

Section 11

Pre-Trip Vehicle Inspection Test

This Section Covers

- Taking the CDL Pre-Trip Inspection Test
- Engine/Cab Inspection (All Vehicles)
- External Inspection (All Vehicles)
- School Bus Only
- Trailer
- Coach/Transit Bus
- CDL Vehicle Inspection Memory Aid

11.1 – Taking the CDL Pre-Trip Inspection Test

During the pre-trip inspection portion of the skills test, you must show that the vehicle is safe to drive. You may have to walk around the vehicle and point to or touch each item and explain to the examiner what you are checking and why. You will NOT have to crawl under the hood or under the vehicle. At the time of your test, the examiner will direct you to the areas of the vehicle to inspect for the test.

11.1.1 – Class A Pre-Trip Inspection

If you are applying for a Class A CDL, you will be required to perform a pre-trip inspection in a Class A combination vehicle that you have brought with you for testing. The test includes an engine start, an in-cab-inspection, and an inspection of the entire vehicle or only a portion of the vehicle which your CDL examiner will explain to you.

11.1.2 – Class B Pre-Trip Inspection

If you are applying for a Class B CDL, you will be required to perform a pre-trip inspection in a Class B vehicle that you have brought with you for testing. The test includes an engine start, an in-cab inspection, and an inspection of the entire vehicle or only a portion of the vehicle which your CDL examiner will explain to you. You will also have to inspect any special features of your vehicle (e.g, school or transit bus).

11.2 Engine/Cab Inspection (All Vehicles)

Study the following vehicle parts for the type of vehicle you will be using during the CDL skills tests. You should be able to identify each part and tell the examiner what you are looking for or inspecting.

11.2.1 Engine Compartment (Engine Off)

Leaks/Hoses

- Look for puddles on the ground.
- Look for dripping fluids on underside of engine and transmission.
- Inspect hoses for condition and leaks.

Oil Level

- Indicate where dipstick is located.
- See that oil level is within safe operating range. Level must be above refill mark.

Coolant Level

- Inspect reservoir sight glass, or
- (If engine is not hot), remove radiator cap and check for visible coolant level.

Power Steering Fluid

- Indicate where power steering fluid dipstick is located.
- Check for adequate power steering fluid level. Level must be above refill mark.

Engine Compartment Belts

- Check the following belts for snugness (up to 3/4 inch play at center of belt), cracks, or frays:
 - Power steering belt.
 - Water pump belt.
 - Alternator belt.
 - Air compressor belt.

Note: If any of the components listed above are not belt driven, you must:

- Tell the examiner which component(s) are not belt driven.
- Make sure component(s) are operating properly, are not damaged or leaking, and are mounted securely.

Clutch/Gearshift (Safe Start)

- Depress clutch.
- Place gearshift lever in neutral (or park, for automatic transmissions).
- Start engine, then release clutch slowly.

11.2.2 – Cab Check/Engine Start

Oil Pressure Gauge

- Make sure oil pressure gauge is working.
- Check that pressure gauge shows increasing or normal oil pressure or that the warning light goes off.
- If equipped, oil temperature gauge should begin a gradual rise to the normal operating range.

Temperature Gauge

- Make sure the temperature gauge is working.
- Temperature should begin to climb to the normal operating range or temperature light should be off.

Air Gauge

- Make sure the air gauge is working properly.
- Build air pressure to governor cut-out, roughly 120-140 psi.

Ammeter/Voltmeter

- Check that gauges show alternator and/or generator is charging or that warning light is off.

Mirrors and Windshield

- Mirrors should be clean and adjusted properly from the inside.
- Windshield should be clean with no illegal stickers, no obstructions, and no damage to the glass.

Emergency Equipment

- Check for spare electrical fuses.
- Check for three red reflective triangles, six fusees, or three liquid flares.
- Check for a properly charged and rated fire extinguisher.

Note: If the vehicle is not equipped with electrical fuses, you must mention this to the examiner.

Steering Play

- *Non-power steering:* Check for excessive play by turning steering wheel back and forth. Play should not exceed 10 degrees (or about two inches on a 20-inch wheel).
- *Power steering:* With the engine running, check for excessive play by turning the steering wheel back and forth. Play should not exceed 10 degrees (or about two inches on a 20-inch wheel) before front left wheel barely moves.

Wipers/Washers

- Check that wiper arms and blades are secure, not damaged, and operate smoothly.
- If equipped, windshield washers must operate correctly.

Lights/Reflectors/Reflector Tape Condition (Sides & Rear)

- Test that dash indicators work when corresponding lights are turned on:
 - Left turn signal.
 - Right turn signal.
 - Four-way emergency flashers.
 - High beam headlight.
 - Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) indicator.
- Check that all external lights and reflective equipment are clean and functional. Light and reflector checks include:
 - Clearance lights (red on rear, amber elsewhere).
 - Headlights (high and low beams).
 - Taillights.
 - Backing lights.
 - Turn signals.
 - Four-way flashers.
 - Brake lights.
 - Red reflectors (on rear) and amber reflectors (elsewhere).
 - Reflector tape condition

Note: Checks of brake, turn signal and four-way flasher functions must be done separately.

