission, do not shift gears during the turn. If you need to, you may shift gears immediately after the vehicle is moving but before it is well into the turn. You may also shift gears in an intersection wider than four lanes if not doing so would slow down other traffic. Generally, not changing gears gives you more control over your vehicle when turning.

Speed

Move ahead within four to five seconds after it is safe to start. Make the turn at a steady speed, increasing speed as you complete the turn. Drive slowly enough to keep full control of your vehicle without slowing down other traffic.

Wide/short

Turn into the corresponding lane on the intersecting road without going over any lane markings or curbs.

Completing the turn

This driving task completes the turn. It begins when you enter the intersecting road and ends when you return to normal traffic speed. Take the following actions:

Lane

End your turn in the lane that corresponds to the lane you turned from. If you are turning left onto a multi-lane road, return to normal traffic speed and move into the curb lane when it is safe to do so. If you are turning right onto a road where the right lane is blocked with parked vehicles or cannot be used for other reasons, move directly to the next available lane.

Traffic check

As you return to normal traffic speed, check your mirrors to become aware of the traffic situation on the new road.

Speed

Return to normal traffic speed by accelerating smoothly to blend with the traffic around you. In light traffic, accelerate moderately. In heavier traffic, you may have to accelerate more quickly. In a vehicle with manual transmission, shift gears as you increase speed.

Stop intersection



Diagram 6-2-1

The approach

This driving task is done at intersections where you must come to a stop. It begins at the point where you can see the intersection and ends just before you enter the intersection. Be sure to follow these actions:

Traffic check

Before slowing down, look all around you. Use your mirrors to check traffic behind you.

Speed

Steadily reduce speed as you approach the intersection. In a vehicle with manual transmission, you may downshift into a lower gear as you slow down. Do not coast with your foot on the clutch pedal.

Space

While slowing down, keep at least a two to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you.

The stop

This driving task includes the actions you take while stopped and waiting to move through the intersection. Remember these points:

Stop

Come to a complete stop. Do not let your vehicle roll forward or backward. When traffic conditions allow, move forward to check that the way is clear or start across the intersection. If you have to stop after you have passed the stop line, do not back up.

Space

When stopped behind another vehicle at the intersection, leave enough space to pull out and pass without having to back up. Leaving this space protects you in three ways: it lets you pull around the vehicle in front if it stalls; it helps prevent you from being pushed into the ahead if you are hit from behind; and it reduces the risk of collision if the vehicle ahead rolls backward or backs up.

Stop line

If you are the first vehicle approaching an intersection with a red light or stop sign, stop behind the stop line if it is marked on the pavement. If there is no stop line, stop at the crosswalk, marked or not. If there is no crosswalk, stop at the edge of the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, stop at the edge of the intersection.

Driving through

This task includes the actions you take as you drive through the intersection and return to normal traffic speed. Make sure to follow these actions:

Traffic check

If you are stopped, waiting for a green light or for the way to be clear, keep checking traffic all around you. Just before entering the intersection, look left, ahead and right to check that the way is clear. If there is any doubt about the right-of-way, try to make eye contact with nearby drivers or pedestrians. You have not properly checked traffic if another vehicle or pedestrian has the right-of-way and must take action to avoid your vehicle.

Both hands

Keep both hands on the steering wheel as you drive through the intersection. You are most at risk from other traffic when you are crossing the intersection. Using both hands on the wheel gives you maximum steering control when you need it most. An exception to this is if you have a disability that prevents you from using both hands.

Gears

In a vehicle with manual transmission, do not shift gears crossing the intersection. If you need to, you may shift gears immediately after the vehicle is moving but before it is well into the intersection. You may also shift gears in an intersection wider than four lanes if not doing so would slow down other traffic. Generally, not changing gears gives you more control over your vehicle.

Traffic check

As you return to normal traffic speed, check your mirrors to become aware of the traffic situation after you have gone through the intersection.

Speed

Move ahead within four to five seconds after it is safe to start. Return to normal traffic speed by accelerating smoothly to blend with the traffic around you. In light traffic, accelerate moderately. In heavier traffic, you may have to accelerate more quickly. In a vehicle with manual transmission, shift gears as you increase speed.

Through intersection



Diagram 6-3-1

The approach

This driving task is done at intersections where you may not need to stop. It begins at the point where you can see the intersection and ends just before the entrance to the intersection. Remember to do the following:

Traffic check

As you approach the intersection, look left and right for traffic on the intersecting road. If you have to slow down for the intersection, check your mirrors for traffic behind you.

Speed

Keep at the same speed as you go through the intersection unless there is a chance traffic may cross the intersection in front of you. If so, slow down or hold your foot over the brake, ready to slow down or stop. Watch for pedestrians about to cross the intersection and vehicles edging into the intersection or approaching at higher speeds.

Space

Keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you.

Driving through

This driving task includes your actions from the time you enter the intersection until you have crossed it and are returning to normal traffic speed. Remember these points:

Lane

Do not go over lane markings or change lanes in the intersection. If your lane is blocked by a vehicle turning left or a vehicle edging into the intersection from the right, slow down or stop instead of pulling out to go around the vehicle.

Both hands

Keep both hands on the steering wheel as you drive through the intersection. You are most at risk from other traffic when you are crossing the intersection. Using both hands on the wheel gives you maximum steering control when you need it most. An exception to this is if you have a disability that prevents you from using both hands.

Gears

In a vehicle with manual transmission, do not shift gears while crossing the intersection. If you need to, you may shift gears immediately after the vehicle is moving but before it is well into the intersection. You may also shift gears in an intersection wider than four lanes if not doing so would slow down other traffic. Generally, not changing gears gives you more control over your vehicle.

Traffic check

If you slowed down for the intersection, check your mirrors again before returning to normal traffic speed.

Freeway

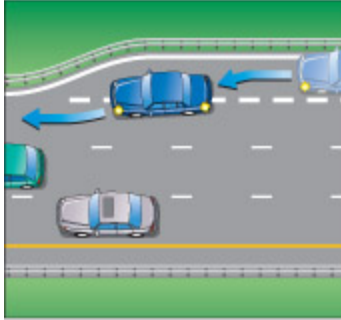


Diagram 6-4-1

Entering

This driving task begins on the entrance ramp to a freeway and ends when you have reached the speed of the traffic on the freeway. Remember to do the following:

Traffic check

While on the ramp, as soon as you can see freeway traffic approaching from behind, check your mirrors and blind spot for a space to merge safely. At the same time, watch any vehicles in front of you on the ramp and keep back a safe distance. Continue to divide your attention between watching in front, checking your mirrors and looking over your shoulder to check your blind spot until you can merge safely with traffic.

Signal

If you have not done so already, turn on your signal as soon as traffic on the freeway is able to see your vehicle on the ramp.

Space

While on the ramp and merging with freeway traffic, keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you. Time your merge so you do not move in beside another vehicle or into the blind spot of another vehicle. If traffic is heavy or moving at such a high speed that it is difficult to keep an ideal following distance, adjust

your speed to get the best spacing possible. While on the ramp and in the acceleration lane, keep inside the lane markings.

Speed

On the curve of the entrance ramp, keep your speed slow enough so that objects and people inside your vehicle are not pushed from the force created by turning the curve. While in the acceleration lane, increase your speed to match that of freeway traffic. While merging, control your speed to blend smoothly with freeway traffic.

Merge

Merge with freeway traffic in a smooth, gradual movement to the centre of the nearest freeway lane.

Cancel signal

Turn off your signal as soon as you have merged with freeway traffic.

Driving along

This driving task checks your actions driving along the freeway (but not merging, changing lanes or exiting). Be sure to remember the following points:

Traffic check

While driving along, keep checking traffic all around you and look in your mirrors every five to 10 seconds.

