

The Graduated Licensing System in Ontario

What's NEW!

Graduated Licensing

- *Increasing penalties for not following licence conditions*

Fully licensed drivers

- *Zero alcohol condition for all drivers 21 and under*



G1

G2

M1

M2



Ontario

How to get your driver's licence in Ontario



You have to be at least 16 years old. Before applying for a car licence, read the Official Driver's Handbook. For a motorcycle licence, read the Official Motorcycle Handbook.

Both of these handbooks can be purchased at Driver and Vehicle Licence Issuing Offices, DriveTest Centres, at some retailers and online at www.mto.gov.on.ca.

When you apply for a Level One (car or motorcycle) licence at a DriveTest Centre, your eyesight and your understanding of the rules of the road will be tested. You will also be asked some questions about your health to determine whether you meet the medical requirements for driving in Ontario.

If you pass both tests and meet the medical requirements you will get your Level 1 (G1 or M1) driver's licence valid for up to 5 years.

It is highly recommended that you complete each level of the graduated licensing system as soon after the minimum time period as you feel ready to do so safely. Why? Your G1 or G2 licence expires 5 years after the date you got your G1.

If you have not passed the G1 and G2 road tests and earned a full G licence by this time, you will have to redo the knowledge test to get a G1 and/or re-take the G1 road test to get your G2.

NEW!

Increasing penalties for not following graduated licensing conditions. See Frequently Asked Questions section.

G

Level One



G1

G1 lasts at least 1 year but not more than 5 years. The time can be reduced to 8 months if you successfully complete a ministry approved driver education course.

At the end of G1 you must pass the G1 road test to move to Level Two - G2

As a G1 driver, you can begin driving cars, vans, SUVs, or small trucks with these 5 conditions:

- 1) You must always have an accompanying driver in the front passenger seat. They must:
 - be fully licensed and have at least 4 years of driving experience*
 - have blood alcohol concentration of less than .05 % (Ontario's roadside suspension limit). Accompanying drivers 21 years of age and under must have zero per cent to assume driving duties and
 - be the only other person in the front seat

*Proof of 4 years driving experience is indicated on an Ontario driver's licence by 4 dots on the front of the card.

- 2) You must not drink any alcohol if you will be driving. Your blood alcohol concentration must be zero.
- 3) You must not drive between 12:00 midnight and 5:00 in the morning.
- 4) Everyone in your vehicle must have a seatbelt. One person per belt.
- 5) You must not drive on Ontario's 400-series highways or high speed expressways, such as the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) or Don Valley Parkway (see Driver's Handbook for a complete list).

G

Level Two



G2

New drivers must hold a G2 licence for a minimum of 12 months before they can attempt the G2 road test.

At this level, you have more privileges because of your driving experience.

You can drive at any time, day or night. You can drive on your own and on any Ontario road with only these 3 important conditions:

- You must not drink any alcohol if you will be driving. Your blood alcohol concentration must be zero.
 - Each person must have a working seatbelt so your vehicle is not overcrowded and everyone is protected. One person. One seatbelt.
 - Teenage G2 drivers must limit the number of passengers under the age of 20 late at night.
- ✓ For the first six months, G2 drivers aged 19 and under cannot carry more than one passenger aged 19 and under between midnight and 5 a.m.*
- ✓ After the first six months, G2 drivers aged 19 and under cannot carry more than three passengers aged 19 and under between midnight and 5 a.m.*

*Does not apply if your only front seat passenger is a fully licensed driver with four or more years of driving experience, or if the young passengers are your immediate family.

NEW!

It is now law that all drivers 21 years of age and under, including full G and M class licensed drivers, must have a blood alcohol level of zero.

M

Level One Level Two



M1 lasts at least 60 days and is valid for up to 90 days. At the end of M1 you must pass a ministry-approved road test to move to M2 (Level 2).

M2 lasts 22 months or 18 months with a ministry-approved safety course.

