

Co-pilot

A Guide for Parents of New Drivers



Transportation,
Infrastructure and Energy

Highway Safety Division

Minister's Message

As part of our efforts to improve the safety of Island road users, The Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy has designed this brochure to assist parents and other responsible individuals who accompany new drivers practising their driving skills. New drivers must acquire the required skills to be safe and competent behind the wheel by getting out on the road and driving. Learning to drive is an important milestone. The skills the learner acquires sets the tone for a lifetime of driving. Thorough preparation for the driving task is therefore essential. With your help, we can ensure that they acquire these skills safely.

Thank you for taking time to read Co-Pilot. I am confident that you and your learning driver will find this brochure informative in understanding the challenges and responsibilities of driving.

Minister

Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy

This brochure supplements the
Prince Edward Island Driver's Handbook

**Please Read
this
Co-pilot Brochure
Before
Signing Your
Consent**

**Please Return
Consent Form*
and
Birth Certificate
at
Time of
Written Appointment**

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Introduction

The purpose of this brochure is to outline ways that you, as a parent and/or “co-pilot”, can help your new driver. Helping the new driver will involve time, effort and patience on your part, but it will be well rewarded. You will worry less, knowing that you assisted your new driver in developing a lifelong skill.

This brochure should be used together with the Prince Edward Island Driver’s Handbook, which includes the rules of the road and basic driving instructions. The Co-pilot brochure is also designed for parents of new drivers enrolled in a Driver Education Program, and will be helpful to anyone who is a “co-pilot” to a new driver.



THE CO-PILOT'S RESPONSIBILITY

Be a Good Model

Children often imitate their parents' behaviour so set a good example whenever you drive. Obey all traffic laws; be courteous and drive safely.

Don't Drive After Drinking

Young people are more likely to drink and drive if they have seen their parents drinking and driving.

Use Seat Belts

Just as your new driver will mimic your bad habits, he or she will usually adopt your good habits, such as wearing a seat belt. No matter how short the trip, encourage your new driver to wear a seat belt. Teach your new driver to fasten the belt before starting the engine. If you wear a seat belt each time you get into the car, your new driver may do the same.

Seat belt fines issued to individuals in the Graduated Driver Licensing Program (GDL) will cause the individual's driving privileges to be suspended. Drivers in the GDL Program can also be charged if they have an unbuckled passenger.

Use Headlights or Daytime Running Lights

Many collisions happen simply because drivers fail to see approaching vehicles. When your headlights or daytime running lights are on, your chances of being involved in a collision are reduced by up to 25 percent.

BEFORE YOU SIGN

Any person under 18 years of age in Prince Edward Island requires the signed consent of both parents or legal guardian(s) to receive an instruction permit. If you think that your teenager is not ready to drive, you can and should withhold your consent. A consent can also be withdrawn at any time until the age of 18. Before you give your consent, consider your teenager's:

Attitude

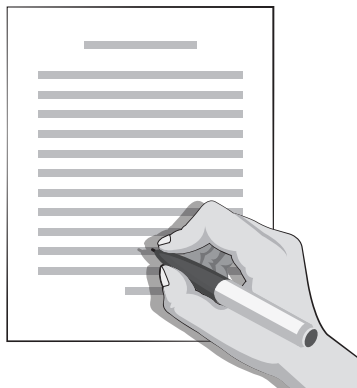
Attitude influences behaviour. The young person with a positive attitude toward people in authority (parents, teachers, police, etc.), pedestrians and other road users will be responsible enough to place safety ahead of personal image and prestige.

Social Responsibility

Adolescents who apply themselves to their school work, show willingness to help others and meet family expectations are more likely to engage in responsible driving.

Intellectual Maturity

Anyone who wants to drive must be able to learn and apply the rules of the road. Beyond this, new drivers must understand the risks involved in driving, recognize the serious consequences of breaking the law and be prepared to act accordingly.



Risk-taking Behaviour

Research suggests that adolescents who engage in certain behaviours that place themselves or others in danger may be at greater risk of involvement in a serious collision.

Emotional Maturity

Anyone who has problems with alcohol or other drugs should not consider driving; by consenting, you would be initiating a lethal combination. Also, a person with poor emotional control should not be given the opportunity to vent anger and frustration behind the wheel of a car.

Financial Resources

Besides gas and upkeep of a vehicle there are expenses for adequate collision and liability insurance. If there is a collision, cost may increase.

Graduated Driver Licensing Program

The Graduated Driver Licensing Program (GDL) is a system of licensing that gives new drivers the opportunity to gradually move into higher risk driving situations after gaining experience in lower risk situations.

The GDL Program has three stages. (Stage 1, 2, and 3). No driver may apply for a Class 1, 2 or 4 Driver's Licence until they have successfully completed the GDL Program.

