

South Dakota

TEEN Drivers

Freedom & Responsibility

When are we going to get my DRIVER LICENSE?

So you're getting to the age when you want to drive. Sure, there are a lot of things you will be able to do if you get a driver license, but have you thought of your new responsibilities? Here are some facts to keep in mind as you get your license and get behind the wheel.

Fast Fact: car crashes are the #1 killer of teens ages 16 -19. Pretty scary, right? People in your age group are the least likely to wear a seatbelt when driving.

Keep in mind that when you start driving, you're not only responsible for your life and your vehicle; you're also responsible for other people's lives. Think about them: other passengers, pedestrians and drivers.

Talk to your parents and decide when you're ready to get your driver license. When the time is right, you'll have questions about the process. Here's a list of FAQs that may come up before you climb behind the wheel.

Remember to buckle up... it's the law!

Fast Fact: In South Dakota, you must be at least 14 to apply for a permit.

How do I get my license?

How old do I have to be to get my driver license?

You must be 14 to get your first permit. You must hold an Instruction Permit for 180 consecutive days or 90 days with completion of a state approved driver education program (with a score of 80 percent or higher on both the written and drive portions of the class.) A Restricted Minor's Permit may be issued after holding the Instruction Permit for the required amount of days, provided you have not had any traffic convictions in the six-month period prior to upgrading to the Restricted Minor's Permit.

Do I have to come back to the exam station and change my Restricted Minor's Permit to an Operator License?

Yes, you must go to an exam station to upgrade to an Operator License after turning 16.

Do I need my parents with me when I apply for my License?

Yes, parental consent is needed for all applicants younger than 18.

Can I use my hospital copy of my birth record?

No, you must bring a certified Birth Certificate issued by the state Department of Health or by the county Register of Deeds office.

Can my parent/guardian cancel my privilege to drive?

Yes, the parent/guardian who signed the consent on your application may request cancellation of your license.

What documents are required to apply for a S.D. Driver License?

You need to bring a certified Birth Certificate and Social Security number. Those younger than 18 must also bring their parents.

Can I get a permit to practice driving?

Yes, an Instruction Permit allows an individual at least 14 years old to drive for one year during the hours of 6 a.m.-10 p.m., if the motor vehicle is operated under the direction of a licensed driver at least 18 years old who has at least one year driving experience. To drive between the hours of 10 p.m.-6 a.m., you must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

What do I do when I want to convert my Instruction Permit to an Operator License?

At age 16 you must go to your local exam station and perform the necessary skill testing. You must be free of any traffic convictions for the six-month period prior to the conversion and have held the Instruction Permit for the required time. If the Instruction Permit has expired, you will be required to obtain another Instruction Permit for 90 or 180 days.

What is the cost of a license and how long is it valid?

Operator License: \$8 - Valid for five years
Instruction Permit: \$8 - Valid for one year
Restricted Minor's Permit: \$8 - Valid for five years

What About Testing?

How many tests do I take when I apply for a Driver License?

You will take a 25-question written test and a driving skills test. They will also screen your vision. Obtaining the Instruction Permit only requires the vision screening and a written test.

How high must I score to pass?

Vision Screening: 20/40 with both eyes
Written test: 80 percent
Skill Test: 80 percent

Law violations or dangerous actions result in an automatic failure.

How many times can I retake each test?

If you fail your vision screening, no further testing will be allowed until a statement from your optometrist is completed and submitted.

You are allowed a total of three attempts to pass both the written AND the skills test each time you submit your application and fees. For example: If it takes you two times to pass the written portion of the test, you're only allowed one attempt to pass the skills test.

If you do not pass both tests within three attempts, you must reapply and pay the fee again to get three more tries. Remember that you need your parent's permission any time a new application is completed.

If I fail the written or skill test, can I retake the test on the same day?

No, you can only take the tests one time per day.

If I take a state approved driver education course, do I need to test at my local exam station?

In some cases, driver education instructors will sign your Driver Education Certificate of Completion indicating that you have successfully completed the course (80 percent), which will waive all exam station testing. The certificate may be used to waive testing for one year from the date signed. The vision test will still be required.

If the driver education program allows this waiver, what should I bring with me to the exam station to get my license?

The Driver Education Certificate of Completion form signed by your instructor, a parent or guardian to sign consent on the state application, and the required identification documents.

Do I need an Instruction Permit before I can legally drive with a driver education instructor?

No, a permit is not required if you are driving with a certified driver education instructor.

Could I LOSE my license?

How can I lose my Instruction Permit?

Your permit will be suspended or revoked if you are convicted of a traffic violation while driving with an Instruction Permit.

How can I lose my Restricted Minor's Permit?

You will lose your permit for 30 days if you are convicted of any traffic violation or permit restriction violation. If you are convicted of a second violation, you will lose your license until your 16th birthday or for 90 days, whichever is longer. You will lose your license until your 16th birthday, or as required by law, if you are convicted of a felony or Class One misdemeanor. If you are 16 or 17 and have an Instruction Permit or a Restricted Minor's Permit, you will have your permit suspended for 30 days for each occurrence of violating the restrictions of the permit.

How can I get my permit back after a revocation or suspension?

You may be required to retest and pay a \$50 reinstatement fee and an application fee.

Fast Fact:

Statistics show more than 27 teens die on average each year in South Dakota car crashes.

Motorcycles & Mopeds

Fast Fact:

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that helmets saved 1,060 motorcyclists of all ages in 2003. If all motorcyclists had worn helmets, an additional 584 could have been saved.

What is the difference between a moped and a motorcycle?

Moped: A motor driven cycle equipped with two or three wheels. It can be no larger than 50 cc's and cannot require clutching or shifting by the operator. According to law, a larger engine would make the vehicle a motorcycle.

Do I need a motorcycle license to operate a moped?

No, but you must possess a valid Operator License or Restricted Minor's Permit.

Can I obtain a Motorcycle Instruction Permit to learn to operate my motorcycle?

Yes, you may obtain a Motorcycle Instruction Permit by completing the vision screening and written motorcycle test. The permit is valid for the operation of a motorcycle for 30 days between 6 a.m.-8 p.m. You must be accompanied by a licensed motorcycle operator on a separate motorcycle who is at least 18 and has at least one year driving experience.

*****No Motorcycle Instruction Permit holder may carry a passenger on a motorcycle*****

What is the South Dakota helmet law?

All motorcycle and moped operators and passengers younger than 18 are required to wear helmets.

Other Info

How do I get a state issued Identification card?

You may obtain a state issued ID card at any age. A Certified Birth Certificate is required for identification, and parental consent is necessary if you are younger than 18.

What is South Dakota's seatbelt law?

All operators and passengers younger than 18 must be buckled up at all times. Seatbelt usage is required during all driver license testing.

How do I request a new license card?

You will need two forms of identification, one with a birth date. You will be required to apply for a duplicate card, but will not be retested. The duplicate license fee is \$6.

Fast Fact:

You may be ticketed and fined \$20 for not wearing a seatbelt.

For more info call :
1.800.952.3696

or check it out @
www.state.sd.us/dps/dl

Dont forget to buckle up. . . its the law!