



Learner's Permit FAQs

Q: I turned 16 during the State of Emergency. When can I take my learner's permit exam?

A: The RMV is prioritizing customers who have birthdays between January and May. Your application must be processed at a Service Center (with an appointment) so we can review your identification documents, administer a vision exam, and take your photo. Follow the steps below:

1. Go to [Mass.Gov/RMV](https://www.mass.gov/rmv) and select Make/Cancel a Reservation, and then Apply for a Learner's Permit.
2. Then select date, time, and location for application appointment to visit a Service Center. Your choices will be 5:00pm – 8:00pm at one of 10 open RMV Service Centers in Massachusetts. After you select date, time, and location and enter your information, you will be sent a confirmation email stating to arrive on time and prepared for the visit at your selected location.
3. Complete your application [online](#).
4. Visit the RMV Service Center at your scheduled time.
 - a. You must wear a face-covering to be allowed inside.
 - b. You must answer screening questions before entering the Service Center.
 - c. You must bring your completed application and required documents, if applicable.
 - d. Only you and one parent/guardian can go inside for your appointment, no one is allowed inside.
5. If you are taking the test in English, Spanish, Mandarin, or Portuguese, you will be given instructions to take the exam online.
6. If you speak another language (listed in the [Driver's Manual](#)), you will be allowed to take the exam in the Service Center at an automated testing station (ATS).

Q: I heard the RMV is allowing permit exams to be taken online. Is this true?

A: Yes. The RMV will offer learner's permit exams to be taken online in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese. If you speak another language that the RMV offers the exam in, you will need to take it in-person at an RMV Service Center. Both options require an appointment to visit a

Service Center so we can verify your identity, administer a vision exam, and take your photo. Visit [Mass.Gov/RMV](https://www.mass.gov/rmv) and select Make/Cancel a Reservation, and then Apply for a Learner's Permit.

Q: If the exam is available online, why do I have to make a reservation to go an RMV Service Center?

A: The RMV must verify your [identity](#), check your vision, and take your photo during the application process. To be prepared for your visit, complete your application [online](#) and make a reservation to visit one of our open Service Centers. Once your application is completed at the Service Center, you will be ready to take the exam online.

Q: Can I take a commercial learner's permit exam online?

A: No. Only class D (passenger) or class M (motorcycle) exams can be offered to be taken online.

Q: Is the online learner's permit exam the same as the version taken in-person?

A: Yes. You will be asked 25 questions and you must get 18 to pass. You will be allowed 25 minutes to take the exam. Topics covered on the exam include alcohol misuse, suspensions, and JOL violations, as well as rules of the road and identifying road signs. To prepare for the exam, study the [Class D Driver's Manual](#).

Q: What if I fail the online learner's permit exam? Can I take it again?

A: If you fail the exam, you will be given instructions at the end of the exam on how to pay for and take another exam.

Q: Is the online learner's permit exam only available in English?

A: No. The online version of the learner's permit exam is available to be taken in English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Mandarin. For all other languages (listed in the [Driver's Manual](#)), these must be taken in-person using the automated testing station (ATS). The RMV is working to have all languages online in the near future.

Q: I need to take the permit exam in-person. How is the RMV going to ensure it is safe to do so?

A: For your safety and ours, we ask all RMV customers to wear face coverings when you visit the Service Center for your scheduled reservation and you must answer screening questions before entering the Service Center. Also, the learner's permit exam is taken using a touch-screen monitors so the RMV will require you to wear gloves while in the permit room.

The RMV has taken other steps to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. In keeping with recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the RMV has:

- adopted enhanced cleaning practices for facilities

- purchased additional contactless hand sanitizer dispensing stations
- issued anti-viral disinfectant wipes and individual size hand sanitizers to certain employees
- expanded areas to be disinfected

Q: Do I still have to wait 6 months to take my road test even though my birthday was in March/April?

A: Yes. The [Junior Operator](#) law states that you must have a valid learner's permit for at least 6 consecutive months before taking the road test.

Q: If I pass the online learner's permit exam, how do I get my permit? Do I have to go back to an RMV Service Center?

A: When you pass the online exam, you will be given instructions to access your profile and print your permit. You will not need to go back to the Service Center. The permit will look a little different from permits printed at the RMV Service Center. All information is now printed on one page (8 ½ X 11).

Q: Do I have to sign up for Driver's Ed before taking the learner's permit exam?

A: No. However, to get your driver's license before you are 18 years old, you must complete an RMV-approved driver's education course.

Q: Can I pause the exam after I start and go back and finish at a later time?

A: No. Once you begin the exam, the 25 minutes will start and you must complete within the allotted time.

Q: Can I look up the answers to the exam questions in the driver's manual while I take the exam online?

A: No. The same rules apply whether taking the exam online or in-person. Driver's Manuals and other reference materials cannot be used during the learner's permit exam and are not allowed in the testing area. You also are not allowed to use any electronic device (including electronic optical devices), regardless of the purpose of the device. Audio devices or headphones cannot be used or worn, unless they are being used for taking an audio exam.

Q: I passed my learner's permit exam. Can I drive now?

A: Learner's permit holders may drive when accompanied by an driver who is licensed, who is at least 21 years of age, who has at least one year of driving experience, and who is occupying a seat beside the driver.

- A permit holder who is under the age of 18 may not drive between the 12:00 am (midnight) and 5:00 am unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian, who is licensed with at least one year of driving experience and whose license or right to operate is not revoked or suspended.
- The permit holder may not operate in another state if it is in violation of that state's law.
- The holder of a motorcycle learner's permit (Class M) may not carry passengers and may not operate after sunset or before sunrise.
- The permit holder must be have the learner's permit when driving.