

FACT SHEET 5 Road Safety



Takapuna Grammar School *International Department*

While you are in New Zealand you may well

- travel in a car or bus as a passenger
- drive a car, motorcycle, or other vehicle
- ride a bicycle
- use public transport

It is important that you do so safely.

Owning or driving a car

You should obtain a New Zealand driver's licence on your arrival in New Zealand if you plan to drive. Drivers must have a current and valid New Zealand Drivers licence, International Driving Permit, or overseas licence to drive a car in New Zealand. An international visitor can drive on an overseas licence for 12 months. After that they must apply for a New Zealand driver licence. Drivers must carry their licence at all times when driving

To ride a motorbike in New Zealand you must get a motorbike licence.

New Zealand has a Graduated Driver Licence System. There are three stages: learner; restricted; and full. Drivers must pass an official test for each licence stage. A learner licence allows you to learn to drive. If you hold a learner licence, you must be accompanied at all times when driving by a supervisor (a person who holds and has held a full licence for at least two years). A restricted licence allows you to drive on your own between the hours of 5 am and 10 pm. If you wish to drive outside these hours you must be accompanied by a supervisor. If you hold a learner or restricted licence, you cannot carry passengers unless you are accompanied by a supervisor. A full licence allows you to drive on your own and carry passengers at any time.

If you own a car, you should obtain at least third party insurance. A reminder that the roads outside of the main highways can be narrow and windy. You must drive really carefully.

The New Zealand Police enforce New Zealand driving laws. There are penalties such as fines, licence disqualification or suspension, vehicle impoundment, and imprisonment for breaking the driving laws.

Be particularly careful about the Give Way Rule (give way to traffic on your right). This is peculiar to New Zealand.

Under the Land Transport (Unauthorised Street and Drag Racing) Amendment Act 2003 police can impound vehicles, at the owner's expense, for operating the vehicle in a race or in an unnecessary exhibition of speed or acceleration, or causing the vehicle to undergo a sustained loss of traction (e.g. wheel spins)

There are parking laws in New Zealand. Parking areas are sign-posted. Parking is not allowed on yellow lines. Most city parking requires drivers to pay and display a receipt. Vehicles can be towed away, at the expense of the owner, if they are parked illegally



About drink driving:

The amount of alcohol drivers under twenty years old are legally allowed to drink before driving is so small that it is safer not to drink at all. Driving while over the legal alcohol limit is a criminal offence in New Zealand. There are severe penalties, including licence disqualification and suspension and prison terms for driving while over legal alcohol limit.

About speeding:

The maximum speed limit in New Zealand is 100km/h. Most urban streets have 50km/h limits. Speed limits are well sign posted, and can vary on the same stretch of road, so watch for them. Drive to conditions- in poor visibility

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and bad weather it may be appropriate to drive slower than the speed limit.

About the requirement to wear safety belts: Drivers and passengers are legally required to wear a safety belt. There are fines for not wearing safety belts.

About failure to give way at intersections: Intersections are places where two or more roads intersect or meet. Look for traffic wherever it may come from and give way to your right. Refer to the Road Code for more detailed information, as New Zealand's Give Way Rules are unique.

About driver fatigue: Driving when you are tired or have not had enough sleep can affect your driving. Signs of fatigue include finding it hard to focus, poor decision-making, and slower reaction times. Plan your trips so you have plenty of sleep before you drive. If you are driving and you feel tired, stop driving and have a sleep, drink water or coffee, and circulate fresh air into the car.

About what to do in case of an accident: If in an accident, exchange details with other drivers involved (name, telephone number, address, type and colour of vehicle, vehicle registration number, insurance company). If the accident is serious and/or the other driver denies fault, note down other factors such as names of any witnesses, road names, if either party was carrying passengers, the time of day, the weather conditions.

If someone is injured or killed an accident it must be reported to the Police. If the police do not attend the accident, report it at the nearest Police station within 24 hours.