Speed

Avoid exceeding the speed limit or driving unreasonably slowly. Whenever possible, drive at a steady speed. Look ahead to where you are going to be in the next 12 to 15 seconds for dangerous situations or obstacles that you can avoid by changing your speed.

Space

Always keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you. If another vehicle follows too closely behind you, give yourself even more room in front or change lanes. Try to keep a space on both sides of your vehicle, and try not to drive in the

blind spots of other vehicles. Avoid driving behind large vehicles. Because of their size, they block your view of traffic more than other vehicles.

Exiting

This driving task begins when you are driving in the far right lane of the freeway and can see the exit you want to take. It ends when you reach the end of the exit ramp. Remember to do the following:

Traffic check

Before moving into the exit lane, look left and right and check your mirrors. If there is a lane of traffic on your right, such as an acceleration lane from an entrance ramp or a paved shoulder, remember also to check your right blind spot.

Signal

Turn on your signal before you reach the exit lane.

Exit lane

Enter the exit lane at the beginning of the lane with a smooth, gradual movement. Stay inside the lane markings. If there are two or more exit lanes, do not cross solid lines on the pavement to change lanes.

Speed

Do not slow down before you are completely in the exit lane. Once you are in the lane, slow gradually without causing traffic to pile up behind you. On the curve of the exit ramp, keep your speed slow enough so that objects and people inside your vehicle are not pushed from the force created by turning the curve. In a vehicle with manual transmission, downshift as you reduce speed.

Space

Keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you.

Cancel signal

Turn off your signal once you are on the exit ramp.

Lane change

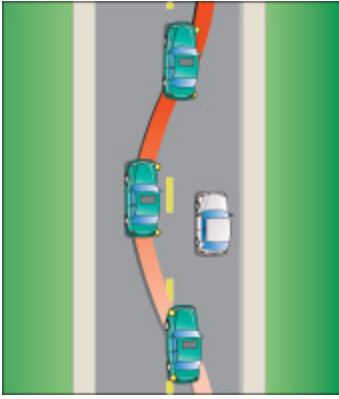


Diagram 6-5-1

This driving task begins as you look for a space to change lanes and ends when you have completed the lane change. Remember to follow these actions:

Traffic check

While waiting to change lanes safely, look all around you. Divide your attention between watching in front, watching the mirrors and checking your blind spot. If there is another lane beside the one you are moving into, check traffic in that lane to avoid colliding with a vehicle moving into the lane at the same time as you do.

Signal

Turn on your signal when there is enough space for you to change lanes. After signalling, check your blind spot one more time before starting to move into the other lane. Your signal should be on soon enough to give traffic behind you time to react to the signal. If traffic in the lane you are moving into is heavy, you may turn on your signal before there is enough space to change lanes. This will let traffic behind you know that you are looking for a space to change lanes.

Space

Keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you. If there is another lane beside the one you are moving into, be careful not to move in beside another vehicle or into the blind spot of another vehicle.

Speed

Adjust your speed to match the speed of traffic in the new lane.

Change

Change lanes with a smooth, gradual movement into the centre of the new lane.

Both hands

Keep both hands on the steering wheel as you change lanes. Using both hands on the wheel gives you maximum steering control. An exception to this is if you have a disability that prevents you from using both hands.

Cancel signal

Turn off your signal as soon as you have changed lanes.

Roadside stop

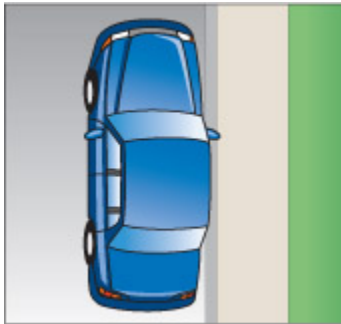


Diagram 6-6-1

The approach

This driving task begins when the examiner tells you to stop and ends once you have come to a stop. Make sure you take these actions:

Traffic check

Before slowing down, check your mirrors and scan to see if it is legal (look for signs) to make the roadside stop. Then scan the road for traffic approaching from the front and rear of your vehicle. A 150-metre gap in both directions provides enough space to perform the move safely. If there is a chance of traffic or pedestrians overtaking you on the right, check your right blind spot just before pulling over.

Signal

Turn on your signal before slowing down unless there are vehicles waiting to enter the road from side roads or driveways between you and the point where you intend to stop. Wait until you have passed these entrances so that drivers will not think you are turning before the stopping point.

Speed

Steadily reduce speed as you approach the stop. In a vehicle with manual transmission, you may downshift into a lower gear as you slow down. Do not coast with your foot on the clutch pedal.

Position

Stop parallel to the curb and not more than about 30 centimetres away from it. If there is no curb, stop as far as possible off the travelled part of the road. Do not stop where you will block an entrance or other traffic.

The stop

This driving task includes the actions you take after stopping. Remember to do the following:

Signal

Turn off your signal and turn on your hazard lights.

Park

If your vehicle has an automatic transmission, put the gear selector in park and set the parking brake. If your has a manual transmission, set the parking brake and shift into neutral if not turning off the engine, or shift into low or reverse if turning off the engine. When parking on a hill, set your wheels against the curb, in the appropriate direction to keep your vehicle from rolling.

Resume

This driving task begins when the examiner tells you to move back onto the road and ends when you have returned to normal traffic speed. Take the following actions:

Start

Turn on the engine. Release the parking brake and select the correct gear to move back onto the road.

Signal

Turn off your hazard lights and turn on your left turn signal.

Traffic check

Just before pulling away from the stop, check your mirrors and your left blind spot.

Speed

Return to normal traffic speed by accelerating smoothly to blend with the traffic around you. In light traffic, accelerate moderately. In heavier traffic, you may have to accelerate more quickly. In a vehicle with manual transmission, shift gears as you increase speed.

Cancel signal

Turn off your signal as soon as you are back on the road.

Curve

This driving task begins when the curve comes into sight and ends when you have gone completely around it. Follow these actions:



Diagram 6-7-1

Speed

As you approach the curve, try to determine the safe speed for it. To do this, look for clues such as a sign that shows the safe speed, the shape of the curve and the type of road you are driving on. Slow down to the safe speed for the curve by the time you are 30 metres into it. In a blind curve where you cannot see all the way around it, drive more slowly in case oncoming traffic wanders into your lane or the curve is tighter than you expected.

Slow down before the start of the curve to avoid braking in it. While in the curve, keep your speed steady and slow enough so that objects and people inside your vehicle are not pushed from the force created by turning on the curve. Near the end of the curve, begin accelerating to return to normal speed. In a vehicle with manual transmission, do not shift gears in the curve. Not changing gears gives you more control over your vehicle and reduces the risk of your wheels locking while downshifting.

Lane

As you enter the curve, look across or as far around it as possible. This helps you stay in a smooth line and centred in the lane throughout the curve. If you look only at the road directly in front of you, you are likely to wander back and forth across the lane, forcing you to constantly correct your steering.

Business section

This driving task is done on straight sections of road where a number of businesses are located. Be sure to do the following actions:



Diagram 6-8-1

Traffic check

In a business area, there are many places other than intersections where vehicles or pedestrians are likely to enter the road. These include entrances to businesses, institutions and construction sites, as well as pedestrian and railway crossings. At all these locations, look left and right to check for vehicles or pedestrians about to enter the road.

Mirror check

While driving along, check your mirrors every five to 10 seconds. Check your mirrors more often in heavy traffic or where vehicles are moving at different speeds.

Lane

Drive in the safest lane for through traffic. This is usually the curb lane. However, if the curb lane is blocked by traffic or there are many curbside hazards, the centre lane may be a safer choice. Keep to the centre of the lane and within the lane markings. Look ahead to where you will be in the next 12 to 15 seconds for dangerous situations or obstacles that you can avoid by changing lanes.

Speed

Avoid exceeding the speed limit or driving unreasonably slowly. Whenever possible, drive at a steady speed. Look ahead to where you will be in the next 12 to 15 seconds for dangerous situations or obstacles that you can avoid by changing your speed.

