

10 THINGS YOU SHOULD DO

BEFORE YOUR DRIVING EXAM

You'll pass.
Guaranteed!





Since Driving-Tests began in 2010,
we've received feedback from more than
15,000 test-takers about their experiences
with the official knowledge exams.

Many people arrive at the DMV overconfident and underprepared, missing simple steps that could help them pass their knowledge test. Those who succeeded often followed similar preparation strategies. Here are 10 steps we recommend to better prepare for your knowledge exam.

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Get things in order

- Proof of Identity and Residency:** Most states require you to bring proof of your identity and residency in your state. This typically includes a government-issued ID and utility bills or bank statements.
- Social Security Card:** If you are eligible for a Social Security number, you'll likely need to bring your Social Security card.
- Driver's Education Certificate:** If you have completed a driver's education course, bring your certificate of completion.
- Vision Test:** See an eye doctor if you're concerned that your vision isn't good enough to pass the vision exam. You must bring eyeglasses or contact lenses for the vision screening if you require them.
- Consent for Minors:** If you are under 18 years of age, bring proof of consent from your parent or guardian for supervised driving. This may include a signed form or document, possibly notarized, depending on your state's requirements. Your parent or guardian might also need to accompany you to the DMV.
- Organ Donor Information:** If you decide to register as an organ donor, this can usually be done at the DMV when applying for or renewing your license.
- Check Specific State Requirements:** It's crucial to consult your state's official DMV website or driving manual for specific documents and additional requirements.



At least one week before the knowledge exam, gather everything you'll need to take to the DMV with you.

Prepare your mind and your body

- Health Check:** Assess your health before the exam. If you're sick or suffering from a severe headache, it might impair your ability to focus and recall information. Consider rescheduling the exam if you're not feeling well, as being at your best is crucial for success.
- Rest:** Get a good night's sleep. Aim for seven to nine hours of quality sleep. Being well-rested is key to mental clarity and alertness during the exam.
- Avoid Stimulants and Stress:** On the night before the exam, steer clear of activities that can overstimulate your mind, such as suspenseful TV shows, exciting movies, video games, or heated social media debates. These can interfere with your ability to wind down and get restful sleep.
- Calm Evening Routine:** Instead of cramming all night, choose calming activities like reading something light or practicing relaxation techniques. This helps settle your mind and prepares it for the next day's challenge.
- Set Multiple Alarms:** Ensure you wake up on time by setting multiple alarms. This prevents oversleeping and reduces stress on the morning of your exam.
- Morning Preparation:** On the day of the exam, give yourself plenty of time to get ready. Have a nutritious breakfast to fuel your brain and leave early to avoid any last-minute rush that could increase anxiety.
- Review Lightly:** If you feel the need to review, do so lightly in the morning. Go over key points or summaries rather than trying to absorb new information. This can boost your confidence without overwhelming you.

Start your day off right

- Well-Balanced Breakfast:** Opt for a breakfast that combines proteins, healthy fats, and carbohydrates to fuel your brain and body. Good choices include eggs, whole-grain toast, yogurt, fruits, and nuts. This mix helps sustain energy levels and concentration without causing sluggishness.
- Limit Caffeine:** While a small cup of coffee might help wake you up, avoid consuming too much caffeine as it can heighten anxiety and make you jittery. If you're sensitive to caffeine, consider alternatives like herbal tea or a decaffeinated beverage.
- Morning Exercise:** Engage in light exercise such as a brisk walk, stretching, or yoga. This can boost blood circulation to your brain and help ease nerves. Exercise is also effective in reducing stress hormones and can enhance your mood and alertness.
- Relaxation Techniques:** If you experience test anxiety, incorporate relaxation techniques into your morning routine. Practices like deep breathing, meditation, or progressive muscle relaxation can calm your mind and reduce stress.
- Mental Preparation:** Spend some quiet time visualizing success at the test or reviewing key points in a relaxed manner. Avoid last-minute cramming, as this can increase anxiety.
- Plan Your Journey:** Make sure to know the route to the testing center and allow extra time to get there so you won't have to rush. Arriving a bit early can give you time to settle and compose yourself before the test begins.
- Avoid Additional Stressors:** Keep your morning as calm as possible. Avoid engaging in stressful activities or conversations. Focus on positive thoughts and stay confident in your preparation.

Review the key topics one last time

- License Requirements and Restrictions:** Understand who can get a license, the requirements, and the restrictions (like learner permits and provisional licenses).
- Road Signs and Signals:** Recognize regulatory signs, warning signs, informational signs, and pavement markings.
- Safe Driving Practices:** This covers topics like turning, parking, sharing the road, and the impact of alcohol and drugs on driving.
- Special Situations:** Be prepared for questions about driving in adverse weather, handling emergencies, and specific rules for motorcycles and large vehicles.

