

Tips and Tricks for the Road Test

Prepare:

1. Practice! Practice! Practice!
2. Drive as much as you can and practice getting in the car and immediately adjusting seat/mirrors and buckling your seatbelt, starting the car, your eye-head movements, your head movements, your leg movements, hand movements, body movements when reversing the car, etc. The more you repeat those movements, the more it will become muscle memory so you can focus on the road rather than trying to remember what to do.
3. When you are not driving and have some time to practice, practice those movements while sitting in a chair.
4. If you know which area/streets are around where the road test will be, drive those streets multiple times, or use Google Maps Street View to become familiar with the road signs and intersections.
5. Practice with a comfortable pair of shoes, the thinner the sole, the better.
6. Get a good feel of where your ankle is when your foot is on the gas pedal.
7. Practice smooth foot movements, slow press, slow release, for both pedals. If you had a water bottle balancing on your dashboard, it should not fall.
8. Practice quickly recognizing Left and Right and reacting to them when spoken (some people mix them up, so be sure you do 9 o'clock for Left, and 3 o'clock for Right).
9. If you can take a few classes at a driving school and use their car for the test, that would be best, especially if the instructor can come with you to the road test.

Before the test:

1. Sleep as well as you can the night before.
2. Drink plenty of water 3 hours before the test be be hydrated, but also not need to go during the test. Have a small bottle of water with you to drink right before the test if thirsty again.
3. If you have long hair, make sure it's in a ponytail or bun.
4. Wear your "driving shoes" and comfortable clothes.
5. Practice driving for an hour the morning of if you can, to get into the mindset.
6. Have a small energy bar or a small snack right before the test.
7. Plan to get to the test site 15 minutes early.

During the test:

1. Remember to breathe and remain calm. Relax.
2. Always wait for instructions – when to turn on the car, where to turn, etc. Only act on instructions if safe.
3. Relax.
4. Exaggerate movements a little bit if you can, to show you are going through all of them. Glancing with your eyes will not be enough, you need to show head movement.
5. You've been practicing adjusting your mirrors and seat, let the examiner see that you are going through the checks, even if you only need to move the mirror very little.

6. Be sure to make it obvious you are checking the road when told to start driving.
7. You've been practicing your head movements a lot before the test, so show off – let the examiner see that you are checking those mirrors. Don't just use your eyes, they might not notice and think you are not checking.
8. Relax.
9. Do not let yourself be distracted by the examiner or other people in the car. Your focus should be the road in front of you and the road signs so you can plan as far as you can.
10. Do not let yourself be distracted by other drivers, if anyone honks because you are going the speed limit, let them honk, do not speed up, do not go over the limit.
11. Do not let yourself be distracted by pedestrians. If there is a pedestrian in the crosswalk -- stay put even if they try to wave you through.
12. Relax.
13. Keep your speed between the speed limit, and 5 UNDER the speed limit. Most people drive 5 OVER the speed limit, so don't try to follow a car in front of you, do your own thing and don't go over the limit.
14. When coming to a STOP sign, the examiner will want to feel the car jerking back to a complete stop (if you've practiced, you know what that feels like). Count to 3 in your head before slowly creeping forward and looking both ways to make sure it's safe.
15. If you have the right of way, go for it, but keep your foot hovering above the brake pedal, just in case.
16. Turn on the turn signals with plenty of time before turning (about 100 feet), even if no other cars around. Remember, those turn signals are so other drivers can help you stay safe, so it's good to make it a muscle-memory habit.
17. If you plan to turn your wheel in the next 3 seconds or so, use the turn signal, and be sure to make a show of checking for blind spots right before turning the wheel.
18. Do not cross solid lines unless absolutely necessary (road blocked). Be sure to use your blinker and to make a show out of checking it's safe.
19. Always turn into the lane closest to you. Change lanes after if needed.
20. Be sure to turn off the turn signal once done if it doesn't turn off on its own.
21. If asked to reverse, be sure to put your hand on the seat next to you to help you turn your body. Turn the wheel in the direction you want to turn as you are looking out the rear windshield. Do not let go of the seat until you've come to a complete stop. Then you can turn back and face the front of the car.
22. When stopping behind another car, the examiner will want to see the wheels of that car, so be sure you see them as well – this gives you plenty of safe distance.
23. When done, thank the examiner :) A simple "Thank you." will show you appreciate their attention to your displaying your driving skills.

Good luck!

(and Relax :)

Everything will be OK!