Space

Keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you. Increase the distance if another vehicle follows too closely behind you. On a multi-lane road, try to keep a space on both sides of your vehicle, and try not to drive in the blind spots of other vehicles. In slow traffic, avoid driving behind large vehicles that block your view of traffic ahead of you. When you stop behind another vehicle, leave enough space to see its rear wheels or to pull around it without having to back up.

Residential section

This driving task is done on straight sections of residential or rural road. Remember these points:



Diagram 6-9-1

Traffic check

On a residential road, watch out for entrances to schools, pedestrian crossings, driveways, sidewalks and any other locations where there might be traffic hazards. On a rural road, watch for entrances to residences, farms, businesses and industrial sites. At all these locations, look left and right to check for vehicles or pedestrians about to enter the road.

Mirror check

While driving along, check your mirrors every five to 10 seconds. Check your mirrors more often in heavy traffic or where vehicles are moving at different speeds.

Lane

Keep to the centre of the lane. If there are no lane markings, keep to the centre of the travelled part of the road, away from parked vehicles or pedestrians. Where you cannot see far ahead on the road because of a curve or a hill, move right to avoid colliding with an oncoming vehicle that is over the centre line. Look ahead to where you will be in the next 12 to 15 seconds for dangerous situations or obstacles that you can avoid by changing lanes.

Speed

Avoid exceeding the speed limit or driving unreasonably slowly. Whenever possible, drive at a steady speed. Look ahead to where you will be in the next 12 to 15 seconds for dangerous situations or obstacles that you can avoid by changing your speed.

Space

Keep at least a two- to three-second distance behind the vehicle in front of you. Increase the distance if another vehicle follows too closely behind you. In slow traffic, avoid driving behind large vehicles that block your view of traffic ahead. When you stop behind another vehicle, leave enough space to see its rear wheels or to pull around it without having to back up.

Parallel park

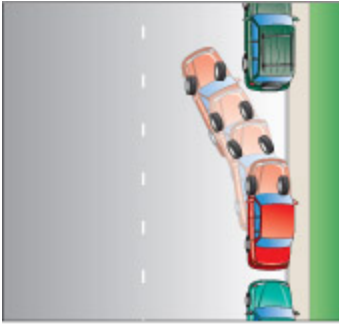


Diagram 6-10-1

The approach

This driving task begins when the examiner tells you to park and ends when you have come to a stop, ready to back into the parking space. Remember these points:

Traffic check

Before slowing down, check your mirror for traffic behind you. Before pulling into position to back up, check your blind spot.

Signal

Turn on your signal before slowing down unless there are vehicles waiting to enter the road from side roads or driveways between you and your stopping point. Wait until you have passed these entrances so that drivers will not think you are turning before your parallel parking position.

Speed

Steadily reduce speed. In a vehicle with manual transmission, you may downshift into a lower gear as you slow down. Do not coast with your foot on the clutch pedal.

Stop

Stop beside, or parallel to, the parked vehicle (real or imaginary) in front of the empty parking space. Leave at least 60 centimetres between your vehicle and the parked vehicle. Stop when your vehicle is completely in front of the empty parking space.

Park

This driving task includes the actions you take to park in a parallel parking space. Remember to do the following:

Traffic check

Before backing up, look all around the vehicle and check your mirrors and both blind spots. Do not start reversing until the way is clear or traffic has stopped to let you park.

Back up

Begin reversing into the space, turning the steering wheel toward the curb. When your vehicle is about halfway into the space, steer to bring your vehicle in line with the curb. Once you are in the parking space, move forward or backward to fit within the pavement markings or to allow room for the vehicle in front or behind you to pull out. Do not hit the curb or touch another vehicle while entering your parking space. Where there is no curb, park off the travelled part of the road.

Park

If your vehicle has automatic transmission, put the gear selector in park and set the parking brake. If your vehicle has manual transmission, set the parking brake and shift into neutral if not turning off the engine, or shift into low or reverse if turning off the engine. When parking on a hill, turn your wheels in the appropriate direction to keep your vehicle from rolling.

Resume

This driving task begins when the examiner tells you to move from the parking space and ends when you have returned to normal traffic speed. Remember these points:

Start

Turn on the engine. Release the parking brake and select the correct gear to move back onto the road.

Signal

Turn on your signal.

Traffic check

Just before pulling out of the parking spot, check your mirrors and your blind spot.

Speed

Return to normal traffic speed by accelerating smoothly to blend with the traffic around you. In light traffic, accelerate moderately. In heavier traffic, you may have to accelerate more quickly. In a vehicle with manual transmission, shift gears as you increase speed.

Cancel signal

Turn off your signal after you leave the parking space.

Three-point turn



Diagram 6-11-1

The approach

This driving task begins when the examiner tells you to stop and turn your vehicle around. It ends when you have almost stopped, ready to start the turn. Be sure to do the following:

Traffic check

Before slowing down, check traffic in front and behind you. If necessary, check your blind spot before pulling over to the right side of the road to stop.

Signal

Turn on your signal before slowing down unless there are vehicles waiting to enter the road from sideroads or driveways between you and your stopping point. Wait until you

have passed these entrances so that drivers will not think you are turning.

Speed

Steadily reduce speed. In a vehicle with manual transmission, you may downshift into a lower gear as you slow down. Do not coast with your foot on the clutch pedal.

Position

Stop so you are parallel to the curb and not more than 30 centimetres away. Where there is no curb, stop as far as possible off the travelled part of the road. Do not stop where you will block an entrance or other traffic.

Turn around

This driving task includes the actions you take to turn around and ends when you are ready to drive away in the opposite direction. Remember these points:

Traffic check

Check your mirrors and your blind spot just before starting the turn. Wait until the way is clear or traffic has stopped to let you turn. Each time you stop while turning, check traffic in both directions.

Signal

Turn on your left signal before starting to turn.

Turn around

With the steering wheel turned sharply left, move slowly and smoothly across the road. When you have reached the far left side of the road, stop and put your vehicle in reverse. With the steering wheel turned sharply right, reverse so the vehicle is facing in the new direction. Stop and shift into forward gear to move ahead. Use the whole road to make your turn, reversing only once. Do not reverse over the edge or shoulder of the road or into the curb.

Resume

This driving task begins when you are turned around, ready to move ahead and ends when you have returned to normal traffic speed. Make sure you take these actions:

Traffic check

Check your mirrors before increasing speed.

Speed

Return to normal traffic speed by accelerating smoothly to blend with the traffic around you. In light traffic, accelerate moderately. In heavier traffic, you may have to accelerate more quickly. In a vehicle with manual transmission, shift gears as you increase speed.

Off-road Vehicles & Snowmobiles

This handbook is only a guide. For official purposes, please refer to the *Highway Traffic Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90h08>) , the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m44>) and the *Off-road Vehicles Act of Ontario* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o04>) .

If you're taking beginner driver education, make sure it's from a ministry-approved school (<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/driver/driving-schools.shtml>) .

For more information about driver licensing, visit the website (<http://www.mto.gov.on.ca>) .

To request a copy of this book in an alternate format, contact Publications Ontario at 1-800-668-9938 or (416) 326-5300 or visit ServiceOntario Publications (<http://www.publications.serviceontario.ca>) .

Disponible en français. Demandez le « Guide officiel de l'automobiliste de publié par le MTO »

Driving is a privilege - not a right

Introduction

Off-road vehicles and snowmobiles are popular forms of recreation for many people in Ontario. They are also necessary for transportation in remote areas and in emergencies.

But these vehicles are not toys. If you intend to use them, you must know how they work, how to drive them safely in different situations and how Ontario laws apply to them.

It is important to remember that off-road vehicles are intended for off-road use. Dirt bikes cannot be driven on public roads, although snowmobiles can be in some areas. Off-road vehicles are allowed to travel directly across some highways. However only single-rider, all-terrain vehicles can be driven on the shoulder of some provincial highways and municipal roads where bylaws permit.

