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What is on the cdl driving test

To pass a CDL permit test, there is a written exam. The exam covers topics from dealing with the equipment on the truck to driving safety to pre-trip inspections and much more. Driving Academy, based in Linden, New Jersey, and serving students nationwide, offers CDL driver training to help those who want to earn their CDL to drive professionally. Here, we talk about what is on the commercial driver's license (CDL) permit test. What Is Covered on a CDL Permit Test? The CDL permit test consists of 50 multiple-choice questions about CDL driving. While it is harder to pass than a standard driver's license permit test, reading through the driver's manual will give test-takers a good idea of what is on the test. Some of the main topics include: General Knowledge The general knowledge test is where students prove they know all the basics about driving a commercial vehicle, including steering, shifting, and vehicle inspections. Air Brakes The air brakes exam covers brakes, air brakes, air pressure gages, and much more. Passenger Endorsement The passenger endorsement exam features questions about driving buses or other vehicles with passengers. Questions include what to expect during an inspection, what passengers can or cannot bring onto the vehicle, and how far back a driver should remain from a vehicle in front of them. Combination Vehicle The combination vehicle part of the exam has questions about hauling multiple trailers and conducting safety checks. Sample Questions There are sample questions from the CDL permit test on our practice permit test page. Some questions that may be found on a CDL practice test are below, along with the correct answers. Q. Which of these pieces of emergency equipment should always be carried in your vehicle? A. Fire extinguishers, warning devices, spare electrical fuses. Q. Name some things you should check on the front of the vehicle during the outside inspection. A. Clearance lights, identification lights, grill Q. When should you use the parking brake? A. Anytime you park Q. How often should the air tank be drained? A. Once a day Q. If a rider wants to bring a car battery or can of gasoline aboard your bus, you should A. Not allow the rider to do so. Q. It is best to wear your seatbelt: A. At all times Q. Large combination vehicles take longer to stop: A. When they are empty Prepare For a CDL Permit Test at Driving Academy Driving Academy offers three different CDL programs for those who are interested in pursuing professional truck driving. Class A CDL A Class A CDL is needed for those who want to drive tractor-trailers or vehicles that weigh more than 26,000 pounds and have a trailer that weighs more than 10,000 pounds. Once a Class A CDL has been earned, Class A CDL license holders can also drive Class B vehicles. Class B CDL A Class B CDL is for box trucks and delivery trucks. A Class B vehicle is described as any vehicle weighing over 26,000 pounds and has no trailer, or if there is a trailer, it weighs less than 10,000 pounds. Examples of Class B vehicles include box trucks, cement trucks, garbage trucks, and delivery trucks. Class B+P CDL The Class B+P CDL is for vehicles that weigh more than 26,000 pounds and have a carrier with 16 or more passengers, including the driver. A passenger bus or school bus are examples of Class B vehicles. Once someone has earned a CDL Class B+P license, they can also drive any other Class B vehicle. The "P" is an endorsement that allows drivers to carry passengers. Choose Driving Academy to Earn a CDL For those interested in earning a CDL from a trucking school, Driving Academy offers the opportunity to pursue a career that is in demand. Driving Academy provides students with advanced training and the knowledge and skills needed to pass their CDL permit test, and then go on to earn their Class A, Class B, or Class B+P CDL. Driving Academy offers its students guaranteed CDL truck and bus training without the fear of failure. Our programs offer: Affordable payment plans that start at just \$500 down Certified third-party testing site available Flexible training schedules Lifetime job placement for graduates State-of-the-art simulator training Driving Academy has locations in New Jersey and accepts students from anywhere in the United States. If you're ready to hit the road and earn a CDL, contact us today to learn more about our CDL truck driver training programs. The last major step to obtain a CDL is the Driving Test. After getting a medical certificate, background check, all the written tests, and hundreds of hours working with the equipment—taking the Driving Test can be nerve racking whether it's for your Class A or Class B license. A proper driving school will prepare you to take this final test. All of the material described briefly below will be explained by the school in exhaustive detail, which is another reason that it's important to pick a good school. This article will explain the various parts of the test, so you: Will have a good understanding of the testing process Can ask the right questions when you are picking a driving school There are three separate parts of the driving test: Pre-Trip Inspection Highway/City Driving (aka. "On-road Driving") Skills (aka. "Basic Controls") Each is designed to confirm that the student driver can properly control a truck and can operate the equipment safely. The student will be required to point to (and/or touch) each primary component of the truck, call out its name, and describe what it is being inspected for. For example: Steering box, bolted