

Senior Drivers' Workbook

A safe driving self-quiz with practical tips for driving safer and longer



CHOICES



The road to driving safer and longer

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This booklet is part of the Iowa Department of Transportation's **“Choices Not Chances - The Road to Driving Safer and Longer”** series. These booklets and video were developed to help Iowa drivers remain safe and mobile as they age. For more information, contact the Department of Transportation's Office of Driver Services at 800-532-1121



Am I a Safe Driver?

Check the box if the statement applies to you.

- I get lost while driving.
- My friends and family members say they are worried about my driving.
- Other vehicles seem to appear out of nowhere.
- I have trouble seeing signs in time to respond to them.
- Other drivers drive too fast.
- Other drivers often honk at me.
- Driving stresses me out.
- After driving, I feel tired.
- I have had more “near misses” lately.
- Busy intersections bother me.
- Left-hand turns make me nervous.
- The glare from oncoming headlights bothers me.
- My medication makes me dizzy or drowsy.
- I have trouble turning the steering wheel.
- I have trouble judging distances of approaching vehicles.
- I have trouble staying in my lane.
- I have trouble pushing down on the gas pedal or brakes.
- I have trouble looking over my shoulder when I back up.
- The police have stopped me recently for my driving.
- People will no longer accept rides from me.
- I don't like to drive at night.
- I have more trouble parking lately.
- Signs confuse me.

If you have checked any of the boxes, your safety may be at risk when you drive. Talk to your doctor about ways to improve your safety when you drive.

Safe Driving Tips for Older Drivers

Tip #1: Drive with care.

Always —

- Plan your trips ahead of time. Decide what time to leave and which roads to take. Try to avoid heavy traffic, poor weather and high-speed areas.
- Wear your safety belt — and wear it correctly. It should go over your shoulder and across your lap.
- Drive according to conditions and your capability. It's unsafe to drive too fast or too slow.
- Be alert! Pay attention to traffic at all times.
- Keep enough distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Be extra careful at intersections. Use your turn signal and remember to look around you for people and other vehicles.
- Check your blind spot when changing lanes or backing up.
- Be extra careful at train tracks. Remember to look both ways for trains.
- When you take a new medicine, ask your doctor or pharmacist about possible side effects. Many medicines may affect your driving even when you feel fine. If your medicine makes you dizzy or drowsy, talk to your doctor to find out ways to take your medicine so it doesn't affect your driving.

Never —

- Drink and drive.
- Drive when you feel angry or tired.
- Eat, drink or use a cell phone while driving.

If —

- You don't see well in the dark, try not to drive at night or during poor weather.
- You start to feel tired, stop your vehicle somewhere safe. Take a break until you feel more alert.

Safe Driving Tips for Older Drivers

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Tip #2: Take care of your vehicle.

- Make sure you have plenty of gas in your vehicle.
- Have your vehicle tuned up regularly.
- Keep your windshield and mirrors clean.
- Keep a cloth in your vehicle for cleaning your vehicle's windows.

Tip #3: Know where you can find a ride.

How do you get around when your vehicle is in the repair shop? What if the weather is bad... do you have an alternative plan? If you don't know the answer to these questions, it's time for you to put together a "transportation plan." A transportation plan is a list of all the ways that you can get around. Use this list when your vehicle is in the repair shop or when you don't feel safe driving. Your transportation plan might include:

- Rides from friends and family.
- Taking a taxi or bus.
- Riding the senior shuttle.

If you need help creating a transportation plan, your doctor, area agency on aging or a family member can get you started.

Tip #4: Take a driver safety class.

To learn how to drive more safely, try taking a class. In a driver safety class, the instructor teaches you skills that you can use when you are driving. To find a class near you, call one of the following programs:

AARP Driver Safety Program
888-227-7669

Iowa Department of Public Safety
State Patrol Safety Education Officers
515-725-6091

Highway Signs Quiz

Place the correct number in the space below each of the signs on the next page. (Answers are on the back page.)

