



Safety Corner

Topic: Graduated Driver's License

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Learning Objective:

Students will:

1. Understand when they can get an instruction permit,
2. Know what to do before applying for an instruction permit,
3. Know what rules apply to drivers under 18,
4. Determine situations and environments that could lead to unsafe risks that cause injuries.

Vocabulary: Graduated Driver's License, distractions:

Graduated Driver License – a multi-stage approach to granting young drivers full license privileges.

distractions – something that makes it difficult to think or pay attention.

What are Colorado's Graduated Driver's License (GDL) Laws?

There are three stages to Colorado's GDL system:

Learner Stage

This is a supervised stage of learning for young drivers that lasts 12 months

The minimum entry age for this stage of driving varies in Colorado:

15 year-olds who are enrolled in driver education may apply for a learner permit and may drive while supervised by a parent, guardian or adult 21 years of age or older that has been authorized by a parent or guardian

At age 15 and 6 months, driver education is no longer required, but young drivers at this age must have completed a four hour driver awareness program



At age 16, young drivers may apply for their learner permit, which allows them to drive while supervised by a licensed driver age 21 or older

During the learner stage, young drivers are required to complete 50 hours of supervised driving with their parent, guardian or supervising adult (10 of these driving hours must be supervised nighttime driving)

Young drivers at this stage are banned from using their cell phones while driving

Intermediate Stage

This is a restricted stage of driving for young drivers that lasts 12 months

The minimum entry age for this stage of driving is 16 in Colorado

At this stage, young drivers are granted a restricted license after passing a road test

Additionally at this stage, young drivers are limited in the hours they can drive as well as who they can drive with:

Young drivers cannot drive between the hours of midnight and 5 a.m. in Colorado

Young drivers may not have any passengers who are not family members under age 21 during the first six months of having their restricted license

After six months, young drivers with a restricted license may not have more than one passenger under age 21

Full Privilege Stage

This is an unrestricted stage of driving

Young drivers may obtain a standard driver license

After 12 months or at age 18 (whichever occurs first), young drivers are no longer under the restrictions of GDL laws

The minimum entry age for this stage of driving is 17 in Colorado



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The purpose of GDL laws is to:

Offer young drivers the opportunity to gain valuable and needed on-road experience before driving under more challenging conditions

By restricting the number of passengers, banning cell phone use and setting curfew, GDL limits danger and potential risks young drivers face while learning to drive safely, making our roads safer for them and others

Some of the top causes of car crashes by teen drivers are drunk/impaired driving, speeding, and distracted driving.

Other distracting behaviors that can lead to car crashes are reading, reaching for an item, driving emotionally, tired/fatigued, cell phones, and other occupants.

Hopefully this information ensures you are knowledgeable and safe about driving rules and potential behaviors that can cause crashes.

Sources:

<https://sites.google.com/state.co.us/cogdltoolkit/about-gdl?authuser=0>

Colorado Driver Handbook, 2015, <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/sites/default/files/DR2337.pdf>

Merriam -Webster <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/distract>



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Graduated Driver License Cheat Sheet

- You can get a permit at 15 if you are enrolled, attending and participating in a state-approved driver's education program which includes 6 hours behind the wheel training.
- You can get a permit at 15½ after successfully completing a 4-hour driver awareness course such as "Alive at 25."
- And you can get a permit at 16 if you have not taken any classes.
- All new drivers under 18 need a parent/legal guardian signature to obtain a permit.
- Ten of your 50 driving hours must be nighttime.
- You cannot drive with anyone except your driving instructor, parent/legal guardian, or someone appointed by them. And the supervisor must hold a valid Colorado driver license.
- No more than one passenger in the front seat, if you are under eighteen. One exception is when you are driving siblings and passengers with medical emergencies.
- Another exception is you may drive between midnight and 5:00 a.m. if you are driving to or from a school authorized activity, driving to or from work or if you are an emancipated minor.

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