Horn

- Check that air horn and/or electric horn work.

Heater/Defroster

- Test that the heater and defroster work.

Parking Brake Check

- With the parking brake engaged (trailer brakes released on combination vehicles), check that the parking brake will hold vehicle by gently trying to pull forward with parking brake on.
- With the parking brake released and the trailer parking brake engaged (combination vehicles only), check that the trailer parking brake will hold vehicle by gently trying to pull forward with the trailer parking brake on.

Hydraulic Brake Check

- Pump the brake pedal three times, then hold it down for five seconds. The brake pedal should not move (depress) during the five seconds.
- If equipped with a hydraulic brake reserve (back-up) system, with the key off, depress the brake pedal and listen for the sound of the reserve system electric motor.
- Check that the warning buzzer or light is off.

Air Brake Check (Air Brake Equipped Vehicles Only)

- Failure to perform all three components of the air brake check correctly will result in an automatic failure of the vehicle inspection test. Air brake safety devices vary. However, this procedure is designed to see that any safety device operates correctly as air pressure drops from normal to a low air condition. For safety purposes, in areas where an incline is present, you will use wheel chocks during the air brake check. The proper procedures for inspecting the air brake system are as follows:
 - *Static Check.* Shut off the engine; chock your wheels, if necessary; release the tractor protection valve and parking brake (push in); fully apply the foot brake and hold it for one minute. Check the air gauge to see if the air pressure drops more than three pounds in one minute (single vehicle) or four pounds in one minute (combination vehicle).
 - *Check Low Air Pressure Warning Device.* Turn the electrical power on and begin fanning off the air pressure by rapidly applying and releasing the foot brake. Low air warning devices (buzzer, light, flag) should activate before air pressure drops below 60 psi.
 - *Check Protection Valve and Spring Brakes Activation.* Continue to fan off the air pressure. At approximately 40 psi on a tractor-trailer combination vehicle, the tractor protection valve and parking brake valve should close (pop out). On other combination vehicle types and single vehicle types, the parking brake valve should close (pop out).
 - *Check Air Compressor and Governed Cut-Off.* Build the air pressure to governed cut-off (100-125 psi).

Service Brake Check

- You will be required to check the application of air or hydraulic service brakes. This procedure is designed to determine that the brakes are working correctly and that the vehicle does not pull to one side or the other.
- Pull forward at 5 mph, apply the service brake and stop. Check to see that the vehicle does not pull to either side and that it stops when brake is applied.

Safety Belt

- Check that the safety belt is securely mounted, adjusts, latches properly, and is not ripped or frayed.

11.3 – External Inspection (All Vehicles)

11.3.1– Steering

Steering Box/Hoses

- Check that the steering box is securely mounted and not leaking. Look for any missing nuts, bolts, and cotter keys.
- Check for power steering fluid leaks or damage to power steering hoses.

Steering Linkage

- See that connecting links, arms, and rods from the steering box to the wheel are not worn or cracked.
- Check that joints and sockets are not worn or loose and that there are no missing nuts, bolts, or cotter keys.

11.3.2 – Suspension

Springs/Air/Torque

- Look for missing, shifted, cracked, or broken leaf springs.
- Look for broken or distorted coil springs.
- If vehicle is equipped with torsion bars, torque arms, or other types of suspension components, check that they are not damaged and are mounted securely.
- Air ride suspension should be checked for damage and leaks.

Mounts

- Look for cracked or broken spring hangers; missing or damaged bushings; and broken, loose, or missing bolts, u-bolts or other axle mounting parts. (The mounts should be checked at each point where they are secured to the vehicle frame and axle[s]).

Shock Absorbers

- See that shock absorbers are secure and that there are no leaks.

Note: Be prepared to perform the same suspension components inspection on every axle (power unit and trailer, if equipped).

11.3.3 – Brakes

Slack Adjusters and Pushrods

- Look for broken, loose, or missing parts.
- For manual slack adjusters, the brake pushrod should not move more than one inch (with the brakes released) when pulled by hand.

Brake Chambers

- See that brake chambers are not leaking, cracked, or dented and are mounted securely.

Brake Hoses/Lines

- Look for cracked, worn, or leaking hoses, lines, and couplings.

Drum Brake

- Check for cracks, dents, or holes. Also check for loose or missing bolts.
- Check for contaminants, such as debris or oil/grease.
- Brake linings (where visible) should not be worn dangerously thin.

Brake Linings

- On some brake drums, there are openings where the brake linings can be seen from outside the drum. For this type of drum, check that a visible amount of brake lining is showing.

