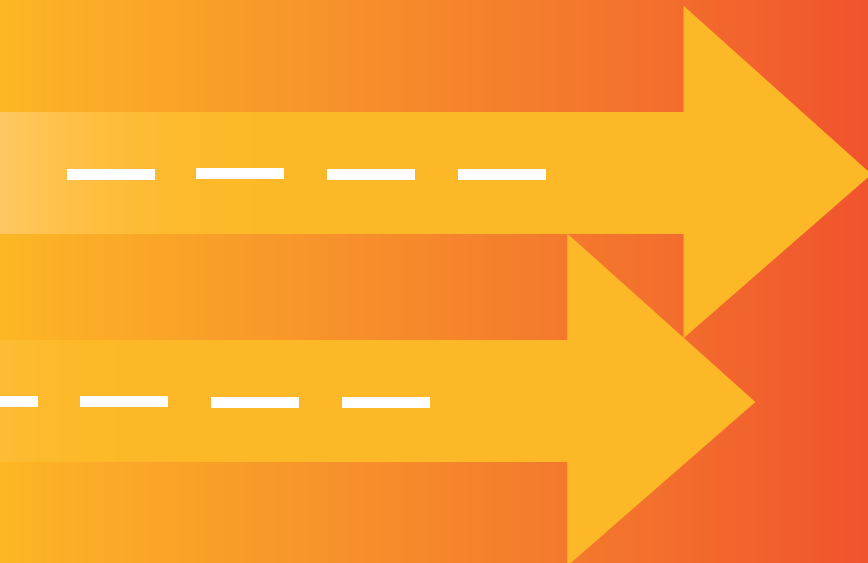


ACT Road Rules Handbook



The *ACT Road Rules Handbook* is written and compiled by Road Transport. The assistance of the following in bringing together this handbook is gratefully acknowledged:

- Road User Services
- Infant Restraint Loan Service
- Australian Driver Trainers' Association - ACT Branch
- Roads and Traffic Authority of New South Wales.

Photographs and specifications for child restraints were generously provided by Safe-n-Sound Victoria.

Other available publications:

- *ACT Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook*
- *ACT Older Drivers' Handbook*
- *Retiring From Driving*

While this handbook is predominantly a training tool for learner drivers, it is also intended to assist ACT or visiting drivers, however it is intended as a guideline only. Legislative provisions are contained in the *Australian Road Rules 2003* and related Acts and Regulations.

For further information please see the links inside the back cover.

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Canberra, January 2006

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FOREWORD

I take great pleasure in endorsing this January 2006 update of the ACT Road Rules Handbook.

The Road Rules Handbook is central to the pre-licence module of Road Ready. It is designed to help you gain theoretical knowledge of the road rules and other information you will need to pass your Road Ready course and the Road Rules Knowledge Test. However, more importantly, the information in it could save your life.

As a Learner driver you will find it pays to keep the Handbook handy so you can revise and reinforce what you are learning on the road. This is even more true once you graduate to your Provisional licence and can drive solo, as this is when drivers are at most risk of crashing. I strongly urge you to continue getting plenty of practice with an experienced driver in the car with you, and to consider doing the innovative Road Ready Plus course, where you can share your experiences with other young drivers and earn the right to remove your “P” plates.

Safe driving!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Hargreaves', written over a large, stylized, abstract shape that resembles a triangle or a large letter 'A'.

John Hargreaves MLA
Minister for Urban Services

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Who this book is for

This book is for people who wish to obtain their ACT learner driver licence, and for experienced drivers with an interest in refreshing their knowledge of ACT road law and defensive driving skills.

People with an interstate licence must obtain an ACT licence within three months of taking up permanent residence in the ACT. Such people are required to present their interstate licence at any Canberra Connect Shopfront, complete a licence application form, and successfully pass an eyesight test.

Almost everything in this book applies to drivers of cars and riders of motorcycles. This book uses the word “driver” to cover both of these groups. Most information applies to pedal cyclists as well and an additional section for cyclists is also included.

