

SKILLS TEST OVERVIEW

All drivers of Commercial Motor Vehicles must have a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). To get a CDL, you must pass knowledge and skills tests. This portion of the manual will help you pass the skills test. There are three types of CDL skills test; the pretrip inspection test (Section 11), the basic control skills test (Section 12), and the road test (Section 13). These are described in this manual. You must take these tests in a vehicle representative of the vehicle you intend to drive. A determination of manufacturer's gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) will be necessary. Vehicles without a GVWR marking may not be eligible for CDL skills test use.

Please arrive a few minutes early for your skills test. You will be required to fill out and sign the "Application for CDL Driver Skills Examination" form and the examiner will give you the general instructions before starting the skills test.

Pre-Trip Inspection

Purpose: To see if you know whether the vehicle is safe to drive.

Test Procedure

You will be asked to do a pre-trip inspection on your vehicle and to explain to the examiner what you would inspect and why. The examiner will mark on a scoring form each item that you correctly inspect or explain. This manual tells you what you need to inspect.

Basic Control Skills Test

Purpose: To evaluate your basic skills in controlling the vehicle.

Set-up:

The test set-up consists of various exercises marked out by lines, traffic cones, or something similar. The exercises consist of straight line backing, right offset backing and full parallel park. The examiner will explain to you how each exercise is to be done. You will be scored on how well you stay within the exercise boundaries and how many pullups and looks you make.

Road Test

Purpose: To evaluate your ability to drive safely in a variety of on-the-road situations.

Test Procedure:

The test drive is taken over a route approved by the State of Indiana. It will include left and right turns, intersections, railway crossings, curves, rural or semi-rural roads, city multi-lane streets, and expressway driving.

You will drive over the test route following instructions given by the examiner. The examiner will score specific tasks such as turns, merging into traffic, lane changes, and speed control, at specific places along the route. The examiner will also score whether you correctly do tasks such as signaling, searching for hazards and lane positioning.

Driver Instructions

These are the general instructions the examiner will give you at the beginning of the test: "The testing session will consist of three parts; a vehicle inspection test, a basic control skills test, and a road test. For the vehicle inspection test, I will ask you to do a thorough inspection of your vehicle. For the basic control skills test, I will have you do several backing and parking exercises. For the road test, we will go out on the road for a trip that will take 30 to 45 minutes."

"At all times during this test, when you are behind the wheel, you are in charge of the vehicle. I will never intentionally tell you to do something that might be unsafe." "I will give you directions as we go along. Ask me to explain if you do not understand a direction, or if you have any questions."

Section 11 PRE-TRIP INSPECTION

This Section Covers

- Vehicle Inspection Test
- Inspection Items
- School Bus

11.1 – Vehicle Inspection Test

Purpose of the Vehicle Inspection Test

To successfully pass your skills test, you will need to conduct a pre-trip inspection on the vehicle you will be driving. The purpose of this inspection is to make sure the vehicle is safe to operate, and to see if you have the knowledge and skills to inspect

your vehicle. The examiner will mark on a grading form each item that was inspected correctly. You must have inspected at least 80 percent of the total items on your vehicle to pass the Vehicle Inspection Test.

The material in this section will help you pass your Vehicle Inspection Test.

General Instructions

Driver Instructions:

This is what the examiner will tell you to do; “For the vehicle inspection, please conduct a thorough inspection of the vehicle.” Certain axles will be inspected separately. **If you fail the air or hydraulic brake check, it will be an automatic failure.**

As you do the inspection, point to the items you are inspecting, and explain what you are inspecting the item for.

Begin by inspecting the front of the truck. Open the hood and inspect the engine compartment. Inspect the front axle systems on the driver’s side. **For safety reasons DO NOT raise the cab on a cab-over type vehicle.** When finished, close the hood and proceed down the driver’s side of the truck/bus. It is only necessary to inspect one side of the vehicle (exception: buses). As you proceed along the side of the vehicle, inspect each axle separately and completely. If any item is on the opposite side, describe the inspection of that item at the appropriate time. **For safety reasons, DO NOT get under the vehicle.** Inspect the rear of the vehicle. When you have completed inspecting the rear of the vehicle, tell the examiner you are finished with the exterior inspection. Proceed to the driver’s compartment. For the in-cab inspection, start the engine and physically check each item in the driver’s compartment (and passenger area of a bus). If your vehicle has air or hydraulic brakes, conclude your inspection with the appropriate brake check. **If you miss any part of the brake check, it will be an automatic failure.**

Safety Rules

The following rules should be observed during the inspection:

1. Always keep the examiner in sight. Make sure you stay where the examiner can always see and hear you.
2. **Never get under the truck**, in front of it, or behind it if there is any chance the truck may move.

3. Be careful when you point to items in the engine compartment. You do not have to make contact with the parts you are inspecting.
4. Use care getting in and out of the truck. Your mind may be on the test or the examiner, so watch your step.
5. You are responsible for your own safety while you do the inspection. Do not rely on others to warn you. The examiner may not see a hazard in time to warn you.

Safety first!!!

Test Procedures

This is a review of the inspection procedures.

1. The examiner provides the instructions.
2. Begin the inspection when you are ready. Follow these steps:
 - A. Inspect front of vehicle
 - B. Under the hood engine inspection
 - C. Inspect driver’s side of vehicle including rear.
 - D. Perform in-cab vehicle inspection
3. As you inspect each item:
 - A. Point to the item.
 - B. Say the name of the item you are inspecting.
 - C. Tell the examiner what you are looking for.

4-Point Air Brake Check

If you want to drive a truck or bus with air brakes, or pull a trailer with air brakes, you need to read, study and practice the 4-Point Air Brake Check. You will be required to physically demonstrate and verbally explain each of the four points outlined on the following pages. **If you fail any part of the air brake check, this will result in an automatic failure ending your skills test.** You will be required to reschedule when you are ready to take the skills test again. You are responsible for the skills test fee and (if applicable) the truck rental fee.

Hydraulic Brake Check

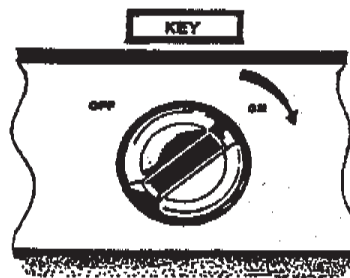
Pump the brake pedal three times, then hold it down for five seconds. The brake pedal should not move during the five seconds. If it does, there may be a leak or other problem. **If you fail any part of the hydraulic brake check, this will result in an automatic failure ending your skills test.**

4-Point Air Brake Check

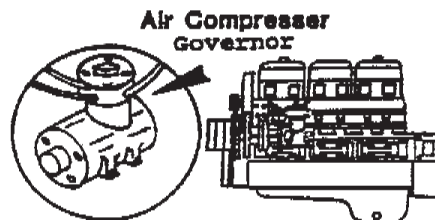
Note: Begin test with air pressure at or below 90 psi.

