

When you start, set the new driver at Ease:

They are nervous (no matter how they behave) and eager, and if you show signs of being nervous, they notice it. In-vehicles practice takes the form of two distinct areas.

1. **Static Practice** is the student just sitting in the vehicle getting familiar with the cockpit area. Seat, Mirrors, Head restraint, Steering and Vehicle Controls, to the point they can adjust, touch and use the controls as required and they do not become a distraction when actually driving.
2. **Dynamic Practice** is the student actually moving and controlling the vehicle, regardless of being in a private parking area or on the road.

Vehicle Familiarization:

1. Show Instrument Panel / Dashboard: Basics to begin with, i.e. Speedometer, signals, horn, wipers
2. Controls: **Tip:** after 1 or 2 lessons, get them to identify controls with eyes closed to get familiar with controls, for example when they put on the signals, they don't have to look at the actual switch.
3. Seating Position for student the **pre-drive checks** are very important.
Tip: if the driver is not sitting correctly they seriously lack control and comfort while driving.
4. Seating Position for **you:** Sit in an 'open' position in the passenger seat that allows **you the co driver** to see the **road ahead**, the **learner driver** and the **left blind spot** of the vehicle. Also adjust your outside right mirror to see the right blind spot. Seat Belt Usage Always. Does the vehicle have front / rear wheel drive or all-wheel with traction control, A.B.S or regular brakes?
It is important the student driver knows the type of vehicle and its characteristics.

Organization of a *dedicated practise:

- a) Choose an appropriate uncomplicated route to begin with; possibly drive them or be familiar with area yourselves.
Depending on what the student is learning at the time, such as *lane changes*, a long straight road with 4 lanes and lights would be appropriate?
- b) Decide what you're going to practise (see driving skills page) and that the driver understands the objectives and review necessary skills from previous practise. Ask the instructor what should be practised.
- c) One on one instruction, if possible try to keep it between you and the new driver as it's not a good idea to bring family members along (including pets).
- d) Keep practise lessons short: You only require about 3/4 of an hour to one hour so don't prolong it too much.

Leave Personal Problems at Home / Keep Focussed on Driving.

No distractions or talking too much about other matters, i.e. Homework etc.

Try not to let other road user's impatience influence you.

Do not eat, read, or listen to music when coaching the new driver, focus on the driving and their response.

2.

Basic to Complex:

Start easy (warm up) especially if it's been some time since you were last out driving.

Drive straight, then on to lane changes

If it's your first time and you are nervous, then a parking lot is ok if it is to work on pedal controls to gain smoothness on starting and stopping.

Until the student gets confident try to stay away from night driving if possible.

If practise is parking find a quiet lot where impatient drivers will not disturb you as you go through the various steps.

Provide for Repetition:

If the new driver makes a mistake, repeat the manoeuvre, and guide them through it, step by step.

Pull over and park before explanations or discussions. Permit them to make mistakes if the mistake does not represent undue risk.

VISUAL SKILLS / Look Further Ahead When driving in the city, the student should be trying to see about 1 ½ to 2 blocks ahead and as far ahead as they can when highway driving. This distance is vital for the new driver to plan you're a response in time to any potential hazards they may see. They should try to maintain a following distance from the vehicle in front of them of 3 seconds in the city, more on the highway, with this distance altered to suit road and weather conditions. Anticipate any Hazards They should be encouraged to look all around their vehicle for potential problems while driving.

This can be done by glancing (not looking, there is a difference) in the rear-view mirror every 3 to 5 seconds and checking traffic and other road users beside them by moving their head and shoulder checking when necessary.

Tip#1: Ask the driver questions about where they are looking or what they see, to point out any potential problems, this way you will be able to guide their awareness.

Tip#2: Skills are often broken down into the '**before, during, and after**' parts of an action. Yet, many practices simply focus on the 'during' part of skill execution. Being pro-active and looking ahead to the potential 'problem' may help to give the driver a solution or picture to what might occur next.

Observe the following: other vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, signs, Road conditions, construction, motorcycles, animals etc. New drivers should ask the "What if" question and decide on a course of action. e.g. "What if the car in front turns or slows down?"