Wear appropriate clothing for the knowledge exam

- Dress Appropriately:** Choose clothing that suits the weather and is comfortable for sitting for extended periods. Avoid overly tight or loose clothing that might distract you during the test.
- Look Presentable:** Passing the test might lead to having your photo taken for your permit or license. Therefore, opt for a neat appearance.
- Carry Necessary Items:** Make sure to bring all required documents and items specified by your state's DMV, such as your identification, proof of residence, and any necessary forms.
- Use the Restroom:** Visit the bathroom before the test starts to avoid any discomfort or distractions during the exam.

Read each exam question intelligently

- Read Carefully:** Always read each question at least twice. This helps you fully understand what is being asked, especially when you're nervous or rushed.
- Identify Negatives:** Pay close attention to words like “not,” “except,” or “avoid.” These can completely change what the question is asking. Missing these words can lead to a misunderstanding of the question and an incorrect answer.
- Evaluate Similar Answers:** If you find multiple answers that seem correct, compare them carefully. Look for the most comprehensive option that covers all aspects of the question. There might be a good answer, but there's often a best answer that is more complete or directly addresses the question's specifics.
- Critique Each Option:** Assess the appropriateness of each answer in relation to the question. Consider different driving scenarios where one answer might apply better than another. This can help you eliminate less suitable answers.
- Consider “All of the above”:** Be mindful of the “All of the above” option. If this choice is present, verify the accuracy of all other statements in the options. If they are all correct, then “All of the above” is likely the best choice.

Use the process of elimination

EXAMPLE

If two vehicles arrive at an uncontrolled intersection (i.e., one without signs or signals) from different roadways at about the same time, the vehicle _____ has the right-of-way.

1. on the right

2. on the left

3. that weighs less

4. that signals first

- Identify and Eliminate Outliers:** Start by discarding any answer that seems obviously incorrect or absurd. In the right-of-way question you provided, option (3) "that weighs less" is clearly not relevant to right-of-way rules and should be eliminated first.
- Assess Plausibility:** Evaluate the remaining choices critically. Look for answers that don't align with standard driving rules or practices. In your example, choice (4) "that signals first" is also irrelevant to right-of-way at an intersection because signaling does not determine right-of-way.
- Narrow Down the Choices:** Once you have eliminated the least plausible options, focus on the remaining choices. For the right-of-way question, this leaves you with "on the right" and "on the left." According to standard traffic laws, at an uncontrolled intersection, the vehicle on the right usually has the right-of-way.
- Use Logical Deduction:** Apply logical reasoning based on your knowledge and the typical rules found in the driving manual. This reasoning helps confirm that "on the right" is the correct choice over "on the left."

EXAMPLE

Before passing another vehicle, you should _____

1. drive off the paved or traveled portion of the road.

2. look ahead for road conditions and traffic.

3. pass on the left if the driver is signaling a left turn.

4. do all of the above.

- Eliminate Absurd Choices:** Immediately rule out choice (1) "drive off the paved or traveled portion of the road" because it's unsafe and illegal.
- Dismiss 'All of the Above':** With choice (1) incorrect, you can also eliminate choice (4) "do all of the above."
- Assess Remaining Options:** Between the remaining choices:
 - Choice (2) "look ahead for road conditions and traffic" is universally correct and always a safe practice when passing.
 - Choice (3) "pass on the left if the driver is signaling a left turn" has potential risks and may not always be safe depending on the scenario.
- Choose the Best Answer:** Go with choice (2) as it is the most consistently safe and correct method, applicable in all situations for passing another vehicle.

Take your best guess if necessary

- Stay Calm:** Remember, it's perfectly normal not to know every answer. Getting rattled can affect your performance on subsequent questions.
- Make an Educated Guess:** After you've ruled out the clearly incorrect options, choose the best remaining answer. Often, your instincts or residual knowledge might guide you correctly.
- Move Forward:** Don't dwell on one question. It's important to maintain a steady pace and focus on answering the rest of the questions as best as you can. Lingering too long on one question can eat into the time you might need for others.
- Keep Perspective:** Keep in mind that you don't need a perfect score to pass. Focus on accumulating enough correct answers to meet the passing threshold.



Taking the test in this manner helps manage anxiety and improves your overall test-taking strategy, increasing your chances of success.

Double-check your answers

- Select Confidently:** When you know the correct answer, confidently select it. Trust your preparation and knowledge.
- Pause for Verification:** After selecting an answer, pause for a brief moment. Take a deep breath to center yourself and reduce any anxiety or rush.
- Double-Check:** Verify that you have selected the answer you intended. Look at your selection carefully to ensure it corresponds with what you believe is correct. This helps catch any slips made due to nerves or haste.
- Move On Carefully:** Once you've confirmed your choice, proceed to the next question. Avoid dwelling excessively on any single answer to keep a good pace throughout the exam.

Believe in yourself



Be confident in your ability to handle the challenge of passing the knowledge test. In fact, believing in yourself is necessary to succeed in handling any challenge!

All the best!

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