

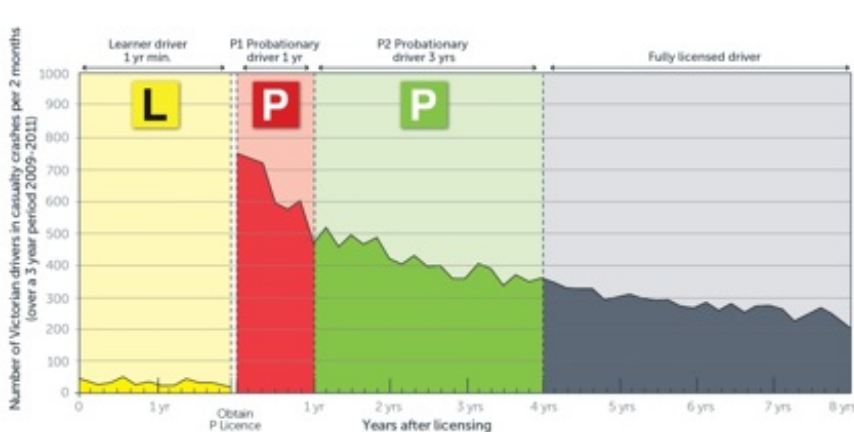
LEARNING TO DRIVE – ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Providing your learner with a lot of driving experience will help them be a safer driver. Learners who are supervised have a very low risk of crashing. However, the first 12 months on P plates is the most high risk time for all drivers.

Learning to drive is an important part of growing up, and helping your child to achieve this is an important role for many parents. There are a lot of resources to help you be an effective supervisor and there are some very important things you need to know when your child gets their licence and drives alone.

What are the facts?

- Learners are one of the safest group of drivers on the road, and have a low crash rate.
- The more hours of driving experience a learner has in a range of driving situations and conditions the better equipped they will be when driving solo.
- Drivers aged 18-25 years old account for about a quarter of all drivers killed on the roads.



What are the rules?

To be eligible to sit for a probationary licence, learners need to:

- Have completed 120 hours of supervised driving experience which must be recorded in the official VicRoads Learner Log Book. This is a legal requirement and it must be presented to VicRoads to be able to sit for the probationary licence test. It is important to read and fill in the log book carefully.
- At least 10 hours of the supervised driving experience must be undertaken at night.
- Supervisors need to have a full car licence and this licence needs to be carried with the supervising driver. The supervising driver must not have a BAC above 0.05.

What can parents do?

When supervising your learner:

- Learning to drive is complicated and takes a long time. Reinforce the need to build experience gradually to your child often.
- Adopt a staged approach to learning to drive. This helps you plan the learning process and

also ensures that you will not put your child in situations they are not ready for.

- There are four stages to learning to drive: Stage 1: Controlling the Car; Stage 2 – Driving on quiet low speed roads; Stage 3 – Complex driving situations; Stage 4 – Rehearsing for solo driving. Details of how to manage this staged approach are outlined in The Learner Kit that all learners receive from VicRoads. It contains a booklet, specifically for parents – Guide for Supervising Drivers.
- If you are using a driving instructor, work in partnership with them and try sitting in on some lessons if you can.
- There are a lot of resources to help learners and their supervisors – make sure you use these. See the list below. Getting ready for the probationary licence test:
- Only book in for the test (consisting of a Hazard Perception Test and on-road Drive Test) when your child is ready. The longer they are on their Ls the more experience and maturity they will gain.
- While your child is still a learner, try to establish some ground rules about solo driving.
- Newly licensed drivers are the highest risk group of drivers on the road and driving late at night is the most risky time.
- Negotiate with your child to limit their late night driving in the first few months of getting their Ps. Agree that for the first 3-6 months of the P period that there will be no late night driving without a parent supervising.
- Be aware of the licence conditions for P drivers and reinforce these with your child.
- Have discussions about avoiding situations where they might be more likely to drink and drive or be pressured into breaching peer passenger restrictions.
- Buying a safe car is particularly important for young people. If you are helping your child choose a car or if you are funding some or all of the car, ensure that your child buys a car that has a 4 star safety rating as a minimum.

Being a good role model

Being a good role model is very important. What parents do shows their child how they want him or her to behave. How you drive, will influence your child in the same way as what you eat or how much you exercise. So, try to practise what you preach – obey the road laws and drive safely. Take responsibility for yourself if you have committed traffic offences in the past. Admit your own mistakes and talk about the negative consequences and how you can avoid future offences.

Other resources

- [The VicRoads Learner Kit](#), which contains the Guide for Learners, the Guide for Supervising Drivers and the Learner Log Book
- [VicRoads Lessons from the Road](#) - online resource with 8 videos on how to go about learning to drive and keeping your P plate safe
- VicRoads Road To Solo Driving handbook – contains safety and road rule information
- [The VicRoads L site](#) – tips for learners and supervising drivers on learning to drive
- [VicRoads GLS Fact Sheet](#)
- [VicRoads Keys Please session](#) – information and practical ideas for Year 10 students during school hours on how to use the learning to drive period, get 120 hours of practice and become safe drivers – parents are welcome to attend
- [TAC Drivesmart CD](#)
- [keys2drive website](#)

“Until my oldest child started learning to drive and I read some of the materials related to helping her get experience I didn’t realise how safe the learner period is and just how many crashes P plate drivers have. It certainly has motivated me to be very involved and monitor my child’s driving when they get their P’s.”

DOWNLOAD PDF