Possession of a licence indicates that the Road Transport Authority is satisfied that the holder is capable of driving safely on public roads in company with other qualified drivers.

Remember: A driver licence is not a right but a privilege granted under the law.

When the Australian Road Rules commenced on 1 March 2000, vehicle licence class codes changed in accordance with new national standards.

The ACT Government issues a five year driver licence to most ACT licence holders after they have completed their provisional licence period. Therefore, it will be some time before the new codes are endorsed on all ACT driver licences, and this will generally be done upon licence renewal.

The chart on page 3 identifies the old and the new vehicle licence class codes.

Vehicle Classes

**Motorcycle licence
(class R licence)**



**Car licence
(class C licence)**



Light rigid vehicle licence (class LR licence)



Medium rigid vehicle licence (class MR licence)



Heavy rigid vehicle licence (class HR licence)



Heavy combination vehicle licence (class HC licence)



Multi-combination vehicle licence (class MC licence)



Licence Classes Codes

Old Codes	New Codes	Licence Class	May Drive:
MP MC	R	Motorcycle licence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A motorbike or motor trike. 2. A motorbike towing a single trailer designed to be towed by a motorbike.
CA	C	Car licence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A motor vehicle (other than a motorbike) with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) not over 4.5 tonnes and that is constructed or equipped to seat not more than 12 adults (including the driver). 2. A tractor or implement. 3. A motor vehicle mentioned in item 1 or 2 that is towing a single trailer (other than a semitrailer) with a GVM not over 9 tonnes. 4. However, this class does not cover a motor vehicle that is towing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 2 or more trailers; or (b) a single semitrailer; or (c) any other single trailer with a GVM over 9 tonnes.
SB	LR	Light rigid vehicle licence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A motor vehicle with a GVM over 4.5 tonnes but not over 8 tonnes. 2. A motor vehicle with a GVM not over 8 tonnes that is constructed or equipped to seat more than 12 adults (including the driver). 3. A motor vehicle mentioned in item 1 or 2 that is towing a single trailer (other than a semitrailer) with a GVM not over 9 tonnes. 4. However, this class does not cover a motor vehicle that is towing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 2 or more trailers; or (b) a single semitrailer; or (c) any other single trailer with a GVM over 9 tonnes.
LT LB	MR	Medium rigid vehicle licence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A motor vehicle with 2 axles and a GVM over 8 tonnes. 2. A motor vehicle mentioned in item 1 that is towing a single trailer (other than a semitrailer) with a GVM not over 9 tonnes. 3. However, this class does not cover a motor vehicle that is towing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 2 or more trailers; or (b) a single semitrailer; or (c) any other single trailer with a GVM over 9 tonnes.
HT HB AB	HR	Heavy rigid vehicle licence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A rigid motor vehicle with 3 or more axles and a GVM over 8 tonnes. 2. An articulated bus with 3 or more axles and a GVM over 8 tonnes. 3. A motor vehicle mentioned in items 1 or 2 that is towing a single trailer (other than a semitrailer) with a GVM not over 9 tonnes. 4. However, this class does not cover a motor vehicle that is towing: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (a) 2 or more trailers; or (b) a single semitrailer; or (c) any other single trailer with a GVM over 9 tonnes.
LA, HA	HC	Heavy combination vehicle licence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A prime mover to which is attached a single semi-trailer plus any unladen converter dolly. 2. A rigid motor vehicle to which is attached a trailer with a GVM over 9 tonnes plus any unladen converter dolly.
RT	MC	Multi-combination vehicle licence	Any motor vehicle or combination of vehicles, other than a motor bike.

Licence eligibility requirements

Applicants are required to satisfy minimum age and driving experience requirements to be eligible for an ACT driver licence.

Applicants MUST learn to drive the respective vehicle types under the supervision of a fully licensed driver of the appropriate class.

Learner licences are not issued for classes LR, MR, HR, HC, MC or for T, H, W or O conditions.

An applicant for an LR or MR licence must be a minimum of 18 years of age and must have held a licence to drive a C class vehicle for at least 12 months.