Note: Be prepared to perform the same brake components inspection on every axle (power unit and trailer, if equipped).

11.3.4 – Wheels

Rims

- Check for damaged or bent rims. Rims cannot have welding repairs.

Tires

- The following items must be inspected on every tire:
 - *Tread depth:* Check for minimum tread depth (4/32 on steering axle tires, 2/32 on all other tires).
 - *Tire condition:* Check that tread is evenly worn and look for cuts or other damage to tread or sidewalls. Also, make sure that valve caps and stems are not missing, broken, or damaged.
 - *Tire inflation:* Check for proper inflation by using a tire gauge. *Note:* You will not get credit if you simply kick the tires to check for proper inflation.

Hub Oil Seals/Axle Seals

- See that hub oil/grease seals and axle seals are not leaking and, if wheel has a sight glass, oil level is adequate.

Lug Nuts

- Check that all lug nuts are present, free of cracks and distortions, and show no signs of looseness such as rust trails or shiny threads.
- Make sure all bolt holes are not cracked or distorted.

Spacers or Budd Spacing

- If equipped, check that spacers are not bent, damaged, or rusted through.
- Spacers should be evenly centered, with the dual wheels and tires evenly separated.

Note: Be prepared to perform the same wheel inspection on every axle (power unit and trailer, if equipped).

11.3.5 – Side of Vehicle

Door(s)/Mirror(s)

- Check that door(s) are not damaged and that they open and close properly from the outside.
- Hinges should be secure with seals intact.
- Check that mirror(s) and mirror brackets are not damaged and are mounted securely with no loose fittings.

Fuel Tank

- Check that tank(s) are secure, cap(s) are tight, and that there are no leaks from tank(s) or lines.

Battery/Box

- Wherever located, see that battery(s) are secure, connections are tight, and cell caps are present.
- Battery connections should not show signs of excessive corrosion.
- Battery box and cover or door must be secure.

Drive Shaft

- See that drive shaft is not bent or cracked.
- Couplings should be secure and free of foreign objects.

Exhaust System

- Check system for damage and signs of leaks such as rust or carbon soot.
- System should be connected tightly and mounted securely.

Frame

- Look for cracks, broken welds, holes or other damage to the longitudinal frame members, cross members, box, and floor.

11.3.6 – Rear of Vehicle**Splash Guards**

- If equipped, check that splash guards or mud flaps are not damaged and are mounted securely.

Doors/Ties/Lifts

- Check that doors and hinges are not damaged and that they open, close, and latch properly from the outside, if equipped.
- Ties, straps, chains, and binders must also be secure.
- If equipped with a cargo lift, look for leaking, damaged or missing parts and explain how it should be checked for correct operation.
- Lift must be fully retracted and latched securely.

11.3.7 – Tractor/Coupling**Air/Electric Lines**

- Listen for air leaks. Check that air hoses and electrical lines are not cut, chafed, spliced, or worn (steel braid should not show through).
- Make sure air and electrical lines are not tangled, pinched, or dragging against tractor parts.

Catwalk

- Check that the catwalk is solid, clear of objects, and securely bolted to tractor frame.

Mounting Bolts

- Look for loose or missing mounting brackets, clamps, bolts, or nuts. Both the fifth wheel and the slide mounting must be solidly attached.
- On other types of coupling systems (i.e., ball hitch, pintle hook, etc.), inspect all coupling components and mounting brackets for missing or broken parts.

Hitch Release Lever

- Check to see that the hitch release lever is in place and is secure.

Locking Jaws

- Look into fifth wheel gap and check that locking jaws are fully closed around the kingpin.
- On other types of coupling systems (i.e., ball hitch, pintle hook, etc.), inspect the locking mechanism for missing or broken parts and make sure it is locked securely. If present, safety cables or chains must be secure and free of kinks and excessive slack.

Fifth Wheel Skid Plate

- Check for proper lubrication and that fifth wheel skid plate is securely mounted to the platform, and that all bolts and pins are secure and not missing.

Platform (Fifth Wheel)

- Check for cracks or breaks in the platform structure that supports the fifth wheel skid plate.

Release Arm (Fifth Wheel)

- If equipped, make sure the release arm is in the engaged position and the safety latch is in place.

Kingpin/Apron/Gap

- Check that the kingpin is not bent.
- Make sure the visible part of the apron is not bent, cracked, or broken.
- Check that the trailer is laying flat on the fifth wheel skid plate (no gap).

Locking Pins (Fifth Wheel)

- If equipped, look for loose or missing pins in the slide mechanism of the sliding fifth wheel. If air powered, check for leaks.
- Make sure locking pins are fully engaged.
- Check that the fifth wheel is positioned properly so that the tractor frame will clear the landing gear during turns.

Sliding Pintle

- Check that the sliding pintle is secured with no loose or missing nuts or bolts, and cotter pin is in place.