Step 1

With the engine running, let the air pressure build

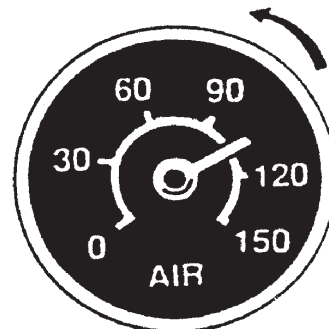


and



check that the air compressor governor cuts out between

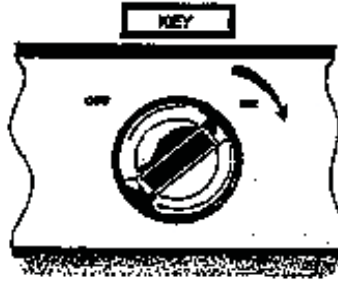
100 - 140 PSI.



Note: If the governor does not cut out between 100 - 140 PSI the air compressor will keep pumping air and blow out an air tank or lines.

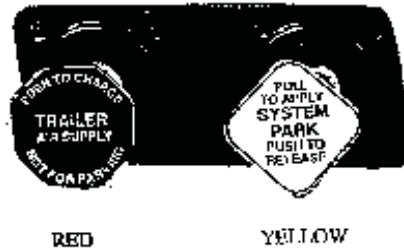
Step 2

Turn engine off,
turn key to on
position so
gauges work



and

release brakes
(push in both valves)



then

fully apply the foot
brake, hold to see if
the air pressure drops.



No more than 3 PSI
in one minute for a
single vehicle, or no
more than 4 PSI drop
for a **combination**
unit, with air brake
equipped trailer.



Note: After fully applying the brake if the air pressure drops more than 3 PSI (single unit) or 4 PSI (combination unit) you have an unsafe air leak in the system.

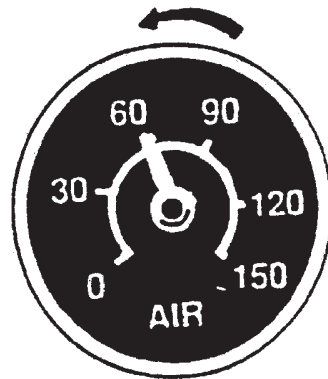
Step 3

Fan off air pressure by pumping the foot brake



to approximately 60 PSI

and



check that the low air pressure warning alarm and/or light activates.



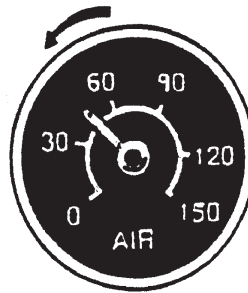
Note: Your low air pressure warning light and/or alarm should activate at approximately 60 PSI. This alarm is a warning that your system has a major leak and is losing air.

Step 4

Continue to fan
off the air
pressure



to approximately
20 to 45 PSI



Look and Listen for **both**
valves to pop out.



Note: Your tractor protection valve on a (combination unit) or parking brake on a (single unit) should pop out at **APPROXIMATELY 20 to 45 PSI** insuring that your vehicle will come to a stop if a loss of air occurs.

If you fail any part of the air brake check, it will be an automatic failure.

11.2 – INSPECTION ITEMS

Scoring Standards

4-Point Air Brake Check

Description: The procedure the driver uses to check the air brake system.

Scoring Standard: The driver performs the air brake system check in the following manner:

Note: Begin with air pressure at or below 90 psi.

- Step 1.** Let air pressure build and check that the governor cuts out between 100-140 PSI.
- Step 2.** Turn engine off, turn key back on so gauges work and release all brake valves. Fully apply the foot brake to see if the air pressure drops more than three pounds in one minute for a single vehicle, or no more than four pounds in one minute for a combination unit with air brake equipped trailer.
- Step 3.** Fan off the air pressure by pumping the foot brake to see if the low air pressure warning alarm activates at approximately 60 PSI.
- Step 4.** Continue to fan off the air pressure. At approximately 20 to 45 PSI on a tractor trailer, both valves should close (pop out). On other vehicle types, the spring brake push-pull valve should pop.
- Note: If you fail any part of the four-point air brake check it will be an automatic failure.**

Air Compressor Belt/Gear

Description: Maintains air pressure in the air brake system.

Scoring Standard: Driver points to belt. Should note that the belt is not frayed, no visible cracks, loose fibers or signs of wear. If belt appears worn and, if it deflects more than three-fourths of an inch, slippage is probably excessive. Air compressor should be checked for securement and leakage. Driver should know if compressor is gear or belt driven.

Air/Electric Lines

Description: Carries air and electricity to trailer.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that air hoses are not cut, cracked, chafed or worn (steel braid should not show through); listens for air leaks. Air and electrical lines are not tangled, crimped or pinched, or being dragged against tractor parts. Electrical line insulation is not cut, cracked, chafed or worn (no electric conductor showing through). None of the air or electrical lines are spliced or taped.

Air/Electrical Connectors

Description: Connects air supplies and electrical power to trailer.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that tractor/trailer air connectors are sealed and in good condition; checks that glad hands are locked in place, free of damage, and there are no audible air leaks. Checks that tractor/trailer electrical plugs are firmly seated and locked in place.

Alternator/Belt

Description: Produces electricity.

Scoring Standard: Driver points to belt. Should note that the belt is not frayed, no visible cracks, loose fibers, or signs of wear. If it deflects more than three-fourths of an inch slippage is probably excessive. Check alternator for securement and frayed wires.

Ammeter/Voltmeter

Description: Shows if alternator is functioning.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that the gauges show alternator is charging; or warning light is off.

Axle Seals

Description: Seals for axle/wheel assembly lubrication.

Scoring Standard: No cracks or distortions in wheel/axle mounting. No signs of leaking lubricants. Check both inner and outer seals.

Baggage Compartment (Buses)

Description: Bus baggage compartment doors.

Scoring Standard: Baggage compartment doors close securely.

Battery/Box

Description: Battery and Box or cage that holds battery in place.

Scoring Standard: Wherever located, sees that

battery(ies) are secure, connections are tight, and cell caps are present. Battery connections should not show signs of excessive corrosion. Battery box and cover (or door) must be secure.

Brake Chamber

Description: Converts air pressure to mechanical force to operate wheel brakes.

Scoring Standard: Not cracked or dented and securely mounted. No audible air leaks.

Catwalk

Description: Platform at rear of cab for driver to stand on when connecting or disconnecting trailer lines.

