



How to Apply for Your Minnesota Driver's License














Driver's Licenses for All

Starting October 1, 2023, all adults in Minnesota can apply for a standard Class D driver's license. Immigration status doesn't matter. Your license won't have any markings about citizenship or immigration status.

This fact sheet is for people who have never had a license before or have a foreign driver's license.

The Steps

Details of each step are in the sections that follow the checklist.

- Choose the Type of License you want 
- Read and Study the Manual 
- Pre-Apply and Schedule Your Knowledge Test 
- Go to DVS 
 - Take the Knowledge Test 
 - Pass the Vision Test 
 - Apply for Your Permit 
- Practice Driving 
- Schedule Road Test 
- Go Back to DVS 
 - Take Your Road Test 
 - Fill Out the Application 
- Get Your License in the Mail 



Choose the Type of License You Want

You have 3 options: Standard, Enhanced or REAL ID Compliant Driver's License. You can [check out details of the options](#) on the Minnesota Driver and Vehicle Services site at <https://dps.mn.gov>.

Note: Enhanced and Real ID driver's licenses require proof of citizenship or qualifying immigration status.



Read and Study the Manual

You can read the [Minnesota Driver's Manual](#) online. You are tested on your knowledge and understanding of Minnesota traffic laws and road signs. You can take [free practice tests online](#).



Pre-Apply and Schedule Your Knowledge Test

Click on "Pre-Apply for a Driver's License" on the [Minnesota Driver and Vehicle Services \(DVS\) home page](#). Pre-applying can make your wait time at the office shorter. It also helps you make sure that you have all the right documents for the license you want.

Find [a driver exam station](#) near you that gives the knowledge tests. Under "Service," click "Class D Knowledge Test." This list of exam places says if you have to make an appointment for the test or can walk-in. If you have to schedule, click "Schedule an Appointment" on the [DVS home page](#). You can also schedule by phone at (651) 284-1234.

Note: You must have a certified English translation for any documents in other languages.

Go to DVS



Take the Knowledge Test

You need to pay the fee of \$21.50 when you go. It can be by check, money order, cash, debit card, or credit card. Most offices also take debit and credit cards. Fees can change. [Check before you go](#).

If you fail the knowledge test twice, you have to pay \$10 for each time you try again.



Pass the Vision Test

They have vision testing machines there. If you normally wear glasses or contacts you can wear them for the test. If you fail the vision screening, they tell you to see an eye doctor.



Apply for Your Permit

You can apply for your permit before you leave. Or you can apply later at an [office near you](#). They give you a temporary paper permit you can use until your card comes in the mail. That takes about a month. Your instruction permit is valid for 2 years and can't be renewed. It lets you drive supervised at all times by a licensed driver 21 years of age or older. Make sure you carry it with you when you practice driving.

When You Have Your Permit



Practice Driving

If you are 18 years of age with a permit, you must practice driving for at least 6 months before scheduling the road test. If you are 19+, you need to hold your permit for at least 3 months before taking the road test. If you have a foreign driver's license, you may not need to wait before scheduling your road test.

Note: if you want/need driving lessons you need to look online. Sometimes you can find instructors through local high schools.



Schedule Your Road Test (also called Skills Test)

Find [a driver exam station](#) near you that gives the road tests. Under “*Service,” click “Class D Road Test.” This list of exam places also says if you have to make an appointment for the test or can walk-in. If you have to schedule, click “Schedule an Appointment” on the [home page](#). You can also schedule by phone at (651) 284-1234.

It can be hard to get an appointment. Schedule at least 3-4 weeks ahead.

Go Back to DVS



Take Your Road Test

You can [learn about the road test online](#). It tells you details about the test and what documents you need to take with you. You need to pay the fee to take the test when you go. The fee is \$38.00. Pay with check, money order, cash, or in most offices, debit or credit card. If you want an enhanced license or Real ID there is an added charge. Fees can change. [Check before you go](#). If you fail the test twice, you have to pay \$20 for each time you try again.



Fill Out the Driver's License Application

Once you pass the road test, fill out the driver's license application. You get a receipt for your driver's license application and a record of your road test score. These 2 things are your temporary driver's license.

If you are under 21 years old, you get a license marked “under-21.” It expires on your 21st birthday. You may apply for an over-21 license 3 weeks before your 21st birthday. From then on, your license expires every 4 years.



Get Your License in the Mail

You get your real license in the mail. You can [check the status of your license online](#) under “More Driver Services.”

Fact Sheets are legal information NOT legal advice. See a lawyer for advice.

Don't use this fact sheet if it is more than 1 year old. Ask us for updates, a fact sheet list, or alternate formats.

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