An applicant for a HR licence must be a minimum of 19 years of age and must have held a licence to drive a C class vehicle for at least 24 months.

An applicant for a HC licence must be a minimum of 19 years of age and must have held a licence to drive a MR or HR class vehicle for at least 12 months.

An applicant for a MC licence must be a minimum of 20 years of age and must have held a licence to drive a HC or HR class vehicle for at least 12 months.

Medical Information

Before applying for a driver licence of any type, licence applicants should check the medical declaration on the reverse side of the drivers licence application form to ensure that they meet the medical requirements to obtain

a driver licence. Any medical conditions that may effect your ability to drive must be reported to the ACT Road Traffic Authority.

Public passenger vehicle

O (Omnibus)

T (Taxi)

W (Restricted Hire Car) or

H (Hire Car) Condition

Applicants who wish to drive a public passenger vehicle must obtain a public vehicle licence class code T, H, W or O condition for their licence.

Applicants must be at least 21 years of age and must have held a licence (other than a motorcycle licence), for at least 12 months. As well as being medically fit, applicants must meet suitable person requirements which includes their traffic and criminal records.

Obtaining an ACT learner driver licence



Any person aged 15 years and 9 months or more may apply for a learner driver licence to drive a motor car.

The learner driver licence is valid for 24 months but must be held for a minimum of six months and the driver must have

attained the age of 17 years before a practical driving assessment can be attempted.

To obtain a learner driver licence to ride a motorcycle, an applicant must be at least 16 years and 9 months old. A motorcycle learner driver licence must be held for a minimum of 3 months before a practical riding test can be attempted.

Motorcycle applicants **MUST** successfully complete the pre-learner licence government approved training course before being eligible to apply for a learner licence. Ask at any Canberra Connect Shopfront for further details.

To obtain a learner driver licence an applicant must:

- provide proof of identity, age and residency;
- complete and pass a 'Road Ready Learner Licence Course';
- pass a knowledge test on ACT road rules and safe driving practices;
- pass an eyesight test.

To drive a motor vehicle, holders of a Learner Driver Licence **MUST** be accompanied by a person holding a **FULL** licence of the same class. Towing is restricted to small trailers not exceeding 750 kilograms GVM.

Holders of a learner driver licence for a motorcycle are **NOT** permitted to tow.

'L' plates **MUST** be displayed on the front and the rear of the vehicle while it is being driven by the learner. 'L' plates must **NOT** be placed in a position where they obstruct the vision of the learner driver, or the accompanying licensed driver. They should

be of the correct size and colour, and must not obscure the vehicles number plates.

Motorcyclists only need to display one 'L' plate, at the rear of the bike.

NOTE 1: 'L' plates are meant to be easily seen by other motorists, for your safety and theirs. The plates must be placed at the front and rear of the vehicle in a conspicuous position so they are clearly visible from in front of and behind the vehicle. 'L' plates are not clearly visible if they are placed, for example, behind wiper arms, behind rear louvres or inside tinted windows.

It is an offence to drive a vehicle with 'L' plates displayed if the driver is not a learner driver.

NOTE 2: A learner licence is valid for two years. If a learner licence holder has not obtained his or her provisional licence during the two-year period, the KNOWLEDGE TEST will need to be completed again before the learner licence can be renewed. Where a learner licence has EXPIRED by TWO YEARS or more, the Road Ready Course and the Knowledge Test will need to be completed again before a learner licence can be renewed.

Proof of identity and residency

Before being permitted to attempt a knowledge test, you will be required to produce:

- One Primary Proof of identity (Category A) document;
- One Secondary Proof of identity (Category B) document; and
- One proof of residency as listed below.

Photocopies of documents are not acceptable

Category A documents

(Primary Proof) consists of:

- Australian Birth Certificate bearing both a registration and certificate number (commemorative certificates or birth extracts are not acceptable);

Note: If the birth certificate is not in the name currently used – appropriate linking documentation will be required – see *Evidence of change of name*.