GDL drivers in stage 3 may apply for a class 3 driver's licence if they are at least 18 years of age and held a class 5 driver's licence for (1) year.

DEVELOPING A SAFE DRIVER

Most young drivers strive for independence, control over their own lives, and acceptance by their friends and family. In our society, obtaining a driver's license often represents an important step in this direction. You can begin by preparing well in advance of the new driver's driving test. There are several things you and your teenager can do to make this a positive experience:

- ▶ By watching you, your teenager was learning to drive long before the first formal driving lesson. Share your experience and concern. Ask for your teenager's opinion and respect it.
- ▶ Driving a motor vehicle is an important responsibility. Decide whether your teenager has shown attitude and behaviours that demonstrate readiness to assume this responsibility. Establish conditions for permitting your teenager to obtain a Driver's Licence.
- ▶ The use of handheld communication devices such as cell phones, Tablets, etc. is prohibited for an individual that is in the Graduated Driver Licensing Program.
- ▶ In many incidences, parents choose to delay their teenager's application for the driving test longer than the mandatory 365-days time period (275 days if enrolled in a driver



education program). Some reasons for doing this are: more practice time is required, poor judgment or poor control and technique. In any case, have your teenager well prepared for the road test to avoid embarrassment or frustration should they not qualify.

- ▶ Determine the most practical method of driving instruction. You may decide that you are the best person to assist your son/daughter; however, it may be that you often become impatient. Perhaps you become anxious whenever someone else drives your car. In such cases, it would be best to have someone more suitable provide the early on-road training and practice sessions. You may wish to enroll your student in a driver education program.
- ▶ Formal lessons will not replace the requirement of follow-up behind-the-wheel practice that a good driving school will expect of their students.
- ▶ Remember, what you teach your new driver should correspond with what is taught by the driver educator. If your new driver insists that your instructions are different from the driver education program, contact the driver educator to discuss this matter.
- ▶ Driver education programs require all students to have a minimum of 25 hours classroom training, 10 hours behind-the-wheel instruction, and six hours observation time. When the program is completed, the driving school will conduct the road test for a Class 5 driver's license unless a student has been randomly selected by the PEI Highway Safety Division for a road test and evaluation..
- ▶ Read the Driver's Handbook which is available from any Access PEI office, or online at www.princeedwardisland.ca/driverpermit (Follow the Graduated Driver Licensing Program links.)

ROAD TEST

Not qualifying for a Driver's Licence results from too many mistakes, a law violation or a dangerous action. A learner who is not successful on the road test must wait a minimum of two weeks before trying again. If your learner driver does not pass the test, please review the road test with them to help understand where more practice or experience is needed. If there is something you do not understand, contact the driver examiner. You may decide that your learner driver requires a longer waiting period than two weeks in order to better prepare for another test.

After Passing Road Test

Now that your new driver has earned a Driver's Licence, remember, it takes several years to develop the good driving habits that will last for a lifetime. Research suggests that inexperience contributes to collisions and traffic violations.

The newly licensed driver is on probation for a period of two years and monitored closely by Highway Safety Division for violations under the *Highway Traffic Act*, Criminal Code and accident involvement.

A conviction for failure to wear a seat belt will result in the suspension of the driving privileges of a driver in the Graduated Driver Licensing Program.

1st offence - 30 days

2nd offence - 90 days

The new driver may also be charged if a passenger is not wearing a seat belt.

The accumulation of six, or more demerit points during the first year of their probation results in a one-month suspension of driving privileges.

During the second year of probation, the accumulation of nine or more demerit points also results in the suspension of driving privileges.

Graduated Licensing Approach

Stage 1 All drivers who received their Instruction Permit (Class 7) must wait a minimum of 365 days (275 days if actively enrolled in a driver education program) before taking their road test.

Drivers providing instruction to a beginner driver with an Instruction Permit must have held a valid Driver's Licence for at least **four** years.

Stage 1 drivers are prohibited from operating motor vehicles between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.. There are no exemptions for the driving curfew in Stage 1; **however, this does not apply to individuals who are 21 years of age or older.**

No person who is a Stage 1 driver shall use a hand-held cellular telephone, headphones, mp3 player or any other hand-held electronic device while operating or having care and control of a motor vehicle.

Stage 1 drivers are require to have a Learner's Decal displayed on any motor vehicle they operate. The Stage 1 driver will receive this decal at the time their photo is taken for their Instruction Permit. The decal is to be placed on the inside of the windshield just above the motor vehicle inspection sticker. There is no cost for the decal and it is made of a material which allows it to be removed and replaced over and over.

Passenger Restrictions:

All newly licensed drivers holding a Class 5 Driver's Licence (one who has held a Driver's Licence less than two years,) will be subject to the following passenger restrictions.

Stage 2 A newly licensed driver, regardless of age, is restricted to one passenger. Any additional passengers must be the newly licensed driver's immediate family.