Scoring Standard: Catwalk is solid, steps securely bolted to the tractor frame and clear of loose objects.

Clutch/Gearshift

Description: Disengages engine from drive train so vehicle won't move, and reduces load on starting motor.

Scoring Standard: Depresses clutch, checks for free play, and insures transmission is in neutral before starting engine. On an automatic transmission, the selector should be in the neutral/park position. Operates gear selector to determine that it goes into and out of gear properly.

Coolant Level

Description: Cools the engine.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks coolant level by checking site glass, reservoir or radiator level.

Note: If engine is hot do not remove radiator cap.

Doors, Lifts, Ties

Description: Ties, chains, cables, ropes, cinches, or other devices used to secure cargo (usually on a flat bed trailer).

Scoring Standard: Doors not bent or broken; hinges secure; latches secure and fully closed. Driver checks that there are no loose ties hanging from the side of the trailer; and/or that all cargo is securely tied down.

D.O.T. Bumper

Description: Prevents vehicle under ride.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that D.O.T. Bumper is not loose, that welds/bolts are intact and is not bent to the point of being ineffective.

Drive Shaft

Description: Transmits power from transmission to drive axle. Buses safety guard over drive shaft.

Scoring Standard: Shaft not bent or cracked; shaft couplings appear to be secure; bus safety guards are in place.

Drum/Rotor/Brake Lining

Description: Brake shoes rub on inside of drum to slow vehicle down.

Scoring Standard: No cracks or dents or holes; no loose or missing bolts. Drum brake linings not less than one-fourth inch thickness (one-eighth inch for disc brakes).

Exhaust System

Description: External piping for conducting combustion gases from engine.

Scoring Standard: All components are securely mounted; no cracks, holes or leaks.

Frame

Description: Structural members for supporting vehicle body or trailer platform over wheels.

Scoring Standard: No cracks or bends in longitudinal frame members, no loose, cracked, bent, broken or missing cross members. On truck box or trailer frame; no signs of breaks or holes in box or trailer floor.

Fuel Tank/Leaks

Description: Holds fuel.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that tank is secure; caps are secure; no leaks from cap or under tank or damaged tank; school buses have required impact guards.

Header Board

Description: Prevents cargo from shifting forward and injuring driver when the vehicle abruptly stops.

Scoring Standard: If required, is securely mounted, free of damage and adequate to contain or hold cargo. Canvas or tarp carrier if so equipped is securely mounted and lashed down.

Heater/Defroster

Description: Heats cab or passenger compartment, and prevents frost or condensation from forming on windshield.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that both heater and defroster are working.

Horn(s)

Description: Air and/or electrical horns for warning other drivers or pedestrians.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that electric and/or air horns work.

Hoses/Lines (Brake)

Description: Brake lines carry air or hydraulic fluid to the brake hose; brake hose supplies the brake assembly.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for leaks, cracked, worn or frayed hoses, and for secure couplings. Check that hoses and lines supply air or hydraulic fluid to brakes.

Hub Oil Seal

Description: Seals in lubrication for wheel hub.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks to see that wheel hub oil seal is not leaking; and, if a sight glass is present, that oil level is adequate. Driver checks both inner and outer seals.

Hydraulic Brake Check

Description: Procedure to be followed to check hydraulic brakes.

Scoring Standard: Pumps the brake pedal three times, then holds it down for five seconds. The brake pedal should not move during the five seconds. If it does, there may be a leak or other problem.

Note: If you fail any part of the hydraulic brake check, it will be an automatic failure.

King Pin/Apron/Gap

Description: Attaches trailer to tractor (king pin) and provides surface for resting trailer on fifth wheel.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that king pin does not appear bent; that apron lies flat on fifth wheel skid plate; and that visible part of apron is not bent, cracked or broken. Check that the trailer is laying flat on the fifth wheel skid plate (no gap).

Landing Gear

Description: Supports front of trailer when trailer is not coupled to a tractor.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that landing gear is fully raised, no missing parts, support frame not bent

or damaged; crank handle is present and secured; if power operated no air or hydraulic leaks.

Leaks/Hoses (Engine Compartment)

Description: Fluid leaks from engine.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for signs of fluid puddles or dripping fluids on the ground under the engine, or the underside of the engine. Inspects engine hoses for condition and leaks.

Lighting Indicators

Description: Dashboard indicator lights for signals, flashers and headlight high beam.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that dash indicators illuminate when corresponding lights are turned on.

Lights (Front)

Description: Headlights, turn signals, clearance lights and identification lights.

Scoring Standard: All lights illuminate and are clean. Headlights function on both high and low beams. No lenses cracked, broken, missing, and proper color.

Lights, Reflectors (Sides & Rear)

Description: Lights and reflectors for showing vehicle clearances at night.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that reflectors are clean; none are missing or broken; and they are of proper color (red on rear, amber elsewhere). Checks that rear running lights are clean and not broken. Rear running lights must be checked separately from signal, flasher, license plate light and brake lights. (Buses-check inside dome light).

Locking Pins (Fifth Wheel)

Description: Hold the sliding fifth wheel in fixed position along slider rails.

Scoring Standard: Driver looks for loose or missing pins in the slide mechanism of sliding fifth wheels; if air powered - no air leaks. Checks that fifth wheel is not so far forward that tractor frame will strike landing gear during turns.

Lug Nuts

Description: Holds wheel on axle.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that all lug nuts are present; checks that lug nuts are not loose (look

for rust trails around nuts); no cracks radiating from lug bolt holes; no distortion of the bolt holes.

Mirrors

Description: Side mirrors for rear view of traffic.

Scoring Standard: Outside: Driver checks mirrors for proper securement and damage. Inside: Driver checks mirrors for adjustment and visibility.

Mounting Bolts

Description: Holds fifth wheel mount on tractor frame.

Scoring Standard: Driver looks for loose or missing mounting brackets, clamps, bolts, or nuts; both fifth wheel and slide mounting appear solidly attached to frame.

Oil Level

Description: Dipstick used to measure amount of oil for engine lubrication.

Scoring Standard: Driver locates dipstick and checks that oil level is in safe operating range.

Oil Pressure Builds

Description: Ensure that engine oil pressure is adequate.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that oil pressure is building to normal; the gauge shows increasing or normal oil pressure; or warning light goes off.

Parking Brake (Hydraulic or Air)

Description: Keeps vehicle from rolling when parked.

Scoring Standard: With the parking brake engaged (trailer brakes released on combination vehicles), check that the parking brake will hold by gently trying to pull forward with parking brake on. With the parking brake released and the trailer brake engaged (combination vehicles only). Check that the trailer brake will hold vehicle by gently trying to pull forward with the trailer brake on.