1. School Zone and Crossing
2. No U-Turn
3. No Right Turn
4. Merging Traffic from the Right
5. Crossroad
6. Two Lanes Merging Into One
7. Stop
8. Yield Right-of-Way
9. Side Road
10. Winding Road
11. Two-Way Traffic
12. Approach to a Divided Highway
13. Do Not Enter
14. Deer Crossing
15. Railroad Crossing Ahead
16. Pedestrian Crossing
17. Slow Moving Vehicle
18. No Passing Zone
19. Road Construction/Maintenance
20. One-Way
21. Hill
22. Keep to the Right
23. Slippery When Wet
24. Warning of Change in Direction

 (a) _____	 (b) _____	 (c) _____	 (d) _____
 (e) _____	 (f) _____	 (g) _____	 (h) _____
 (i) _____	 (j) _____	 (k) _____	 (l) _____
 (m) _____	 (n) _____	 (o) _____	 (p) _____
 (q) _____	 (r) _____	 (s) _____	 (t) _____
 (u) _____	 (v) _____	 (w) _____	 (x) _____

Safety Workbook

Multiple Choice and True/False

Questions and information are provided to help you measure your knowledge and assist you in identifying any problems you may have while driving.
(Answers are on the back cover.)

Direction:

Place an "X" next to the correct answer.

1. You are driving and approach a visually impaired pedestrian carrying a white cane or accompanied by a guide dog attempting to cross the street. What must you do?

- a. Pass if you slow down and sound the horn.
- b. Yield the right-of-way and stop.
- c. Pass if there are no vehicles approaching from the opposite direction.

2. Even if you are driving under the posted speed limit, you could be violating the speed law if:

- a. you fail to sound your horn when you pass another vehicle.
- b. you slow down to make a turn at the next intersection.
- c. you are driving too fast for weather conditions.

3. Never change lanes without:

- a. signaling your intentions.
- b. looking over your shoulder and checking the blind spot.
- c. All of the above.

4. The law requires that you dim your headlights at least 1000 feet before you meet an oncoming vehicle. How far back do you dim your headlights before approaching another vehicle from the rear?

- a. 800 feet
- b. 400 feet
- c. 500 feet

5. When approaching a flashing yellow signal light, you must:

- a. come to a complete stop.
- b. slow down and proceed with caution.
- c. wait for the light to stop flashing.

6. If a green arrow points to the right while a red traffic light is showing:

- a. turn right only after stopping.
- b. go straight ahead after checking for traffic and pedestrians.
- c. turn cautiously in the direction of the arrow and be alert for pedestrians.

7. When passing a vehicle, do not return to the right-hand lane until you can see the vehicle you have passed in your:

- a. side mirror.
- b. rearview mirror.
- c. back window.

8. When approaching a stop sign, you must come to a complete stop:

- a. before the sign.
- b. anywhere in the intersection.
- c. behind the stop line, before entering the crosswalk or before entering the intersection, if there is no crosswalk.

9. If a right turn is permitted at a red stop light, you must:

- a. turn immediately into the intersection.
- b. follow the traffic ahead of you.
- c. come to a complete stop, proceed with caution and yield the right-of-way to vehicles and pedestrians in the intersection.

10. If your vehicle's right wheel goes off the edge of the pavement while the vehicle is in motion, you should:

- a. increase your speed and get back on the road immediately.
- b. without braking, turn to the left.
- c. grip the steering wheel firmly, do not accelerate, brake gently and turn back on the road when it is safe to do so (after approaching traffic has passed).

11. Most rear-end collisions are caused by:

- a. improper following distance between two or more vehicles.
- b. slow speed of traffic.
- c. poor road conditions.

12. When driving on a slippery road and your vehicle starts to skid, you should:

- a. drive close to the edge of the road.
- b. stop instantly.
- c. steer in the direction that the rear wheels are skidding.

13. If your doctor changes or prescribes new medication, you should ask the doctor if the medication will affect your ability to drive safely.

- a. True
- b. False

14. Night driving can be made safer by applying the following rule:

- a. drive at a fast speed.
- b. wear prescribed sunglasses.
- c. travel at a speed that will enable you to stop within the distance lighted by your headlights.

15. If a driver hears or sees an emergency vehicle on a roadway not separated by a median strip, the driver must:

- a. pull to the right when it is safe to do so, and stop until the emergency vehicle has passed.
- b. increase his/her speed.
- c. turn at the next intersection.

16. A single solid yellow line on your side of the centerline on a two-lane pavement means no passing.

- a. True
- b. False

17. Under normal driving conditions, a good rule of thumb to ensure a minimum safe following distance is the:

- a. 10-second rule
- b. eight-second rule
- c. two-second rule

18. In case of a tire blowout while driving you should:

- a. grip the steering wheel firmly and do not brake, but reduce speed.
- b. increase your speed.
- c. quickly turn onto the shoulder of the road.

19. When approaching an intersection with a traffic control signal and the light turns from green to yellow, you should:

- a. not enter the intersection.
- b. increase your speed.
- c. blow your horn and continue through the intersection.

20. When driving in dense fog , you should:

- a. use your bright lights.
- b. stop your vehicle on the road.
- c. travel cautiously at a safe speed within the limits of your vision.