This section of the handbook contains information about Ontario's laws and safe driving tips for snowmobiles and off-road vehicles. As you read, remember it is a guide only. For official purposes, please refer to the *Highway Traffic Act*, the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act*, the *Off-road Vehicles Act*, the *Trespass to Property Act* and the *Occupiers' Liability Act of Ontario*. The applicable legislation can be accessed online through Ontario's e-Laws website (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws>).

Note: Alcohol presents a major risk to your safety and the safety of others whether you are driving a car, motorcycle, snowmobile or off-road vehicle. Drinking affects your ability to operate your vehicle and increases your chances of having a collision.

Driving a snowmobile

This chapter tells you what you need to know to drive a motorized snow vehicle in Ontario. This includes age requirements, registration, where you can and cannot drive, safety tips, traffic signs and signals and the Snowmobiler's Code of Ethics.

I. Getting ready to drive a snowmobile

What you need to drive a snowmobile in Ontario

You can drive a snowmobile if you have a valid Ontario driver's licence (any class). If you do not have a driver's licence and you are 12 years of age or older, a valid motorized snow-vehicle operator's licence (MSVOL) will allow you to drive on trails established and maintained by a recreational organization for the use of snowmobiles. However, you must be 16 years of age or older and have a driver's licence or a motorized snow-vehicle operator's licence (not both) to drive a snowmobile along or across a public road where snowmobiles are allowed.

An MSVOL is issued by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs in co-operation with the Ministry of Transportation. You must successfully pass a snowmobile driver-training course to get a licence. (For more information on how to get a motorized snow-vehicle operator's licence.

If you are a visitor to Ontario and wish to drive a snowmobile while you are here, you must have a valid licence that allows you to drive a snowmobile in your home province, state or country.

You must carry your driver's licence or snow-vehicle operator's licence when you are driving your snowmobile anywhere other than on your own property. You must show it when asked by a police or conservation officer.

If your driver's licence or snow-vehicle operator's licence has been suspended, you may not drive any type of vehicle on or off any roads or in any public place.

Registering and insuring your snowmobile

Before driving a snowmobile, it must be registered with the Ministry of Transportation through a ServiceOntario centre. This applies to new or used snowmobiles that have never been registered, and snowmobiles previously registered in another jurisdiction. If you buy a new snowmobile, it must be registered within six days of sale. You can download and complete a registration form (<https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/sr-lv-006>) before visiting a ServiceOntario centre.

If you buy a new snowmobile, your dealer will register it with the Ministry of Transportation within six days of the sale. If you buy a used snowmobile that has been previously registered, you will simply need the signed snow-vehicle permit and the bill of sale to transfer the registration into your name.

You must pay a fee to register your snowmobile. This is a one-time fee to be paid by the owner of the snowmobile. After registering, you will be given a permit and a registration number decal to display on your snowmobile.

Attach the decal to each side of your snowmobile's cowling or engine cover. It should be placed so that the start of the registration number is between 10 and 15 centimetres from the rear of the cowling. If the decal cannot be placed on the cowling because of the design of the vehicle, place the decal on each side of the tunnel, near the light reflector.

Unless you are driving your registered snowmobile on your own property or you are a resident of northern Ontario that is exempt, you must have a validation sticker on your registration decal. You must carry your driver's licence or MSVOL and evidence of your vehicle's registration at all times and show it to a police or conservation officer when asked.

Snowmobiles are only permitted on public highways when directly crossing. In specific circumstances, snowmobiles can operate on the non-serviced portion of some highways. Local municipalities also have authority to pass bylaws governing the use of snowmobiles on highways under their jurisdiction.

There is an annual renewal fee for the sticker. Place the sticker in the upper right corner of the decal.

You must also have liability insurance to drive your snowmobile off your own property. Carry the insurance card given to you by the insurance company for the snowmobile, and show it when a police or conservation officer asks for it. If someone else uses your snowmobile with your consent, you are both responsible for any penalties, damages or injuries that may occur.

There are separate requirements and rules regarding the operation of trail grooming equipment. Make sure you know what is required before operating grooming equipment.

Wear a helmet

You must wear a helmet whenever you drive or ride on a snowmobile or any kind of toboggan or sled towed by a snowmobile. Although you do not require a helmet when you operate a snowmobile on your own land, it is recommended that you wear one for safety reasons. The helmet must meet the standards approved for motorcycle helmets, or motor-assisted bicycle helmets, and must be fastened properly under the chin.

Protect your eyes and face

Always wear a face shield or goggles. A face shield can help prevent windburn, frostbite, sunblindness and watering eyes from the wind. A face shield can also protect your eyes from branches and twigs when driving through wooded areas. Select lightly tinted and shatterproof shields or goggles to match conditions. For example, choose clear plastic for dull, cloudy days and deep yellow for late afternoon when flat light can hide depressions in the snow. Avoid dark-tinted shields or goggles, which can restrict your vision.

Make sure your snowmobile is in good condition

Before every trip, check your snowmobile to make sure it is in good working order. Your life may depend upon it. Do the following:

- Check the steering mechanism. Turn the handlebars back and forth to make sure the turning is smooth and unrestricted.
- Check the condition and tension of the motor drive belt. Change it if necessary or if you are in doubt about its reliability.
- Check the emergency switch, headlights and tail lights.
- Check the battery solution level.
- Check the throttle and brake levers. Make sure they move freely.
- Check the spark plugs and the tank's fuel level. Do not use matches or a lighter when doing this, and never add fuel when the motor is running.

When towing a toboggan, sled or any other kind of vehicle behind a snowmobile, be sure to use a rigid tow bar and a safety chain. For safety, towed vehicles must have reflective material on the front sides, rear sides and rear to make them more visible. Towing is generally not allowed on public roads except to cross the road at a 90-degree angle. This does not apply to a snowmobile being used to free a stuck vehicle, for any emergency rescue or for trail maintenance.

Before you drive anywhere, read the owner's manual carefully and keep it in your snowmobile at all times.



Be well prepared for every trip

Carefully preparing for every trip is an important part of safe snowmobiling. Check local weather forecasts and local ice conditions before heading out, as they can change in a matter of hours. Avoid travelling on unmarked frozen lakes and rivers. Make sure you tell someone where you will be travelling and when you expect to be back. Use the buddy

system; do not drive your snowmobile alone and always ride within your abilities and according to conditions.

Take along a first-aid kit, a vehicle repair kit, an extra ignition key, a drive belt, spark plugs and a rope. On long trips, include a map and a compass (or a GPS unit and know how to use it), flashlight, hunting knife, hatchet, extra fuel, matches in a waterproof box and high-energy food such as granola bars. If you travel over frozen lakes and rivers, wear a buoyant snowmobile suit and carry ice picks to improve the chances of survival if you break through the ice.

II. Safe and responsible snowmobiling

Where you can and cannot drive

You may drive your registered snowmobile on your own property, on the private trails of organizations to which you belong, on private property when you have the owner's permission or in permitted public parks and conservation areas.

Snowmobiles are only permitted on public highways when directly crossing. In specific circumstances, snowmobiles can operate on the non-serviced portion of some highways. Local municipalities also have the authority to pass bylaws governing the use of snowmobiles on highways under their authority.

You may not drive a snowmobile on certain high-speed roads, freeways, the Queen Elizabeth Way, the Ottawa Queensway and the Kitchener-Waterloo Expressway. This includes the area around these roads, from fence line to fence line. You may not drive on the serviced section of a road (from shoulder to shoulder) except to cross. When crossing, you must slow down, stop and then proceed at a 90-degree angle. When riding in a group, do not motion the driver behind you to cross. Let each rider assess oncoming traffic and decide for themselves when it is safe to cross. If visibility is restricted at the crossing, you may then wave to the driver behind you that the way is clear.

