

# What are GDL Programs?

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) programs are designed to minimize the highest risk situations for a new driver while they safely gain crucial experience behind the wheel. GDL programs introduce young drivers to the road slowly with a gradual, staged approach to earning a driver's license.

## GDL LAWS SAVE LIVES

Car crashes are the number one killer of teens, taking almost 4,000 young lives annually. These crashes are not just accidents—they are preventable crashes.

Since the inception of GDL laws, teen fatalities and serious injuries have been reduced by up to 40%!

**50%** of teens killed in car crashes were passengers driven by another teen

## THREE STAGES OF THE GDL LAW:

- 1 Learner License
- 2 Provisional License
- 3 Full Driver's License

It's simple. Read on to understand the different licensing stages and guidelines.

## WHAT CAN TEENS, PARENTS, AND GUARDIANS DO?

By understanding, following, and enforcing GDL laws, teens, parents, and guardians can minimize the risk of a car crash and keep the roads safer for everyone.



Visit [ImpactTeenDrivers.org/Texas](https://ImpactTeenDrivers.org/Texas) for more information and to access additional resources.

# Understanding GRADUATED DRIVER LICENSING LAWS

## Texas





### STAGE 1

## LEARNER LICENSE

The Learner License stage is the time to gain driving experience.

This stage can begin at age 15. Teens must register for an approved driver education course. Upon completion of the course, teens will obtain a Texas Driver Education Certificate to present at the driver license office. They must also complete the Impact Texas Teen Drivers program from the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Once a teen has studied the Texas Driver Handbook, they should head to the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to take the written driver exam. Once they pass the exam, they become the proud holder of a Learner License.

All teens need a minimum of 44 hours of behind-the-wheel supervised driving time with a licensed adult who is 21 years of age or older. Ten of those hours must be at night. 14 of these practice hours must be completed with a driving instructor, including seven hours of in-car observation and seven hours of behind-the-wheel practice. They will hold their Learner License for a minimum of six months and must be at least 16 years old before taking the driver's license test.

### STAGE 2

## PROVISIONAL LICENSE

Once a teen passes the driver's license test, they will receive their Provisional License.

A Provisional License allows the teen driver to drive ALONE. However, they must follow these driving restrictions while in the Provisional License stage:

- *No more than 1 passenger* under the age of 21 years old UNLESS they are family members or accompanied by a licensed driver over the age of 21
- *No driving between midnight and 5 a.m.*
- *No use of a wireless communications device* while driving, hands-free or not
- *Seat belts* are mandatory for all people in the car



### STAGE 3

## FULL DRIVER'S LICENSE

When a teen turns 18 years old, the passenger, nighttime, and wireless device restrictions are lifted. Remember, hands-free is not distraction-free. Seat belts remain mandatory for all occupants of a vehicle under Texas law.

With a full driver's license, teens can participate in all of the privileges, responsibilities, and enjoyments that come with driving. But remember, driving is a privilege, not a right, and it is important to drive safely at all times no matter age or experience.

Congrats!