21. Two vehicles approach an intersection from different directions at the same time. There are no stop signs, yield signs or traffic control lights. Which driver must yield?

- a. the driver on the left.
- b. the driver on the right.
- c. the driver who first sounds his/her horn.

22. When making a left turn, you have the right of way over other vehicles.

- a. True
- b. False

23. At intesections, railroad crossings, bridges, or in bad weather conditions, motorcyclists and bicyclists should:

- a. be expected to yield to all vehicles.
- b. be allowed the same privileges as other vehicles.
- c. be allowed extra room since the motorcycle or bicycle may tip.

24. When there are two or more lanes of traffic moving in each direction, what type of centerline is used?

- a. One single solid yellow line.
- b. Broken white lines.
- c. Two solid yellow lines.

25. On a two-lane roadway, you must always stop for a school bus flashing its red warning lights and extending its stop signal arm when:

- a. approaching the school bus from behind.
- b. approaching the school bus from the front.
- c. approaching the bus in either direction.

26. A left turn is permitted at a red light when the driver:

- a. turns from the farthest left lane of a one-way street into the farthest left lane of a one-way street.
- b. signals for the turn, stops completely and yields right-of-way to on-coming traffic.
- c. Both a and b

27. When approaching a flashing red signal light, you must:

- a. come to a complete stop.
- b. proceed with caution.
- c. wait for a green light before proceeding.

28. When you come to a railroad crossing without flashing warning signals or crossing gates, you should:

- a. increase your speed and cross the tracks as quickly as possible.
- b. stop immediately.
- c. be alert, slow down, be prepared to stop, and proceed with caution, if no train is approaching.

- 29. When a traffic signal turns green, you may proceed:**
- a. after looking in both directions.
 - b. instantly.
 - c. after yielding the right-of-way to pedestrians and vehicles still in or entering the intersection.

- 30. When parking downhill on a street with curbing, you must:**
- a. turn the wheels away from the curb.
 - b. turn the wheels toward the curb.
 - c. It does not make any difference

- 31. When driving out of an alley, private road or driveway in an urban area:**
- a. slow down.
 - b. sound your horn.
 - c. stop before entering the sidewalk area and yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and vehicles.

- 32. If you pass your intended exit on an interstate or expressway, you should:**
- a. stop and back up on the shoulder of the road.
 - b. go on to the next exit.
 - c. park and wait for help.

- 33. When planning to pass a motorcycle, bicycle or moped, always:**
- a. share the same lane with the motorcycle, bicycle or moped.
 - b. sound your horn and accelerate your vehicle.
 - c. change lanes and pass the same way you would pass another vehicle.

- 34. Iowa law requires that in residential areas, turn signals must be given at least:**
- a. 50 feet before turning.
 - b. 100 feet before turning.
 - c. 200 feet before turning.

- 35. Grandparents:**
- a. do not need to use child safety seats when transporting grandchildren under the age of six.
 - b. should not transport grandchildren.
 - c. must use a child safety seat when transporting children under age six and must use either a child safety seat or seat belt for transporting children between the ages of six and 11.

- 36. To turn safely into a sharp curve ahead, you should:**
- a. slow down before entering a curve.
 - b. reduce your speed after entering a curve.
 - c. stop and proceed with caution.

- 37. To prevent skidding (hydroplaning) when driving on wet pavement, always:**
- a. increase the speed of your vehicle.
 - b. apply your brakes.
 - c. reduce your vehicle's speed.

- 38. When are broken white lines (dashes) used on streets or highways?**
- a. When passing is prohibited.
 - b. On two-lane pavements.
 - c. To divide lanes on streets and highways having more than one lane of traffic moving in the same direction.

39. When a driver is in an intersection waiting to make a left turn, the front wheels of his/her vehicle should be positioned:

- a. left.
- b. straight.
- c. at a 90-degree angle.

40. The right-of-way is:

- a. to be taken.
- b. to be demanded.
- c. to be given.

41. When approaching a sign that reads "Merging Traffic," you must:

- a. stop your vehicle before proceeding.
- b. try to "beat the traffic."
- c. adjust your speed and position to avoid a collision with other vehicles.

42. You may cross a double yellow line marking only under the following conditions:

- a. When approaching an intersection.
- b. To make a left turn into or from any alley, private road or driveway.
- c. On city streets.

43. When completing a right turn onto a multi-lane road, you should complete the turn in the:

- a. lane nearest the left-hand curb.
- b. lane nearest the right-hand curb.
- c. middle lane in the intersection.