Passenger Emergency Exits

Description: Bus doors, roof hatches, or push-out windows used for emergency exits.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that all emergency exit doors are firmly closed. Also, warning buzzer and lights are operating. Check all warning devices.

Passenger Entry/Lift

Description: Bus door(s) used for normal entry or exit.

Scoring Standard: Door correctly opens and closes; entry steps clear; treads not loose or worn out enough to trip passenger. Hand rails solidly mounted, step light operational.

If equipped with a handicap lift, look for leaking, damaged, or missing parts and explains how lift should be checked for correct operation. Lift must be fully retracted and latched securely. Operation lights checked.

Passenger Seating

Description: Passenger seats.

Scoring Standard: No broken seat frames; seats firmly attached to floor.

Pintle Hooks Assembly (Truck/Trailer)

Description: Coupling System between truck and trailer.

Scoring Standard: With trailer hooked to truck, driver will check all connections, safety devices and electrical or air connections. (See pintle hook diagram at the end of this section.)

Platform (Fifth Wheel)

Description: Mounting holding the fifth wheel skid plate and locking jaws mechanism.

Scoring Standard: No cracks or breaks in the platform structure.

Power Steering Fluid

Description: Hydraulic fluid for assisting steering wheel action to front wheels.

Scoring Standard: With the engine stopped, driver checks that fluid level is within safe operating range.

Release Arm

Description: Releases fifth wheel locking jaws so that trailer can be uncoupled.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that release arm is in the engaged position, and any safety latch is in place.

Rims

Description: Retain tires on wheels.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for damaged or bent rims; rims should not have cracks or welding repairs; no rust trails that indicate that rim is loose on wheel.

Safety Belt/Emergency Equipment, F.E.T. (Fuses, Extinguisher and Triangles)

Description: Equipment for use during a breakdown, or at an accident scene; fuses, extinguishers and triangles.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for spare electrical fuses (if used); three red reflective triangles; properly charged and rated fire extinguisher. Check for properly secured, mounted, and adjusted safety belt.

Safety Latch/ Locking Jaws

Description: Locks locking jaws closed.

Scoring Standard: Checks that fifth wheel locking jaws are securely locked and that the safety latch is engaged.

Shock Absorber

Description: Tubular suspension part which provides a smooth ride.

Scoring Standard: No cracks or leaks, no missing or broken mounting bolts.

Signal and Brake Lights

Description: Brake lights, rear signal lights, and four-way flashers.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that both brake lights come on when brakes applied; checks that each signal light flashes; and checks that four-way flashers work. (Examiner will assist.)

Slack Adjustor

Description: Linkage from brake chamber to brake shoe to activate brakes.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for broken, loose or missing parts; when pulled by hand, brake rod should not move more than approximately one inch.

Spacing (Dual Wheels)

Description: Evenly spaced dual wheels.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks that dual wheels are evenly separated, and that tires are not touching one another. Look for any debris between tires. Dayton type rims shall be checked for loose, rusted or damaged spacer.

Splash Guards/Mud Flaps

Description: Devices used to prevent road materials from being thrown by vehicle tires.

Scoring Standard: If equipped, checks that splash guards or mud flaps are not damaged and mounted securely.

Spring/Air/Torque Assembly

Description: Leaf or coil springs to dampen wheel vibration forces created by rolling over road surface. Steel bar, or air bag that acts as a spring in place of leaf or coil springs.

Scoring Standard: Driver looks for broken leaves, leaves that have shifted and are in, or nearly in, contact with the tires, rim, brake drum, frame or body; missing or broken leaves in the leaf spring. For coil spring, driver looks for broken or destroyed spring. If vehicle is equipped with torsion bars, torque arms, or other types of suspension components, checks that they are not damaged and are mounted securely. Air bags not cut or leaking.

Spring Mount

Description: All brackets, bolts, and bushings used for attaching spring to axle and vehicle frame.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for cracked or broken spring hangers; broken, missing, or loose bolts/u-bolts; missing or damaged bushings; broken, loose, or missing axle mounting parts.

Steering Box/Hoses

Description: Container for mechanism that transforms steering column action into wheel turning action.

Scoring Standard: Driver looks for missing nuts, bolts, cotter keys, etc., power steering fluid leaks; damage to power steering hoses.

Steering Linkage

Description: Transmits steering action from steering box to wheel.

Scoring Standard: Connecting links, arms, rods not worn or cracked; joints and sockets not worn or loose; no loose or missing nuts, bolts or cotter pins

(steering column, pitman arm, drag link, steering knuckles and tie rod).

Steering Play

Description: Procedure to check for excessive looseness in the steering linkages.

Scoring Standard: Driver works steering wheel back and forth, should have less than 10 degrees free play.

Note: Must have engine running to check power steering.

Tandem Release (Arm/Locking Pins)

Description: Sliding mechanism and locking pins for sliding tandem axles on trailers.

Scoring Standard: If equipped, make sure the locking pins are locked in place and release arm is secured.

Temperature Gauge

Description: Measures water temperature in engine cooling system.

Scoring Standard: Temperature should begin to climb to the normal operating range or temperature light should be off.

Tires I.C.D. (Inflation, Condition and Depth)

Description: Road wheel tires.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks tread depth (see note); tire inflation; tire condition; tread evenly worn; looks for cuts or other damage to the tread walls; valve caps and stem are not missing, broken or damaged; retread not separating from tire. (Steer tires should not be retreads.)

Note: Minimum tread depth is four thirty-seconds of an inch on steer tires, and two thirty-seconds of an inch on other tires. **Bus steer tires shall not be retreads.**

Waterpump

Description: Provide circulation of coolant within the engine.

Scoring Standard: With engine off, driver points to water pump. Checks for securement and leakage. Determining if water pump is gear or belt driven.

Windshield

Description: Windshield.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for cracks, dirt, and illegal stickers or other obstructions to view.

Wipers/Washers

Description: Windshield wipers.

Scoring Standard: Driver checks for worn rubber on blades; blades secure on wiper arm; and that wipers work. If equipped, check for windshield washer fluid and that windshield washers operate correctly.

11.3 - School Bus Only

Emergency Equipment

In addition to checking for spare electrical fuses (if equipped), three red reflective triangles, and a properly charged and rated fire extinguisher, school bus drivers must also inspect the following emergency equipment.

- Emergency Kit
- Body Fluid Cleanup Kit

Lighting Indicators

In addition to checking the lighting indicators, school bus drivers must also check the following lighting indicators (internal panel lights):

- Alternately flashing amber lights indicator, if equipped.
- Alternately flashing red lights indicator.
- Strobe light indicator, if equipped.

