



# Maryland Driver Education Curriculum Guide

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**Disclaimer: The information in the Driver Education Classroom and In-car Curriculum is, of necessity, generic in nature and is for general instructional purposes only. Student drivers and their supervising drivers should refer to their vehicle's owner's manual for specific information on their automobile and state motor vehicle law for specific information regarding traffic law and regulation and to obtain the most current information.**

# Maryland Driver Education Curriculum Preface

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

Driving a motor vehicle is a relatively simple task performed in a complicated and consistently changing environment. Traffic crashes remain the leading cause of death for people between the ages of 13 and 20. After decades of declines in fatality rates, 2014 and 2015 saw a reversal of that trend. Nationally there was an increase of more than 5% in traffic fatalities and Maryland saw an increase of over 15%.

To insure the safety of the new drivers and Maryland roads, the Maryland Graduated Licensing System (GLS) Law mandates all new drivers, regardless of age complete a course in driver education that consists of a minimum of 30 hours of classroom instruction and a minimum of six hours of behind-the-wheel instruction before receiving their first noncommercial driver's license.

In addition to the educational requirements, all new drivers in Maryland are required to complete The practice hours with a supervising driver. Supervising drivers must be at least 21 with three years of driving experience. All practice hours, which vary by the age of the new driver, should be recorded in the New Driver and Coach Practice Guide. If new drivers or coaches have specific questions about driving in Maryland or need to record practice hours, refer them to the New Driver and Coach Practice Guide RD-006. Copies of this guide are available at the local MVA branch and on line at <http://www.mva.maryland.gov/resources/docs/RD-006.pdf>

The MVA approved curriculum has gone through several different revisions. The current revision process began in 2015. The organization of the objectives and content were discussed and approved in numerous meetings with state and national representatives from the driver education industry. Initial discussion of the curriculum included representatives from the Maryland Highway Safety Office, the R. Adams Crowley Shock Trauma Unit, ADTSEA, and NHTSA. Members from the senior management team at MDOT/MVA also contributed to the process.

## REVISIONS TO THE CURRICULUM

There are several significant changes to the new curriculum. The first of these is a change in order. To create a unified curriculum where the New Driver and Coach Practice Guide supports the driver education program and vice versa, the curriculum has been re-organized. The curriculum now mirrors the order of the New Driver and Coach Practice Guide. (RD-006)

The second change to the curriculum creates an added value for the driver education program. All textbooks have been replaced with a Student Workbook. While schools will no longer need to purchase copies of the textbooks, they will need to insure that **every student has a copy of the Student Workbook**. Instructors can use the worksheets and factsheets in the workbook in class or can assign them as homework.

The final change is a change in emphasis. Previous iterations of the curriculum have focused on acquiring basic, factual knowledge. Many students already have much of that information. The revised curriculum focuses on how and why drivers do the things they do. There is also a greater emphasis on safe driving : stressing the need for new drivers to put away their electronics, put on their safety belts and avoid speeding.

## ONGOING CHANGES TO THE CURRICULUM

To ensure that the curriculum is current with best practices and Maryland Law, the MDOT/Motor Vehicle Administration will occasionally adopt changes to the Driver Education Classroom and In-car Curriculum. These changes will be distributed to driver education schools and will be posted to the Administration's website, [www.mva.maryland.gov](http://www.mva.maryland.gov). Driver education schools must ensure their instructors are aware of all changes and use the most current curriculum.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT CLASSROOM AND BEHIND THE WHEEL CLASSES

The classroom instruction described in the Maryland Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Curriculum satisfies the requirement for 30-hours of classroom instruction mandated by Maryland law.

- Each student must begin the classroom instruction with Unit 1, which cannot be missed and made up later.
- If a student is absent from any classroom session, except Unit 1, the student must make up that specific session.
- If a student misses more than 12 hours of classroom instruction, the student must retake all of the classroom instruction, starting with Unit 1.
- **Coaches, parents, guardians, and/or mentors must be invited and should be strongly encouraged to attend Unit 1.**
- Parents or guardians should also be invited and encouraged to attend other classroom sessions and in-car lessons in addition to the parent orientation.
- Each unit is three hours long and is designed to follow sequentially and to support the Rookie and Coach Practice Guide.
- Additional information about the teaching of the curriculum and regulations pertaining to it can be found in COMAR

The six hours of behind the wheel lessons are designed to coordinate with the New Driver and Coach Practice Guide and the updated curriculum. Schools and driver education instructors should ensure coaches know and understand that the six hours of behind the wheel instruction are designed to complement and refine the 60 hours of practice new drivers are required to complete, not to substitute for them. Coaches should know that the most effective use of the behind wheel lessons is to coordinate with the behind the wheel instructors to develop any skill learned can be further refined during the practice times.

