

The Basics of Graduated Driver Licensing

GDL is a three-step process designed to help teens gain experience and build skill while minimizing common risks such as the use of cell phones cell use, passenger distractions, and nighttime driving.



Here's a game-winning strategy for helping teens be safe behind the wheel. California's GDL Process involves the following three steps:

Step 1: Learner's Permit

A teen under the age of 17 ½ must complete a DMV-approved drivers training course with a licensed instructor before taking the driving test. This course must offer at least six hours of behind-the wheel instruction (no more than two hours at a time). In addition, during the six months that you must hold a learner's permit, you're required to practice driving for an additional 50 hours with a parent or guardian supervising you from the passenger seat, 10 of which must be at night. The parent or guardian will then sign the back of your learner's permit testifying that these hours were driven.

Step 2: Provisional License

Once a teen is at least 16 years of age and has held a permit for at least 6 months, he or she may take the behind the wheel driving test to obtain a **Provisional License**. This allows the teen to drive without supervision, but with the following provisions:

- May not transport passengers under the age of 20
- May not drive between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. except for documented exemptions for school, work or medical reasons
- May not use a cell phone, including hands-free devices

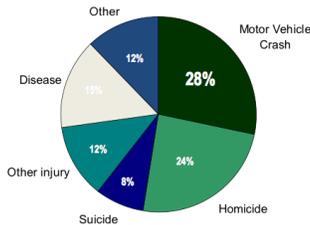
Step 3: Unrestricted License

Once the teen is at least 17 years of age and has held a Provisional License for at least 12 months, he or she may obtain an **Unrestricted License**. Teens under the age of 18 are not allowed to use phones, including hands-free, or any electronic device.

Why does GDL work?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Motor vehicle crashes are the No. 1 killer of teens.

2009 Leading cause of death in California, ages 16-17



Parents play a critical role

Teens whose parents set rules and monitor driving in a helpful, supportive way are

- Half as likely to be in a crash
- 71% less likely to drive intoxicated
- 30% less likely to use a cell phone while driving
- 50% more likely to buckle up

GDL supports parents by helping to protect teen drivers. Making the components of GDL rules in your home will provide your teen with a safe environment to gain much needed experience.

Following California law is important, the National Safety Council recommends parents take it a step further:

- No passengers for the first year (includes siblings)
- No cell phone use in the car at all
- No nighttime driving – have the car home by 10 p.m., earlier is better
- Safety belts are to be worn on every trip – no exceptions

GDL focuses on first 6 - 12 months and 1,000 miles

Novice drivers' risk begins to drop with experience.