securely, no streaks of rust, no shiny bits of metal. Pitman arm, not cracked, cotter pin attached, no streaks of rust, no shiny bits of metal. Drag link, not cracked, firmly attached to pitman arm, ball joint(s) in good order. Note: "Streaks of rust" could indicate that there are loose bolts or metal parts rubbing against each other. "Shiny bits of metal" show where parts are rubbing. Safety Notes Never inspect under the hood with the engine running. The engine parts can be hot. The fan in a truck is huge, and nearly invisible while spinning. Don't wear loose/baggy clothing. If you have long hair, keep it tied back. Keep your body parts (and clothing) clear of moving/spinning equipment. Photo by Eduardo Cano, Unsplash This part of the test is the most straightforward. The student will be required to drive the truck safely in highway and city traffic. The truck driving school will know the route. You will practice driving the same, exact route many times before you will ever be tested by the DMV examiner. The skills portion of the test is essentially backing the truck/trailer combination through an obstacle course without striking a cone or rolling over a white painted line. The truck school will have an obstacle course in their yard that is identical to the obstacle course at the DMV. Backing a trailer is very difficult. Half of your driving time at the driving school will involve backing the truck between cones. Photo 113609731 | Dmv © Calvin L. Leake | Dreamstime.com The driving school will arrange the testing appointment for you. At the end of the fifth week of school, they will make enough reservations for everyone in the class. As the instructors feel that the students are ready, they will take the students in a truck to the DMV in small groups. If a class is 12–15 students, then over 3–4 days of testing everyone will have a chance to take the driving test. The students that test later in the schedule will have a few additional days of practice. If you fail any of the three parts of the test, the test stops immediately. (For example—if you can't inspect the truck properly, they don't let you drive it on public roads.) The DMV allows you three different attempts to pass the driving test. If you fail three times, the DMV will require you to retake all the written tests. Note: Most driving schools provide a truck to take your driving test twice. If you need a truck to take a test for a third time, they will rent you a truck at a very discounted rate. This is something you should check when picking a driving school. Note: Some "Train Here. Work Here" schools will cut you from the training program after two unsuccessful attempts at the driving test. Which is another reason to avoid a "Train Here. Work Here" school. Check before signing up for any classes. Photo 156792380 | Dmv © David Tonelson | Dreamstime.com The Pre-trip Inspection Test happens first. If the obstacle course is adjacent to the DMV testing facility, you might get your Skills Test next. Then your Highway/City Driving Test last. If the obstacle course is not next to the DMV—you will take part of the Highway/City (driving to the Skills Test area), then take the Skills Test, then take the rest of the Highway/City Driving (returning to the DMV office): Pre-trip Skills Highway/City or Pre-trip Highway/City (1st half) Skills Highway/City (2nd half) Each DMV is slightly different. Your local school will explain the procedure. There are no actual statistics on pass/fail rate with new drivers. Anecdotal evidence from driving instructors suggest that more than 85% of all students pass the driving test (all three parts) on the first try. You will be learning and training for your entire career. Passing the Driving Test isn't the end of learning. Passing the Driving Test means that the DMV feels that you have the basic skills necessary to operate a truck safely. Conclusion The driving school training will be virtually identical to how DMV runs the actual test. The school will prepare you for the test. They won't take you to DMV until they are confident that you can pass. This is another reason why it is important to pick a good school. All commercial drivers of vehicles in interstate commerce with a maximum gross vehicle weight rating of over 10,000 pounds are required to obtain and maintain a valid Medical Examiner's Certificate (ME Certificate). CDL holders in Wisconsin must provide their SDLA with a copy of their ME Certificate. Self-Certification All Wisconsin CDL holders must declare to their State Driver Licensing Agency (SDLA) that they only operate or expect to operate commercially in 1 of 4 possible categories with their CDL. This process is called self-certification. The four categories are: Interstate non-excepted: You are an Interstate non-excepted driver and must meet the Federal DOT medical card requirements (e.g., you are "not excepted"). Interstate excepted: You are an Interstate excepted driver and do not have to meet the Federal DOT medical card requirements. Intrastate non-excepted: You are an Intrastate non-excepted driver and are required to meet the medical requirements for the state of Wisconsin. Intrastate excepted: You are an Intrastate excepted driver and do not have to meet the medical requirements for the state of Wisconsin. Hearing Requirements A person is physically qualified to drive a CMV if that person: First perceives a forced whispered voice in the better ear at not less than five feet with or without the use of a hearing aid or if tested by use of an audiometric device, does not have an average hearing loss in the better ear greater than 40 decibels at 500Hz, 1000Hz