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## Practice test for california driver's license renewal

BrianAJackson/iStock/Getty Images Department of Motor Vehicle laws in every state require that you pass a vision test to get or renew a driver's license. While state laws may vary slightly, they typically call for visual acuity of at least 20/40 in either or both eyes, with or without corrective eyeglasses, and peripheral vision of 140 degrees. Driver's license vision screening focuses on visual acuity, peripheral vision and in some states, the ability to see colors. Check the laws in your state, as colorblindness may result in an automatic failure in some states. Examiners use a [Snellen eye chart]( to measure visual acuity -- distance vision -- and a computerized machine to test peripheral vision. If you normally wear corrective lenses, bring them with you, as you must wear them during the exam. Get an eye exam from a qualified eye care professional, such as a board-certified ophthalmologist or optometrist before or instead of taking a vision test at your local DMV. If you're renewing an existing license, your state may be able to provide your doctor with a [form] to fill out to prove you meet the vision requirements for your state. This is especially important if you haven't had a professional eye exam within the past year and may have issues that require correction. Forgetting to blink and squeezing your eyes are common problems during a vision-screening test. Staring at a DMV eye chart without blinking increases tension around your eyes, which reduces vision and leads causes eye strain. Blinking also increases eye lubrication, which can significantly improve your ability to see clearly. According to Dr. Edward Kondrot, a board certified ophthalmologist and homeopathic physician, the keys are to "blink lightly and often and do not squeeze either eye shut during the test."\*\* Keeping your body hydrated helps prevent lack of tear production. When your eyes stop producing tears, dry eye, eyestrain and vision problems often follow. Dr. Kondrot recommends that you drink at least half your body weight in ounces of water each day. For example, if you weigh 120 pounds, drink 60 ounces of water each day. \*\*Start at least one week in advance, as this tactic won't work if you wait until the day of the vision test.\*\* CursedSenses/iStock/Getty Images You can renew your license after it expires. The amount of time in which you can do so varies by state, but the process is similar. Your state's motor vehicle department may give you a temporary license while you wait for the real one. It may take up to 10 business days to receive it in the mail. The period of validity for a driver's license varies by state and ranges from four years in New Jersey to eight years in Virginia. Typically, you may renew yours from a few months to a year in advance of the expiration date. You may also renew after it expires, but you can't legally drive until the license is valid again. The process depends on the amount of time elapsed between the expiration and renewal dates. Many states offer a grace period of one to three years in which you can renew without repercussion. If you have missed the grace period, you would have to apply for a new license and retake the vision, written and driving skills test. Most states allow drivers to renew by mail and in person, but some also offer phone and online options. However, when your license expires you must visit a department office. In most cases this is because the department requires a vision test and a new picture. Complete an application for a driver's license and select the option to renew. Provide two forms of identification, such as a birth certificate and a Social Security card, and proof of your legal presence in the U.S, if required. These include your U.S. passport, permanent residence card and naturalization documents. Take the vision test and a new picture and pay the processing fee. You can renew your expired license by mail if you are out of the state or the country when it expires. In most cases, renewing this way involves writing to the regulating department with an explanation for your inability to do it in person. Include a completed renewal application, copies of two forms of identification, a check or money order for the processing fee, your current address and your address in the state and a self-addressed stamped envelope for the renewed license. Contact your state's regulating department or visit the website for specific instructions on the process. If you are working outside the country for the U.S. government, you might be eligible for an extension when your license expires. Eligible parties include members of the military on active duty, civilian employees or contractors, members of the diplomatic office, and the spouses and dependents of each. The department will extend your driver's license past the due date until several weeks or months after your return, and it will issue documents or a card showing the extension, which you must carry with your license. The application requirements vary by state. Contact your state's regulating department to find out how you may apply. A driver's license is a government-issued piece of identification required to operate a motor vehicle. Many places will ask for a driver's license for identification purposes, or it can be used to show legal age when buying alcohol or tobacco. Unlike some countries, a U.S. driver's license is not a nationally issued piece of identification. Each state issues its own license, and requirements and procedures vary depending on your state. You can check your state's requirements by referring to your