Except where prohibited, you may drive your snowmobile along public roads, keeping as far away from the road as possible in the section between the shoulder and the fence line. Local municipalities may pass bylaws that regulate or prohibit snowmobiles anywhere within their boundaries, on or off public roads. Make sure you are aware of the bylaws in the municipality where you intend to snowmobile.

You may not drive a snowmobile on railway tracks unless you have permission from the railway track authority.

Public trails

Ontario's public trails are established and maintained by many snowmobile clubs. They are patrolled by Ontario Provincial Police, municipal police, conservation officers and Snowmobile Trail Officer Patrol officers. Some clubs require snowmobiles to have and display a trail permit to drive on their trails. Some other clubs allow their trails to be used without a trail permit. Trails may have signs stating that a trail permit is required. If you are unsure, check with the local snowmobile club to find out if you need a trail permit.

For trails operated by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs, you must have and display a trail permit. This includes trails on private property, municipal property and land owned by the government. Some snowmobile-trail user groups are exempt from the permit requirement. Those who are eligible for exemption and the documents required as proof are included in the trail-permits section of the regulations of the *Motorized Snow Vehicles Act*. Snowmobilers who are exempt must carry the appropriate documents and show them when requested to do so.

For information about trails and trail permits, contact your local snowmobile club or the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs, 501 Welham Road, Unit 9, Barrie, ON L4N 8Z6. Phone 705-739-7669; fax 705-739-5005; or e-mail at info@ofsc.on.ca (mailto://www.ofsc.on.ca) . You can visit the OFSC website (<http://www.ofsc.on.ca>) .



Do not trespass

You are trespassing if you drive your snowmobile on private property without permission from the owner. The owner is not required to have a "No Trespassing" sign posted. If you are driving your snowmobile on private property, you must stop and identify yourself when asked by the police, the owner of the property or a representative of the owner. If you are told to leave the property, you must do so immediately.

You may be fined if you are convicted of trespassing. In addition, you may be ordered to pay damages. Under certain circumstances, you may also be required to pay for the cost of prosecuting. Charges will be laid against the driver of the snowmobile. If the driver is not known, the owner may be charged if the snowmobile was used with the owner's permission.

A copy of the *Trespass to Property Act* is available through Publications Ontario. Phone (416) 326-5300 or 1-800-668-9938. It is available over the Internet at ServiceOntario Publications (<http://www.publications.gov.on.ca>) and Ontario's e-Laws website (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws>) .

It is an offence under the *Railway Safety Act* to trespass on railway tracks.

Obey the speed limits

You must not drive a snowmobile faster than 20 km/h in any public park or exhibition ground, or on any road where the speed limit for other vehicles is 50 km/h or less. You must not drive faster than 50 km/h on snowmobile trails or on any road where the speed limit for other vehicles is more than 50 km/h. Always leave extra space between you and the snowmobile in front to give yourself more time to react to unexpected hazards and stop safely. Lower your speed at night and don't outrun your headlights. Reduced nighttime visibility makes hazards more difficult to spot and estimating distance is much harder. Always wear clothing with reflective markings to remain visible at night.

Municipalities may set other speed limits for snowmobiles on public roads, trails and parks within their boundaries. Check municipal bylaws.

Stop for police

You must come to a safe stop when requested by a police officer to do so. If you do not stop, you may have to pay a fine or go to jail, or both. If you are convicted of failing to stop for a police officer and the court believes you wilfully avoided police during pursuit - that you tried to escape the police - your licence will be suspended for a minimum of five years. Your licence can be suspended for up to 10 years if anyone is killed or injured as a result of avoiding police.

Report collisions to the police

You must report to the police immediately any collision that results in injury to any person or damage to property apparently exceeding \$400.

Do not drink and drive

Alcohol is a major factor in snowmobile fatalities. Consuming any amount of alcohol before you ride affects your ability to make good decisions. Alcohol also increases fatigue, slows reaction time and increases your risk of hypothermia.

It is against the law to drive a snowmobile when you are impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Drinking and driving is a deadly combination. All drivers, especially inexperienced drivers, must be able to concentrate on driving.

Consuming any amount of alcohol before you ride affects your ability to make good decisions. Even one drink can reduce your ability to concentrate and react to things that happen suddenly when you are driving. With more alcohol in your blood, you could have trouble judging distances and your vision may become blurred. Factors like tiredness, your mood, and how long ago you ate and how much, can make a difference in how alcohol affects your driving ability.

The police can stop any driver to determine if alcohol or drug testing is required. They may also do roadside spot checks. When stopped by the police, you may be told to blow into a machine that tests your breath for alcohol, a roadside screening device, or perform physical co-ordination tests. If you fail or refuse to provide a breath sample or to perform the physical co-ordination tests, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

If the reading on the machine shows you have been drinking, you may be taken to a police station for a breathalyzer test. The breathalyzer uses your breath to measure the amount of alcohol in your bloodstream.

If you cannot give a breath sample or it is impractical to obtain a sample of breath, the police officer can require you to provide a blood sample instead.

If the police believe that a driver is impaired because of the consumption of a drug or a combination of alcohol and a drug, they can also require a driver to submit to an evaluation and then require a driver to provide blood, oral fluid or urine samples. If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

Driving impaired or with more than 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood (.08) is an offence under the Criminal Code. Even if your blood-alcohol concentration is less than .08, you can still be charged with impaired driving under the Criminal Code.

You will receive an immediate 90-day administrative driver's licence suspension if your blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) is more than .08 or if you fail or refuse to provide a breath or bodily fluid sample, perform a physical co-ordination test or submit to an evaluation.

If you register in the "warn range" of .05 to .08 on a roadside screening device, you will receive an **immediate** driver's licence suspension. For a first occurrence, you will be suspended for three days. For a second occurrence in a five-year period, you will be immediately suspended for seven days and you must undergo a remedial alcohol-education program. For a third or subsequent time in a five-year period, you will be immediately suspended for 30 days, and you must undergo a remedial alcohol-treatment program and have an ignition interlock condition placed on your licence for six months. If you choose not to install an ignition interlock device, you must not drive until the condition is removed from your licence.

If you are 21 years old and under and hold a full-class driver's licence, you must not drive if you have been drinking alcohol. Your blood-alcohol level must be zero. If you are caught driving with alcohol in your blood, you will receive an immediate driver's licence suspension at the roadside for 24 hours and, if convicted, you will face a fine and a 30-day licence suspension.

Drivers of all ages in either Level One or Level Two of Ontario's graduated licensing system must also have a blood-alcohol level of zero when driving. New drivers caught drinking and driving will receive an immediate driver's licence suspension at the roadside for 24 hours and, if convicted, will face a fine and will receive a suspension period as per the Novice Driver Escalating Sanctions scheme. For the first occurrence, you will be suspended for 30 days. For the second occurrence, in a five-year period, you will be suspended for 90 days. For the third occurrence in a five-year period, the novice portion of your driver's licence will be cancelled, and you must reapply for a G1 licence.

Novice drivers will also be charged under the Criminal Code if their BAC exceeds .08 and will be issued a warn-range suspension if they register between .05 and .08.

Drugs

Any drug that changes your mood or the way you see and feel about the world around you will affect the way you drive. Criminal Code and HTA sanctions apply to drivers impaired by alcohol or a drug.

In circumstances involving possible impairment by drugs or a combination of alcohol and a drug, police can require a driver to perform physical co-ordination tests and to submit to an evaluation, and then require a driver to provide blood, oral fluid or urine samples. If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code. You will also receive an immediate 90-day administrative driver's licence suspension. Illegal drugs such as marijuana and cocaine are not the only problem. Some drugs that your doctor may prescribe for you and some over-the-counter drugs can also impair your driving.