and 2,000 Hz with or without a hearing aid when the audiometric device is calibrated to the American National Standard Z24.5-1951. Vision Requirements You must meet the following vision requirements: A distant visual acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in each eye without corrective lenses or visual acuity separately corrected to 20/40 (Snellen) or better with corrective lenses; A distant binocular acuity of at least 20/40 (Snellen) in both eyes with or without corrective lenses; A field of vision of at least 70 degrees in the horizontal Meridian in each eye; The ability to recognize the colors of traffic signals and devices showing standard red, green, and amber. Blood Pressure Requirements Your blood pressure needs to be under 140/90. Stage 1 hypertension, blood pressure between 140/90 - 159/99: 1-year medical certificate, must be renewed every 12 months. Stage 2 hypertension, blood pressure between 160/100 - 179/109: 3 month medical certification. Full disqualification if not under control after 3 months, until controlled. Will be required to renew every 12 months. Stage 3 hypertension, blood pressure at or over 180/110: Automatic disqualification, 6 month certification once blood pressure is under control, must be renewed every 6 months. Blood pressure can be controlled with or without medication. Urinalysis Testing Your urine sample will be tested in a lab for blood, sugar, and protein, which might indicate hidden health problems. Physical Impairments Drivers with physical impairments, which affect their ability to safely operate CMVs, must obtain a "variance" from the state of Wisconsin in order to be approved to drive commercially. The variance document must be carried with the commercial driver and do not have to meet the Federal DOT medical card requirements. Intrastate non-excepted: You are an Intrastate non-excepted driver and are required to meet the medical requirements for the state of Wisconsin. Intrastate excepted: You are an Intrastate excepted driver and do not have to meet the medical requirements for the state of Wisconsin. 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Stage 3 hypertension, blood pressure at or over 180/110: Automatic disqualification, 6 month certification once blood pressure is under control, must be renewed every 6 months. Blood pressure can be controlled with or without medication. Urinalysis Testing Your urine sample will be tested in a lab for blood, sugar, and protein, which might indicate hidden health problems. Physical Impairments Drivers with physical impairments, which affect their ability to safely operate CMVs, must obtain a "variance" from the state of Wisconsin in order to be approved to drive commercially. The variance document must be carried with the commercial driver whenever they are operating a commercial motor vehicle. A Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE) is a special type of "variance" required for drivers with impaired or missing limbs (e.g., a hand or finger, an arm, foot, or leg). Drivers with missing limbs, if eligible, must obtain an SPE certificate. The commercial driver must always carry the SPE certificate at all times. About The Skill Performance Evaluation (SPE) Program The Skill Performance Evaluation program is for CMV drivers who drive in interstate commerce. The SPE certification allows drivers with missing or impaired limbs to drive CMVs across state lines if they have been fitted with (and are wearing) the right prosthetic device, and the driver can demonstrate the ability to drive the truck safely by completing on-and off-road activities. If the driver passes the Wisconsin commercial vehicle driving test, he or she will receive a SPE certificate. Over the years, FMCSA has granted more than 3,000 SPE certificates to truck drivers who have shown that they can drive safely on the nation's highways. Implied Consent to Alcohol Testing Any person who holds a Wisconsin CDL is considered to have consented to such testing as is required by the state of Wisconsin or any State or jurisdiction in the enforcement of being under the influence of a controlled substance or using alcohol, be under the influence of alcohol, or have any measured alcohol concentration or detected presence of alcohol, while on duty, or operating, or in physical control of a commercial motor vehicle. Consent is implied by driving a commercial motor vehicle. Prescription Drugs Although the driver has a legal prescription, he/she may be disqualified if the medication could adversely affect the driver's ability to drive a CMV safely. A CDL test consists of both a written knowledge test and a practical skills test. The knowledge test covers: General knowledge Air brakes Combination vehicles Specialized endorsements (like HAZMAT and passenger transport) The skills test includes: Vehicle inspection Basic control skills An on-road driving test In this guide, you'll learn the specifics of each section and how to prepare effectively. A Commercial Driver's License (CDL) test is a critical step for anyone looking to drive a commercial vehicle professionally. Whether you aim to drive trucks, buses, or any vehicle designed to transport goods and passengers, a CDL is mandatory. The test ensures you possess the necessary knowledge and skills to operate these vehicles safely. Here's what you need to know about what a CDL test consists of and how to prepare for it successfully. The CDL knowledge test, also known as the written test, is the initial hurdle you need to clear. This test comprises multiple-choice questions that cover a range of topics relevant to commercial driving. Key