

# Driver Education Requirements and Alternative Options

## Age Requirements

- **If you are a Virginia resident under age 18**, you must hold your Virginia learner's permit for at least nine months and complete a Virginia state-approved driver education program.
- Your parent, guardian, or foster parent must provide his or her driver's license or state-issued identification card number and sign the driver education completion certificate. By signing the certificate, they attest to your academic standing and certify that you have driven at least 45 hours (15 of which occurred after sunset) and that the statements made and the information submitted on the certificate are true and correct. Certifying false statements can result in prosecution.
- **If you are a Virginia resident age 18 or older** and have never held a license issued by any state, U.S. territory or foreign country, you must either:
  1. Hold a Virginia learner's permit for at least 60 days and complete a Behind-the-Wheel Checklist (Form [CSMA 19](#)) before you may take the road skills test. This checklist describes specific driving tasks that you may be asked to perform while taking the road skills test, to be administered by a DMV staff member.
  2. A licensed driver must certify on the form that he/she has been with you while you practiced your driving skills and that you have complied with all requirements for learner's permit holders while operating a motor vehicle.
  3. **OR**
  4. Successfully complete the driver's license knowledge exam and show completion of a state-approved driver education program. Doing so will waive the requirement to hold your learner's permit for at least 60 days. In addition, as the road skill test will be administered as part of the driver education course, you will not be required to take the road skills test at DMV.

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## About Driver's Education

Driver education programs are available statewide to students, adults and out-of-school youths. Public and private school programs are approved by the Department of Education. [Driver training schools](#) follow the same course content and are licensed by DMV.

The program must present 36 classroom periods, including components about alcohol safety, drug abuse awareness, aggressive driving, distracted driving, pedestrian and bicycle safety, handicapped parking, fuel-efficient driving practices, motorcycle awareness, and organ and

tissue donation awareness. The program must also include 14 in-car instruction periods - 7 periods of driving and 7 periods of observation, including the final road skills examination.

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## 90-Minute Parent/Teen Component

This additional minimum 90-minute parent/student driver education component is part of the in-classroom portion of the driver education curriculum and emphasizes parental responsibilities regarding juvenile driver behavior, juvenile driving restrictions and the dangers of driving while intoxicated and underage consumption of alcohol, as required by Virginia Code §22.1-205.

- Students under age 18 in Planning District 8 (counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Manassas and Manassas Park) must participate in this component, along with a parent or guardian, as part of the in-classroom portion of the driver education curriculum. The course must be completed in person.
- Students under age 18 outside of Planning District 8 may be required by their school division to participate in this component, along with their parent or guardian, as part of the in-classroom portion of the driver education curriculum.

The course can be completed in person or online. To find which school divisions require the completion of this additional component, refer to School Divisions Requiring 90-Minute Parent/Teen Component.

NOTE: Students, along with their parent, guardian, or foster parent, can complete the component in person at their high school or at a driver training school or online at <http://www.90minparentteen.org/>. The 90-minute parent/teen component is not currently available through an online driver training school.

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## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### 90-Minute Parent/Teen Component Exemptions

Parents and students are exempt from the 90-minute/student driver education component if:

- Student is at least 18 years old
- Student is an emancipated minor
- Unaccompanied minor who is not in the physical custody of their parent or guardian

Note: An "unaccompanied minor" is a minor that may be separated from his/her parents and living with others who do not have custody for a variety of reasons. After the student has completed his/her training, the student must check the appropriate box on the Virginia Driver Training Certificate (DTS B) regarding the exemption from the additional parent/student component of the driver education program and sign the certificate before the license is processed.

The course may be taken at a public or private driver training school. The classroom component may also be taken online through a driver training school.

If you are home schooled, refer to Driver Education for Home-Schooled Students.

You will receive a driver education completion certificate when you successfully complete a driver education program. The driver education certificate of completion is considered part of the driver's license application. A copy of your certificate will be sent by your school instructor to DMV for issuance of a permanent driver's license.