44. Unless otherwise posted, the speed limit on a residential street is:

- a. 25 mph.
- b. 30 mph.
- c. 35 mph.

45. High beam glare of oncoming headlights can be reduced by:

- a. occasionally looking at the white stripe at the right edge of the pavement.
- b. looking at the centerline of the road.
- c. wearing sunglasses.

46. The legal speed limit in a school zone is:

- a. 20 mph.
- b. 25 mph.
- c. 30 mph.

47. After a train has passed, the general rule of thumb is to continue as soon as the train clears the railroad crossing.

- a. True
- b. False

48. In cold weather, bridges may be icy even when other roads are dry.

- a. True
- b. False

49. You may pass another vehicle by using the shoulder of the road:

- a. when the vehicle in front of you is making a left-hand turn.
- b. to go around a slow-moving vehicle.
- c. You are not allowed to pass on the shoulder of the road.

50. If you get stranded in a winter storm, you should:

- a. leave your vehicle to find help.
- b. stay inside your vehicle and wait for help.
- c. get out and try to push your vehicle.

Safe Driving Tips for Older Drivers

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Tip #5: Take care of your health.

- **Visit your doctor and vision specialist regularly.**
- **Eat a healthy diet.**
- **Exercise to stay fit.** You need strength and endurance to drive safely.

Tip #6: Keep yourself safe in your vehicle.

- **Wear your safety belt** — and wear it correctly. It should go over your shoulder and across your lap.
- **Never drink and drive!**
- **Don't drive when you are angry, upset, sleepy or ill.**
If you have concerns about your driving safety, talk to your doctor.

Tip #7: Take care of your emotional health.

- **Keep in touch with family and friends.** It's important to maintain your social life.
- **Exercise your mind.** Keep your mind active by reading books, doing crossword puzzles and taking classes.
- **Stay involved.** Join community activities or volunteer projects. Somebody needs what you can offer.
- **Keep a positive attitude.** Focus on the good things in your life, and don't dwell on the bad. Do the things that make you happy. If you've been feeling sad lately or no longer enjoy the things you used to, ask your doctor for help.

Safe Driving Tips for Older Drivers

Tip #8: Attend a “Choices Not Chances” presentation offered by the Iowa Department of Transportation’s Office of Driver Services

Contact the Office of Driver Services to schedule a speaker for your group by calling 800-532-1121.

Tip #9: Plan for your future. Know your own health.

This is important for staying safe and maintaining an active lifestyle.

- Know what medical conditions you have.
- Know the names of your medicines and how they should be taken.
- Make a list of your medical conditions, medicines, drug allergies (if any), and the names of your doctors. Keep this list in your wallet.

Tip #10: Make your health care wishes known to your family and doctors.

- Consider filling out an advance directives form. This form lets you state your health care choices or name someone to make those choices for you.
- Consider filling out a form to help you and your family or friends agree with you on when and how you should stop driving.
- Have your wish for organ donation noted on your driver’s license. Give your family and doctors copies. This way they have a written record of your choices in case you are unable to tell them yourself.
- If you need help with your advance directives, talk to your doctor.

Safety Quick Tips

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Your “comfort level” is your best friend.

If you are not comfortable driving on the road, at that time of day, or to that town, then use one of these alternatives.

- A different route
- A different time of day
- Ride with someone else
- Contact your local transit system (urban or rural)

If left turns are a problem or make you nervous, change your route.

- Make more right turns to eliminate the left turn.
- Make left turns where there is a traffic light with a turn arrow.
- Pick an intersection with a four-way stop.
- Pick a less-busy intersection for your left turn.

If backing makes you nervous or causes you trouble:

- Use parking places where you do not have to back out.

If heavy traffic makes you nervous or causes you trouble:

- Carpool when going downtown or to the mall.
Leave the driving to someone else. Offer to drive when you are going someplace less busy.



Anticipation of the situation ahead or around you makes up for your slowed reaction time.

- Make sure you look as far ahead as you can see in addition to watching everything around you.
- Make sure you regularly look left and right so you will see merging traffic or cross traffic in time to react safely.
- Expect the next stop light to change before you get to it and be prepared to stop.
- Look in your rearview mirror often. If you have someone following too close or closing on you too fast, start slowing down early. By taking a longer time to come to a stop, the motorist behind you will not be caught off-guard and rear-end your vehicle.



Make sure you do not drive with your disabled parking permit hanging from your rearview mirror.

- Your parking permit can hide cars and pedestrians from your view — it could be someone you know that you are not seeing! (Shown in pictures below.)



Remember: This permit should be displayed only when parked!