## CURRICULUM MATERIALS AND STRUCTURE

The Maryland Driver Education Classroom and In-Car Curriculum guide is divided into ten units of classroom instruction and six one hour units of in-car instruction. The program was designed to have the new driver start their in-car instruction and their practice time with their coaches before completing the classroom work.

### Updated Authorized Materials

Attached to this curriculum is a workbook that contains factsheets, worksheets, and video worksheets. These are specifically designed to support the updated curriculum. As an instructor goes through the curriculum, he/she will note where materials from the workbook can be used.

**Every student must have his/her own copy of the workbook. The workbook cannot be shared and cannot be reused. For MVA purposes, it replaces the current textbooks. Any textbooks currently in use may continue to be used but do not replace the updated workbook.**

### Units 1 – 10, Classroom Instruction

The organization of the material in the curriculum follows the order of material in the New Driver Practice Guide. The curriculum starts with becoming acquainted with a vehicle and goes through steps until it concludes with a unit on making good decisions when driving by avoiding drugs and alcohol. Throughout each unit, students are consistently reminded of the need to put away distractions, put on their safety belts, and to obey the speed limit. According to the latest research from NHTSA, these are the three areas cause the greatest problems for new drivers.

Each unit is designed to be three hours long with a review and a unit quiz at the end of each unit. There is a review for the final at the end of Unit 9. Unit Ten is a brief unit that explains some of the fundamentals of owning a vehicle such as insurance, registration, titles, and VEIP. It also allows for time to complete the final and any additional paperwork. The units for each objective are listed at the end of the preface.

### Teaching Guide

The teaching guide contains a step by step guide for the curriculum. It includes an illustration of each slide and a list of all talking points, exercises and additional material for each slide of the classroom presentation. It has a list of all terminal objectives for each unit so an instructor should know what each student should have accomplished or should know by the end of each unit.

### Power Point Presentation

A Power Point presentation is provided with the curriculum and supports each unit. Relevant video segments are embedded in the presentation and play automatically when an instructor guide to organize and enhance instruction and is not to be read verbatim. At the bottom of each slide are notes, talking points, and suggested exercises. Most of the exercises described are supported by a worksheet found in the **Student Workbook**. **Please note that there are numerous animations in most slides. It is imperative instructors practice using the curriculum before using it in front of a class.**

## Videos

All videos are embedded in the curriculum and designed to play automatically when an instructor reaches a particular slide. To ensure students have the best possible educational experience, it is important that an instructor fully integrates the video into the flow of the lesson. This means asking questions before the video to give students things to look for and discussing the important points in the video after it is completed. Each video has a video worksheet that accompanies it. These are located in the Student Workbook.

Any supplemental videos must be approved *in writing* by the MVA prior to use. Please note that it is the responsibility of the school to secure the appropriate permissions from the agency that created a video to be allowed to use it. The Administration may add or delete videos from the approved list.

## Student Work Book

The student workbook contains worksheets that support the exercises described in the teaching guide, factsheets that provide additional information or important points to remember, and video worksheets to support the videos embedded throughout the curriculum. As noted earlier, each student must receive his/her own, individual copy of the workbook. This workbook replaces all textbooks.

**Factsheets** There are numerous factsheets throughout the workbook. These are designed to give additional information for concepts in the classroom content or to reinforce a concept that is discussed in the classroom. The factsheets will also give a new driver's coaches an opportunity to review important concepts.

**Worksheets** These are designed to support exercises and activities in the curriculum. Most of the exercises that are described in the curriculum are supplemented by worksheets.

There are several different ways an instructor could effectively use the worksheets, each with advantages and disadvantages. Students can complete the worksheets individually, as small groups or as a whole class. The questions on the worksheets are designed to check for comprehension of factual material and to create a springboard for a more in-depth discussion of the material.

**Video Worksheets:** Every video in the curriculum is accompanied by a worksheet that gets students to remember the factual details and provides questions for an effective discussion of the main ideas of the video. These worksheets are designed to ensure that the videos are integrated into the classroom discussion.

## Behind-The-Wheel Instruction

Although not mandatory, driver education schools should begin behind-the-wheel instruction before the student has completed the classroom portion of the driver education program. Beginning behind-the-wheel instruction while the student is still attending classroom training provides immediate reinforcement and practice of the concepts provided in the classroom, and allows the student to gain a better understanding of the material that is presented. Students must possess a valid learner's permit before operating a motor vehicle. This includes any driver education vehicle. It is the responsibility of the Instructor to verify that the student has a valid Learner's Permit in their possession before conducting any behind-the-wheel training.

### **Final Examinations**

There are three versions of the final examination. Each version has 50 questions. There is also an answer sheet for the students to record their answers, and answer keys for the instructor to use in grading the final exam. Schools are strongly encouraged to use a mix of tests for each class, to discourage students from sharing answers during the test.