Knowledge Areas: General Knowledge: Applicable to all CDL applicants, includes basic road rules and vehicle operation. Air Brakes: Important for vehicles equipped with air brake systems. Combination Vehicles: Specific to vehicles like tractor-trailers. Endorsements: Additional qualifications like HAZMAT or passenger transport. The General Knowledge exam is a must for all CDL applicants. This section includes questions on road rules, vehicle operation, and safety protocols. Key Features: Road Rules Understanding: Familiarize yourself with traffic laws and signage. Vehicle Operation: Know how to handle different parts of the vehicle under various conditions. Safety Measures: Understand critical safety protocols, like maintaining safe following distances and proper loading techniques. The Air Brakes test focuses on vehicles equipped with air brakes. It is crucial if you aim to drive trucks or buses that use this system. Key Concepts: Air Supply System: Know how the air brakes system functions, including air pressure and reservoirs. Usage Protocols: Correct procedures for operating air brakes, understanding warning lights and drains. The Combination Vehicles test assesses your ability to handle vehicles such as tractor-trailers. It's essential for Class A CDL applicants. Key Elements: Coupling and Uncoupling: Proper methods to couple and uncouple trailers. Handling and Stability: Understand how to manage larger, more complex vehicles safely. Additional knowledge tests are required for specific endorsements that extend your qualifications. Common Endorsements: HazMat (Hazardous Materials): Requires knowledge of handling and transporting hazardous materials, coupled with a background check. Passenger: Necessary for driving vehicles carrying passengers, like buses. Tankers: For vehicles transporting liquids, understanding fluid dynamics within the tanker. Doubles/Triples: Covers the handling of trucks pulling two or three trailers. The vehicle inspection test assesses your ability to identify and explain the components of your commercial vehicle. This pre-trip inspection ensures you can verify the vehicle's safety before hitting the road. Inspection Checklist: Exterior Checks: Evaluate tires, lights, and mirrors. Interior Checks: Check gauges, airbrake system, and emergency equipment. Functionality Tests: Ensure that the brakes, steering mechanism, and suspension are working correctly. Transition seamlessly to the next sections on "Basic Vehicle Control Skills Test" and "On-Road Driving Test" to cover the remaining parts of the skills test, providing both specific maneuvers and behaviors tested. Then, address "Test Locations and Scheduling" and "Medical Requirements" to complete the guidelines for aspiring CDL candidates. The Basic Vehicle Control Skills Test gauges your ability to maneuver your commercial vehicle in various scenarios. This test ensures you can handle the vehicle's size and weight effectively. Common Maneuvers Included: Backing: Demonstrating control while reversing straight back. Offset Backing: Proving your skill in backing into a lane offset from your starting position. Parallel Parking: Showcasing your ability to park parallel to the curb or within a specified space. Alley Docking: Maneuvering your vehicle into an alley dock setup, a common scenario in loading docks. To excel in this segment, practice these maneuvers in a controlled environment. Key Tips: Practice Regularly: Consistent practice helps refine your skills. Use Reference Points: Mark reference points to guide you during the maneuvers. Stay Calm and Focused: Maintain concentration and do not rush the processes. In the on-road driving test, you will navigate through typical traffic conditions. This segment evaluates your practical driving skills and adherence to traffic laws. Key Areas Evaluated: Lane Changes: Executing safe and smooth lane changes. Turns: Making right and left turns within the correct lanes. Intersections: Safely crossing intersections, paying heed to traffic signals and signs. Highway Driving: Merging, exiting, and maintaining speed on highways. Mistakes can happen, but awareness and preparation can mitigate them. Mistakes to Watch For: Failing to Signal: Ensure you use your indicators for every turn and lane change. Improper Speed: Keep to the speed limits and adjust for road conditions. Not Checking Mirrors: Regularly check your mirrors to maintain awareness of your surroundings. You will need to take your CDL test at designated testing sites. Most states provide specific locations where you can schedule both the knowledge and skills tests. How to Find Locations: State DMV Websites: Check the DMV website of your state for a list of approved testing centers. Third-Party Providers: Some states allow third-party providers to conduct the skills test. Planning ahead is crucial, especially since test dates can fill up quickly. Steps to Schedule: Check Availability: Look for available dates and times on your state's DMV website. Prepare Required Documents: Ensure you have all necessary documents, including your learner's permit and medical certification. Book Early: Schedule your test as soon as you feel ready to avoid long waiting periods. Driving a commercial vehicle demands physical and mental fitness. Therefore, you are required to undergo a medical examination to ensure you meet the necessary health standards. Key Health Standards: Vision and Hearing: Adequate vision and hearing capabilities to operate a vehicle. General Physical Health: Absence of medical conditions that could impair safe driving, such as high blood pressure or obstructive sleep apnea. Mental