M1

After passing the Knowledge and Vision tests, you will be given an M1 (Level 1) licence. As a new rider, you can begin learning to ride a motorcycle with these four conditions:

- You must not drink any alcohol if you will be riding. Your blood alcohol concentration must be zero.
- You may only ride during daylight hours (between a half-hour before sunrise and a half-hour after sunset).
- You may only ride on roads with speed limits of 80 km/h or less and on highways 11, 17, 61, 69, 71, 101, 144, and 655.
- You must not carry any passengers.

M2

In M2 (Level 2), you now have gained experience and skills to carry a passenger and ride at any time, day or night on any Ontario road.

- You must not drink any alcohol if you will be riding. Your blood alcohol concentration must be zero.

Motor Scooters & Mopeds



Graduated licensing rules apply to motor scooter and moped drivers. Remember, the law requires drivers to wear a motorcycle helmet.

There's a Class M licence for driving motor scooters (limited-speed motorcycles) and mopeds (motor-assisted bicycles). The licence shows Class M or M2 with an "L" condition allowing you to drive a motor scooter or moped, but not a motorcycle.

Motor scooter and moped drivers can take road tests on their own vehicle. You cannot drive a moped with a G licence. Moped drivers must have a Class M licence or the conditional Class M licence.

To get a Class M with the "L" condition licence, you must pass:

- ✓ M written test – get M1 90-day licence.
- ✓ M1 road test on a motor scooter or moped – get M2 licence with "L" condition.
- ✓ M2 road test on a motor scooter or moped – get M licence with "L" condition.

Motor Scooter & Moped Road Test



Due to the limited speed of motor scooters and mopeds, you will not be asked to drive on a freeway but you will be tested on roads with speed limits of 50 km/h.

Your motor scooter or moped must be mechanically fit and able to maintain a safe speed on a 50 km/h road.

For more information on motor scooter and moped licensing and testing visit:

www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/driver/lsm.htm

For information on Ministry of Transportation approved safety courses for motor scooters and mopeds visit:

www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/driver/courses.htm

Frequently Asked Questions



What is Graduated Licensing?

Ontario's Graduated Licensing System (GLS) allows new drivers to earn full driving privileges in 2 stages. In the first stage, G1/M1(car or motorcycle) Level 1, drivers learn and practise under conditions that reduce the risk of collision.

Once new drivers/riders have gained more experience, they must pass a road test to enter the second stage, G2/M2 Level 2, with more privileges. At the end of Level 2, a second road test must be passed to earn a full G or M driver's licence.

* Please see G1/G2 and M1/M2 sections for licence conditions and minimum time periods.

Why do we need Graduated Licensing?

Graduated Licensing has helped to significantly reduce the number of collisions novice drivers have on Ontario's roads. A comprehensive evaluation covering the first five years of the program showed that the fatal and injury collision risk of novice drivers was reduced by 37 per cent.

Graduated Licensing is one way of reducing the risks new drivers face – a way to prevent collisions and save lives.

How does the program work?

New drivers of passenger vehicles learn to drive with five important conditions in Level 1. Drivers earn more privileges by passing a road test to enter Level 2. At the end of 12 months in Level 2, they can earn a full driver's licence by passing another road test.

New motorcycle riders learn to ride with 4 conditions in Level 1, which lasts at least 60 days. They must pass a road test to enter Level 2 with more privileges. They earn a full licence when they pass a skills test after 18 to 22 months in Level 2.

Can I shorten the time it takes to get a full car or motorcycle licence?

Yes. You can reduce the time it takes to get a full licence by completing a ministry-approved driver education course. Car drivers reduce their minimum time in G1 by completing the course. Motorcycle riders reduce their minimum time in M2 to 18 months by completing a ministry-approved safety course in either M1 or M2.

Drivers and riders must pass the appropriate road test to move to the next level.

What is a ministry-approved driver education course?