For emergency assistance at the scene of an accident, call 111 and ask for the emergency service required (e.g. Police, Fire or Ambulance)

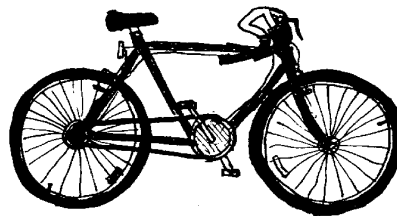
In the case of a non-injury accident, a driver or rider must give his/her name and address, the vehicle owner's name and address, and the registration plate number of his/her vehicle to other people involved in the accident. If a non-injury accident results in damage to an unoccupied vehicle or other property belonging to someone else, this must be reported to the owner of the property within 48 hours. The driver must give his/her name and address, the registration plate number of his/her vehicle, and the location of the accident to the owner of

the damaged vehicle or property. In cases where the owner of the damaged unoccupied vehicle or property is unknown or cannot be contacted, the accident must be reported to the Police at the nearest Police station within 60 hours.

Being a pedestrian:

1. Cars won't always stop for pedestrians
2. Use controlled crossing points (pedestrian crossings, pedestrian traffic lights) where possible

Using the kerb drill to cross the road: Find a safe place to cross. Stop one step back from the kerb. Look and listen for traffic wherever it may come from (Look right, look left, look right again). If there is traffic coming wait until it has passed, then look and listen for traffic again. When there is no traffic coming walk quickly straight across the road, looking each way for traffic.



Being a cyclist:

Cyclists are required by law to wear a properly-fitted, standards-approved bicycle helmet, when riding a bicycle on a road. Cyclists should ride on the road not on the footpath

The LTSA and New Zealand Police recommend that children under 10 years old ride on the road only when accompanied by a responsible older person.

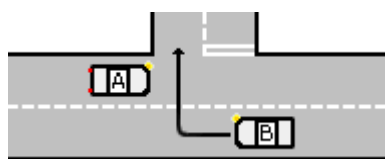
Drivers and passengers are legally required to wear safety belts and can be fined for not wearing safety belts



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The full New Zealand Road Code is not available online, however the New Zealand Automobile Association offers a [Summary of New Zealand Road Rules](#) of some of the most important New Zealand road rules on their website. Many of the [road rules](#) and conditions specific to New Zealand are also explained in detail on the [Land Transport Safety Authority](#) website.

In New Zealand, cars drive on the **left** side of the road, similar to Australia. Generally most international road rules are followed, however;



Cars turning left MUST give way to traffic turning right (ie: all other traffic). They do not have automatic right of way. In the example to the right, Car B has the right of way where Car A is turning left.

Country driving needs special care, so be on the lookout for **animals on the road** (signposts will warn of "Wandering Stock"), **one-way bridges** and **unsealed roads** which need to be approached with extra caution and care. Often country roads in New Zealand are narrow, have a loose gravel surface, and no road markings. Local drivers tend to drive fast, and in the middle of unmarked roads.

The natural tendency for many international drivers when confronted with someone approaching around a corner from the opposite direction, is to pull to the right, rather than the left, **with disastrous consequences!**



One Way bridges require particular care, and have specific signage at both approaches to the bridge, indicating who has right of way. The circular "PLEASE GIVE WAY" sign with the **large** black arrow for approaching traffic shows you must give way. The rectangular "RIGHT OF WAY" sign with the **large** arrow in your direction shows you have the right of way. If you are travelling in the direction of the

Overtake on the right except:

- when directed by a police officer
- when there are two or more lanes on your side and you can safely overtake on the left.

Don't overtake near:

- a pedestrian crossing
- a railway crossing
- an intersection
- a blind bend, crest of a hill or anywhere else where you cannot see clearly at least 100 metres in front of you.
- Don't overtake in a no passing line area. This is shown by a solid yellow line on your side of the road. Advance warning of these is often given by a broken yellow line.



Traffic Lights

RED - means stop. Note: North American, Canadian visitors - you cannot turn left when stop light at an intersection is still red.
YELLOW - means stop. If you are so close to the line that you cannot stop safely, keep going.
GREEN - means you can go if it is safe.