- Australian Citizenship Certificate or Naturalisation Certificate;
- Australian Passport (expired by up to two years);
- Overseas Passport (expired by up to two years if accompanied by a current Australian Visa);
- Department of Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs Travel Document (valid up to five years after issue);
- Department of Immigration & Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs Certificate of Evidence of Resident Status;

- Australian photo licence (expired up to two years);
- Portrait and/or signature stored on licensing authority data base;
- Australian Defence Force photo identity card (excluding civilians);
- Police Officer photo identity card (from issuing jurisdiction only).

Category B documents

(Secondary Proof) consists of:

- Medicare card;
- Plastic financial institution card with signature and embossed name;
- Student identity document (with photo and/or signature) issued by an educational institution;
- Department of Veterans' Affairs / Centrelink pensioner concession card;
- Australian-issued security guard / crowd controller licence (with photo);
- Australian-issued firearm licence (with photo).

Proof of residency

Proof of residency, if not already established by a Category A or Category B document must be supplied by all interstate and overseas licence holders transferring to an ACT drivers licence, and all original licence applicants.

Provided the applicant's residential address is listed on the document, the following are acceptable:

- contract of purchase, current lease or rental document for relevant premises.
- current vehicle registration certificate;

- driver licence or vehicle registration renewal notice for coming period;
- current Council rate notice;
- current Land Tax valuation notice;
- Australian Taxation Office assessment (last or current financial year).

Evidence of change of name

All documents must be original, not photocopied:

- full evidence of identity or former name.

AND one of the following (where possible):

- Marriage Certificate issued by Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages (commemorative certificates are not acceptable);
- Change of Name Registration with Registrar of Births, Deaths & Marriages Registry Deed Poll (to prove name change) registered with relevant authority;
- Divorce *Decree Nisi* or *Absolute* (indicating the name being reverted to).

Interstate paper licence holders transferring to an ACT licence, must produce with their licence:

- one category A document; and
- one proof of residency document.

Overseas applicants/ licence holders applying for an ACT licence, must produce with their licence:

- one category A document;
- one category B document; and
- one proof of residency.

Overseas applicants from approved countries must sit and pass the knowledge test and undergo an eyesight test.

Overseas applicants from non-approved countries must sit and pass the knowledge test, undergo an eyesight test and complete a practical driving test. If the test is assessed as a fail, applicants are required to obtain a learner driver licence and to comply with the conditions that apply, eg. display 'L' plates and have a fully licensed driver seated beside them when driving. An applicant's overseas licence becomes invalid upon the applicant failing to pass a driving assessment.

Note: Overseas applicants must produce their overseas driver licence, complete with an English translation (where the licence is not in English) at the time they sit for the knowledge test.

Overseas applicants may gain their licence through the Competency Based Training and Assessment Scheme (CBT&A) if they wish, however, applicants who take this option are required to obtain a learner driver licence and abide by the regulations pertaining to that learner driver.

After passing a practical driving test, overseas licence holders will be issued a full driver licence.

The knowledge test

There are 35 multiple choice questions in the knowledge test. Some questions are mandatory knowledge and must be answered correctly. The remainder are general knowledge questions and four incorrect answers are allowed.

After successfully passing the knowledge test you will be issued with a photographic learner driver licence which is green in colour.

Note: While the information needed to pass the knowledge test can be found in this handbook, many of the questions asked in the test require common sense answers. The test has been designed to make applicants think through the questions carefully before selecting an answer.

To assist in passing the knowledge test, applicants can practice the test on the Road Ready website at:
www.roadready.act.gov.au

Driving outside the ACT

ACT learner driver licences are acceptable in all States and Territories of Australia.

Learners should be aware that when driving as a learner in another State or Territory, they **MUST** comply with the conditions and road laws of that State or Territory and any specific conditions relating to learner drivers. For further information, see Posted Speed Limits, page 34.

The driving test

Prior to making an appointment for a driving test, it is recommended that learner drivers complete a minimum of 50 hours driving practice before attempting a practical driver assessment.

