

Curriculum Guidelines for Driver Education On the Road Instruction: All students should be using the curriculum. Option A & Option B

This is based upon a recommended 45 minutes of driving time each “class”.

Class #1: The majority of the driving should be in residential areas, practicing right and left hand turns. Teach hand over hand turning to new drivers, make sure experienced drivers are taking proper angles to the turns and landing in the proper lanes. Full stops at stop signs and where to stop should be completely covered, and discussions on right-of-way should be done. Establish a pattern of having the students signal when you tell them to turn (ie., they respond immediately to your instructions). Talk about basics of what is done on a NY state road test and basic defensive driving concepts which will be used and discussed during every class (ie., patience, observing the laws, and decision making).

Class #2: Still the majority of the driving should be on mostly residential streets. You can introduce turns that have different angles, etc. All students should have experience with residential intersections with blocked visibility (trees, bushes, cars, signs, etc.) where they have to practice stopping at the stop line and then “creeping” up to where both they and the instructor can see clearly down both ways. Intersections should be varied with respect to right-of-way. This means that the student should be working on a pattern of intersections in a neighborhood where the first intersection has a 4 way stop, the next has a stop for the student but not for cross traffic, then hit “T” intersections where they both have the right-of-way, and when they do not. The variety of intersections will demonstrate whether they really understand this. Students should also do a little more driving on the main roads, but only driving straight (simple stuff) for a minute or two (or a little more than class #1).

Class #3: Students should be introduced to busier intersections, all should be making right hand turns at traffic light intersections (turn-on-red, no-turn-on-red, turning on green arrow, etc.) and handling fairly busy residential intersections. Students can be making left hand turns at traffic light intersections, but these should be “T” intersections (with no on-coming traffic) or traffic lights with turning signals (again, no on coming traffic to deal with). All students should get an introduction to the 3 pt U-turn (at least one 3 pt U-turn). Students should get runs on a couple of different major roadways (if capable), again, nothing too complicated. Students should be picking up street signs and quizzed on them when appropriate. You can begin the introduction to the lane change (merging) by using roadways where two lanes merge into one. This gets them reading signs (& the roadway) and starting to look in the mirrors for traffic while moving. It is important that you emphasize patience and taking the safest opportunity “to go”, not the first opportunity “to go”.

Class #4: More 3 point U-turns (do 3 or 4) and raising the bar on difficulty (ie., narrower streets, streets with many parked cars, etc.). Driving on the main roadways should be increased again and very basic lane changes can be introduced. You can do more merges and do basic lane changes with little to no traffic around the vehicle. Introduce the left hand turn at a traffic light with on coming traffic.

Class #5: The difficulty level on 3 point U-turns can be raised to its highest levels (ie., very

narrow streets or with obstructions). All students should be making the basic left hand turn at a traffic light, but without heavy traffic, although advanced students may be introduced to heavy traffic turns. Lane changes should start to involve more traffic and you should start introducing the turn & lane change combination. This combination means that you instruct the student to make a left (or right) hand turn from the right lane (or left lane) trying to get the student to recognize that they need to deal with the lane change first and the turn second. Most of the straight driving should be on the main roadways.

Class #6: Virtually all the driving should be on the main roadways, with at least 6 or 7 lane changes in light traffic for each student. Residential street driving should only be done with students who are still at basic levels. Variety is the key at this point, you should be trying to explore new areas and getting farther from home. If you can, try to get to areas that have hills and curves as this works on more subtle control of the vehicle, varying and gradual use of the brake, gas, and steering.

Class #7: This class should be basically a long road trip, you should extend driving time to at least 1 hour. Along the way have the students do multiple lane changes. General instruction is necessary, goal is getting students comfortable with main road driving.

Class #8: This class should involve more lane changes and deal with the largest and most complicated intersections. These intersections should involve multiple turning lanes for turns with turning arrows and very heavy traffic where the light changes on the student while waiting at steady green lights. You can begin the introduction to the parallel park by demonstrating it yourself.

Class #9: All students should be introduced to the parallel park doing at least 2 parks this session. Basic set up with no car behind them. Try to involve lane changes with all turns at major intersections and try to make most of these turns left hand turns without a turning arrow (so they have to deal with oncoming traffic).

Class #10: More parallel parking, advanced drivers can be given cars behind them, larger vehicles, vehicles parked the wrong way, etc. You can also introduce different types of parking (shopping center, etc.). While doing more parking (3 or 4 parks), review residential street rules, right-of-way, etc.

Class #11: This class should be a total mix of driving including everything done so far, turns, 3 point U-turn, parallel park, lane changes, major intersections, etc.

Class #12: This class is basically the same as #11 but include high speed lane changes (50 mph +) and entry to major roadways that simulate parkway/expressway entry ramps (some entry ramps onto Sunrise Highway, route 109, route 110, Jericho Turnpike, route 106/107, etc.) if you can get to them.

Class #13: Expressway driving. Try to do Expressway driving before parkway driving if you can. Highway driving is not simply driving straight on Ocean parkway for 20 minutes. Students should get and off the highway 3 or 4 times. If you have to use the parkways, make sure that you select long ramps for them to start on. Most of their driving should be in the right hand lane so

they have to deal with incoming traffic and can see how people enter the highway (both correctly & incorrectly) from the perspective of the person on the highway already.

Class #14: Parkway driving. Students should be introduced to parkway driving and use 1 or 2 medium length ramps as well as long ramps. The very short ramps are beyond the capabilities of most licensed drivers, and it is recommended you leave this to the professionals. Some driving can be done in the middle lane (Southern State Parkway) for the experience, but it is hard (& inappropriate) to stay there for long doing the speed limit.

Class #15: Each student should do a review of the road test material, followed by a 7 to 8 minute (10 minutes maximum) simulated road test. This test should be complete with a grade sheet so the student can see how the test works and what they have to work on. Criticism should be direct but still encouraging, emphasizing the relative simplicity of the test. The “real” test is after they receive their license. We are emphasizing that the road the test is relatively simple, real driving is complex. If you are unaware of the details of procedures and tasks of a NYS road test, please consult a professional.

Class #16: The entire final class should be a “road test”. Students should be encouraged for the things they do correct, and review their mistakes. Let them work on and correct anything that goes wrong so they feel that they have mastered that task.

This guideline is based on the idea that the student (s) is taking the road test after the last class. If they are taking it sooner, you should advance the road test classes up sooner for that student (class) and move the highway practice back to the end.