Tongue or Draw-bar

- Check that the tongue/draw-bar is not bent or twisted, and check for broken welds and stress cracks.
- Check that the tongue/draw-bar is not worn excessively.

Tongue Storage area

- Check that the storage area is solid and secured to the tongue.
- Check that cargo in the storage area (i.e., chains, binders, etc.) is secure.

11.4 – School Bus Only

Emergency Equipment

- In addition to checking for spare electrical fuses (if equipped), three red reflective triangles, and a properly charged and rated fire extinguisher, school bus drivers must also inspect for the presence of a nine-item first-aid kit.

Lighting Indicators

- In addition to checking the lighting indicators listed in Section 10.2 of this manual, school bus drivers must also check the following lighting indicators (internal panel lights):
 - Alternately flashing amber lights indicator, if equipped.
 - Alternately flashing red lights indicator.
 - Strobe light indicator, if equipped.

Lights/Reflectors

- In addition to checking the lights and reflective devices listed in Section 10.2 of this manual, school bus drivers must also check the following (external) lights and reflectors:
 - Strobe light, if equipped.
 - Stop arm light, if equipped.
 - Alternately flashing amber lights, if equipped.
 - Alternately flashing red lights.

Student Mirrors

- In addition to checking the external mirrors, school bus drivers must also check the internal and external mirrors used for observing students:
 - Check for proper adjustment.
 - Check that all internal and external mirrors and mirror brackets are not damaged and are mounted securely with no loose fittings.
 - Check that visibility is not impaired due to dirty mirrors.

Stop Arm

- If equipped, check the stop arm to see that it is mounted securely to the frame of the vehicle. Also, check for loose fittings and damage.

Passenger Entry/Lift

- Check that the entry door is not damaged, operates smoothly, and closes securely from the inside.
- Hand rails are secure and the step light is working, if equipped.
- The entry steps must be clear with the treads not loose or worn excessively.
- If equipped with a handicap lift, look for leaking, damaged, or missing parts and explain how lift should be checked for correct operation. Lift must be fully retracted and latched securely.

Emergency Exit

- Make sure that all emergency exits are not damaged, operate smoothly, and close securely from the inside.
- Check that any emergency exit warning devices are working.

Seating

- Look for broken seat frames and check that seat frames are firmly attached to the floor.
- Check that seat cushions are attached securely to the seat frames.

11.5 – Trailer**11.5.1 – Trailer Front****Air/Electrical Connections**

- Check that trailer air connectors are sealed and in good condition.
- Make sure glad hands are locked in place, free of damage or air leaks.
- Make sure the trailer electrical plug is firmly seated and locked in place.

Header Board

- If equipped, check the header board to see that it is secure, free of damage, and strong enough to contain cargo.
- If equipped, the canvas or tarp carrier must be mounted and fastened securely.
- On enclosed trailers, check the front area for signs of damage such as cracks, bulges, or holes.

11.5.2 – Side of Trailer

Landing Gear

- Check that the landing gear is fully raised, has no missing parts, crank handle is secure, and the support frame is not damaged.
- If power operated, check for air or hydraulic leaks.

Doors/Ties/Lifts

- If equipped, check that doors are not damaged. Check that doors open, close, and latch properly from the outside.
- Check that ties, straps, chains, and binders are secure.
- If equipped with a cargo lift, look for leaking, damaged or missing parts and explain how it should be checked for correct operation.
- Lift should be fully retracted and latched securely.

Frame

- Look for cracks, broken welds, holes or other damage to the frame, cross members, box, and floor.

Tandem Release Arm/Locking Pins

- If equipped, make sure the locking pins are locked in place and release arm is secured.

11.5.3 – Remainder of Trailer

Remainder of Trailer

- Please refer to Section 11.2 of this manual for detailed inspection procedures regarding the following components:
 - Wheels.
 - Suspension system.
 - Brakes.
 - Doors/ties/lift.
 - Splash guards.

11.6 – Coach/Transit Bus

11.6.1 – Passenger Items

Passenger Entry/Lift

- Check that entry doors operate smoothly and close securely from the inside.
- Check that hand rails are secure and, if equipped, that the step light(s) are working.
- Check that the entry steps are clear, with the treads not loose or worn excessively.
- If equipped with a handicap lift, look for any leaking, damaged or missing part, and explain how it should be checked for correct operation.
- Lift should be fully retracted and latched securely.

Emergency Exits

- Make sure that all emergency exits are not damaged, operate smoothly, and close securely from the inside.
- Check that any emergency exit warning devices are working.

Passenger Seating

- Look for broken seat frames and check that seat frames are firmly attached to the floor.
- Check that seat cushions are attached securely to the seat frames.

11.6.2 – Entry/ Exit

Doors/Mirrors

- Check that entry/exit doors are not damaged and operate smoothly from the outside. Hinges should be secure with seals intact.
- Make sure that the passenger exit mirrors and all external mirrors and mirror brackets are not damaged and are mounted securely with no loose fittings.