Fitness: Ability to handle the stress and demands of driving a commercial vehicle. You must pass this examination to receive a Medical Examiner's Certificate, which proves you are fit to drive a commercial vehicle. The certificate typically lasts for 24 months, though certain conditions may necessitate more frequent examinations. To prepare effectively for the CDL test, you should use a variety of study resources. Recommended Resources: State CDL Manual: The most comprehensive resource covering all test material. Online Practice Tests: Websites offer practice questions similar to those on the actual test. Study Guides and Flashcards: Help reinforce critical concepts you need to know. Hands-on driving practice is essential. Enroll in a CDL training program or spend time with experienced drivers to get a feel for real-world conditions. Practical Tips: Use a Training Program: Look for accredited CDL training programs that offer both classroom instruction and behind-the-wheel training. Drive in Different Conditions: Practice driving in various environments, such as city streets, rural roads, and highways. When taking the written knowledge test, avoid these common mistakes to improve your chances of passing on the first try. Frequent Errors: Skipping the Manual: Not thoroughly studying your state's CDL manual can leave you unprepared. Ignoring Practice Tests: Failing to take practice tests can result in a lack of familiarity with the test format and question types. Mistakes during the skills test can be costly. Being aware of these common errors can help you avoid them. Common Skills Test Mistakes: Rushing Through Maneuvers: Taking your time ensures accuracy and reduces errors. Failing Pre-Trip Inspection: Missing critical points during the vehicle inspection can result in immediate failure. Not Adjusting for Conditions: Failing to adjust driving speed and techniques for weather and traffic conditions. Sometimes, despite your best efforts, you may not pass the CDL test on your first attempt. Understanding the retesting process can help you better prepare for the next try. Retesting Process: Waiting Period: You may need to wait a specified number of days before retaking the test. Fees: There might be additional fees for retesting each segment of the CDL exam. Use the wait time wisely to improve your skills and knowledge. Enhancement Tips: Review Study Materials: Go over the areas where you struggled. Practice More: Spend additional time practicing maneuvers and driving. Seek Feedback: If possible, get feedback from a trainer or experienced driver to identify and correct mistakes. By understanding what a CDL test consists of and preparing thoroughly, you put yourself in a strong position to pass both the knowledge and skills tests. Your journey to becoming a safe and competent commercial driver starts with mastering these essential elements. Good luck! Getting a CDL (commercial driver license) is the first step in your trucking career. During the process, you can also test for endorsements to drive a school bus, transport hazardous materials (HAZMAT), or many other commercial motor vehicles (CMVs). A CDL requires having a commercial learner's permit (CLP) for 14 days, CDL training by a registered truck driving school, and passing the CDL skills test. These requirements are set up by the FMCSA (Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration), but states are responsible for giving the tests and issuing CDLs. What is a pull up in CDL? You'll want to avoid a "pull up" during your CDL skills test and it'll have nothing to do with getting your chin over a bar. In trucking, a pull up is when the truck driver stops and then pulls forward to change direction or clear an obstacle. The goal is to get into position without this extra maneuver. Can I take my CDL test online? Some states will allow you to take the written tests online, but you will need to physically go to the DMV (department of motor vehicles) to present your documents and complete the driving tests. Becoming a truck driver is a big responsibility, so your skills and qualifications are reviewed closely prior to the state issuing you a CDL. What's included on the CDL skills test? The CDL test has three sections. Studying the CDL manual and practicing behind the wheel are the best ways to pass all three and become a CDL driver. If you don't pass one of the tests, you'll have to retake it and some states put a limit on how long your test results are good for. A few actions during your test that can result in an automatic failure are: exiting the vehicle unsafely, driving over a curb, and breaking a law. Vehicle inspection test This written test, also called the pre-trip inspection test, is the knowledge test of the three. It includes twenty questions from the CDL manual. A passing test score is 80% or higher. The questions change frequently, but common topics include chaining up, what to do at a scale, and how to secure your cargo. Basic controls skills test Here's a chance to show off your actual driving skills. The basic controls skills test will include timed tests of your abilities in straight line backing, offset backing, and alley docking within physical boundaries usually indicated by cones. Complete each task in the allotted amount of time without crossing any boundaries and you'll pass the test. Road test During the CDL road test, also known as the driving test, you'll demonstrate your driving skills and knowledge on the road in real life traffic situations. You'll need to know all the local traffic laws as well as how to navigate a truck and trailer on roads with other drivers.