Lights/Reflectors

In addition to checking the lights and reflective devices, school bus drivers must also check the following (external) lights and reflectors:

- Strobe light, if equipped.
- Stop arm light.
- Alternately flashing amber lights, if equipped.
- Alternately flashing red lights.

Student Mirrors

In addition to checking the external mirrors, school bus drivers must also check the internal and external mirrors used for observing students:

- Driver checks for proper adjustment.
- Driver checks that all internal and external mirrors and mirror brackets are not damaged and are mounted securely with no loose fittings.
- Driver checks that visibility is not impaired due to dirty mirrors.

Stop Arm

Driver checks the stop arm to see that it is mounted securely to the frame of the vehicle. Also, check for loose fittings and damage.

Passenger Entry/Lift

Driver checks that the entry door is not damaged, operated smoothly, and closes securely from the inside.

Hand rails are secure and the step light is working, if equipped.

The entry steps must be clear with treads not worn excessively.

If equipped, with a handicap lift, look for leaking, damaged, or missing parts and explain how lift should be checked for correct operation. Lift must be fully retracted and latched securely.

Emergency Exit

Driver checks that all emergency exits are not damaged, operate smoothly, and close securely from the inside.

Driver checks that any emergency exit warning devices are working.

Seating

Driver checks for broken seat frames and checks that seat frames are firmly attached to the floor.

Driver checks that seat cushions are attached securely to the seat frames.

Inspection Items: Bus**1. Front of Bus**

- A. Lights

2. Engine Compartment

- A. Oil level
- B. Coolant level
- C. Power steering fluid
- D. Water pump/Belt/Gear
- E. Alternator/Belt
- F. Air compressor/Belt/Gear
- G. Leaks/Hoses

3. Steering Components

- A. Steering box and hoses
- B. Steering linkage

4. Front Suspension

- A. Springs
- B. Spring mounts
- C. Shock absorber

5. Front Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings/Rotor

6. Front Wheel Assembly

- A. Tire (I.C.D.)
- B. Rim
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle seals

7. Under Vehicle

- A. Drive shaft
- B. Exhaust system
- C. Frame

8. Rear Suspension

- A. Spring/Air/Torque Assembly
- B. Spring mounts
- C. Shocks

9. Rear Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Brake Chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings/Rotor

10. Rear wheel assembly

- A. Tires (I.C.D.)
- B. Rims
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle seals
- E. Spacers/Budd

11. Rear of Bus

- A. Lights, reflectors
- B. Signal/Brake lights
- C. Splash Guards
- D. Doors and lifts

12. Driver/Fuel Area

- A. Door, mirror
- B. Fuel tank secure
- C. Any fuel leaks
- D. Battery/Box

13. Engine Start (In-Cab Checks)

- A. Passenger entry/Lift
- B. Emergency exits
- C. Seating
- D. Safety Belt, Equipment, F.E.T.
- E. Clutch/Gearshift
- F. Oil pressure builds
- G. Ammeter/Voltmeter
- H. Air brake check (4 point)
- I. Steering play
- J. Parking brake/Hydraulic
- K. Mirrors, windshield
- L. Wipers/Washers
- M. Lighting indicators
- N. Horns
- O. Heater/Defroster
- P. Student lights, stop arm
- Q. Coolant temperature

Note: Inspection items may vary according to your equipment. This is only an example.

Inspection Items: Straight Truck**1. Front of Truck**

- A. Lights

2. Engine Compartment

- A. Oil level
- B. Coolant level
- C. Power steering fluid
- D. Water pump/Belt/Gear
- E. Alternator/Belt
- F. Air compressor/Belt/Gear
- G. Leaks/Hoses

3. Steering Components

- A. Steering box and hoses
- B. Steering linkage

4. Front Suspension

- A. Springs
- B. Spring mounts
- C. Shock absorber

5. Front Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings/Rotor

6. Front Wheel Assembly

- A. Tire (I.C.D.)
- B. Rim
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle Seals

7. Driver/Fuel Tank Area

- A. Door, mirror
- B. Fuel tank secure
- C. Any fuel leaks
- D. Battery/Box

8. Under Vehicle

- A. Drive shaft
- B. Exhaust system
- C. Frame

9. Rear Suspension

- A. Spring/Air/Torque Assembly
- B. Spring mounts
- C. Shocks

10. Rear Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Brake chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings/Rotor

11. Rear wheel assembly

- A. Tires (I.C.D.)
- B. Rims
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle seals
- E. Spacers/Budd

12. Rear of Truck

- A. Lights, reflectors
- B. Signal/Brake lights
- C. Splash Guards
- D. Doors, Ties, Lifts
- E. DOT Bumper

**13. Engine Start
(In-Cab Checks)**

- A. Clutch/Gearshift
- B. Oil pressure builds
- C. Ammeter/Voltmeter
- D. Air brake check (4-point)
- E. Steering play
- F. Parking brake/Hydraulic
- G. Mirrors, windshield
- H. Wipers/Washers
- I. Lighting indicators
- J. Horns
- K. Heater/Defroster
- L. Safety Belt, Equipment, F.E.T.
- M. Coolant Temperature

Note: Inspection items may vary according to your equipment. This is only an example.

**Inspection Items:
Tractor/Trailer**

1. Front of Truck

- A. Lights

2. Engine Compartment

- A. Oil level
- B. Coolant level
- C. Power steering fluid
- D. Water pump/Belt/Gear
- E. Alternator/Belt
- F. Air compressor/Belt/Gear
- G. Leaks/Hoses

3. Steering Components

- A. Steering box and hoses
- B. Steering linkage

4. Front Suspension

- A. Springs/air
- B. Spring mounts
- C. Shock absorber

5. Front Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings/Rotor

6. Front Wheel Assembly

- A. Tire (I.C.D.)
- B. Rim
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle Seals

7. Driver/Fuel Tank Area

- A. Door, mirror
- B. Fuel tank secure/Leaks
- C. Battery/Box

8. Rear of Cab

- A. Air/Electric lines
- B. Catwalk
- C. Lights/Reflectors

9. Front of Trailer

- A. Air/Electric connect
- B. Header Board
- C. Lights/Reflectors

10. Under Vehicle

- A. Drive shaft
- B. Exhaust system
- C. Frame

11. Rear Suspension

- A. Spring/Air/Torque Assembly
- B. Spring mounts
- C. Shocks

12. Rear Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings

13. Rear wheel assembly

- A. Tires
- B. Rims
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle seals
- E. Spacers/Budd

14. Coupling system

- A. Mounting bolts
- B. Safety latch/Locking jaws
- C. Platform
- D. Release arm
- E. Kingpin/Apron/Gap
- F. Locking pins