### **Instruction in Spanish**

To teach the MVA approved curriculum in Spanish, a school must employ an instructor who is approved to teach in Spanish. Only the instructor who is approved to teach in Spanish may conduct the classes. If that instructor ceases to be employed by the school for any reasons, the school may no longer teach the curriculum in Spanish until another instructor is approved. For further information about the process, please contact Driver Instructional Services.

### **Instruction in a language other than English or Spanish**

If a driver education school wants to provide instruction in a language other than English, they must request and receive written approval from the Administration for each specific language before instruction is given. The school is responsible for ensuring that all instructional materials are translated into the approved language and that all translations are accurate and complete. All classes must be taught in only one language and the Instructor and all of the students in that class must be fluent in that language.

## PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES BY UNIT OF MARYLAND CURRICULUM

### UNIT 1: Welcome to Driver Education

**Introduce structure of Driver Education, parent involvement, GLS and state licensing requirements.**

- Students will describe the stages and appropriate restrictions of the GLS.
- Students will define the roles of the driving school, new driver, and parent/mentor in the formal driver education process.
- Students will describe any law changes that may have occurred since their coaches took driver education.
- Students will list statistics that define the risks involved for the new driver.

### UNIT 2: Language of the Road

**Introduce students to signs, signals, and pavement markings.**

- Students will define the concept of the Highway Transportation System and evaluate what impact that concept has on safe driving.
- Students will describe the function of signs, signals, and lane markings and the potential consequences of not following those markings.
- Students will evaluate how traffic control devices impact safety including right of way and risk and the impact of failing to obey the laws pertaining to traffic control devices.
- Student will also be able to describe the laws for sharing the road safely with emergency vehicles, school buses, pedestrians, motorcycles, and bicycles.
- Student will evaluate the risks of failing to adhere to signs and road markings including the risks of speeding and distraction.

### UNIT 3: Getting Started

**Introduce students to vehicle equipment and prepare them to drive.**

- Student will locate and describe the significance and appropriate use of vehicle equipment using owner's manual when necessary.
  - Safety
  - Comfort
  - Warning
- Students will list the necessary steps to safely enter and exit a parking space in an off street environment.
  - Pre-entry checklists
  - S.E.E.



#### **UNIT 4: Breaking Away from the Curb**

**Introduce students to fundamental driving tasks while reinforcing the need to use S.E.E. in every driving situation.**

- Students will list the steps necessary to turn the vehicle on and off safely and evaluate why each of those steps is important.
- Students will describe the steps necessary to move the vehicle forward and in reverse.
- Students will describe how to maintain speed and control acceleration and deceleration.
- Students will describe how to stop vehicle.

#### **UNIT 5: Driving in Neighborhoods**

**Introduce students to safe and legal driving in neighborhoods including a discussion of various risk groups and the tasks frequently performed in neighborhoods.**

- Students will be able to describe the skills necessary to safely and legally drive in a residential area.
  - Complete legal right and left hand turns
  - Include managing vehicle space
  - Include SEE
- Students will also be able to evaluate the inherent risks of a residential area and determine how distraction will impact those risks.
- Students will be able to describe the other road users typically found in residential areas and how to drive safely when encountering those users.

#### **UNIT 6: Driving Faster on Bigger Roads: Suburban, Urban, and Rural Roads**

**Introduce students to safe and legal driving on larger urban, suburban, and rural roads including a discussion of risk groups and tasks frequently performed on those types of roads.**

- Students will be able to describe the skills necessary to safely and legally drive on urban, suburban, and rural roads.
  - Space Management
  - S.E.E.
  - Steering
- Students will also be able to evaluate the inherent risks of these types of roads and determine how distraction will impact those risks.

### **UNIT 7: Driving Into the Sunset : Expressway Driving**

- Students will be able to describe the skills necessary to safely and legally drive on expressways.
- Students will be able to describe the types of vehicles and road conditions typically found on expressways and what laws apply.

### **UNIT 8: Crash, Bang, Boom: Malfunctions, Weather, Crashes, Traffic Stops & How to Avoid Them**

- Student will be able to identify the various adverse conditions he/she will be likely to encounter and define the appropriate measures to take to drive safely in those conditions.
- Student will evaluate the risks in various adverse weather conditions.
- Student will examine the role speed plays in collisions.
- Student will be able to list his/her responsibilities in a collision and what the consequences are for failing to complete those responsibilities.

### **Unit 9: Making Good Decisions: Not Drinking, Not Using Drugs, Not Being Distracted, & Not Being Aggressive**

- Student will be able describe to the various personal factors such as distraction, fatigue, emotions, drugs and alcohol that impact driving.
- Students will be able to evaluate the impact of the various personal factors on safe and legal driving.
- Student will be able describe the various legal and administrative penalties associated with impaired driving.
- Student will develop strategies to avoid impaired or distracted driving.

### **Unit 10 and Final Examination**

