

Transcript for **Learning to drive: everything you need to know**

Hello, everybody. It's Molly here and welcome back to another video for the British Council's LearnEnglish Teens website and their YouTube channel. In today's video I'm going to be talking about learning to drive. I'm going to talk a little bit about the process of learning to drive in the UK and how it all works, and then I'm going to talk to you about my experiences because at the moment I'm actually in the middle of having driving lessons and I'm preparing to take my test in about a month's time, so it's something that's on my mind at the moment and I thought it would be interesting to share with you guys.

So, first off: what is the process of learning to drive like in the UK? You can start driving in the UK when you're 17 years old, but before you do that you have to apply for your provisional driving licence. You can apply for your provisional driving licence when you're 15 years old and nine months, any time after that. I have mine here; it's a little card that's green and looks like this. Once you have your provisional driving licence, you're allowed to start driving on the roads, but there are some rules about this. You have to put 'L' plates on your car to show that you're a learner, and you have to be supervised, so that either means with a driving instructor that's qualified or you can go in the car with a family member or a friend or something like that, but they have to be over 21 and they have to have been driving for at least three years with their licence.

Now, before you take your practical test, you have to have taken your theory test. The theory test is made up of two parts. There's a multiple choice section, which has lots of questions about the rules of the road and is based off of the Highway Code, which I have here, so it's stuff about road signs and speed limits and all kinds of things like that, which is important to know if you're going to be driving. The second part is a hazard perception test where you have to identify potential dangers that might occur when you're, when you're out driving on the roads.

Once you've had enough driving lessons, enough practice, you can take your test. I have mine coming up in March, so hopefully – fingers crossed – all goes to plan and I will pass, but it is quite difficult to pass. Lots of people fail first time and have to retake it, which you can do – there's no limit on the amount of times, I don't think, that you can retake your driving test 'cos, obviously, it's very important that you're safe to drive on the roads.

So that's the process of how you learn to drive in the UK, and now I want to talk to you a little bit about my experiences. So, when I was 17, 17 and a half, I started having driving lessons. I had lessons once a week for two hours after school, 'cos I was still at school at that point. And I really didn't like driving! I found it very stressful. I was terrible at it. I had a few lessons, maybe about ten or maybe even a few more, but then I just sort of gave up 'cos I was, like, it's not for me, I don't like driving. Yeah. But now I'm 21, so that's four years later, and because of my circumstances at the moment, I've been at home for two months with not much going on, so my parents suggested that I learn to drive. So, I started lessons again and this time it's going a lot better, which I'm really, really happy about. One thing that I think really helped was that this time I took my theory test before I did any of my lessons, and that really helped because I knew all the rules and I had, like, a grounding of the theory behind how you actually learn to drive. Another thing is that I really get on very well with my instructor. The lessons are very structured and he's really calm and relaxed, which I like when I'm in a stressful driving situation. And at the moment I've had about 20 hours of lessons. Today was the first day I went out practising with my dad as well. If you can find somebody to go in the car with you, that's just helpful because it's just good to get as much practice as you can before the

test. The other reason why I think I've been so much more successful this time is because this time I have the motivation to actually want to learn, which is really important, I think.

This brings me onto the final thing I want to talk about today, which is the pros and cons of learning to drive, because there are some disadvantages as well as advantages. One of the main disadvantages is the cost. Learning to drive is an expensive process. The theory test costs £23, I think, and the practical test costs £62, so just that alone is quite a bit of money. Driving lessons themselves can be quite expensive, and if you do learn to drive and you want to actually drive in a car, then you have to be insured and the insurance can be expensive. So, it's not the cheapest thing to learn to do. Obviously, driving a car overtaking public transport is not so good for the environment, so that's something to bear in mind, and if you live in a really big city with good public transport links, you don't necessarily need a car.

But there are definitely good reasons to learn to drive. For a teenager or a young adult like me, it does give you independence. Instead of having to rely on my parents to drive me to places, I can drive myself. But the main reason why I want to drive is because it's a really useful skill, and I just don't know when I'm going to need it. I don't know where I'm going to live when I finish university. I don't know what kind of job I'm going to get. I don't want to not be able to go for an opportunity in life because I can't drive.

I hope you enjoyed this video about learning to drive. It's quite an exciting thing to do, a bit scary at times but also an important thing and kind of a rite of passage. Fingers crossed I pass, and I might make another video for you nearer the time about the test and how that was, if, if that is something you guys would be interested in. And I'll see you in the next video!