If you are involved in a crash we advise you to do these things:

1. Stop and help.
2. Do not admit to liability.
3. Obtain driver's name, address and insurance company of all other parties involved and the registration numbers of any other vehicles involved.
4. Report details to your Insurance Company within 24 hours and complete an accident report.
5. **If someone is hurt report to the nearest police station within 24 hours.**



**THE FASTER YOU GO
THE BIGGER THE MESS**

Speed, and Driving after Drinking are the major killers on New Zealand Roads. Penalties for both are high.

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Maximum speed limits in towns and cities is 50 km/h (30mph) and on the open road 100 km/h (60mph), unless signs indicate alternative speeds. Speed cameras are operating throughout New Zealand. They can be in hidden locations, not visible to motorists.

ACCIDENT

If you are approaching a crash site slow down and drive at **20km/h or less** until you have passed the crash site.

If a school bus has stopped to let children on or off, you must slow down and drive at **20km/h or less**, until you are well past the bus, no matter what direction you are coming from.

Fines for driving up to 50km/h over the speed limit range from \$30 to \$630.

Driving more than 50km/h over the limit now falls under the categories of careless, dangerous, or reckless driving, depending on the circumstances, and now results in a mandatory 28 day licence suspension

Seatbelts must be worn by ALL occupants of the vehicle at all times, even in the rear seat. Drivers may be given an instant fine of \$150 if they are apprehended not wearing a seat belt.

All children under five years of age must use an infant or child car seat - by law. Car seats are available for hire from rental car companies, and Plunket Childcare offices throughout New Zealand.

Strict drink-driving laws apply, with random breath testing carried out at any time. All insurance is invalid if drivers exceed the legal alcohol limit (currently 0.8gm alcohol per liter of blood).



Driver Licenses

A valid, full, New Zealand, International, or Country of Origin driving licence is required to drive in New Zealand.

If you are intending to drive in New Zealand you must have held a non-probationary licence in their country of residence for a minimum of three years. You will only be able to drive those types of vehicles for which you were licenced in your country of origin.

If you hold a valid overseas driver licence with your photo on it, you can use this licence for up to one year, without having to get an international driving licence.

If you do not have a photo on your overseas driver licences, you will need to obtain an international driver licence. You should obtain this before you leave your own country.

If you are going to be driving in New Zealand for longer than one year, you must upgrade to a full New Zealand driver licence. After you have been in New Zealand for one year, your overseas driver licences will no longer be valid for driving in New Zealand.

Don't Drink and Drive...

- These guidelines are for the first hour of drinking without food. If followed, they will keep a fully licensed driver under the limit. You should have no more than one standard drink per hour from then on. A standard is equivalent to 1 can of low alcohol beer, 1 nip of spirits, 1 glass of beer, 1/3 a can or stubbie of beer, 1/3 bottle of wine cooler or a 1/3 (60ml) of a glass of wine.
- Your limit may be less if you're smaller than average, unwell, taking medication or not used to alcohol. Drinking more than the amounts specified here will take you to a level considered dangerous and may take you over the legal limit.
- If you hold a learner or restricted license your legal limit is much less. Therefore you shouldn't drink any alcohol before driving.

**Guidelines
drink either -**

Female	Male
<p>3/4 1 1 litre jug</p> 	<p>3/4 5 200ml glass of beer</p> 
<p>1/2 2 can of beer 4.5% alc/vol</p> 	<p>2 2 330ml stubbie of beer</p> 
<p>4 5/2 low alcohol beer 2.0% alc/vol</p> 	<p>3/4 5/2 single nip of spirits</p> 
<p>1 1/2 2 330ml bottle of wine cooler</p> 	<p>1 1/2 2 150ml glass of wine</p> 

- Always eat when you drink to reduce the effects of alcohol.
- Drink low alcohol beer (2.0% or less) or non-alcoholic drinks to help keep you under the limit.
- Once you're over the limit, time is the only cure and this will only work if you don't drink more alcohol. Strong coffee, saunas, cold showers, walking or jogging won't get you back to the limit any faster.
- The legal limit for fully licensed drivers is 80mg alcohol per 100ml blood (based on an average: male 67kg, female 56kg).
- From 1 April, 1993, stringent limits on drink driving with greatly increased penalties, were set for drivers under 20. Little more than one can of beer is now needed to put an averaged-sized driver over the limit.

transport safety

New Zealand law requires you to carry your photographic driver licence or permit with you whenever you are driving. If your vehicle is stopped and you cannot produce your licence you will be prosecuted and possibly have your vehicle impounded.