11.6.3 – External Inspection of Coach/ Transit Bus

Level/Air Leaks

- See that the vehicle is sitting level (front and rear), and if air-equipped, check for audible air leaks from the suspension system.

Fuel Tank(s)

- See that fuel tank(s) are secure with no leaks from tank(s) or lines.

Baggage Compartments

- Check that baggage and all other exterior compartment doors are not damaged, operate properly, and latch securely.

Battery/Box

- Wherever located, see that battery(s) are secure, connections are tight, and cell caps are present.
- Battery connections should not show signs of excessive corrosion.
- Check that battery box and cover or door is not damaged and is secure.

11.6.4 – Remainder of Coach/ Transit Bus

Remainder of Vehicle

- Please refer to Section 11.2 and 11.3 of this manual for detailed inspection procedures for the remainder of the vehicle.

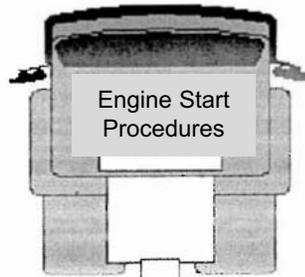
11.7 – CDL Vehicle Inspection Memory Aid

Combination Vehicles

Front of Vehicle, Lights/Reflectors, Engine Compartment & Steering Components

- Steering Axle
- Suspension
 - Brakes
 - Tires

Driver Door Fuel Area

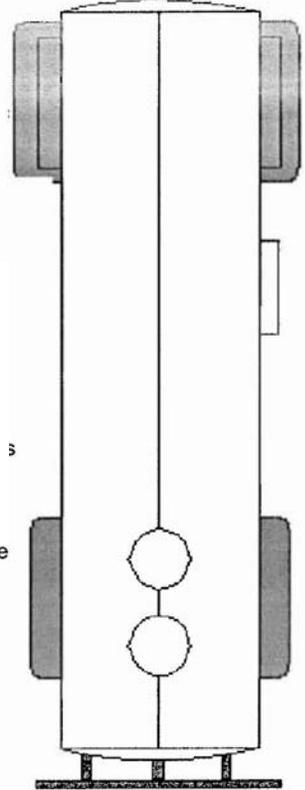


- Under Vehicle
- Drive Shaft
 - Exhaust
 - Frame

- Drive Axle(s)
- Suspension
 - Brakes
 - Tires

- Coupling Devices
- Truck
 - Trailer

Rear of Truck/Tractor & Lights/Reflectors



- Trailer Components
- Front, Side, Lights & Reflectors
 - Frame
 - Landing Gear
 - Tandem Release

- Trailer Axle(s)
- Suspension
 - Brakes
 - Tires

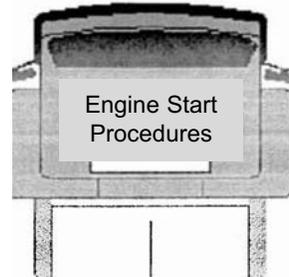
Rear of Trailer and Lights/Reflectors

Straight Truck or Bus

Front of Vehicle, Lights/Reflectors, Engine Compartment & Steering Components

- Steering Axle
- Suspension
 - Brakes
 - Tires

Driver Door Fuel Area



- Under Vehicle
- Drive Shaft
 - Exhaust
 - Frame

Passenger items (Buses Only)

School Bus Items (School Buses Only)

Side of Vehicle & Lights/Reflectors



- Drive Axle(s)
- Suspension
 - Brakes
 - Tires

Rear of Vehicle and Lights/Reflectors

Section 12

Basic Vehicle Control Skills Test

This Section Covers

- Skills Test Scoring
- Skills Test Exercises

Your basic control skills could be tested using one or more of the following exercises off-road or somewhere on the street during the road test:

- Straight line backing.
- Offset back/right
- Offset back/left
- Parallel park (driver side).
- Parallel park (conventional).
- Alley dock.

These exercises are shown in Figures 12-1 through 12-6.

12.1 Scoring

- Crossing Boundaries (Encroachments)
- Pull-ups
- Outside Vehicle Observations (Looks)
- Final Position

Crossing Boundaries (Encroachments) – The examiner will score the number of times you touch or cross over an exercise boundary line with any portion of your vehicle. Each encroachment will count as an error.

Pull-ups – When a driver stops and reverses direction to get a better position, it is scored as a “pull-up”. Stopping without changing direction does not count as a pull-up. You will not be penalized for initial pull-ups. However, an excessive number of pull-ups will count as errors.

