

C A R E 2 D R I V E

FREE DOWNLOAD

Your own drive comes first

The habits, the language and the six routines to get straight in
your own driving first.



Score yourself

Six routines

Words that help



7 pages · PDF · for parents and supervising drivers

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Your own drive comes first

Before you sit beside a learner, spend two weeks looking at your own driving. It is the single highest-value thing a supervising driver can do, and it fits around the journeys you already make.

You have probably been driving for twenty or thirty years. That is a lot of skill. It is also a lot of habit, and habit is quiet. Most experienced drivers have picked up a handful of shortcuts they no longer notice, and a learner sitting next to you copies all of it, including the parts you would not choose to teach.

There is a second reason. A learner is being taught a set of named routines by their instructor. If you use the same words, every hour you spend with them adds to the lessons instead of running alongside them. If you use different words, they have to translate, and translation is where confidence leaks away.

So this guide has three jobs, and they are all about you.

1. Notice your own habits.

An honest checklist you score yourself against, twice: today, and again in a fortnight.

2. Learn the language.

How to give an instruction so it lands, and how the wording changes as they get better.

3. Learn the routines.

DSSSM, POM, MSM, MSPSL, LADA and IPSGA, in plain English, with two weeks of practice on your own drives.

Who this is for

Families who are doing it themselves: a learner, somebody who loves them, a car with L plates and a lot of Sunday mornings. It assumes you are going to do this anyway, because most families do, and it is the road map nobody hands you.

Professional tuition is available to every learner and is worth considering at any point. Nothing here stops you booking a lesson if you ever want another pair of eyes on a particular skill.



Ellie says: two weeks. You are not adding journeys, you are paying attention on the ones you already make.



The honest checklist

Score yourself now, before you read anything else. 1 is never, 5 is every single time. Nobody is looking.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I check my interior mirror before I slow down or brake	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I check the relevant door mirror before I signal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I signal early enough to be useful, and not out of habit where nobody benefits	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I keep both hands on the wheel unless I am changing gear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I look into a junction properly rather than rolling out on a glance	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I give way to pedestrians already crossing, or waiting to cross, at a side road	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I hold a two second gap in the dry, and four in the wet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I drive to the conditions rather than to the number on the sign	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know what my speed is without checking the speedometer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I stop behind the line at lights and junctions, not over it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I stay off the phone entirely, including at a red light	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I check my blind spot before moving off	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I plan for the roundabout before I reach it, not on it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I keep my eyes moving and scan well ahead	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I stay calm around other drivers and say nothing I would mind being copied	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I could explain out loud why I did each of the above	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Reading your score

Everything scored 3 or below is something a learner beside you will absorb. Pick the two lowest and make them your only focus for the first week. You do not need to improve the whole list at once. Two habits, held on purpose for fourteen days, is enough to change what gets copied.

The last line is the one that matters most for teaching. Being able to do something and being able to explain it are different skills, and the better you drive the harder the explaining gets, because the steps have long since disappeared from view.



STEP TWO

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The language, and how it changes

Instructions land better in a set order: where first, then what, with enough warning to act on. Get this right and half the friction disappears.

Where, then what, then time to do it.

"At the end of the road, turn left." Not "turn left" as the junction arrives, and not "left" on its own.

The three levels, in order

Level	What you say	Use it when
Direction	"At the end of the road, turn left." Every turn given, one at a time, early.	Everything is new. You are removing the navigation job so they can drive.
Destination	"Make your way to the retail park, follow the signs." No turn-by-turn.	The driving is steady and you want them planning and reading signs.
Independent	"Follow the sat nav." Or nothing at all for twenty minutes.	Late on. This is what the test does for about twenty minutes.

Moving up a level is how you hand over responsibility a piece at a time, and it gives you something honest to say about progress: "we did twenty minutes on destinations today and you only needed one prompt."

Ten swaps for the passenger seat

Instead of "you're too fast"

"What is the limit along here?"

Instead of "mirror!"

"What did you check before you moved out?"

Instead of "watch that cyclist"

"What can you see up ahead on the left?"

Instead of "that was wrong"

"Talk me through what happened there."

Instead of "just go"

"Take your time. Tell me when the gap is right."

Instead of "good"

"Good, and what made it work that time?"



Ellie says: a question makes them look. An instruction makes them look at you.



The six routines, in plain English

These are the words their instructor uses. Learn them once and you can prompt with a single letter instead of a sentence.

DSSSM · the cockpit drill

Doors, **S**eat, **S**teering, **S**eatbelt, **M**irrors. Every time they get in, in that order, before the engine. It takes thirty seconds and it is the first thing an examiner sees.

POM · moving off

Prepare the car, **O**bserve all round including the blind spot, **M**ove when it is clear. The observation happens after the car is ready, not before, so the picture is current.

MSM · the short one

Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre. The everyday version, used for anything simple.

MSPSL · the full hazard routine

Mirror, Signal, Position, Speed, Look. The one they will use at every junction, roundabout and parked car for the rest of their driving life. If you learn one, learn this.