The Stage 2 section of the GDL Program lasts for one year.

Stage 2 drivers are prohibited from operating motor vehicles between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m.. The Stage 2 driver may apply for an exemption from the driving curfew for work purposes and may also operate a motor vehicle between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. if they are accompanied by a licensed driver who has held a Driver's Licence for at least four years and the accompanying driver does not have a BAC level of .05 or more. **This does not apply to individuals who are 21 years of age or older.**

Exemption forms are available at all Access PEI locations and the internet at www.princeedwardisland.ca/GDL
(Follow the Graduated Driver Licensing Program links.)

No person who is a Stage 2 driver shall use a hand-held cellular telephone, headphones, mp3 player or any other hand-held electronic device while operating or having care and control of a motor vehicle.

Stage 2 drivers are required to have a Graduated Decal displayed on any motor vehicle they operate. The Stage 2 driver will receive this decal at the time their photo is taken for their Class 5 driver's licence. There is no cost for the decal.

Stage 2 and 3 drivers will be suspended for any seatbelt or passenger restriction fines they receive. 1st offence 30 days and 2nd offence 90 days. Any suspension times will be added to the waiting time to exit the stage the fine was received in.

When the GDL driver has spent the appropriate time in Stage 2, they automatically graduate into Stage 3.

Stage 3 A newly licensed driver, regardless of age, will require all passengers in the vehicle to be restricted to the number of seatbelts.

No person who is a Stage 3 driver shall use a hand-held cellular telephone, headphones, mp3 player or any other hand-held electronic device while operating or having care and control of a motor vehicle.

Stage 3 drivers are required to have a Graduated Decal displayed on any motor vehicle they operate. This is the same decal the driver received for Stage 2. There is no cost for the decal.

DECALS

If a decal becomes lost or destroyed during any of the GDL Stages, a replacement decal may be acquired at any Access PEI location. There is no charge for the replacement decal. If this occurs at times when it is not possible to get a replacement decal such as evenings, weekends or the decal was left on another vehicle, an individual may produce a temporary paper decal to be placed on the windshield or print one from the following web at:

www.princeedwardisland.ca/GDL

(Follow the Graduated Driver Licensing Program links.)

BLOOD ALCOHOL CONTENT

“0” BAC for Graduated Drivers

All new drivers under 19 years of age or drivers in the GDL Program (regardless of age) and all drivers under the age of 22 that received their driver's license after September 16, 2017 must have a “0” blood alcohol content (BAC) when driving. An offence will result in a 24-hour roadside suspension and a 90-day administrative prohibition. If the BAC level is .08 or more, OR for failure or refusal to supply a breath or blood sample OR if impaired by a drug or combination of a drug and alcohol, the driver will be charged under the CCC and face further cancellations of his or her driving privileges.

Driving while disqualified is also an offence and a conviction will result in a six-month cancellation to be applied consecutively to the period of the existing suspension, cancellation or disqualification.

A new driver must be encouraged to take responsibility for safe driving.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is extremely important for new drivers to understand their responsibility and it is just as critical for parents or guardians to allow the novice or newly licensed driver to drive at every opportunity possible under supervision. Whenever possible, each time you get into your vehicle with a novice or newly licensed driver, encourage them to do the driving.

Take positive steps toward prevention of bad driving habits, praise newly acquired, safe driving skills and remind the new driver of ways to improve weaker areas. **Most of all, continue to practice driving together.**



CONSENT FORM

I, _____
Instruction Permit holder (*Signature*)

understand and accept the responsibility of holding a Class 7 Driver's Licence by operating in a safe and courteous manner.

I also consent that as an Instruction Permit holder or as a newly licensed driver enrolled in, or having completed a driver education program, I will participate if selected, in a road test evaluation by Highway Safety.

Parents' Consent

I, _____
Father/Legal Guardian (*signature*)

and, _____
Mother/Legal Guardian (*signature*)

If sole custodian, check here

I/We have read the Co-pilot brochure and do hereby approve that a Driver's Licence be issued to the above named person who has not reached the age of 18.

I/We also consent that if my newly licensed driver is enrolled in or has completed a driver education program, he/she will participate if selected, in a road test evaluation by Highway Safety.

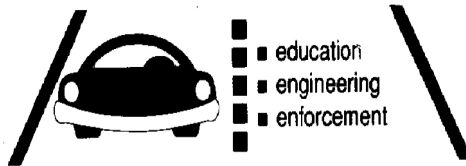
I/We also agree to give my new driver, while on their Instruction Permit, every opportunity to practice their skills behind the wheel.

For more information contact:

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Highway Safety

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Charlottetown, PE
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Fax: (902) 432 2529



or online at

[*www.princeedwardisland.ca/driverpermit*](http://www.princeedwardisland.ca/driverpermit)

(Follow the Graduated Driver Licensing Program links.)



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