Outside Vehicle Observations (Looks) – You may be permitted to safely stop and exit the vehicle to check the external position of the vehicle (look). When doing so, you must place the vehicle in neutral and set the parking brake(s). Then, when exiting the vehicle, you must do so safely by facing the vehicle and maintaining three points of contact with the vehicle at all times (when exiting a bus, maintain a firm grasp on the handrail at all times). If you do not safely secure the vehicle or safely exit the vehicle it may result in an automatic failure of the basic vehicle control skills test. The maximum number of times that you may look to check the position of your vehicle is two (2) except for the Straight Line Backing exercise, which allows one look. Each time you open the door, move from a seated position where in physical control of the vehicle or, on a bus, walk to the back of the bus to get a better view, it is scored as a “look”.

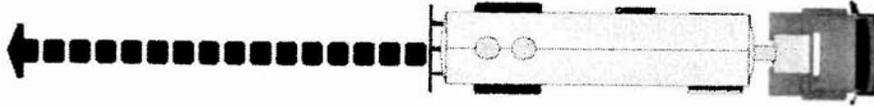
Final Position – It is important that you finish each exercise exactly as the examiner has instructed you. If you do not maneuver the vehicle into its final position as described by the examiner, you will be penalized and could fail the basic skills test.

12.2 Exercises

12.2.1 – Straight Line Backing

You may be asked to back your vehicle in a straight line on a street or between two rows of cones without touching or crossing over the exercise boundaries. See Figure 12.1.

Figure 12.1



12.2.2 – Offset Back/Right

You may be asked to back into a space that is to the right rear of your vehicle. You will drive straight forward and back your vehicle into that space without striking the side or rear boundaries marked by cones. You must place your vehicle completely into the space. See Figure 12.2.

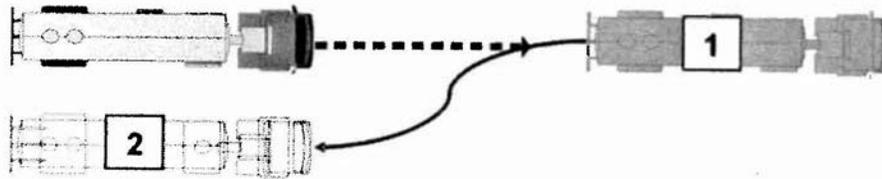


Figure 12.2

12.2.3 – Offset Back/Left

You may be asked to back into a space that is to the left rear of your vehicle. You will drive straight forward and back your vehicle into that space without striking the side or rear boundaries marked by cones. You must place your vehicle completely into the space. See Figure 12.3.

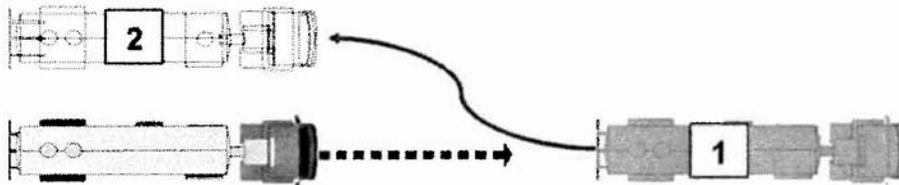


Figure 12.3

12.2.4 – Parallel Park (Driver Side)

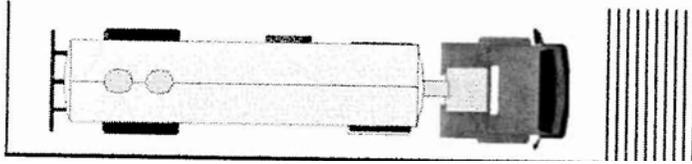
You may be asked to park in a parallel parking space that is on your left. You are to drive past the parking space and back into it bringing the rear of your vehicle as close as possible to the rear of the space without crossing side or rear boundaries marked by cones. You are required to get your vehicle completely into the space. See Figure 12.4.



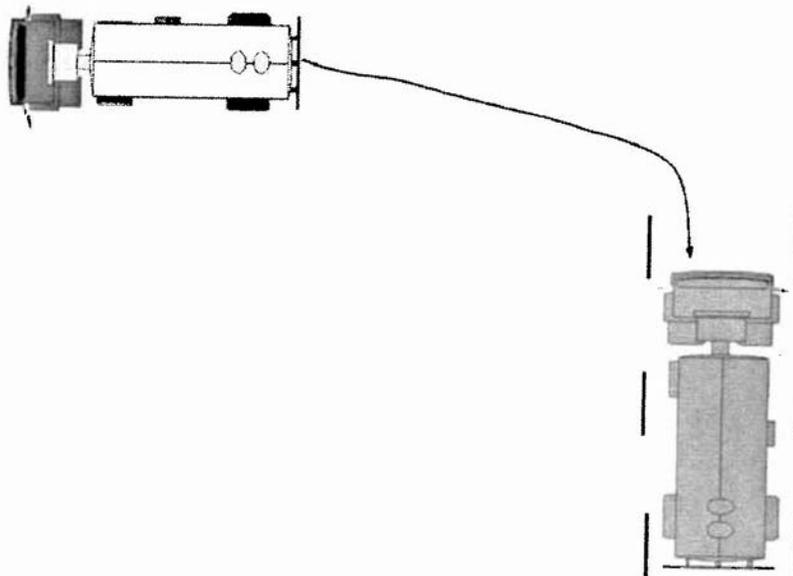
Figure 12.4

12.2.5 – Parallel Park (Conventional)

You may be asked to park in a parallel parking space that is on your right. You are to drive past the parking space and back into it bringing the rear of your vehicle as close as possible to the rear of the space without crossing side or rear boundaries marked by cones. You are required to get your vehicle completely into the space. See *Figure 12.5*.