3.

We are teaching the students how-to drive, in today's society, not how to pass a road test, test preparation comes later.

Driving in the lane that gives them the best view ahead, the smoothest flow and most efficient speed. Always keep your eyes moving, but don't stare at things; glance, as you may steer in the direction you are staring. Move your eyes at least every two to three seconds. Glancing at parked vehicles for: drivers, passengers (door openers), exhaust, (any sign of life) Check the ground around and underneath for feet or shadows. Scan intersections with eyes Left - Centre - Right- before going through, **as the first 2 seconds entering an intersection are the most dangerous.**

SPATIAL SKILLS: Try to maintain a space all around your vehicle and do not be 'boxed in' which is one of the most common causes of collisions. Having SPACE around the vehicle is the most important skill in driving and one of the most difficult to obtain when sharing the road with other road users.

If you can create space when driving, remember, someone will move into that space, it is a natural law and should be understood with that in mind, regardless if you are waiting behind other vehicles, following other vehicles, or have other vehicles following you.

But, because that is the 'law of Proxemics' does not mean it is correct. That is why developing an all-round awareness (visual tracking) coupled with good peripheral vision, (two of the fundamental skills good drivers possess) will elevate an ordinary driver into a good driver.

If first in line at traffic lights / stop signs, wait a couple of seconds to create a 'space cushion' and scan the intersection before moving.

Stop at least one car length behind another vehicle at lights/stop sign etc. as the old "see their tires" doesn't work in this day age of low front profile vehicles and never enter an intersection on a green light unless there is room on the other side to move into.

Note: These are just some simple skills the new driver must attain and make a habit which is not easy in this day of 'monkey see, monkey do' driving'.

It's easy to acquire bad driving habits; you just must look at the driving behavior beside and around you to understand. The practices mentioned above will give a new driver good grounding and confidence as well as minimize their chances of a collision.

4.

CO-DRIVERS: Be specific in your instructions: Give all instructions well in advance. Be clear in where you are going. e.g. "At the next intersection I want you to turn right / or / when you think it's safe I want you to lane change"/ another way is to say, "do you see the lights up ahead I want you to turn left at them" In confirming a question, say "that is correct" This will prevent confusion.

Verbalising Procedures: When a little more experienced, ask the driver to tell you what they observe up ahead. Asking questions is a good habit to get specific feedback, an example would be: "What is the speed limit" / "what kind of lights up ahead?" Another form of commentary is when **you** are driving, you can ask questions of the student, that way they have no distractions while assessing driving conditions.

Positive Reinforcement: This is most important to the student. They are nervous and trying to please you. Students get enough negativity in their lifetime. If it's sincere, have empathy with them. Ask them to evaluate their own performance at the end of the practice.

Adverse Conditions: Night Driving: Driving in Rain: High Winds: Winter Driving etc. Fatigue, Visibility and Traction problems exist, 16% of drivers drive at night but 30% crash at night. Depth perception is more difficult at night and contrast difficult to judge.

Safe Speed for Conditions: Mother Nature and the Environment you are driving in set the speed. Under certain conditions the novice driver will go faster than they intend or realise, especially on a long straight road, so by asking the question "what is the speed here" can control the driver without stressing.

Discuss Alcohol and Drug Usage This is something that must be talked about at home as far as I am concerned there is zero tolerance. We talk about it in the classroom and the responsibilities of the driver and the graduated driving rules. What if they go to a party and have the car etc., can they call home for a ride; discussing these issues early can prevent problems later. Also, who is allowed in the vehicle with them when they obtain their licence; again, see the graduated driving rules for teens.

***Dedicated Practise** means taking them out driving and working on the specific skills and techniques they have learnt from their instructor. This practise does not have to be any more than an hour all together, 3 or 4 times a week.

'Destination' driving (students drive themselves to school or sports game) doesn't constitute practise in the sense defined above, the ten hours learning in-car from the instructor is not enough time to give them the proper experience to prepare them for the driving task ahead. Family members who put time in with the student's driving and talk with the instructor regarding feedback make a huge difference to the students' progress, safety, and welfare.