Here are some points you should remember:

- If you use prescription medicines or get allergy shots, ask your doctor about side effects such as dizziness, blurred vision, nausea or drowsiness that could affect your driving.
- Read the information on the package of any over-the-counter medicine you take. Any stimulant, diet pill, tranquillizer or sedative may affect your driving. Even allergy and cold remedies may have ingredients that could affect your driving.
- Drugs and any amount of alcohol together can have dangerous effects, even several days after you have taken the drug. Do not take a chance - ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Practice safe snowmobiling

Driving a snowmobile requires the same attention and alertness that driving any other kind of vehicle does. You must have complete control of your reflexes. If you are a beginner, practise until you can handle the basic driving skills.

Learn how to control your balance on turns by using your weight to control your movements and leaning in the direction you want to turn. Position your body on the snowmobile in a way that will give you the most comfort and control for the conditions in which you are driving. On level ground, sit or kneel with both knees on the seat. On uneven or bumpy ground, stand on the running boards with your knees slightly bent.

Always take the time to plan your route before you ride and make sure others in your group know the route as well. If you must stop on the trail, always select a location where you will be visible and pull over to the right as far as possible. If you are riding in a group, you should park the snowmobiles in single file and leave the vehicles running so you are visible at night.

On hard-packed snow or ice, reduce your speed, because stops and turns are harder to make and you will require greater distance to complete them. When your snowmobile is trapped in deep snow, remember to turn off the motor before you try to get it out of the snow.

Every time you travel on ice, you are risking your safety and that of your passenger. Watch out for pressure cracks that are much more difficult to spot at night. If you are in an unfamiliar area, ask local authorities or residents about the ice conditions, inlets, outlets, springs, fast-moving current or other hazards. Listen to local radio broadcast warnings by the Ontario Provincial Police about ice conditions. If you must drive over frozen lakes or rivers, you should consider using a buoyant snowmobile suit. It might save your life.

Whenever you are driving, always watch for trails and highway, signs and obey them. Always remain on the right-hand side of the trail when riding and exercise caution on hills and curves. You should always be prepared for the unexpected. Exercise caution at road and rail crossings. Trucks and trains often kick up large clouds of snow that greatly reduce visibility. Carry a cell phone with you when riding.



III. Snowmobile signals and signs

Hand signals

Signals tell others what you want to do, giving them a chance to slow down, stop or prepare to turn. Use hand signals to signal before stopping, slowing down suddenly or turning. Give the correct signal well before the action and make sure others can see it. These illustrations show nationally recognized hand and arm signals.

Left turn

Extend your left arm straight out and point in the direction of the turn.



Right turn

Raise your left arm to shoulder height with elbow bent.



Stop

Extend your right arm straight up over your head with the palm of the hand flat.



Slowing

Extend your left arm out and down the side of your body. Flap your arm up and down to signal caution.

Oncoming snowmobiles

Raise your left arm to shoulder height with your elbow bent and motion left to right over your head, pointing to the right side of the trail.

Snowmobiles following

Raise left arm to shoulder height with your elbow bent. Motion front to back over your shoulder with your thumb, like a hitchhiker.

Last snowmobile in line

With elbow bent, raise your left forearm to shoulder height and clench your fist.

Trail signs

Trail signs give you important information about what to do in certain situations. Here are some common trail signs and what they mean. Because trail signs are not official traffic signs, they may vary in shape and colour. Watch for signs such as these and obey them.

Stop

A stop sign is eight-sided and has a red background with white letters. Come to a complete stop.



Stop ahead

Be prepared to stop for a stop sign up ahead.



Snowmobiling permitted

A sign with a green circle means you may do the activity shown inside the ring. You may drive a snowmobile in the area where this sign is displayed.



Snowmobiling restricted

A sign with a red circle with a line through it means the activity shown inside the ring is not allowed. Do not drive a snowmobile in the area where this sign is displayed.



Direction signs

These signs give you information about the direction in which you should travel on the trail. Do as the sign tells you.



Traffic signs

If you are driving your snowmobile along or across any public roads, you need to be aware of traffic signs and what they mean. The following traffic signs relate specifically to snowmobiles.

Snowmobiles permitted

Snowmobiles are allowed on the road or highway where this sign is displayed.



Snowmobiles restricted

Snowmobiles are not allowed on the road or highway where this sign is displayed.



Snowmobiles crossing

These signs warn drivers that snowmobiles are allowed to cross the road.



Wind-chill factor

It is important to consider the wind-chill factor when planning outdoor winter activities.

Wind-chill factor is the combined effect of wind and low temperature, which makes it feel much colder on a windy day in winter than is the actual temperature. This is caused by the faster cooling effect of the wind. For example, if the actual temperature is -10°C and the wind speed is 40 km/h, the temperature feels like -31°C .

You need to be aware of the wind-chill factor so that you can dress appropriately. Outer layers that are waterproof and multiple under-layers of clothing provide added protection, and allow you to take clothing off if temperatures increase. Also, make sure that young passengers are properly dressed and that their hands and faces are well protected.

Wearing a balaclava will reduce the risk of exposure. Prolonged exposure to cold wind-chill temperatures can lead to hypothermia.

The chart below can help you calculate wind chill so you will be aware of potentially dangerous conditions.

Wind-chill calculation chart

		Air Temperature in °C											
		5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25	-30	-35	-40	-45	-50
Observed wind speed at 10m elevation, in km/h	5	4	-2	-7	-13	-19	-24	-30	-36	-41	-47	-53	-58
	10	3	-3	-9	-15	-21	-27	-33	-39	-45	-51	-57	-63
	15	2	-4	-11	-17	-23	-29	-35	-41	-48	-54	-60	-66
	20	1	-5	-12	-18	-24	-31	-37	-43	-49	-56	-62	-68
	25	1	-6	-12	-19	-25	-32	-38	-45	-51	-57	-64	-70
	30	0	-7	-13	-20	-26	-33	-39	-46	-52	-59	-65	-72
	35	0	-7	-14	-20	-27	-33	-40	-47	-53	-60	-66	-73
	40	-1	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-54	-61	-68	-74
	45	-1	-8	-15	-21	-28	-35	-42	-48	-55	-62	-69	-75
	50	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-49	-56	-63	-70	-76
	55	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57	-63	-70	-77
	60	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-43	-50	-57	-64	-71	-78
	65	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58	-65	-72	-79
	70	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-59	-66	-73	-80
	75	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-59	-66	-73	-80
	80	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60	-67	-74	-81

Approximate Thresholds:

Wind-chill at or below -25°C: risk of frostbite in prolonged exposure.

Wind-chill at or below -35°C: frostbite possible in 10 minutes; warm skin, suddenly exposed. (Shorter time if skin is cool at the start.)

Wind-chill at or below -60°C: frostbite possible in less than two minutes; warm skin, suddenly exposed. (Shorter time if skin is cool at the start.)

Take a snowmobile driver-training course

If you are between 12 and 15 years of age, or if you are 16 and older and do not have a valid Ontario driver's licence, you must successfully pass a snowmobile driver-training

course to get your operator's licence. A snowmobile driver-training course can also be a valuable refresher for licensed and experienced snowmobilers.

The course takes about six hours and is usually held over three days. It covers safe driving practices, snowmobile laws, knowledge of the snowmobile, maintenance, driving positions, survival, first aid, night driving, trail signs, clothing and storage. It also teaches safe and courteous driving habits and skills to help you avoid collisions and property damage.

The training course is offered by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC) in co-operation with the Ministry of Transportation and is offered by club instructors trained by the OFSC. For the location of the nearest OFSC member club offering the course and the cost, contact the OFSC Driver Training Office at 501 Welham Road, Unit 9, Barrie, ON, L4N 8Z6. Phone 705-739-7669 or fax 705-739-5005. You can visit the OFSC website (<http://www.ofsc.on.ca>) .

The snowmobiler's code of ethics

Follow this code of ethics, and you will do your part to make snowmobiling a respectable, fun and safe winter recreation.

