



Tips for supervising drivers

Accompanied by a supervising driver, learners are among the safest drivers in the community. However, provisional drivers (P-platers) account for a disproportionate number of deaths and injuries on our roads.

An effective supervising driver needs to be a role model. It's important to provide a learner with a strong foundation of skills and knowledge for a lifetime of safe driving.

Make sure you're up to date with the current road rules so you know you're passing on the correct information.

The Driver's Handbook is a valuable resource available as a free download on the My Licence SA website, or in hardcopy for \$10 at RAA Shops or Service SA centres. The RAA website at raa.com.au/motor/driving-school, has online quizzes for testing your knowledge.

Read and understand the Driving Companion – also available on the My Licence SA website – and the logbook it contains.

Supervising driver and learner requirements in South Australia

- The supervisor must hold a full, unconditional driver's licence for a minimum of two years and have had no driving disqualifications or suspensions in the past two years.
- The learner driver must have a valid learner's permit.
- The supervisor and learner must carry their licences when driving.
- 'L' plates must be correctly displayed on the front and rear of the vehicle.
- The car must be registered, roadworthy and appropriately insured.

Health and wellbeing

- It's important that both the supervisor and learner are well rested before driving.
- To reduce stress, make sure there's enough time to practise safely, so the lesson isn't rushed.
- Staying calm benefits both the supervisor and learner and leads to a good relationship and better decision making.
- Practise breathing techniques to relieve stress and encourage the learner to do the same.
- Take a break in a safe location if you are starting to feel overwhelmed.
- If either party is unwell or overly stressed, consider delaying or discontinuing the practice session.

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Safety first

- Check that everyone in the car has their seat and head restraint adjusted properly, and their seatbelt fitted correctly.
- Discuss the driving plan before setting off.
- Before the learner starts driving, discuss the controls of the vehicle to ensure the learner understands how to operate it and critically, how to slow down and stop it.
- Ensure there's enough safe space around the car before moving off.
- Advise the learner driver you'll be constantly observing the road environment in all directions to ensure it's safe. It's important the learner understands that this is for safety reasons and is not a judgement of their driving.
- Make sure the learner's skill level is suitable for any situations likely to be encountered on the drive and discuss how to manage situations that might occur.
- Discuss what might happen if the supervising driver needs to take control of the car. While stationary, practise possible scenarios where this might occur.

Follow the road rules

It's essential the learner follows the road rules and the supervising driver's advice. Examples include:

- coming to a complete halt at a stop sign
- ensuring the car's speed is slightly under the speed limit
- stopping for amber lights at intersections, unless it's unsafe to do so
- not entering an intersection when it's blocked by other vehicles
- staying at least three seconds behind the vehicle immediately ahead
- leaving a space when stopping behind a vehicle; in case there's a need to drive around it; to allow room if it rolls back; to avoid colliding with the car in front if you're hit from behind
- slowing down when approaching a green light and covering the brake in case the light changes.

Ease into it

- Begin with the easiest tasks, then progress to more difficult ones.
- Practise in quiet streets, preferably in daylight, before progressing to more challenging conditions.
- Initially, keep practice sessions short.
- Let the learner proceed at their own pace.
- As the learner's skills improve, add variety to the lessons – different roads, weather, and traffic conditions, and if possible, different vehicles.
- As the learner nears the time they'll get their P-plates, make the practice situations similar to those they'll experience driving independently.



Good communication is vital

- Find out the learner's level of experience and gauge their knowledge and skill level during and after each practice session.
- Ask the learner if they have any concerns about learning to drive.
- Discuss what will be covered during the practice session and find out if the learner wants to focus on any particular skills.
- Explain and demonstrate a new task before the learner attempts it.
- Give all driving instructions well ahead of time.
- Use the 'At... do' method. For example, "At the traffic lights we'll cover the brake, slow down and turn left."
- Be wary of using words like 'stop' or 'right' in normal conversation, as they may be taken as instructions.
- Only use words and terminology the learner will understand.
- Practise commentary driving, where the learner talks through their driving actions and describes their observations. This allows the supervisor to understand what the learner is thinking as they drive.
- Give honest and realistic feedback and don't make it personal.
- Learners can become overconfident, so be positive when they successfully complete a task, but don't imply they've mastered it.
- Don't criticise mistakes but praise the learner's efforts to improve.
- Ensure the learner understands that responding to hazards is more difficult at higher speeds. A vehicle travelling at 60 km/h covers 17m per second.

We're here to help

**Call our Road Safety team on 8202 4570
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raa.com.au/roadrules**