- You should also ensure that you have insurance cover in the event of an accident, and the damage which could be incurred on the vehicle you are driving as well as other vehicles. Insurance is not legally required in New Zealand, however it is recommended that at a minimum you should have Third Party Insurance,

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covering damage you cause to other vehicles and property.

- You should not travel in a vehicle being driven by someone who you know does not have a valid licence and adequate insurance cover.

Car License

If you have an overseas driver licence or an international driving permit, you can drive in New Zealand for a maximum of one year after you first arrive.

After one year, you will need to apply for a New Zealand driver licence. You will have to pass a theory test and, depending on the country you have come from, a practical driving test (usually the full licence test) as well.

If you don't have an overseas driver licence or an international driving permit, you will need to apply for a learner licence before you can begin to drive any vehicle in New Zealand.

If you don't apply for a New Zealand driver licence within one year of arriving in this country you will become an unlicensed driver and could be charged if you are caught driving by the Police.

Being unlicensed could also affect your ability to get car insurance, delay your insurance claim or result in your claim being declined.

In New Zealand, unlicensed drivers who are warned not to drive and are subsequently caught driving by the Police have the vehicle they are driving seized at the roadside and impounded for 28 days.

If you are an unlicensed driver you should not be driving. You have not proved you know and understand New Zealand's road rules and you are putting yourself and others at risk.

Theory test

All drivers on New Zealand roads must have an adequate knowledge of our road rules, signs, laws and safe driving practices.

The requirement for all applicants to pass a theory test is of particular importance in New Zealand because of our unique 'Give Way' rule. Under this rule, you must give way to

vehicles coming from the opposite direction and turning right, when you are turning left.

New residents from all countries must sit the theory test. You have one year from the date you arrive in New Zealand to arrange to sit the theory test for the highest class of vehicle your overseas licence allows you to drive. .

Practical test

All overseas drivers are tested to ensure that they meet minimum standards of driving skill and have sufficient experience to drive safely. Drivers from some countries are exempt from the practical test. If your licence comes from Australia, Canada, Norway, a member state of the European Union, South Africa, Switzerland or the United States of America, you may be eligible for an exemption from the practical test.

To get an exemption you need to:

- produce a valid and current overseas driver licence from one of the above countries, or one that has expired within the last 12 months
prove you have enough driving experience (ie have held a full overseas driver licence for at least two years)
- sign a statement that your overseas licence has not been suspended or revoked.

If you are exempted from sitting the practical test, you still need to pass the theory test. If you don't pass the theory test, you can't drive.

Forms to apply for an overseas licence conversion are available from Land Transport Safety Authority (LTSA) driver licensing agents.

People with licences from other countries can still convert that licence to a New Zealand driver licence by sitting and passing the theory test and full licence practical test.

Why do only some new residents have to sit the practical test?

Some countries require similar standards of driving skill and have similar licensing systems as New Zealand's. The LTSA recognises that drivers from these countries usually have adequate driving skills. They therefore need only demonstrate a knowledge of our road

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rules before being granted a New Zealand driver licence.

Other countries have very different driver licensing systems. Where there are significant differences in the way drivers obtain licences we require people from those countries to show that they have adequate driving skills to drive safely. This helps ensure our roads are safer for everyone.

What happens if I fail the theory or practical tests?

If you fail the theory test you cannot drive until you pass it.

If you fail the practical test you must be accompanied by a supervisor while driving until you pass. The supervisor must sit in the front passenger seat and hold and have held a full licence for at least 2 years.

Motorcycle licence

As with a car licence, if you have an overseas motorcycle licence you can ride a motorcycle for one year before having to apply for a New Zealand motorcycle licence.