**Figure 12.5****12.2.6 – Alley Dock**

You may be asked to sight-side back your vehicle into an alley, bringing the rear of your vehicle as close as possible to the rear of the alley without going beyond the exercise boundary marked by a line or row of cones. You are required to get your vehicle completely into the space with your entire vehicle straight with the alley. See *Figure 12.6*.

**Figure 12.6**

Section 13

On-Road Driving Test

This Section Covers

- **Specific Driving Maneuvers**
- **Your Overall Performance and General Driving Behavior**

You will drive over a test route that has a variety of traffic situations. At all times during the test, you must drive in a safe and responsible manner.

During the driving test you must:

- Wear your safety belt.
- Obey all traffic signs, signals, and laws.
- Complete the test without an accident or moving violation.

During the driving test, the examiner will be scoring you on specific driving maneuvers as well as on your general driving behavior. You will follow the directions of the examiner. Directions will be given to you so you will have plenty of time to do what the examiner has asked. You will not be asked to drive in an unsafe manner.

If your test route does not have certain traffic situations, you may be asked to simulate a traffic situation. You will do this by telling the examiner what you are or would be doing if you were in that traffic situation.

13.1 – Specific Driving Maneuvers

13.1.1 – Turns

You have been asked to make a turn:

- Check traffic in all directions.
- Use turn signals and safely get into the lane needed for the turn.

As you approach the turn:

- Use turn signals to warn others of your turn.
- Slow down smoothly, change gears as needed to keep power, but do not coast unsafely. Unsafe coasting occurs when your vehicle is out of gear (clutch depressed or gearshift in neutral) for more than the length of your vehicle.

If you must stop before making the turn:

- Come to a smooth stop without skidding.
- Come to a complete stop behind the stop line, crosswalk, or stop sign.
- If stopping behind another vehicle, stop where you can see the rear tires on the vehicle ahead of you (safe gap).
- Do not let your vehicle roll.
- Keep the front wheels aimed straight ahead.

When ready to turn:

- Check traffic in all directions.
- Keep both hands on the steering wheel during the turn.
- Do not change gears during the turn.

- Keep checking your mirror to make sure the vehicle does not hit anything on the inside of the turn.
- Vehicle should not move into oncoming traffic.
- Vehicle should finish turn in correct lane.

After turn:

- Make sure turn signal is off.
- Get up to speed of traffic, use turn signal, and move into right-most lane when safe to do so (if not already there).
- Check mirrors and traffic.

13.1.2 – Intersections

As you approach an intersection:

- Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Decelerate gently.
- Brake smoothly and, if necessary, change gears.
- If necessary, come to a complete stop (no coasting) behind any stop signs, signals, sidewalks, or stop lines, maintaining a safe gap behind any vehicle in front of you.
- Your vehicle must not roll forward or backward.

When driving through an intersection:

- Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Decelerate and yield to any pedestrians and traffic in the intersection.
- Do not change lanes or shift gears while proceeding through the intersection.
- Keep your hands on the wheel.

Once through the intersection:

- Continue checking mirrors and traffic.
- Accelerate smoothly and change gears as necessary.

13.1.3 – Urban/Rural Straight

During this part of the test, you are expected to make regular traffic checks and maintain a safe following distance. Your vehicle should be centered in the proper lane (right-most lane) and you should keep up with the flow of traffic but not exceed the posted speed limit.

13.1.4 – Urban/Rural Lane Changes

During the multiple lane portion of the urban and rural sections, you will be asked to change lanes to the left, and then back to the right. You should make the necessary traffic checks first, then use proper signals and smoothly change lanes when it is safe to do so.

13.1.5 – Expressway

Before entering the expressway:

- Check traffic.
- Use proper signals.
- Merge smoothly into the proper lane of traffic.

Once on the expressway:

- Maintain proper lane positioning, vehicle spacing, and vehicle speed.
- Continue to check traffic thoroughly in all directions.

You will be instructed to change lanes, and you must:

- Make necessary traffic checks.
- Use proper signals.
- Change lanes smoothly when it is safe to do so.

When exiting the expressway:

- Make necessary traffic checks.
- Use proper signals.
- Decelerate smoothly in the exit lane.
- Once on the exit ramp, you must continue to decelerate within the lane markings and maintain adequate spacing between your vehicle and other vehicles.

