

Introduction

After you have passed your driving test you can legally drive without supervision. This can be quite daunting as up until that time, even though you will have been encouraged to make all the driving decisions for yourself, you have had the reassurance of your instructor being there to help you should you need it. You have also been given directions to follow which means that you haven't been required to plan a journey or even follow direction signs. Independent driving tests how you make your own decisions.

Lesson aims and objectives

The aim of this lesson is to prepare you to drive independently.

By the end of the lesson you should be able to:

- Follow a set of verbal route directions, with help from a simple diagram if needed.
- Follow road direction signs to a specific destination.
- Follow a combination of verbal route directions and direction signs.
- Carry out all the above whilst still driving correctly and implementing the hazard drill.

Subject Brief

Road Signs

You must be able to follow directional road signs in order to find your way around, particularly in unfamiliar areas. In order to do this safely you must be looking well ahead for any signs that give you good clear early information and then act upon this information in good time. The earlier you see the sign the sooner you can plan what you need to do to follow that specific route.

Use your hazard drill early and if you need to change lanes then do so in good time. To help you change lanes safely keep a safe following distance behind the vehicle in front to allow you the space to change lanes easily. If, for any reason, you find that you have taken a wrong turn or are in the wrong lane, don't worry just continue along the route you have taken, find a safe place to turn round and then retrace your steps until you can follow the route you needed originally. Do not make any late or hurried lane or direction changes.

Verbal route directions

There may be occasions when you have to ask for directions to your destination, so you must be able to listen to, remember and then follow the directions you are given. You may find it useful to write them down or have a map available.

Independent driving on the driving test

During the driving test you will have to drive independently for approximately 10 minutes. This will demonstrate to the examiner that you are able to follow verbal route directions or route direction signs, whilst still driving safely. The examiner will test you in one of three ways, these are:

1. Road Signs

The examiner will ask you to follow the direction signs to a specific destination until further notice e.g. 'I would like you to follow the signs towards Leeds A62 until further notice.'

2. Verbal directions

The examiner will give you a number of verbal route directions to follow. He may also show you a simple diagram of the route to help you follow the directions. E.g. 'I would like you to take the second road on the right, at the traffic lights turn left and then at the roundabout turn right, it's the third exit.'

3. Verbal directions and road signs

The examiner may give you a combination of both direction signs and verbal directions to follow. E.g. 'I would like you take the first road on the left, take the second road on the right and then follow the signs towards Leeds.'

The independent driving route

During your driving test it doesn't matter if you don't remember every direction, or if you go the wrong way - that can happen to the most experienced drivers. If you ask for a reminder of the directions, the examiner will confirm them to you. Driving independently means making your own decisions and, just like when driving with friends, this includes deciding when it's safe and appropriate to ask for confirmation on where you're going.

If you go off the independent driving route it won't affect the result of your test unless you commit a driving fault.

If you go off the route or take a wrong turning, the examiner will help you to get back on the route and continue with the independent driving.

If there are poor or obscured traffic signs, the examiner will give you directions until you can see the next traffic sign - you won't need to have a detailed knowledge of the area. If this happens the examiner would say, 'There are no signs here. Just continue ahead please' and then, 'Now, carry on following the signs to

Highway Code Study

Pages: 110-111, Direction Signs.

Lesson Quiz

- 1) Which lane would you need to follow the sign towards Barnsley?



- Left
- Centre
- Right

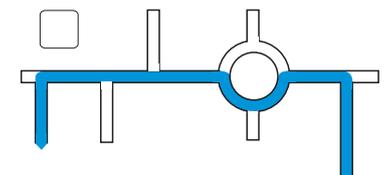
- 2) There are 3 lanes on the approach to this roundabout, which lane would you probably need to follow the direction to Leeds?



- Left
- Centre
- Right

- 3) Which route directions match the diagram below?

- A. At the end of the road turn left, at the roundabout follow the road ahead, then take the second road on the right.
- B. At the end of the road turn left, at the roundabout follow the road ahead, then take the second road on the left.
- C. At the end of the road turn right, at the roundabout follow the road ahead, then take the second road on the right.





4) During the independent section of the driving test, you cannot remember all the directions given to you by the examiner, what should you do?

Just carry on and go where you think the examiner wanted you to go.

Ask the examiner for confirmation of the directions.

Pull up at the side of the road and then ask the examiner for confirmation of the directions.