



How to Get a Driver's License in Wisconsin

This guide explains how to get a driver's license in Wisconsin, whether you:

- Already have a license from another country
- Know how to drive but don't have a license
- Have never driven before

All licenses are issued by the [Wisconsin Department of Transportation](#).

Basic Requirements (Everyone)

To get a Wisconsin driver's license, you must:

- Be at least **16 years old**
 - NOTE: There are [additional requirements if you are under 18](#).
- Provide:
 - Proof of identity (passport or birth certificate)
 - Proof of Wisconsin address
 - Social Security Number (or proof you don't have one)
- Pass:
 - Vision test (at the DMV)
 - Knowledge (written) test
 - Driving (road) test

International Students

If you are an international student, you will need:

- Passport
- Visa (F-1, J-1, etc.)
- I-20 or DS-2019
- I-94 record
- Proof of Wisconsin address

If you do NOT have a Social Security Number:

- You must get a **Social Security denial letter**

Process of Getting a License

How you get a license depends on the experience you have driving. Most students will be issued a [probationary driver's license](#) once they have passed all of the required test.

If You Already Have a License from Your Country

Even if you have a foreign license:

- Wisconsin usually does NOT transfer it directly
 1. A few countries qualify for an exception. [Review the list online](#).



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- You will still need to:
 1. Study the [Wisconsin Motorist Handbook](#)
 2. Pass the [knowledge \(written\) test](#)
 3. Get a temporary permit
 4. Pass the road test
 5. Get your probationary driver's license

Your license helps show experience, but you will still need to take the tests.

If You Can Drive but Don't Have a License

If you already know how to drive:

1. Study the [Wisconsin Motorist Handbook](#)
2. Take practice quizzes
 - a. [Link to practice test](#) on Wisconsin Department of Transportation website
3. Take and pass the [knowledge test](#)
4. Get an **instruction permit**
5. Practice driving (with a licensed adult)
6. Take the **road test**
7. Get your probationary driver's license

If You Have Never Driven Before

If you're a beginner:

1. Learn the basics
 - a. Traffic signs
 - b. Road rules
 - c. How a car works
 - d. Study for the test with the [Wisconsin Motorist Handbook](#) and take practice quizzes
2. Take the [Knowledge Test](#)
 - a. Once you pass, you will get your **instruction permit**
3. Practice Driving
 - a. With a driving school (recommended for all, but required for anyone under 18)
 - b. With a licensed driver (age 21+)
4. Prepare for the [Road Test](#)
5. Take the Road Test
 - a. If you pass you will get a probationary driver's license

What Happens During a Road Test?

Review [this official site](#) to understand what to practice and how to schedule a test.

In general, you will be tested on:

- Safe turning and signaling
- Obeying traffic signs and lights
- Staying in your lane



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- Parking
- Checking mirrors and blind spots

Common mistakes:

- Not fully stopping at stop signs
- Forgetting to check blind spots
- Driving too fast or too slowly

Where to Apply

You must go to a DMV service center through the [Wisconsin Department of Transportation](#).

You can schedule appointments online.