local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). In most states, you will need a Social Security Number in order to apply for a driver's license. Bring all required identification with you, which may include your passport, foreign driver's license, birth certificate or permanent resident card, and proof of your immigration status. The DMV will also want to confirm that you are an in-state resident, so bring proof of residence such as a utility bill or lease in your name showing your current address. There are some general requirements in order to obtain a driver's license, including a written test, vision test, and driving test. Each state will have its own requirements and procedures. Some states will acknowledge the previous driving experience, so research the requirements for your state before you go so you can plan to bring any required paperwork from your home country. Many states will consider you a new driver, though, so be prepared for that. Prepare for your written test by picking up a copy of your state's driver's guide at the DMV office. You can usually get these at no charge, and many states post their guidebooks on their DMV websites. The guidebook will teach you about traffic safety and the rules of the road. The written exam will be based on the contents of this handbook, so make sure you're well prepared. If you've never driven before, you'll need to learn new driving skills to pass the road test. You can either take lessons from a very patient friend or family member (just make sure they have the right auto insurance to cover you in the case of an accident), or you can take formal lessons from a driving school in your area. Even if you've been driving for a while, it might be a good idea to take a refresher course to familiarize yourself with the new traffic laws. You can usually walk into a DMV office without an appointment and take your written test that day. Watch the time, though, since most offices suspend testing for the day about an hour before closing. If your schedule is flexible, try to avoid the busy times at the DMV. These are typically lunchtime, Saturdays, late afternoons, and the first day after a holiday. Bring your required documentation with you and be prepared to pay a fee to cover the cost of taking the test. Once your application is complete, you'll be directed to an area to take your exam. When you finish the exam, you will be told immediately whether or not you have passed. If you didn't pass, you'll need to successfully pass the exam before you can take the road test. There may be a restriction on how soon you can attempt the exam and/or how many times you can take the test. If you pass the exam, you will schedule an appointment for a road test. You may be asked to take a vision test at the same time as your written exam, or during your driving test appointment. For the driving test, you will need to provide a vehicle in good working condition as well as proof of liability insurance. During the test, only you and the examiner are allowed in the car. The examiner will test your ability to drive legally and safely, and will not try to trick you in any way. At the end of the test, the examiner will tell you if you passed or failed. If you passed, you will be giving information about receiving your official driver's license. If you fail, there will likely be restrictions on when you can take the test again. Flickr/diversey When I rented a car for a week-long trip to Italy this past summer, I started out by figuring out whether I'd need an International Driver's License. The answer? I didn't absolutely need one, but it was recommended and better to be safe than sorry. Here's why: An International Driver's Permit is a valid form of ID in 150 countries and it translates your driver's license into 10 languages. Even if it's not required by the country you're visiting (here's a handy list), it's much easier to communicate with local authorities when they can read your identification in their native tongue. "The real value of it isn't so much from a legal standpoint, but it's in case something were to happen—you're pulled over for a driving infraction, or there's an accident, or something goes awry—and you don't have an international driving permit, [the police] may not be able to communicate effectively with you," Bryan Shilling, managing director of travel products and services for AAA, told Condé Nast Traveler. It's relatively inexpensive and easy to obtain. IDPs are issued by the AAA and are available at all the branch offices. To get one, you just need to fill out an application and bring it in along with two passport photos and the \$20 fee (it went up from \$15 on June 1). Your IDP will be processed and issued on the spot. If there's not a branch office near you, the permits can also be ordered through the mail but it can take four to six weeks. It makes renting a car a breeze. While I didn't need an IDP to drive in Italy, the peace of mind it provided when I picked up my rental at the Milan Airport Hertz office and while driving on the Autostrade was well worth the \$20 fee. Jail time can be avoided. Driving without one in Japan, for instance, can result in being fined, arrested, or even deported. So before you head out for your next international road trip, be sure to check with the State Department to see if your destination requires it. And even if it doesn't, consider picking one up anyway. After all the carabinieri will thank you for not having to translate your North Dakota license, which might even get you a break on that speeding ticket. This content is created and maintained by a third party, and imported onto this page to help users provide their email addresses. 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