

Driving as you get older

You may have been driving for many years, but there are some things that you need to take into consideration as you get older and your circumstances change.

You and your Driving Licence

Can I ever be too old to drive?

There are over [5 million drivers](#) who are over 70 years old. Your licence will not be automatically renewed when you reach 70 years. Together with your GP, you should have regular check-ups to see if you're still up for the demands of the road.

There is no upper age limit for driving a car. All drivers have to [renew their driving licence](#) when you reach the age of 70 and every 3 years after. The renewal form will be sent to you automatically by the [Driver Vehicle Licence Agency \(DVLA\)](#) 90 days before your 70th birthday. You can also [renew your driving licence online](#) for free any time from 90 days before your 70th birthday.

When completing the form you will need to declare any medical conditions you have and confirm that you meet the eyesight requirements for driving.

Visit Olderdrivers.org.uk for more details on the eyesight requirements for driving.

[Guide for Older Drivers](#) is a guide from [RiDC](#), which may help you when filling out the form.

Am I fit enough to drive?

Each of us is personally responsible for making sure that we are fit to drive. Some physical or medical conditions must, by law, be reported to the DVLA. They will then send you a confidential medical form, asking you to describe your medical condition in greater detail and to agree to getting a medical report from [your GP](#). The latest General Medical Council guidance is that disclosure of personal information about a patient without consent may be justified in the public interest if failure to disclose may expose others to a risk of death or serious harm. This means that although it is your responsibility to disclose your health to the DVLA, the GP may believe that it is in the public interest to disclose. Doctors should still seek the patient's consent to disclosure if practicable and consider any reasons given for refusal.

The following health conditions are identified by the DVLA as requiring a three year renewal of your licence along with a GP confirmation of fitness to drive safely or a medical examination:

- diabetes or taking insulin
- syncope (fainting)
- heart conditions (including atrial fibrillation and pacemakers)
- sleep apnoea
- epilepsy
- stroke
- glaucoma

There are also some prescription drugs and over-the-counter medicines that can have an effect on the skills needed to drive safely, so you should check with your GP or Pharmacist that it's still safe for you to drive.

Having a disability or medical condition does not necessarily mean that your driving licence will be affected. The things to think about are:

- frailty and how an accident could affect you
- tiredness; don't have long journeys at times you get the most tired and after meals

Local Support

[North East Drive Mobility](#) help people retain or regain their independence as drivers or passengers. The service is open to experienced and learner drivers, provisional licence holders and passengers with a medical condition or disability which affects their ability to use a vehicle. They can:

- assess your driving ability
- give advice on vehicle adaptations, getting in and out of a vehicle, and wheelchair storage
- provide specialist driving tuition
- offer information and advice: This includes advice on other options such as [community transport services](#)

You can refer yourself or be referred by your GP, occupational therapist, the DVLA, Motability or any other agencies.

How to stay safe as an older driver

According to data gathered by the Older Drivers Task Force, "drivers over the age of 70 are less likely to be involved in crashes involving speed, loss of control or alcohol". Despite these encouraging signs, there are extra steps you could take to further extend and enjoy your driving life, such as:

- making modifications to your car to assist any visual or physical ailments
- if you have difficulty while walking you may qualify for a Blue Badge for accessible parking
- having regular medical and driving assessments
- telling the DVLA about any medical conditions that may affect your ability to drive

For even more advice on age and driving, check out this [advice for older drivers page](#).

Experienced Driver Assessments

If it is a long time since you passed your driving test and you would like an objective assessment of your current driving skills, you might like to have an Experienced Driver Assessment (EDA).

What is an EDA and who is it for?

An EDA may be useful for:

- people who wish to continue driving, but who feel slightly apprehensive about driving on today's roads; or
- older people wishing to reassure themselves and their loved ones that they can still drive safely.

An EDA is not a test; it is an assessment which will provide an objective and confidential report on your driving ability.

[The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents \(RoSPA\)](#) offers Experienced Driver Assessments.

What does an EDA involve?

The assessment will involve an hour's drive in your own car, at a time and place convenient to you. A qualified driver who is registered with RoSPA will accompany you during the assessment. Afterwards, you will be given a confidential verbal and written report and a certificate of completion.

There is no pass or fail to the assessment, but your report may include suggestions on how you can improve specific driving skills and your all round driving ability.

[Visit the RoSPA website to book an assessment.](#)

[IAM Roadsmart](#) is a road safety charity dedicated to making our roads a better place. Helping drivers and riders be confident, have safer, economical and enjoyable journeys. They also offer mature driver review courses.

Keep up to date with changes to The Highway Code

The rules in the [Highway Code](#) are updated when there are changes in the law. New rules may be added while you are preparing for your practical test, or after you have passed. It's really important to stay up to date, whether you've only had one lesson or had a driving licence for years. Visit GOV.UK to:

- [read the updates to the Highway Code](#)

- [register for email updates](#)
 - follow The Highway Code on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
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Driving in the Winter

Before making a journey during bad weather you should make sure that you and your car are prepared. This includes:

- carrying an emergency kit (including warm clothing or blankets)
- checking water and oil levels
- checking all your lights work, including brake lights
- checking tyre tread depth;
- and making sure that you are well rested and fit to drive

Visit [Gov.uk](#) for more advice on driving in bad weather.