Making an appointment

Appointments for Government driving tests can be made at the Road User Services office, 13 – 15 Challis Street, Dickson, or at a Canberra Connect Shopfront located in Civic, Tuggeranong, Belconnen or Woden. A booking cannot be made by phone, as a fee must be paid before an appointment can be arranged.

Do NOT arrange a driving test booking for a date prior to your 17th birthday or if you have NOT held your learner driver licence for the required 6 month minimum period. You will forfeit your booking fee and be required to arrange another booking at further cost.

If you are unable to keep your driving test appointment you may change your appointment time, but you must do so at least 48 hours in advance of the time. There is a fee for this service.

Ensure that you are aware of the location for your assessment, ie Road User Services office, Dickson, or the Canberra Connect Shopfront, Tuggeranong. If you arrive at the wrong location for your test, you will forfeit your booking fee.

Vehicle requirements

When you attend for your driving test, your vehicle should:

- be mechanically sound, registered (with a current registration label)

attached to the windscreen, temporary registration is not acceptable), roadworthy, clean and fitted with lap sash type seat belts for both front outer seating positions;

- have a floor mounted handbrake between the front seats, if the test is for a class C, or C with A (Automatic condition); and
- tyres **MUST** have at least 1.5mm of tread depth for the full tread width that comes into contact with the road surface.

The Licence Examiner will check your test vehicle to ensure that it complies with these conditions. If it does not, the test will not proceed and you will be required to pay another booking fee to obtain another test time.

During the driving test

Try to arrive for your test about 10 minutes early.

The Licence Examiner will then accompany you while you undertake your test, and will decide if it is safe to let you drive unaccompanied on ACT and interstate roads.

During the practical test, which starts when you enter the test vehicle, the Licence Examiner will expect you to:

- coordinate the various vehicle controls;
- maintain direction and speed on the road, while observing all rules and signs;
- respect the rights and safety of other road users;

- demonstrate a safe defensive attitude;
- do headchecks to cover your blindspots on all lane changes, when diverging left or right, or when moving off from the kerb;
- display no undesirable habits such as steering one handed or holding the gear lever when not required;
- not depress the clutch too early when stopping or have it depressed when cornering;
- not rely too much on good brakes eg. late braking;
- obey all relevant speed limits, signposting and roadmarkings;
- have a basic knowledge of English in order to understand the Licence Examiner's directions; and
- stop at stop signs, and not roll through them.

Applicants should be aware that the Licence Examiner may be accompanied by a Trainee Examiner during the practical driving test.

Driver competencies

Your driving ability will be assessed against 22 driver competencies. These competencies have been arranged in a logical order. They are:

1. Vehicle controls
2. Cabin drill
3. Starting up procedure
4. Moving off procedure

5. Gear changing
6. Steering control
7. Turns, left and right
8. Speed control
9. Slowing procedure
10. Stopping procedure
11. Hill starts
12. Give way rules, intersections, traffic lights, roundabouts, traffic signs, road markings, pedestrian crossings, school crossings
13. Reversing
14. Right angle parking (front in)
15. Reverse parallel parking
16. U turns
17. Turning around in the road, eg three point turns
18. Lane changing, merging, entering freeways
19. Overtaking
20. Observation skills, visual searching and scanning, hazard recognition
21. Compliance with the System of Vehicle Control
22. Driving on busy roads and unfamiliar roads.

Further details about the 22 driver competencies can be found in the Learner Driver Handbook *Towards Your "Ps" in the ACT* and Logbook.

ACT licence holders renewing their licence must produce:

- A completed licence renewal form;

- An existing ACT photographic licence (or satisfactory proof of identity).
- They must pass an eyetest test (if required);
- Be photographed for their licence, and pay the required fee.

Competency Based Training and Assessment Scheme (CBT & A)

Learner drivers now have the option of obtaining their provisional driver licence through a Competency Based Training and Assessment (Logbook) Scheme, as an alternative to the one-off practical driving test by a Government Licence Examiner.

Under this scheme, learner drivers are assessed by an Accredited Driving Instructor against the 22 driver competencies. After successful completion of the competencies, the Accredited Driving Instructor can certify the learner driver as having the necessary competence to be issued a Provisional Driver Licence without the need for a formal Government practical driving assessment.