Again, as with applying for a car licence you may be eligible for an exemption from the practical test. The countries whose licence holders are eligible for exemptions from the practical test are the same as for a car licence. All licence holders converting to a New Zealand licence have to sit the theory test.

Licence holders from other countries can convert to a New Zealand licence by passing the theory test and the full licence test.

When you convert to a New Zealand licence, it will hold the equivalent licence classes to your overseas licence.

The *Road Code* explains safe driving laws and practices, and is a guide for drivers who are preparing for a theory or practical driving test. It has been revamped and revised to include all the recent changes to driver licensing in New Zealand. Drivers who are new to our roads, people learning to

The Full Licence Test (Car drivers)

Please note: these instructions are for the obtaining of a **licence to drive a car**. The

requirements to obtain a motorbike license are quite different.

What is the full licence test?

The full licence test is a tough onroad driving test that restricted licence holders must pass before "graduating" to a full New Zealand driver licence.

People taking the test are expected to demonstrate safe driving behaviour across a wide range of traffic situations and road conditions.

The things that you will be asked to do in the test are designed to see if you can safely handle driving situations that present the greatest crash risk to New Zealand drivers in their first five years of driving.

If you cannot show the testing officer that you can handle these situations safely, you will not pass the test and you will remain on a restricted licence.

What does the full licence test involve?

The full licence test takes about 1 hour to complete.

The test is conducted in your car or a vehicle provided by you. This vehicle must be roadworthy or the test cannot be undertaken. A brief roadworthiness check will be conducted before the test begins.

If your vehicle is not roadworthy then the test will be cancelled and you will need to book and pay for another test.

The full licence test has three parts:

- Part 1 - basic driving (about 10 minutes duration)
- Part 2 - detecting and responding to driving hazards in built-up areas (about 15 minutes duration)
- Part 3 - detecting and responding to driving hazards in higher speed zones (about 20 minutes duration).

Time is also allowed in the one-hour test period for administration and for the testing officer to give you feedback on your performance (about five minutes).

You must successfully complete Part 1 before progressing to Parts 2 and 3. The testing officer will tell you the result of Part 1 as soon as you have completed it.

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There are no fixed test routes. You must be capable of driving on all types of roads and in all traffic situations.

Preparing for the full licence test

If you have been driving regularly in all types of traffic situations for at least 18 months and have not caused any crashes, you should be able to pass Part 1 of the full licence test without difficulty.

However, you may need to practice talking about detecting and responding to the hazards that you see when driving to prepare for Parts 2 and 3 of the test.

To help prepare for those parts of the test you could ask a friend or relative who is an experienced driver (someone who has been driving for at least five years) to help you practice.

The friend or relative should sit in the front passenger seat while you drive and perform the role of the testing officer. The information provided in the sections on Parts 2 and 3 of the test should help you to practice describing the hazards you detect and respond to when performing particular driving manoeuvres.

You should practice until you can confidently and clearly describe what traffic hazards you are looking at and what you are doing about them, and you can safely and legally perform the manoeuvres required in Parts 2 and 3.

Remember...

- Don't be late for the test. If you are more than 5 minutes late your test will be cancelled and you will have to book and pay again to resit the test. Make sure your vehicle is roadworthy and has enough fuel in it to last for the 45 minute drive.

How is the test scored?

You need to get 80% to pass the test. This is based on your total score across all three parts of the test. A simple **yes and no** approach to scoring is used. If you perform a driving skill to the required standard you get a "yes". If you do not perform the skill to the required standard you will get a "no".

What manoeuvres will I have to make?

The testing officer will instruct you to perform turning, stopping and other manoeuvres. You

are required to drive safely and legally throughout the test. This means positioning the vehicle correctly, controlling speed and selecting safe gaps in the traffic.

Safe driving does not necessarily mean travelling at the speed limit it means driving to suit the conditions, but where it is safe you are expected to travel within 5 km/h of, but never exceeding, the posted speed limit.

If your driving endangers anyone, the test will end. If the danger was caused by your error, you will not pass the test. If you break any traffic law you will fail the test. Very close note will be taken of your speed and no tolerance will be given for exceeding posted limits.