[Highways England](#) website has road safety and breakdown advice for motorists.

Taxing your car

Paper tax discs have now been replaced by electronic records, so you no longer need to display them in your car windscreen. Police cameras will be used to check car registration details to ensure the car is taxed.

You need to tax your car to keep it on the road. The DVLA will send you a V11 renewal reminder form when your current tax is about to expire.

[You can check on gov.uk:](#)

- the tax status of a car
- registered as SORN (off the road and not taxed)

There are 3 ways to renew your car tax:

- [pay for your car tax online](#) using the 16 digit number on your renewal reminder
 - by phone
 - at your local [post office](#). You will need to take your V11 reminder form, MOT test certificate and the necessary payment with you.
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Buying and selling your car

The remaining car tax is no longer transferred when you buy a vehicle. You will need to get new vehicle tax before you can use the vehicle.

If you sell your car and notify the DVLA, they will automatically send you a refund for any full calendar months left on your car tax.

You can check the tax on any vehicle at [Gov.uk](#).

Check the history of a used car

You can [check the history of a car for free at gov.uk](#). You will need the car registration number to find out:

- the details match the ones registered with the DVLA
 - original vehicle make, model Colour, engine specifications and vehicle type emissions
 - MOT status and history
 - if the car has been recalled
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Car insurance

You must have [insurance](#) to drive a car.

[Check the Motor Insurance Database](#) to make sure your vehicle is insured.

You can get quotes from to find the best deal for you. There are lots of comparison websites to choose from such as:

- [Moneysupermarket](#)
 - [Compare the market](#)
 - [GoCompare.com](#)
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Mobility Scooters and Power wheelchairs

If you no longer drive a car or are not a car driver, but need something to help you to get about, a wide variety of [scooters and wheelchairs](#) are available that can be driven either on the pavement or on the road, depending on the size of the scooter.

[Motability](#) can give you advice on which vehicle might best suit your needs.

Fuel Service help for disabled drivers

[Fuel Service](#) is a scheme to make travelling easier for disabled drivers. This is how it works:

- use your mobile phone to find and book with a petrol station before you set off
- the petrol station confirms they will help so you can go there in confidence and you don't waste your time
- when you arrive, FuelService tells them which pump you're at, and they tell you how long they will be
- for smartphone users, it's available as a free app
- for other mobile users you call an automated number

It is probably useful to carry enough cash to pay for your fuel or you could try [Shell's fill up and go app](#).

Other Useful Information

- [Olderdrivers.org.uk](#) A National website from [RoSPA](#)
- [Top Tips for older drivers](#) Age UK's factsheet
- [LifeBook](#)– Free resource from Age UK where you write important and useful information about your life, from who insures your car to where you put the TV licence.
- Uswitch have a [Senior driving hub for Information, data and tips for elderly drivers](#)

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Useful Organisations

Disability North

Email: reception@disabilitynorth.org.uk

Website: www.disabilitynorth.org.uk

Telephone: 0191 2840480

Address: The Dene Centre, NE3 1PH

RIDC (Research Institute for Disabled Consumers)

Email: mail@ridc.org.uk

Website: www.ridc.org.uk

Telephone: 0207 427 2460

Address: Unit 10 Blenheim Court, N7 9NY

DVLA

Website: www.dvla.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 790 6802

Address: Vehicle Customer Services DVLA , SA99 1AR

North East Drive Mobility

Email: northeast.drivemobility@ntw.nhs.uk

Website: <https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/services/north-east-drive-mobility-independent-assessment-advice-service-walkergate-park/>

Telephone: (0191) 287 5090

Address: Walkergate Park Hospital, NE6 4QD

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA)

Email: help@rospa.com

Website: <http://www.rospa.com>

Telephone: 0121 248 2000

Address: RoSPA House, B15 1RP

Older Drivers

Email: info@olderdrivers.org.uk

Website: <http://www.olderdrivers.org.uk>

Telephone: 0121 248 2000

Blue Badge Scheme at Newcastle City Council

Website: <http://www.newcastle.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport/parking/disabled-parking-and-blue-badge-scheme>

Telephone: 0191 278 7878

Address: Blue Badge Scheme, NE1 8QH

Highways England

Email: info@highwaysengland.co.uk

Website: <https://highwaysengland.co.uk/>

Telephone: 0300 123 5000

Address: Highways England , B32 1AF

IAM Roadsmart

Email: support@iam.org.uk

Website: <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/>

Telephone: 0300 303 1134

Address: 1 Albany Place, AL7 3BT

The Highway Code

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>

Telephone: 0300 303 1134

Related Articles

[Blue Badge Scheme](#)

[Nexus TaxiCard Scheme – Accessible Transport](#)

[Community transport or minibus services](#)

[Public transport](#)

[Taxis](#)

[Concessionary travel](#)

[Your Doctor or GP](#)

[Motability: car scheme for disabled people.](#)

[Shopmobility](#)

[Insurance](#)

[Help with shopping and prescriptions](#)

[Wheelchairs, mobility scooters and powered wheelchairs](#)