

Despatch

October 2011



DSA ezine for road safety professionals

Independent driving one year on

October marks the first anniversary of the introduction of independent driving to the practical test.

Independent driving was introduced last October in response to concerns that newly qualified drivers often felt unprepared for driving without the security of their instructor

“It improved my confidence and driving skills on the road.”

or the examiner giving constant directions.

Candidates are required to follow road signs or a series of directions for about 10 minutes within the test, without prompts from the examiner. The purpose is to make the test more reflective of ‘real driving’ and a better assessment of whether candidates are ready to drive unsupervised post test.

A year after its introduction, independent driving is widely regarded as a positive measure. Driving instructor associations and road safety organisations have welcomed the change, and in a recent survey of test candidates, over two

thirds of people said the independent driving section has helped them to be better prepared for driving on the road.

We know that many instructors already taught independent driving, but some have also told us they have changed their training programmes to include more opportunities for the learner to take greater responsibility for their driving.

DSA is now conducting further research and evaluation. ADIs signed up to get email alerts will be invited to take part in a survey from 18 October. DSA will also be asking candidates

“It increased my awareness and helped me to plan ahead.”

“It helped me to learn about taking decisions and using my own initiative while driving.”

who have taken a test in the last year to give their feedback.



Professional drivers urged to exchange paper licences

From October bus and lorry drivers will have to get a photocard licence before obtaining their driver qualification card.

From 18 October bus, coach and lorry drivers holding a British paper driving licence will be required to exchange it for a photocard licence before they receive their driver qualification card (DQC).

The DQC proves that a driver holds the Driver Certificate of Professional

Competence (CPC) which professional bus, coach and lorry drivers must now legally hold in addition to their driving licence.

Drivers with a photocard licence will receive their DQC automatically, as the same photograph can be used for both documents. While drivers will still have to pay the usual £20 photocard licence fee, they will benefit from receiving their DQC free of charge, which could save them up to £30 over the 10 year photocard licence period.

Rosemary Thew, DSA chief executive said:

“We’re urging drivers to exchange their paper licence sooner rather than later. As well as saving money, drivers holding a photocard licence will receive their DQC automatically.”

Those drivers leaving the exchange of their licence until after they have completed their training risk a delay in receiving their DQC.

Drivers can apply to exchange their licence online, by post or in person at DVLA local offices and selected Post Offices. For more information visit direct.gov.uk/driverinfo

Also from 18 October, holders of driving licences issued in the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar will be able to obtain a CPC whilst working, or being resident, in the UK.



