



A GUIDE TO DRIVING

You want to drive like everyone else, but you are worried that because you have a physical limitation or because you use a wheelchair, that this may not be an option. Many people with physical limitations want to drive, just like everyone else. Being able to drive makes it much easier to get around. The good news is that with the right training and equipment many people with physical limitations can drive safely, just as anyone else. Technology compensates for physical limitations. There are driving rehabilitation specialists, people who help figure out whether or not you have what it takes and what you need to get on the road. Here are 5 steps you can follow to discover whether you should drive, and if you can drive, what type of car and modifications will be needed.

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HERE ARE THE 5 STEPS:

STEP 1 PREPARE DOCUMENTATION

STEP 2 GET YOUR LEARNER'S PERMIT

STEP 3 HAVE A DRIVER'S ASSESSMENT

STEP 4 TAKE DRIVER'S TRAINING

STEP 5 TAKE DRIVER'S TESTS (BEHIND-THE-WHEEL AND VISION)



Understanding these steps will help you get ready to drive.

Step 1 Prepare Documentation

You need to have the following documents in order to get a learner's permit:

1. Picture Identification
2. Birth Certificate
3. Social Security Card
4. Physician Referral (if you need car adaptations)

Be prepared! Make sure that you have all of your documentation with you when you go to get your permit.

Step 2 Get Your Learner's Permit

1. **AGE.** You have to be 15 years 7 months of age or older to get a permit.
2. **PARENTAL CONSENT.** If you are under 18, your parent or guardian has to go with you to a Motor Vehicle Department office and sign a Parental Consent Form. The Form has to be notarized or witnessed by a MVD officer.
3. **DRIVER'S MANUAL.** Get a copy of the Driver's Manual from any MVD or download a copy from the web site <http://dot.state.az.us/mvd/custsvcguid.htm>.
4. **STUDY, STUDY, STUDY** the manual.
5. **STUDY HINTS.** Make cards on items that are hard so you can practice them. Ask a family member or friend to quiz you.
6. **PRACTICE TEST.** Take the practice test in the back of the Manual. Keep studying until you feel comfortable that you can pass the test.
7. **TAKE THE TEST.**
 - Bring your picture identification and birth certificate to the MVD.
 - Don't forget the \$7.00 fee.
 - When you pass the test, you will take a vision test.
 - When you pass the written and vision tests you get your learner's permit (Class G).
 - The permit is valid for 12 months.



Study the manual and take the practice test in the back.

Are you worried you might not pass the test? You don't need to; you can take it 3 times in a 12-month period without having to pay again.

Step 3 Driving Evaluation

Driving rehabilitation specialists evaluate your ability to drive, what kind of car or van will best accommodate you, and the type of equipment or adaptations that you need. They are critical in helping you figure out how to meet your needs. The specialist can answer the following questions:

Question 1. TO DRIVE OR NOT TO DRIVE? That is the big question! The specialist will test whether you have certain skills that are critical to being a safe driver. Here are some of the things the specialist—and you—must consider:

- Vision—can you see far enough ahead and to the side to drive safely— can you figure out where you are in relation to other cars; how far you are from cars in front of you, next to you, and behind you?
- Reaction Time—can you react to what is happening in the traffic around you quickly enough to avoid an accident?
- Does your body respond too much or too little to loud noises or other unexpected events?
- Is it difficult for you to coordinate your hand-eye or hand-foot or foot-eye movements—can you move your head so you can see to back up the car?
- Do you remember the rules of the road and what the signs stand for (all the stuff you had to memorize for your learner's permit and that will be in the final test--behind-the-wheel)?
- What about directions to get some place? Are you lost in space, or can you read a map? What would you do if you got lost?
- How will you handle emergencies if your car breaks down, or you are in an accident?



Driving rehabilitative specialists are trained to evaluate your needs.

A comprehensive assessment by a driving rehabilitation specialist will determine your ability to drive.



Mumbo Jumbo Words

These words describe the types of tests given by a driving specialist.

Decision Making is a measure of a person's ability to make choices that affect whether a person will be a safe driver. The assessment is based on—medical history, a physical exam, and tests of functional ability to drive.

Physical Exam is an exam to measure:

- Ambulatory and transfer ability
- Balance, range of motion
- Coordination
- Muscle strength
- Sensation
- Hand function

Functional Exam is an exam to measure:

- Visual acuity
- Depth perception
- Color and glare vision
- Glare recovery
- Field of vision
- Double vision
- Tracking



Knowing your
limitations is the key
to safe driving.



Question 2. What type of vehicle should you drive?

When the specialist determines that you can drive, the specialist can then help you to decide whether you should drive a CAR or a VAN.