15. Rear of Truck

- A. Lights, reflectors
- B. Splash guards

16. Side of Trailer

- A. Landing gear
- B. Lights, reflectors
- C. Doors, Ties, Lifts
- D. Frame, Tandem release

17. Rear Suspension

- A. Springs/Air/Torque Assembly
- B. Spring mounts

18. Rear Brake Assembly

- A. Hoses/Lines
- B. Brake Chamber
- C. Slack adjustor
- D. Drum/Linings

19. Rear Wheel Assembly

- A. Tires (I.C.D.)
- B. Rims
- C. Lug nuts
- D. Axle seals
- E. Spacers/Budd

20. Rear of Trailer

- A. Lights, reflectors
- B. Doors, Ties, Lifts
- C. Splash guards
- D. DOT bumper

21. Engine Start

(In-Cab Checks)

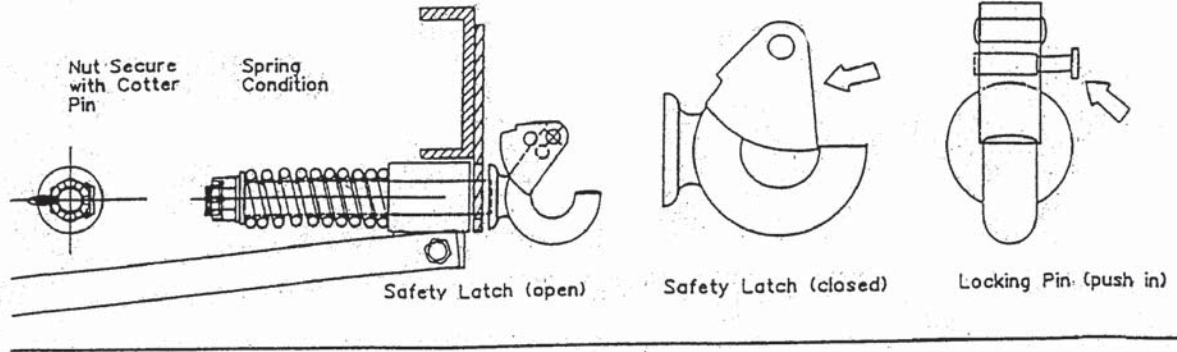
- A. Clutch/Gearshift
- B. Oil pressure builds
- C. Ammeter/Voltmeter
- D. Air brake check (4 point)
- E. Steering play
- F. Parking brake/Hydraulic
- G. Mirrors, windshield
- H. Wipers/Washers
- I. Lighting indicators (L.R4H)
- J. Horns (city/air)
- K. Heater/Defroster
- L. Safety belt/Emergency (F.E.T.)
- M. Coolant Temperature

Note: Inspection items may vary according to your equipment. This is only an example.

TRUCK/TRAILER CONNECTION

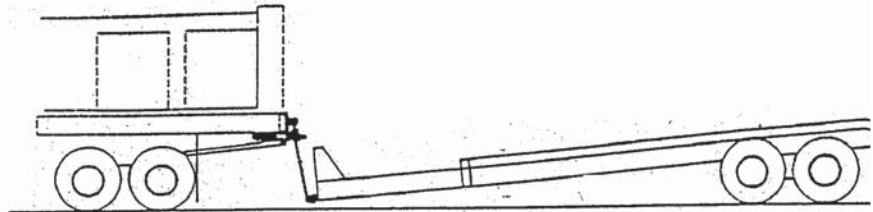
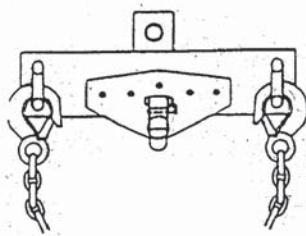
PINTLE HOOK ASSEMBLY

(SIDE VIEW)



TRUCK (REAR VIEW)

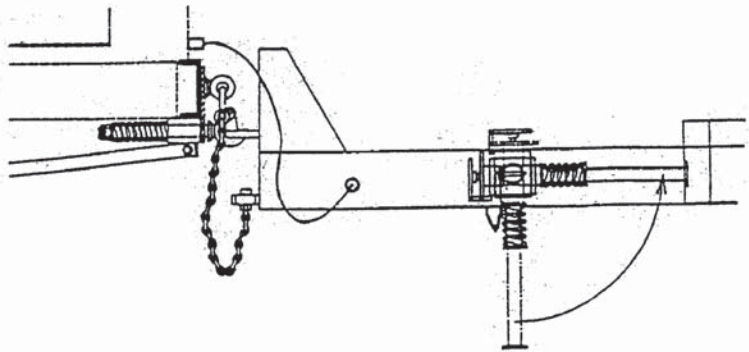
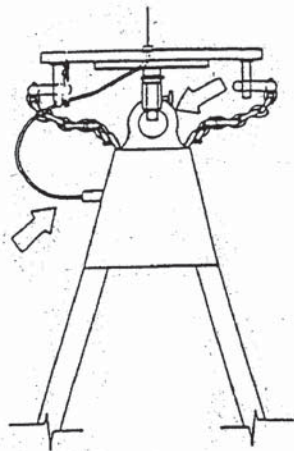
SAFETY CHAINS



Safety chains must be capable of holding the trailer tongue off the ground in the event of truck/trailer separation.

- Hook Condition
- Safety Latch (closed)
- Chain Condition
- Chain Length

COMPLETED COUPLING



Pintle Eye Condition
Electric Brake Cable

Pintle Hook

- Safety Chains
- Safety Pins
- Disconnect Wire
- Battery/Switch
- Trailer Tongue/Bolts
- Hooks/Bolts

Scoring Standards

-
-
-
-
-
-

Final Check

- Pintle Eye in hook
- Safety Latch Closed
- Locking Pin (pushed in)
- Chains Connected
- Electric Brake Cable Connected
- Jack Stand in Travel Position and Locking Pin in Place
- Load and Tie-Downs Secured

Section 12

BASIC VEHICLE CONTROL SKILLS TEST

This Section Covers

- **Skills Test Exercises**
- **Skills Test Scoring**

Your basic control skills will be tested using the following exercises.

Straight line backing.
Offset back/right
Parallel park (conventional).

These exercises are shown in Figures 12-1 through 12-3.

12.1 Scoring

Crossing Boundaries (encroachments)
Pull-ups
Vehicle Exits
Final Position

Encroachments – The examiner will score the number of times you touch or cross over an exercise boundary line with any portion of your vehicle and three points will be assessed per encroachment.

Pull-ups –You will not be penalized for initial pull-ups. However, subsequent pull-ups will result in a one point assessment for each additional pull up.