A ministry-approved driver education course for car drivers is one that:

- Gives you a minimum of 25 hours classroom and 10 hours in-car teaching (12 hours for manual transmission).
- Gives you a student record which is the official course completion document bearing the logo of the Government of Ontario.

Many commercial driving schools and all high schools with driver education programs offer Ministry of Transportation approved Beginner Driver Education courses. Shop carefully because only a ministry-approved course will allow you to shorten the time it takes to earn full licence privileges. For ministry – approved motorcycle rider education courses, contact your local community college or call the Ministry of Transportation.

What should accompanying drivers do?

Accompanying drivers should refer to the Official Driver's Handbook and the Teen Driver Guide to:

- Help new drivers develop their skills, remind them of the rules of the road and warn them of dangers they may not see.
- Advise new drivers about safe, courteous driving and not allow other passengers to distract the driver.

Accompanying drivers are there to take over driving if you need to use a 400-series highway or continue a trip after midnight. Since they may have to drive, they must have a blood alcohol (BAC) concentration of less than .05%. Accompanying drivers 21 and under must have zero per cent to assume driving duties.

Does the time spent in Level 1 and Level 2 count toward the 4 years of experience you need to be an accompanying driver?

Yes, this experience counts.

Why can't I drive on high-speed expressways in Level 1?

High-speed collisions cause more damage than those at lower speeds. That's why it makes sense to reduce the risks while you practise in G1 or M1. When you have more skill, you'll have a better chance of reacting quickly to avoid collisions. There are always roads you can use instead of 400-series highways and expressways, but if you do need to use a high-speed road, your accompanying driver can take over. You may practise on high-speed roads with a licensed driving instructor.

Why must there be a seatbelt for every passenger?

Seatbelts are the best way to avoid injury in a collision. This condition ensures that the vehicle is not overcrowded and that everyone is protected in the case of a collision.

Why can't I driver after midnight in Level 1?

Staying off the road when the risks are highest is a good way to avoid collisions. About half of the fatal collisions involving new drivers happen at night. People are tired and it's harder to see. These factors put lives in danger especially for new drivers who are still developing the skills required to avoid collisions.

NEW! What happens if I break one of the conditions of my licence?

As of August 1, 2010, if the police stop you for any reason, the officer checking your licence will see that you are a G1, G2, M1 or M2 driver. If you are charged with and convicted of:

- Breaking any of your graduated licensing conditions,
- Highway Traffic Act offences that result in 4 or more demerit points, or
- Received a court order for any Highway Traffic Act offences that would have resulted in 4 or more demerit points,

you will be subject to increasing penalties under the Novice Driver Escalating Sanctions program.

NEW! What is the Novice Driver Escalating Sanctions Program?

Each time you are convicted of any of the 3 scenarios described above, the sanction applied against your licence is escalated as follows:

- 1st conviction or condition violation – 30 day suspension.
- 2nd conviction or condition violation – 90day suspension.
- 3rd conviction or condition violation – your novice licence class will be cancelled, any existing fees paid or credit earned for driving experience will be forfeited and you will need to re-apply as a new driver.

These sanctions are designed to provide a greater incentive to new drivers to obey the conditions of GLS and the rules of the road.

Why is there a late-night passenger restriction for teenage G2 drivers?

Teen drivers are 3 times more likely to have a serious crash when driving with 3 or more teen passengers. This restriction keeps teens mobile, but also safer.

NEW! What is the new Zero BAC initiative for young drivers 21 years of age and under and what are the penalties for violating Zero BAC?

As of August 1, 2010, if you are a fully licensed driver who is 21 years of age or under and caught with alcohol in your blood, you will receive an immediate 24-hour roadside driver licence suspension and if convicted could face a fine of \$60 to \$500 and a 30 day licence suspension. This is in addition to the suspensions and consequences that all drivers face at higher BAC levels.

For more information, call

ServiceOntario
1-800-268-4686
or 416-235-4686 in GTA
TTY: 1-866-471-8929
or 905-704-2426 in Niagara

www.mto.gov.on.ca