1. I will be a good sportsperson and conservationist. I recognize that people judge all snowmobilers by my actions. I will use my influence with other snowmobilers to promote responsible conduct.
2. I will not litter trails or camping areas. I will not pollute lakes or streams. I will carry out what I carried in.
3. I will not damage living trees, shrubs or other natural features.
4. I will respect other people's property and rights.
5. I will lend a helping hand when I see someone in distress.
6. I will make myself and my snowmobile available to assist in search-and-rescue operations.
7. I will not interfere with or harass hikers, skiers, snowshoers, people who are ice fishing or participating in other winter sports. I will respect their rights to enjoy recreation facilities.
8. I will know and obey all federal, provincial and local rules regulating the operation of

snowmobiles in areas where I use my snowmobile.

9. I will not harass wildlife. I will avoid areas posted for the protection of wildlife.
10. I will not drive where snowmobiles are prohibited.

Summary

By the end of this section, you should know:

- The licensing requirements to operate a snowmobile on roads and trails
- The importance of checking your snowmobile, preparing for trips and wearing proper protective gear
- Where you can and cannot drive your snowmobile
- The dangers of alcohol and driving on frozen lakes and rivers
- Hand signals, trail signs and traffic signs specific to snowmobiles

Driving an Off-road vehicle

Off-road vehicles (sometimes called ORVs) are any two- or three-wheeled motorized vehicles, as well as specific vehicles with four or more wheels as prescribed by regulation, intended for recreational use. Examples of off-road vehicles include all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), two-up ATVs, side-by-side ATVs, utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), amphibious ATVs, off-road motorcycles and dune buggies.

Note: Electric and motorized scooters (commonly known as go-peds) and pocket bikes (which are miniature motorcycles about two feet in height and with a speed of 70-80 km/h) are not off-road vehicles and, as such, cannot be registered as off-road vehicles. These vehicles also do not comply with motorcycle standards and cannot be registered as motorcycles.

I. Getting ready to drive an off-road vehicle

What you need to drive an off-road vehicle in Ontario

You must be 12 years of age or older to drive an off-road vehicle, except on land occupied by the vehicle owner or under the close supervision of an adult. Direct and close supervision by an adult is recommended.

While off-road vehicles are generally not allowed on public roads, there are some exceptions. (See the section "Where you can and cannot drive.")

Registering and insuring your off-road vehicle

Off-road vehicles must be registered with the Ministry of Transportation at a ServiceOntario centre. This applies to both new and used vehicles. You must be 16 years or older to register an off-road vehicle, and you must be able to prove you own the vehicle.

If you buy a new off-road vehicle, you must get a certificate of sale from the dealer.

If you buy or transfer ownership of a used off-road vehicle, you must present the signed vehicle portion of the vehicle permit from the previous owner.

You must pay a fee to register your off-road vehicle. After registering, you will be given a vehicle permit and licence plate. You should carry the vehicle permit at all times unless you are operating the vehicle on land occupied by the owner of the vehicle.

If you have a two- or three-wheeled vehicle, attach the licence plate to the front of the vehicle in plain view. If you have a vehicle with four or more wheels, attach the licence plate to the rear of the vehicle.

You must register your vehicle within six days of becoming the owner. If you change your address, you must notify the Ministry of Transportation within six days of the change. You may do this in person at a ServiceOntario centre, by mail to the Ministry of Transportation, P.O. Box 9200, Kingston, ON K7L 5K4, or on the ServiceOntario website
.....
(<http://www.serviceontario.ca>) .

If you are driving your off-road vehicle anywhere other than on the vehicle owner's property, you must also have vehicle liability insurance. You must carry the insurance card with you and show it if requested by a police officer. If someone else uses your off-road vehicle with your consent, you are both responsible for any penalties, damages or injuries that may occur.

The following vehicles do not need to be registered as off-road vehicles: road-building machines, farm vehicles, golf carts and motorized wheelchairs. In addition, off-road vehicles participating in a rally or competition sponsored by a motorcycle association with more than 25 members do not need to be registered for the event.

Wear a helmet

You must wear a motorcycle helmet, as required by the *Highway Traffic Act*, whenever you drive or ride on an off-road vehicle or on any vehicle towed by an off-road vehicle. The only exception is when you operate the vehicle on the property of the vehicle owner. The helmet must meet the standards approved for motorcycle helmets, or motor-assisted vehicle helmets, and must be fastened properly under the chin.

Protect your face and body

Always wear a face shield or goggles. A face shield can help prevent windburn, sunblindness and watering eyes from the wind. It can also protect your eyes from branches and twigs when driving through wooded areas. Wear pants that cover your legs, a long-sleeved shirt or jacket to protect your arms and gloves. Boots should be high enough to cover your ankles. To make yourself more visible to others while driving, wear brightly coloured clothing.

Make sure your vehicle is in good condition

Before every trip, check your vehicle to make sure it is in good working order. Your life may depend upon it. Check the vehicle thoroughly before you start to drive, including the following:

- Check the brake control to make sure it moves freely. Adjust if necessary.
- Check that the throttle opens and closes smoothly in all steering positions.
- Check the condition of the tires and tire pressure.
- Check the fuel lines and connections to make sure there are no leaks.
- Check that you have enough fuel and oil.
- Check that the engine is running smoothly. Make sure the is in neutral before starting the engine.
- Check that your lights are in good working condition.

Before you drive anywhere, read the owner's manual.



Be well prepared for every trip

Carefully preparing for every trip is an important safety measure. Check local weather forecasts and make sure you tell someone where you will be travelling and when you expect to be back. Use the buddy system; drive with others, not alone. Take along a first-aid kit, a vehicle repair kit, an extra ignition key, a drive belt, spark plugs and a rope. On long trips, include a map and a compass (or a GPS unit and know how to use it), flashlight, hunting knife, hatchet, extra fuel and matches in a waterproof box.

II. Safe and responsible off-road vehicle driving

Where you can and cannot drive

You may not drive an off-road vehicle on most public roads in Ontario. This includes the area between the boundary or property lines, including medians, shoulders and ditches.

There are some exceptions:

- You may drive an off-road vehicle directly across some public roads.
- You may drive certain off-road vehicles with three or more wheels along some public roads when using the vehicle for farming, for licensed hunting or for the trapping of fur-bearing animals, provided that the vehicle weighs 450 kilograms or less and does not have an overall width greater than 1.35 metres (excluding mirrors).
- You may drive an off-road vehicle within a provincial or public park if it is permitted by the park authority.
- Emergency personnel, such as police officers and firefighters, who are performing necessary duties in the course of their work or who are responding to an emergency, may drive off-road vehicles on public roads.

There are also exceptions for the category of off-road vehicles known as all-terrain vehicles (ATVs).

If you do drive an off-road vehicle on or across a public road, you must be at least 16 years of age and have a valid Ontario driver's licence (Class G2, M2 or higher).

You may not operate an ATV in such a way as to disrupt or destroy the natural environment, including fish habitats, property and plants or trees.

For more specific information on where you may operate off-road vehicles, and what rules you must follow when doing so, you should refer to the *Highway Traffic Act* and the *Off-road Vehicles Act*.

All-terrain vehicles (ATVs)

All-terrain vehicles are off-road vehicles with the following characteristics: four wheels, all of which are in contact with the ground; steering handlebars; and a seat designed to be straddled by the driver.

There are sections of provincial highways in Ontario where you may drive an ATV on the shoulder, provided the ATV weighs 450 kilograms or less, does not have an overall width greater than 1.35 metres (excluding mirrors), meets the requirements of the federal Motor Vehicle Safety Act and the American National Standards Institute Standard, and is designed to carry only a driver and no passengers. You must travel in the same direction as the traffic using that side of the road. If there is no shoulder, if the shoulder is obstructed or if you are crossing a level railway crossing, you may drive your vehicle on the paved part of the highway. Keep as close as safely possible to the right of the shoulder or edge of the highway as you can.