LADA · how to think at a hazard

Look, Assess, Decide, Act. It sits inside the Look at the end of MSPSL. Most hesitation at junctions is a learner stuck between Decide and Act.

IPSGA · the advanced version

Information, **P**osition, **S**peed, **G**ear, **A**cceleration. The police Roadcraft system, with information running all the way through. Some instructors teach it as IPSGL, with Look in place of Acceleration. It is worth knowing because it is where MSPSL grows up to.

These are teaching routines, not law. The order matters because it puts observation before commitment every single time.



WEEK ONE

FREE

Fourteen days: week one

One focus per day, on a journey you were making anyway. Twenty to thirty minutes of real attention, then thirty seconds of honesty at the kerb.

Day 1 · The baseline

A normal route, changing nothing. Just watch yourself. **Then:** Score the checklist on page 2 again, driving fresh in your mind.

Day 2 · DSSSM and POM

Do the cockpit drill out loud every time you get in, and a full POM at every move off. **Then:** Which of the five did you keep skipping?

Day 3 · Mirrors

Interior mirror before every slow down. Door mirror before every signal. **Then:** How many times did you signal before you looked?

Day 4 · MSM and MSPSL

Run the full five steps out loud at every junction and parked car. **Then:** Where did the order break down? It is usually Position.

Day 5 · Position and speed

Where exactly is the car in the lane, and is that on purpose? **Then:** One road where your position was lazy.

Day 6 · LADA at junctions

At every junction: Look, Assess, Decide, Act. Name the four out loud. **Then:** Any junction where you decided but did not act?

Day 7 · Commentary drive

Alone in the car, talk the whole route out loud: what you see, what it might do, what you intend. **Then:** Rescore the checklist. Compare with day 1.

How to do a commentary. Say what you see, what you think it will do, and what you intend. "Parked van on the left, someone could step out, easing off and moving out early." It feels odd for about four minutes, then it becomes the most useful habit on the list.



Fourteen days: week two

Week one took your driving apart. Week two puts it back together and adds the parts a learner needs from you.

Day 8 · Reading ahead

Lift your gaze to the furthest point you can see, then sweep back. Every few seconds. **Then:** What did you spot earlier than you would have last week?

Day 9 · People

High street, cyclists, side roads. Give way to pedestrians at every junction mouth and say it out loud. **Then:** Any moment you would not want copied?

Day 10 · Signs and markings

Call each sign's type out loud before its meaning: warning, order, information. **Then:** Two signs you had genuinely forgotten.

Day 11 · IPSGA

Run the advanced system on an open road. Gear to match the speed you have chosen, not the other way round. **Then:** Did the gear come before or after the speed?

Day 12 · Poor weather

Wet day. Four second gap, earlier and gentler braking. **Then:** How much of your normal margin was actually dry-road margin?

Day 13 · The language

Drive with a passenger and narrate as if instructing: where, then what, then time to act. **Then:** Did anything come out as a bark rather than a direction?

Day 14 · The new baseline

Same route as day 1, same conditions if you can. Full commentary. **Then:** Score the checklist a third time.

Ready for the other seat? Four honest questions.

Can you name and explain all six routines without looking? Can you give a direction early enough to be useful, every time? Can you sit quietly through a moment that does not go to plan, and ask a question instead? Did anything on your checklist move up by two?



WHAT NEXT

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Where this goes next

This fortnight is the foundation. The next part is the fifty hours of practice beside them, and that has a shape too.

The five stages, in brief

Stage	What gets practised
1 • Basics first 10 hours	Cockpit drill, car control, moving off and stopping, angled starts, pulling up on the right, T junctions, gears, mirrors, signals, road position.
2 • Junctions 10 hours	Crossroads, roundabouts, mini roundabouts, crossings, with POM, MSPSL and LADA running underneath. Where you start handing over responsibility.
3 • Manoeuvres and open road 10 hours	All four reverse manoeuvres and the turn in the road, car parks, then 40mph plus, country lanes, bends, hazard awareness, slip roads.
4 • Independence 10 hours	Overtaking in town and on dual carriageways, following signs and a sat nav, planning a route out of town, general practice.
5 • Test ready final 10 hours	Mock runs, the manoeuvres first time with no warm up, the local test centre roads, and the honest conversation about whether the date is right.

The full road map is in **The Parent's Guide to Teaching Your Child to Drive**.

Every stage broken down hour by hour, with session plans, prompting scripts, grading charts and the point at which you stop prompting. There is a matching learner workbook for them to fill in, and town workbooks covering the roads around your own test centre. All at care2drive.co.uk.

Before your first session together

Check you are 21 or over and have held a full licence for that category for three years. Check the insurance covers a learner, by ringing the insurer rather than assuming. L plates front and rear. No motorways unless you are supervising alongside an approved instructor in a dual-controlled car.

♥ **EVERY COPY SOLD HELPS SOMEONE LEARN TO DRIVE**

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