New theory test books published

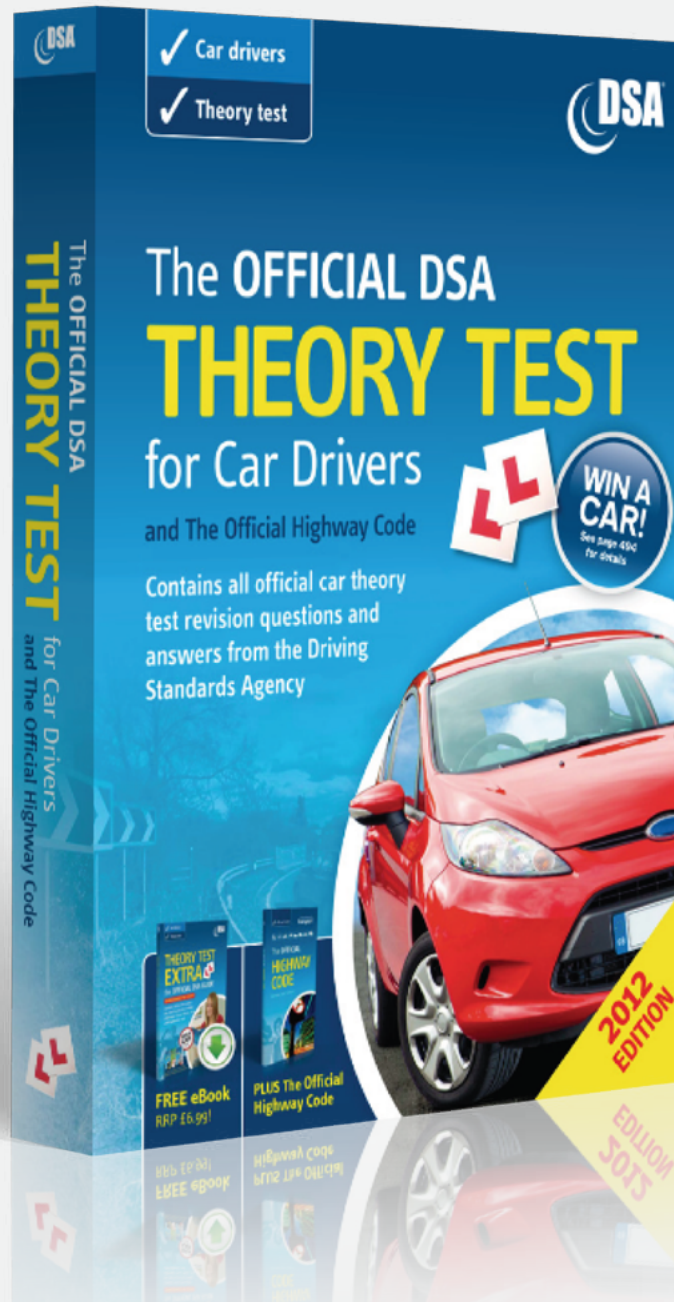
New official driving and riding theory books were published last month to help candidates revise in preparation for changes to the test in January 2012.

Since theory tests began in 1996, DSA has published the questions and answers from the theory test question banks for all categories of tests for cars, motorcycles, lorries and buses.

However, DSA announced last November that it was to stop publishing the multiple choice questions and answers, with unpublished questions being used from January 2012.

DSA's Chief Executive Rosemary Thew said: "The reason behind the move is to stop candidates from simply memorising theory test questions and answers and learning by rote. The new books contain questions and answers for revision and also explain the theory behind each question.

"This approach to learning will help candidates to gain a better knowledge and understanding of driving theory which will help them respond correctly to the new, re-worded live questions used in the actual test."



The new publications include the full DSA explanations for every revision question, helping candidates fully understand the answer. Each question has extra help for candidates to improve their knowledge of the theory by including references to the official source materials where they can read the background information and learn more (this feature is available for drivers of large vehicles for the first time in this new edition).

Other theory test products including CD Roms, downloadable PDFs and ebooks have been also been revised, and DSA has launched its first ever mobile phone apps for theory test revision.



To view the full range of official DSA products visit tsoshop.co.uk/dsa

How to use online ADI services

DSA has a range of online services for approved driving instructors (ADIs). They are available from 6.00 am to midnight, seven days a week.

Here's what you can do online, and where to do it.

Update your registration

You can use this service to:

- update your address, phone number and email address
- show your details on the 'find your nearest driver instructors' service
- commit to the voluntary code of practice and continuing professional development
- view your check test history
- businesslink.gov.uk/manageadi

Pass Plus

You can use this service to:

- register to be a Pass Plus instructor
- order Pass Plus refill packs
- track to see if your pupils' Pass Plus certificates have been issued
- businesslink.gov.uk/passplus

Renew or re-register

You can use this service to:

- renew your ADI registration
- re-register as an ADI if your registration has lapsed
- businesslink.gov.uk/renewadi

Services for new ADIs

- Apply to start the qualifying process
- businesslink.gov.uk/applyadi
- Apply for a trainee licence
- businesslink.gov.uk/traineelicence
- Apply for your first ADI certificate
- businesslink.gov.uk/newadi



What you need

- ➔ PRN - personal reference number - also known as your ADI number
- ➔ User ID - your unique ID to use online ADI services
- ➔ Password - your password to use online ADI services

Forgotten your password?

- ➔ If you have forgotten your password, go to the service you want to use. When you reach the login screen, click on 'Forgot password'. You'll then need to type in your user ID - DSA will then email you a new password.