TO DRIVE A CAR YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO—

- Lock and unlock the door
- Open and close the door
- Transfer to and from your wheelchair
- Store your wheelchair
- Get your wheelchair out of storage

If you have difficulty doing these things, A VAN MAY BE A BETTER CHOICE FOR YOU.

Question 3. What modifications to the car or van do you need?

- Modifications may let you transfer to the driver's seat or drive from your wheelchair.
- Driving control technology can compensate for strength and range of motion limitations.
- Reduced effort steering systems compensate for limits in strength.
- Hand brake and accelerator controls can help when strength and range of motion are issues.
- Joystick driving systems make it possible to operate the gas accelerator, brake, and steer with one hand.

No modifications or vehicle selection should be made until you have completed a driver evaluation.

Question 4 What goes in a prescription?

If the specialist gives you a green light—that it is okay for you to drive—he/she will write a prescription that includes information about the modifications you need to drive.



Step 4 Driver's Training

Contact a driver's training school for lessons, or have an adult teach you. **Remember—you can practice driving ONLY when a licensed driver older than 18 is seated next to you!**

Step 5 The Final Test: Behind-The-Wheel

This test is given by the Motor Vehicle Department. MVD staff will take you out in your car and grade your accuracy in following a set of directions. Sometimes the directions are tricky, so stay cool, think carefully, and don't speed. The job of the MVD is to make sure everyone behind the wheel is a safe driver. That is the purpose of this test.

Make sure you have all of the needed documentation.

When you pass this test, you will be issued a Class G driver's license. Congratulations!

Financial Assistance Programs

Car manufacturers have plans that help persons with disabilities reach their goal of driving. On a new car purchase, they refund up to \$1000 for modifications to your car or van for items such as hand controls or lifts. Here are some phone numbers to help you find out if you qualify and to get more information: Chrysler Mobility Program, 1-800-255-9877; Ford Mobility Motoring, 1-800-952-2248; GM Mobility Program, 1-800-255-9877, and Saturn Mobility Program, 1-800-553-6000. You also can check with a local dealership.



Up to \$1,000.00 for modifications

Driving Rehabilitation Specialists

- DriveAble Solutions-An Adaptive Driving Rehabilitation Program, (602) 840-8869
- Health South Meridian Point-Clinical Assessment, (480) 551-5442
- Good Samaritan Rehabilitative Institute-Adaptive Driving Program, (602) 239-4757

The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists

The Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED) was established in 1977 to support professionals working in the field of driver education, driver training, and transportation equipment modifications for persons with disabilities through education and information dissemination. Check with your specialist to see if he/she is ADED certified.

DriveAble Solutions

Lynn Hedrick, Certified Driving Rehabilitation Specialist, has 24 years of medical experience serving people with disabilities. Her driving school is fully licensed by the Motor Vehicle Department, and she is an active member of the Association for Driver Rehabilitation Specialists (ADED).

ADED support professionals working in the field of driver education.

Her evaluation provides the following:

- Comprehensive physical, visual, and cognitive evaluation
- Behind-the-wheel evaluation
- Thorough report to your physician
- Information on funding sources available for training and modifications

If further training is indicated, she can provide

- Immediate scheduling
- Safe training
- Follow-up services
- Prescriptions for training

The cost for the behind-the-wheel training is \$65 per hour.

Health South Meridian Point

Cathy Joseph at Health South Meridian Point can complete a clinical assessment of your ability to drive.

- The sessions will be one hour sessions; you may require from 1 to 3 sessions depending on the degree of your disability.
- The cost is \$75.00 per hour; she can bill her time as an Occupational Therapist.
- She does not conduct the behind-the-wheel evaluation.

Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Institute

The Good Samaritan Rehabilitation Institute conducts assessments on the campus of Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center. The hours of operation are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday by appointment only.

You must bring the following to your assessment:

- A signed physician referral must be on a prescription pad or letterhead. Be sure your diagnosis is written on the prescription.
- Your valid learner's permit
- Medical records including the following:
 - * History and physical
 - * Physical, occupational and/or speech therapy discharge notes
 - * Neuropsychological evaluation (if one was completed)
 - * Ophthalmology report (if one was completed)

During the clinical portion of the evaluation, your strength, reaction time, judgment, and topographical orientation will be assessed.

The type of vehicle you need will be determined during the clinical assessment. This may be a van or car, depending on what your precise driving needs are.

The primary purpose of this program is to provide information to your physician regarding your ability to drive. Good Samaritan is not a licensing agency, and you have to take the driving test at the MVD, even if you successfully complete the evaluation. The current cost for the evaluation is \$1,057.00. Pre-arrangement for payment must be made prior to appointment.

Check the yellow pages for driving schools.

Tools For Driving

NOTES

The goal is
independent, safe
driving.”





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