

# SECTION 13: ROAD TEST

## THIS SECTION COVERS

### 13.1 – How You Will Be Tested

To pass the road test portion of the CDL driving performance evaluation (DPE), you **must** make no more than 30 errors and no critical driving errors, which will result in an automatic failure. Interpreters are prohibited. The entire road test must be conducted in English pursuant to CFR, Title 49 §§391.11(b)(2) and 383.133(c)(5). Technology, such as backup cameras and self-parking, **cannot** solely be used on a road test.

If you communicate in a language other than English, or fail to comprehend instructions given to you in English, during the skills tests (vehicle inspection, basic control skills, and road test), you will receive a verbal warning for the first 2 offenses committed on the same test date. Upon the third offense committed on the same test date, the test will end as an automatic failure.

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 and:

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

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.

**Remember:** You are allowed a total of 3 attempts to pass the vehicle inspection test, basic control skills test, and road test.

**NOTE:** A driver must be tested in a truck or bus (as those terms are defined in CFR, Title 49 §390.5), or other single unit vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 or more, to satisfy the skills testing requirements for a Class B CDL.

## 13.1 – HOW YOU WILL BE TESTED

### 13.1.1 – Turns

You have been asked to make a turn:

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

After the turn:

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

### **13.1.2 – Intersections**

As you approach an intersection:

- Check for 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, and maintain a safe gap behind any vehicle in front of you.
- Your vehicle must not roll forward or backward.

**NOTE:** Do not enter the intersection if there is insufficient space to clear it.

When driving through an intersection:

- Check for 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 your mirrors for traffic.
- Accelerate smoothly and change gears as necessary.

### **13.1.3 – Urban Business**

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, use proper signals, wait for a safe gap before moving into a lane, and maintain a safe following distance.

### **13.1.5 – Expressway/Highway**

Before entering the expressway:

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

Once on the expressway:

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

When exiting the expressway:

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

### **13.1.6 – Stop/Start**

For this maneuver, you will be asked to pull your vehicle over to the side of the road and stop as if you were going to get out and check something on your vehicle. You must check for traffic thoroughly in all directions and move to the right-most lane or shoulder of the road.

As you prepare for the stop:

- Check for traffic.
- Activate your right turn signal.
- Decelerate smoothly, brake evenly, and change gears as necessary.
- Bring your vehicle to a full stop without coasting.

Once stopped:

- The vehicle must be parallel to the curb or shoulder of the road and safely out of the traffic flow.
- The vehicle should not be blocking driveways, fire hydrants, intersections, signs, etc.
- Cancel your turn signal.
- Activate your 4-way emergency flashers.
- Apply the parking brake.
- Move the gear shift to Neutral or Park.
- Remove your feet from the brake and clutch pedals.

When instructed to resume:

- Check your mirrors thoroughly in all directions for traffic.
- Turn off your 4-way emergency flashers.
- Activate the left turn signal.
- When traffic permits, you should release the parking brake and pull straight ahead.
- Do not turn the wheel before your vehicle moves.
- Check traffic from all directions, especially to the left.
- Steer and accelerate smoothly into the proper lane when safe to do so.
- Once your vehicle is back into the flow of traffic, cancel your left turn signal.

### **13.1.7 – Curve**

When approaching a curve:

- Check for traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Before entering the curve, reduce your speed so further braking or shifting is not required in the curve.
- Keep your vehicle in the lane.
- Continue checking for traffic in all directions.

### **13.1.8 – 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 for traffic in all directions.
- If multiple lanes, keep vehicle in right most lane.
- 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, school bus, or 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 4-way emergency 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 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 both 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.
- 4-way emergency flashers should be deactivated after the vehicle crosses the tracks.
- Continue to check your mirrors for 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.

### **13.1.9 – 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 that may appear on the route.

### **13.1.10 – Student Discharge (School Bus)**

If you are applying for a school bus endorsement, you will be required to demonstrate loading and unloading students. Refer to Section 10 of this manual for procedures on loading and unloading school students.

### **13.1.11 – General Driving Behaviors**

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

#### ***Clutch Usage (for Manual Transmission)***

- Always use the clutch to shift.
- If equipped with an unsynchronized manual transmission, you must double-clutch when shifting. Do not rev or lug the engine.
- Do not ride the clutch to control speed, coast with the clutch depressed, or “pop” the clutch.

#### ***Gear Usage (for Manual Transmission)***

- Do not grind or clash the gears.
- Select a gear that does not rev or lug engine.
- Do not shift in turns and intersections.

### ***Brake Usage***

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

### ***Lane Usage***

- Do not drive the 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 (the 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 the right-most lane unless the lane is blocked.

### **13.1.12 – 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 shifting, return both hands to the steering wheel.

### **13.1.13 – Regular Traffic Checks**

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

### **13.1.14 – Use of Turn Signals**

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