Keep a note

- ➔ You can download a guide to using online ADI services. It also includes space for you to make a note of your user ID and a reminder of your password.

[Download the guide](#)

DESPATCH**VIDEO**LINK 

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pqwc0_MMXAs

DSA explores new hazard perception clips

New technologies could be used to update the theory test hazard perception test clips.

DSA is looking at how new technologies could be used to update the current hazard perception test (HPT) clips used in the theory test. The agency has invited companies who provide computer-based animation services to come forward with suggestions for improving the clips.

Senior staff from DSA will be meeting with interested companies later in October to discuss how new technologies could be used to update and modernise the current clips.

The clips were created over 10 years ago and introduced into the driving theory test in November 2002. Research has provided evidence of a benefit to road safety from hazard perception testing. Now the agency is looking to refresh and modernise the HPT to ensure it continues to be fully effective in supporting road safety.

The video clips in use at present were created by filming developing hazards in a variety of road and traffic situations. Whilst the hazards presented are still relevant and appropriate, the image quality of the clips is not as clear or defined as the quality of film available today and the content (vehicles, back drops, fashions etc.) is now looking dated.

DSA hopes the use of new technologies will help to create fresh, modern clips. This would also give an option to introduce a wider range of hazards that would be difficult to capture safely using live filming methods - particularly those involving vulnerable road users.



Theory test technology timeline

July 1996 - A separate written theory test is introduced, replacing questions about the Highway Code during the practical test

January 2000 - The touch screen theory test makes its appearance.

December 2001 - Candidates can book the theory test online.

November 2002 - A hazard perception element is introduced, using video clips to test candidates' awareness of hazards on the road.

September 2011 - DSA publishes an iPhone app to aid revision for the theory test.

A round up of this month's news

Motorcycle test availability

In the July issue of Despatch we reported on DSA's efforts to improve access to motorcycle tests. Progress so far includes:

Over the summer DSA made 50 per cent more motorcycle test slots available compared to the previous year, including more slots after 3pm.

DSA is looking to make module one tests available more locally by using non-DSA sites on a part-time, casual-hire basis. A new casual site has already opened in West Wales, and a site in the Shetlands is due to open in October.

DSA is increasing the number of motorcycle examiners by training more car examiners to deliver bike tests. So far 12 existing DSA examiners have been trained.

Enhanced rider scheme videos

DSA has produced two new videos to promote the Enhanced Rider Scheme post-test training course for motorcyclists. To watch the videos, click on the link below.

DESPATCH **VIDEOLINK**

<http://www.youtube.com/dsagov#p/c/19F18B817B2DADA3/5/Vmmy5h-mYfA>

Drop in road casualties for 2010

Road casualties of all severities in 2010 were six per cent lower than in 2009, according to the Department for Transport's Reported Road Casualties in Great Britain: 2010 Annual Report. The number of fatalities fell for almost all types of road user, with a fall of 21 per cent for car occupants and 19 per cent for pedestrians, but pedal cycle fatalities rose by seven per cent.

Longer jail terms for dangerous driving

Dangerous drivers who seriously injure others could spend up to five years in jail thanks to a new criminal offence, Justice Secretary Kenneth Clarke has announced.

The new offence of 'causing serious injury by dangerous driving' will more than double the current maximum sentence of two years, allowing the courts to impose tougher punishments on dangerous drivers.

For more information, read the [press release](#).

Get in touch

For the latest DSA news and information visit dft.gov.uk/dsa

Information and services for candidates: direct.gov.uk/drivingtest

Information and services for driver and rider trainers: businesslink.gov.uk/adi

Contact details for DSA: dft.gov.uk/dsa/about/contact

What do you think of this issue of Despatch ezine? Email your comments to pressoffice@dsa.gsi.gov.uk



Follow us on twitter: twitter.com/DSAgovuk



Follow us on Facebook facebook.com/trevorwedge



View DSA videos on YouTube: youtube.com/dsagov