Adjusting to changing driving skills.

- Many seniors drive older, low-mileage cars. Years ago this car might have been a perfect match to your driving skills, but now it is cumbersome and hard to steer and maneuver. It's difficult to know where the corners of your bumpers are, and you find yourself sitting lower in the seat so the dashboard and steering wheel may be keeping you from seeing everything you need to see. Try a smaller car. They now include the comfort features of your old car and probably have many new features not available when your car was new.

- When you are turning, left or right, and approaching traffic catches up to you faster than you expected, it may mean that your ability to judge the speed and distance of other vehicles is changing. You can protect yourself by changing your driving. Set up your route so that you only turn at stop lights. Look for intersections with turn lanes and stop lights with turn arrows when making left turns. In smaller communities, choose streets where there is less traffic. But, most important, if you are not sure, wait. Do not make your turn until you are sure. It's easier to survive the honking horn of a rude and impatient driver behind you than a traffic crash.



Iowa Department
of Transportation
Office of Driver Services
800-532-1121
515-244-9124

Driver's License Permanent Examining Stations

For specific hours of operation, call the driver's license station or the Motor Vehicle Information Center at 800-532-1121.

Ames

HyVee Mall
3708 Lincoln Way
515-296-2393

Ankeny

6310 S.E. Convenience Blvd.
515-244-1052

Burlington

Fairway Shopping Center
2700 Mount Pleasant St.
319-754-8767

Carroll

510 N. Carroll St., Suite 1
712-792-5269

Cedar Rapids

152 Collins Road N.E.
319-377-6461

Clinton

316 S. Second St.
563-243-7144

Council Bluffs

Mall of the Bluffs
1751 Madison Ave., Suite 330
712-323-1219

Davenport

2162 W. Kimberly Road
563-386-1050

Des Moines Renewal Station

2339 Euclid Ave.
515-244-1052

Dubuque

Asbury Square Shopping Center
2255 JFK Road
563-583-9844

Fort Dodge

2313 First Ave. S.
515-573-5141

Iowa City

Eastdale Mall
1700 S. First Ave.
319-338-5294

Marshalltown

Plaza Mall
2500 S. Center St.
641-752-5668

Mason City

Southport Shopping Center
1622 S. Federal Ave.
641-423-8391

Muscatine

1903 Park Ave.
563-263-5414

Ottumwa

2830 N. Court Road
641-682-4855

Sioux City

Market Place Mall
3005 Hamilton Blvd.
712-255-5539

Spencer

Gateway North Shopping Center
E. 18th St. and Grand Ave.
712-262-6278

Waterloo

2060 Crossroads Center Suite 103
319-235-0902

Reference to Other Booklets

This workbook is part of the Iowa Department of Transportation's series of materials "**Choices not Chances - The Road to Driving Safer and Longer**" (see the list below), which were developed to help Iowa drivers remain safe and mobile as they age. For more information, contact your local driver's license examining station or visit the Iowa Department of Transportation's Web site at dot.state.ia.us/mvd/ods/index.htm.

1. Older Drivers and Risk – *Why be Concerned about Safe Mobility?*
2. Driver's License Renewal in Iowa
3. Senior Drivers' Workbook – *Practical Driving Tips and a Self-Quiz*
4. Driving With Diminished Skills – *Normal Aging Changes and Dementia or Alzheimer's Disease*
5. Driving Retirement – *Planning and Making it Work*
6. "Choice Not Chances" video (the Iowa DOT's driver's licensing staff are available to speak to local groups and present this friendly video that explains what to expect when renewing your Iowa driver's license, driving tips and the effects aging may have on driving.)

We hope this series of materials will help those making mobility decisions find the balance between maintaining independence and ensuring safety.

Answer Keys

Answers to Highway Signs Quiz

a 8	b 20	c 3	d 7
e 1	f 24	g 15	h 18
i 10	j 12	k 5	l 23
m 21	n 4	o 16	p 19
q 13	r 2	s 14	t 17
u 9	v 11	w 6	x 22

Safety Workbook Multiple Choice and True/False Answers

1. b	11. a	21. a	31. c	41. c
2. c	12. c	22. b	32. b	42. b
3. c	13. a	23. c	33. c	43. b
4. b	14. c	24. c	34. b	44. a
5. b	15. a	25. c	35. c	45. a
6. c	16. a	26. a	36. a	46. b
7. b	17. c	27. a	37. c	47. b
8. c	18. a	28. c	38. c	48. a
9. c	19. a	29. c	39. b	49. c
10. c	20. c	30. b	40. c	50. b