Further details on this scheme can be found in the Learner Driver Handbook *Towards Your "Ps" in the ACT* and Logbook.

NOTE: It is a legal requirement to carry your drivers licence with you at all times when driving. You may be issued with an infringement notice if the police stop you and you are not carrying your drivers licence

Licence classifications

Provisional licence



After you have passed your practical test, or the CBT&A Scheme, you will be issued with a photographic provisional driver licence (red) for a three year period.

It should be noted that if you pass your practical test, or the CBT&A Scheme, in an automatic vehicle, your driver licence will be endorsed with an 'A' condition which will allow you to drive automatic vehicles only. You will be required to display 'P' plates on your vehicle for three years. You will lose your licence if you accumulate four or more demerit points. However, you can reduce the length of time that you must display your 'P' plates to six months and increase your demerit points limit to eight points if you complete an optional *Road Ready Plus* course.

This course may not be undertaken until six months after gaining your provisional driver licence. Provisional licence holders aged 26 years or older will have their demerit points limit increased to eight points and will be able to remove their 'P' plates after six months without having to undertake the course. Provisional licence

holders are restricted to towing trailers up to 750 kilograms GVM for the first 12 months.

NOTE: 'P' plates are meant to be easily seen by other motorists, for your safety and theirs. The plates must be placed at the front and rear of the vehicle in a conspicuous position so they are clearly visible from in front of and behind the vehicle. 'P' plates are not clearly visible if they are placed, for example, behind wiper arms, behind rear louvres or inside tinted windows.

Motorcyclists only need to display one 'P' plate, at the rear of the motorcycle.

NOTE: It is an offence to drive a vehicle with 'P' plates displayed, if you are NOT the holder of a provisional licence.

Full licence



After a three-year provisional period has been completed, you will be eligible to obtain a full driver licence (gold).

Heavy vehicle licence



Applicants for a heavy vehicle licence class will be issued with a national heavy vehicle driver licence (magenta) after successfully passing a practical assessment.

Probationary licence



Drivers/riders returning to driving/riding after a court imposed cancellation or disqualification will be required to hold a probationary driver licence for 12 months before progressing to the previous licence held.

Note: Drivers are required to carry their driver licence at all times when driving a vehicle. Failure to produce your driver licence when asked to do so by police could result in a substantial fine.

Safe driving tips:

- always obey the speed limit;
- always check your blind spots;
- always use your indicators before turning or moving out from the kerb;
- don't rest your arm on the door with your elbow out the window;
- always stop completely at stop signs;
- park lights are for parking – head lights are for driving; and
- don't have worn-out tyres on your vehicle.

Where to get further information

Test your knowledge of the **ACT Road Rules** on the following website:

www.roadready.act.gov.au

Road Ready is designed to help young people in the ACT to become safer and more competent drivers. Visit the Road Ready website for more information:

www.roadready.act.gov.au

Canberra Connect provides access to a comprehensive range of ACT Government information and services including information about obtaining, renewing and paying for your ACT driver licence. Click the links to Transport, Roads and Traffic and Driver licences at:

www.canberraconnect.act.gov.au

or telephone 132281.

You can access the Australian Road Rules by clicking on the National Transport Commission website:

www.ntc.gov.au

and clicking the link to the Australian Road Rules.

For information on speeding and traffic rules enforcement, visit the Australian Federal Police website:

www.afp.gov.au

and click the link to Policing in the ACT, or telephone 6256 7777.

For further information about driver licensing, vehicle registration and inspection, parking, paying infringements and changing your address on-line, visit the Australian Capital Territory Road Transport Authority website:

www.rego.act.gov.au

or telephone 6207 7000.

Information about road safety and other road transport policy issues is available on the ACT Government Road Transport website:

www.transport.act.gov.au

For First Aid information, visit the St John Ambulance website:

www.stjohn.org.au

or telephone (02) 6282 2399 (Canberra) or 1300 360 4555 (Australia-wide).