Where a road or highway falls under the authority of a municipality, the municipality must enact a bylaw for ATVs to be allowed access to the road. If there is no bylaw in place, you cannot drive an ATV on that road. The municipality may also pass bylaws to decide where and when ATVs may be used on these local roads.

For those roads and highways where you are permitted to drive an ATV, you must obey all licensing and operational requirements, and your vehicle must conform to all equipment requirements, as listed in the *Highway Traffic Act* and the *Off-road Vehicles Act*. Remember the following rules:

1. You must have a valid Ontario driver's licence (G2, M2 or higher).
2. You must wear a motorcycle helmet with a chin strap that is securely fastened.

3. You cannot carry passengers on your vehicle.
4. You must drive at speed limits lower than those posted: where the posted speed is 50km/h or less, you must drive 20 km/h or less; where the posted speed is over 50 km/h, you must drive 50 km/h or less.

In general, ATVs are not permitted on controlled-access highways, such as the 400 series highways and most parts of the Trans-Canada Highway, but are allowed access to highways 500 to 899, the 7000 series highways and highways with low traffic volumes.

For more details about which highways ATVs may drive on, please refer to the *Highway Traffic Act*, Ontario Regulation 316/03.



Obey the rules

You must stop if a police officer signals you to do so. You can also be stopped by a landowner when you are driving on private property. If signalled to stop by an authorized person, you must stop and, if asked, properly identify yourself.

Everyone who drives an off-road vehicle without care and attention or without reasonable consideration for other people and property may be charged with careless driving. Other offences, such as dangerous driving and alcohol related offences, apply to drivers of off-road vehicles. When you drive an off-road vehicle on a public road, the *Highway Traffic Act* offences also apply.

Report collisions to the police

You must report to the police immediately any collision on a public highway that results in injury to any person or damage to property apparently exceeding \$2,000.

Do not drink and drive

It is against the law to drive an off-road vehicle when you are impaired by alcohol or drugs.

Drinking and driving is a deadly combination.

Consuming any amount of alcohol before you ride affects your ability to make good decisions. Even one drink can reduce your ability to concentrate and react to things that happen suddenly when you are driving. With more alcohol in your blood, you could have trouble judging distances and your vision may become blurred. Factors like tiredness, your mood, and how long ago you ate and how much, can make a difference in how alcohol affects your driving ability.

The police can stop any driver to determine if alcohol or drug testing is required. They may also do roadside spot checks. When stopped by the police, you may be told to blow into a machine that tests your breath for alcohol, a roadside screening device, or perform physical co-ordination tests. If you fail or refuse to provide a breath sample or to perform the physical co-ordination tests, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

If the reading on the machine shows you have been drinking, you may be taken to a police station for a breathalyzer test. The breathalyzer uses your breath to measure the amount of alcohol in your bloodstream.

If you cannot give a breath sample or it is impractical to obtain a sample of breath, the police officer can require you to provide a blood sample instead.

If the police believe that a driver is impaired because of the consumption of a drug or a combination of alcohol and a drug, they can also require a driver to submit to an evaluation and then require a driver to provide blood, oral fluid or urine samples. If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code.

Driving impaired or with more than 80 milligrams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood (.08) is an offence under the Criminal Code. Even if your blood-alcohol concentration (BAC) is less than .08, you can still be charged with impaired driving under the Criminal Code.

You will receive an immediate 90-day administrative driver's licence suspension if BAC is more than .08 or if you fail or refuse to provide a breath or bodily fluid sample, perform a physical co-ordination test or submit to an evaluation.

If you register in the "warn range" of .05 to .08 on a roadside screening device, you will receive an immediate driver's licence suspension. For a first occurrence, you will be

suspended for three days. For a second occurrence in a five-year period, you will be immediately suspended for seven days and you must undergo a remedial alcohol-education program. For a third or subsequent time in a five-year period, you will be immediately suspended for 30 days, and you must undergo a remedial alcohol-treatment program and have an ignition interlock condition placed on your licence for six months. If you choose not to install an ignition interlock device, you must not drive until the condition is removed from your licence.

If you are 21 years old and under and hold a full-class driver's licence, you must not drive if you have been drinking alcohol. Your blood-alcohol level must be zero. If you are caught driving with alcohol in your blood, you will receive an immediate driver's licence suspension at the roadside for 24 hours and, if convicted, you will face a fine and a 30-day licence suspension.

Drivers of all ages in either Level One or Level Two of Ontario's graduated licensing system must also have a blood-alcohol level of zero when driving. New drivers caught drinking and driving will receive an immediate driver's licence suspension at the roadside for 24 hours and, if convicted, will face a fine and will receive a suspension period as per the Novice Driver Escalating Sanctions scheme. For the first occurrence, you will be suspended for 30 days. For the second occurrence, in a five-year period, you be suspended for 90 days. For the third occurrence in a five-year period, the novice portion of your driver's licence will be cancelled, and you must reapply for a G1 licence.

Novice drivers will also be charged under the Criminal Code if their BAC exceeds .08 and will be issued a "warn range" suspension if they register a BAC from .05 to .08.

Drugs

Any drug that changes your mood or the way you see and feel about the world around you will affect the way you drive. Criminal Code and HTA sanctions apply to drivers impaired by alcohol or a drug.

In circumstances involving possible impairment by a drug or a combination of alcohol and a drug, police can require a driver to perform physical co-ordination tests and to submit to an evaluation and then require a driver to provide blood, oral fluid or urine samples. If you fail or refuse to comply with any of these demands, you will be charged under the Criminal Code. You will also receive an immediate 90-day administrative driver's licence suspension.

Illegal drugs such as marijuana and cocaine are not the only problem. Some drugs that your doctor may prescribe for you and some over-the-counter drugs can also impair your driving. Here are some points you should remember:

- If you use prescription medicines or get allergy shots, ask your doctor about side effects such as dizziness, blurred vision, nausea or drowsiness that could affect your driving.
- Read the information on the package of any over-the-counter medicine you take. Any stimulant, diet pill, tranquillizer or sedative may affect your driving. Even allergy and cold remedies may have ingredients that could affect your driving.
- Drugs and any amount of alcohol together can have dangerous effects, even several days after you have taken the drug. Do not take a chance; ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Do not carry passengers

Do not carry passengers on an off-road vehicle designed for one person. Carrying passengers changes the weight distribution of the vehicle and limits your ability to shift position on the vehicle for control and stability.

Practice safe driving skills

Driving an off-road vehicle is different than driving any other type of vehicle, and takes more skill than you might think. Be sure to read your owner's manual before you begin to drive.

If you are a beginner, practise driving your vehicle in an open area that is free of obstacles, until you become skilled at handling it. Choose ground that is uniform, either dirt, sand or snow. Avoid paved surfaces when driving an off-road vehicle. ATVs are designed for off-road use and are more difficult to manoeuvre on paved surfaces. When driving, keep both feet on the footrests at all times. Do not try to stabilize a tipping vehicle by putting your foot down. You could run over your foot or leg.

Be extremely careful driving through water. Driving fast across unknown water is dangerous. Hidden rocks or holes could throw you off the vehicle and cause serious injury or drowning. First, check that the water is not too deep. Drive slowly and carefully so you can steer around rocks and other obstacles.

Always use a flag mast when driving in dunes and hills. Remember that you need a running start to climb most hills. Be extra cautious when driving among pedestrians, horseback riders, sunbathers or bicyclists.

Read the Snowmobiler's Code of Ethics, and follow it when driving your off-road vehicle.

Summary

By the end of this section, you should know:

- The licensing requirements to operate an off-road vehicle on roads and trails
- The importance of checking your off-road vehicle, preparing for trips and wearing proper protective gear
- Where you can and cannot drive your off-road vehicle
- The dangers of alcohol and driving an off-road vehicle