Vehicle Exits – You will be permitted to safely stop and exit the vehicle to check the external position of the vehicle three times. When doing so, you must place the vehicle in neutral and set the parking brake(s). Then, when exiting the vehicle, you must do so safely by facing the vehicle and maintaining three points of contact with the vehicle at all times. If you do not safely secure the vehicle or safely exit the vehicle it will result in an automatic failure of the basic control skills test.

Final Position – It is important that you finish each exercise exactly as the examiner has instructed you. If you do not maneuver the vehicle into its final position as described by the examiner, you will be penalized and could fail the basic skills test.

12.2 Exercises

12.2.1 – *Straight Line Backing*

You will be asked to back your vehicle in a straight line between two rows of cones without touching or crossing over the exercise boundaries. (See Figure 12.1.)

12.2.2 – *Offset Back/Right*

You will be asked to back into a space that is to the right rear of your vehicle. You will drive straight forward and back your vehicle into that space without striking the side or rear boundaries marked by cones. You must place your vehicle completely into the space. (See Figure 12.2)

12.2.3 – *Parallel Park (Conventional)*

You will be asked to park in a parallel parking space that is on your right. You are to drive past the parking space and back into it without crossing side or rear boundaries marked by cones. You are required to get your vehicle completely into the space. (See Figure 12.3)

Figure 12.1: Straight Line Backing

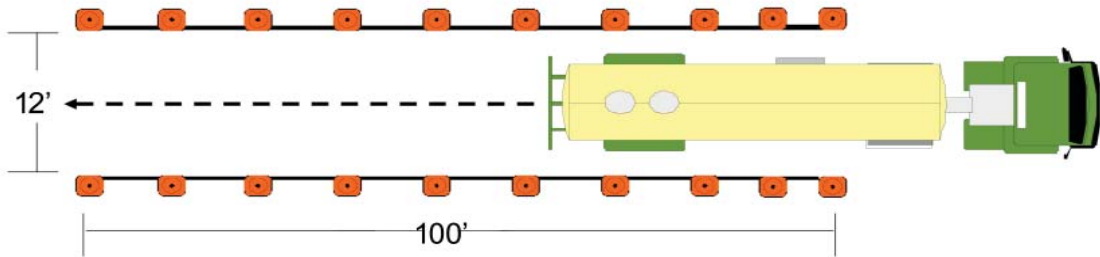


Figure 12.2: Offset Back/Right

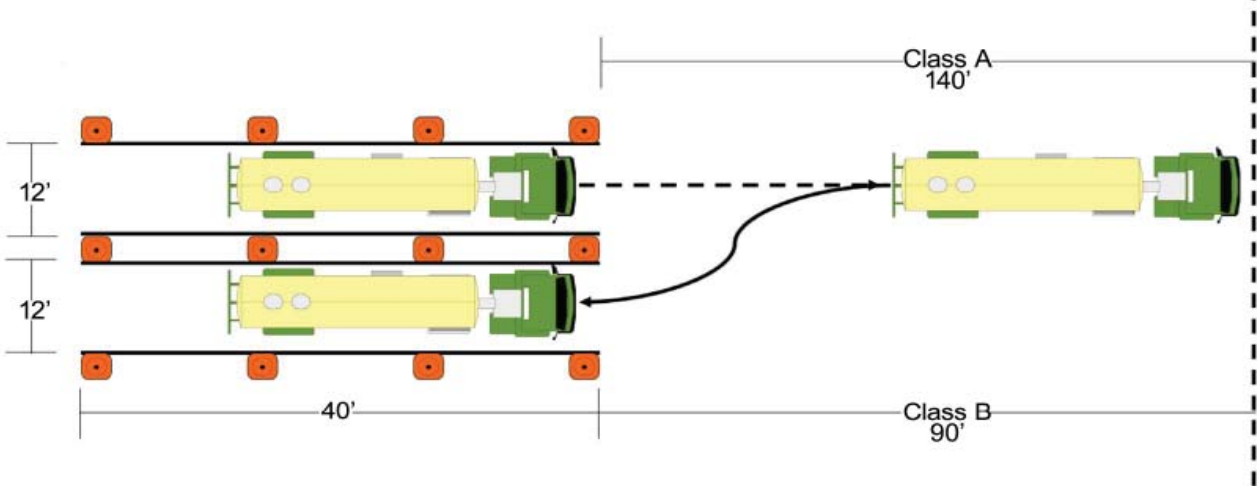
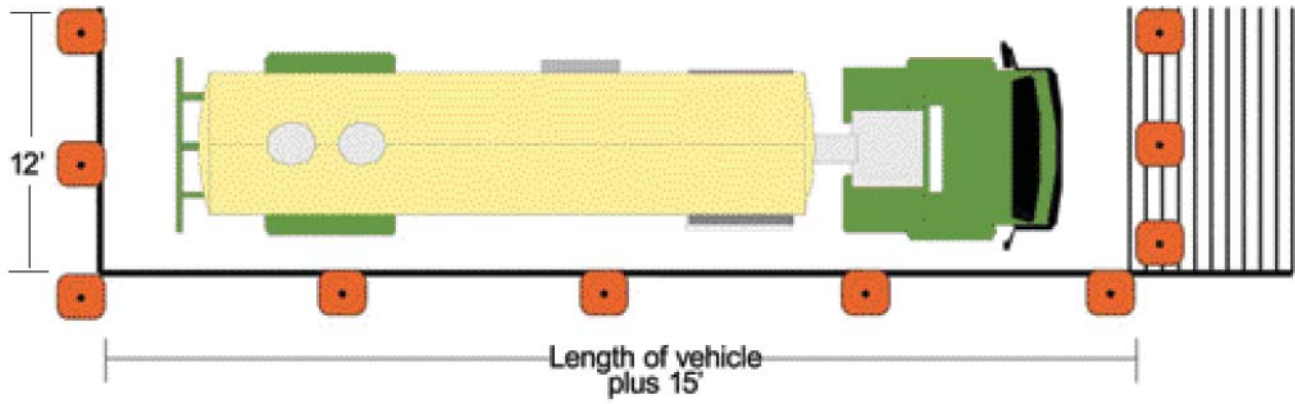


Figure 12.3: Parallel Park (Conventional)



Section 13

ON-ROAD DRIVING

This Section Covers

- **How You Will Be Tested**

You will drive over a test route that has a variety of traffic situations. At all times during the test, you must drive in a safe and responsible manner.

During the driving test, the examiner will be scoring you on specific driving maneuvers as well as on your general driving behavior. You will follow the directions of the examiner. Directions will be given to you so you will have plenty of time to do what the examiner has asked. You will not be asked to drive in an unsafe manner.

If your test route does not have certain traffic situations, you may be asked to simulate a traffic situation. You will do this by telling the examiner what you are or would be doing if you were in that traffic situation.