13.1.6 – Stop/Start

For this maneuver, you will be asked to pull your vehicle over to the side of the road and stop as if you were going to get out and check something on your vehicle. The examiner may have you stop and start on a grade. You must check traffic thoroughly in all directions and move to the right-most lane or shoulder of road.

As you prepare for the stop:

- Check traffic.
- Activate your right turn signal.
- Decelerate smoothly, brake evenly, change gears as necessary.
- Bring your vehicle to a full stop without coasting.

Once stopped:

- Vehicle must be parallel to the curb or shoulder of the road and safely out of the traffic flow.
- Vehicle should not be blocking driveways, fire hydrants, intersections, signs, etc., unless the examiner directed you to that location.
- Cancel your turn signal.
- Activate your four-way emergency flashers.
- Apply the parking brake.
- Move the gear shift to neutral or park.
- Remove your feet from the brake and clutch pedals.

When instructed to resume:

- Check traffic and your mirrors thoroughly in all directions.
- Turn off your four-way flashers.
- Activate the left turn signal.
- When traffic permits, you should release the parking brake and pull straight ahead.
- Do not turn the wheel before your vehicle moves.
- Check traffic from all directions, especially to the left.
- Steer and accelerate smoothly into the proper lane when safe to do so.
- Once your vehicle is back into the flow of traffic, cancel your left turn signal.

13.1.7 – Curve

- When approaching a curve:
- Check traffic thoroughly in all directions.
- Before entering the curve, reduce speed so further braking or shifting is not required in the curve.
- Keep vehicle in the lane.
- Continue checking traffic in all directions.

13.1.8 – Railroad Crossing

Before reaching the crossing, all commercial drivers should:

- Decelerate, brake smoothly, and shift gears as necessary.
- Look and listen for the presence of trains.
- Check traffic in all directions.

Do not stop, change gears, pass another vehicle, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is in the crossing.

If you are driving a bus, a school bus, or a vehicle displaying placards, you should be prepared to observe the following procedures at every railroad crossing (unless the crossing is exempt):

- As the vehicle approaches a railroad crossing, activate the four-way flashers.
- Stop the vehicle within 50 feet but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
- Listen and look in both directions along the track for an approaching train and for signals indicating the approach of a train. If operating a bus, you may also be required to open the window and door prior to crossing tracks.
- Keep hands on the steering wheel as the vehicle crosses the tracks.
- Do not stop, change gears, or change lanes while any part of your vehicle is proceeding across the tracks.
- Four-way flashers should be deactivated after the vehicle crosses the tracks.

Not all driving road test routes will have a railroad crossing. You may be asked to explain and demonstrate the proper railroad crossing procedures to the examiner at a simulated location.

13.1.9 – Bridge/Overpass/Sign

After driving under an overpass, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted clearance or height was. After going over a bridge, you may be asked to tell the examiner what the posted weight limit was. If your test route does not have a bridge or overpass, you may be asked about another traffic sign. When asked, be prepared to identify and explain to the examiner any traffic sign which may appear on the route.

13.1.10– Student Discharge (School Bus)

If you are applying for a School Bus endorsement, you will be required to demonstrate loading and unloading students. Please refer to Section 10 of this manual for procedures on loading and unloading school students.

13.2 – Your Overall Performance and General Driving Behavior

You will be scored on your overall performance in the following general driving behavior categories:

13.2.1 – Clutch Usage (for Manual Transmission)

- Always use clutch to shift.
- Double-clutching is recommended when shifting. Do not rev or lug the engine.
- Do not ride the clutch to control speed. Do not coast with the clutch depressed, or "pop" the clutch.

13.2.2 – Gear Usage (for Manual Transmission)

- Do not grind or clash gears.
- Select gear that does not rev or lug engine.
- Do not shift in turns and intersections.

13.2.3 – Brake Usage

- Do not ride or pump brake.
- Do not brake harshly. Brake smoothly using steady pressure.

13.2.4 – Lane Usage

- Do not put vehicle over curbs, sidewalks, or lane markings.
- Stop behind stop lines, crosswalks, or stop signs.
- Complete a turn in the proper lane on a multiple lane road (vehicle should finish a left turn in the lane directly to the right of the center line).
- Finish a right turn in the right-most (curb) lane.
- Move to or remain in right-most lane unless lane is blocked.

13.2.5 – Steering

- Do not oversteer or understeer the vehicle.
- Keep both hands on the steering wheel at all times unless shifting. Once you have completed the shift, return both hands to the steering wheel.

13.2.6 – Regular Traffic Checks

- Check traffic regularly.
- Check mirrors regularly.
- Check mirrors and traffic before, while in, and after an intersection.
- Scan and check traffic in high volume areas and areas where pedestrians are expected to be present.

13.2.7 – Use of Turn Signals

- Use turn signals properly.
- Activate turn signals when required.
- Activate turn signals at appropriate times.
- Cancel turn signals upon completion of a turn or lane change.