13.1 – How You Will Be Tested

13.1.1 – Turns

You have been asked to make a turn:

Check traffic in all directions.
Use turn signals and safely get into the lane needed for the turn.

As you approach the turn:

Use turn signals to warn others of your turn.
Slow down smoothly, change gears as needed to keep power, but do not coast unsafely. Unsafe coasting occurs when your vehicle is out of gear (clutch depressed or gearshift in neutral) for more than the length of your vehicle.

If you must stop before making the turn:

Come to a smooth stop without skidding.
Come to a complete stop behind the stop line, crosswalk, or stop sign.
If stopping behind another vehicle, stop where you can see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead of you (safe gap).
Do not let your vehicle roll.
Keep the front wheels aimed straight ahead.

When ready to turn:

Check traffic in all directions.
Keep both hands on the steering wheel during the turn.
Do not change gears during the turn.
Keep checking your mirror to make sure the vehicle does not hit anything on the inside of the turn.
Vehicle should not move into oncoming traffic.
Vehicle should finish turn in correct lane.

After turn:

Make sure turn signal is off.
Get up to speed of traffic, use turn signal, and move into right-most lane when safe to do so (if not already there).
Check mirrors and traffic.

13.1.2 – Intersections

As you approach an intersection:

Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
Decelerate gently.
Brake smoothly and, if necessary, change gears.
If necessary, come to a complete stop (no coasting) behind any stop signs, signals, sidewalks, or stop lines maintaining a safe gap behind any vehicle in front of you.
Your vehicle must not roll forward or backward.

When driving through an intersection:

Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
Decelerate and yield to any pedestrians and traffic in the intersection.
Do not change lanes while proceeding through the intersection.
Keep your hands on the wheel.

Once **through** the intersection:

Continue checking mirrors and traffic. Accelerate smoothly and change gears as necessary.

13.1.3 – Urban/Rural

During this part of the test, you are expected to make regular traffic checks and maintain a safe following distance. Your vehicle should be centered in the proper lane (right-most lane) and you should keep up with the flow of traffic but not exceed the posted speed limit.

13.1.4 – Lane Changes

During multiple lane portions of the test, you will be asked to change lanes to the left, and then back to the right. You should make the necessary traffic checks first, then use proper signals and smoothly change lanes when it is safe to do so.

13.1.5 – Expressway

Before entering the expressway:

Check traffic.
Use proper signals.
Merge smoothly into the proper lane of traffic.

Once on the expressway:

Maintain proper lane positioning, vehicle spacing, and vehicle speed.
Continue to check traffic thoroughly in all directions.

When exiting the expressway:

Make necessary traffic checks.
Use proper signals.
Decelerate smoothly in the exit lane.
Once on the exit ramp, you must continue to decelerate within the lane markings and maintain adequate spacing between your vehicle and other vehicles.

13.1.6 – Curve

When approaching a curve:
Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
Before entering the curve, reduce speed so further braking or shifting is not required in the curve.
Keep vehicle in the lane.
Continue checking traffic in all directions.

13.1.7 – Railroad Crossing

Before reaching the crossing, all commercial drivers should:

Decelerate, brake smoothly, and shift gears as necessary.
Look and listen for the presence of trains.
Check traffic in all directions.

Do not stop, change gears, pass another vehicle, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is in the crossing.

If you are driving a bus, a school bus, or a vehicle displaying placards, you should be prepared to observe the following procedures at every railroad crossing (unless the crossing is exempt):

As the vehicle approaches a railroad crossing, activate the four-way flashers.
Stop the vehicle within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
Listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train. If operating a bus, you may also be required to open the window and door prior to crossing tracks.
Keep hands on the steering wheel as the vehicle crosses the tracks.

Do not stop, change gears, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is proceeding across the tracks.
Four-way flashers should be deactivated after the vehicle crosses the tracks.
Continue to check mirrors and traffic.

Not all driving road test routes will have a railroad crossing. You may be asked to explain and demonstrate the proper railroad crossing procedures to the examiner at a simulated location.

13.1.8 – Bridge/Overpass/Sign

After driving under an overpass, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted clearance or height was. After going over a bridge, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted weight limit was. If your test route does not have a bridge or overpass, you may be asked about another traffic sign. When asked, be prepared to identify and explain to the examiner any traffic sign which may appear on the route.

13.1.9 – Student Discharge (School Bus)

If you are applying for a School Bus endorsement, you will be required to demonstrate loading and unloading students. Please refer to section 10 of this manual for procedures on loading and unloading school students.

During the driving test you must:

Wear your safety belt.
Obey all traffic signs, signals, and laws.
Complete the test without an accident or moving violation.

You will be scored on your overall performance in the following general driving behavior categories:

13.1.10 – Clutch Usage (for Manual Transmission)

Should always use clutch to shift.
Do not rev or lug the engine.
Do not ride clutch to control speed, coast with the clutch depressed, or “pop” the clutch.

13.1.11 – Gear Usage (for Manual Transmission)

Do not grind or clash gears.
Select gear that does not rev or lug engine.
Do not shift in turns.

13.1.12 – Brake Usage

Do not ride or pump brake.
Do not brake harshly. Brake smoothly using steady pressure.

13.1.13 – Lane Usage

Do not put vehicle over curbs, sidewalks, or lane markings.
Stop behind stop lines, crosswalks, or stop signs.
Complete a turn in the proper lane on a multiple lane road (vehicle should finish a left turn in the lane directly to the right of the center line).
Finish a right turn in the right-most (curb) lane.
Move to or remain in right-most lane unless lane is blocked.

Multiple turn lane:

Turn must begin in right lane and end in corresponding lane on cross street.

13.1.14 – Steering

Do not over or under steer the vehicle.
Keep both hands on the steering wheel at all times unless shifting. Once you have completed shift, return both hands to the steering wheel.

13.1.15 – Regular Traffic Checks

Check traffic regularly.
Check mirrors regularly.
Check mirrors and traffic before, while in and after an intersection.
Scan and check traffic in high volume areas and areas where pedestrians are expected to be present.

13.1.16 – Use of Turn Signals

Use turn signals properly.
Activate turn signals when required.
Activate turn signals at appropriate times.
Cancel turn signals upon completion of a turn or lane change.

Automatic Failures:

The grounds for immediate failure deals with serious driving errors. When an error of this type occurs, the test is stopped. Errors which will be grounds for immediate failure are listed below:

1. Committing a moving traffic violation or disobeying signs and signals.
2. Having an avoidable accident or incident.
3. Any dangerous action or unsafe behavior. (Examples: shifting while crossing railroad tracks, rolling rearward from stopped position)
4. Driving vehicle over sidewalks or curbs.
5. Refusing to wear seat belt.
6. Other (Example: failure to obey directions)