

Becoming a Supervisor- Training Techniques

Commentary driving

This is an effective way to teach the learner how to drive.

While you are driving explain to the learner the skills you use, what you are thinking and the decisions you make. Many of your driving skills will have become second nature to you. It will take a bit of practice to notice them again, but all you need to do is verbalise everything that's going through your mind while you drive. You can start doing this even before your learner has their learner's permit and continue any time they ride in the car with you.

Here are just a few of the things you can mention:

- Where you are looking – as far ahead as you can see, at the sides of the road and at the cars in front of your vehicle.
- What you are noticing – lights changing, the indicator on the car in front, and hazards on the sides of the road.
- What you do in response – slow down, back off, prepare to brake and check your mirrors in case you have to stop in a hurry.

As the learner's driving improves, you can get them to start performing this exercise themselves. This is a good way for the learner to practice and for you to identify what they are actually noticing and thinking.

Spot the errors

It's useful for you and your learner to watch other drivers and look out for any errors they make. This will confirm how wary of other drivers they need to be, and also highlight good and bad driving behaviour.

Common errors are:

- Speeding
- Tailgating
- Obstructing other vehicles (e.g. blocking intersections, failing to pull over to the left lane).

Rehearse between sessions

Encourage your learner to rehearse driving activities in their mind after each session and also before their next session.

Braking practice

- Watch your driver to see at what point they start to brake on the approach to a red light or intersection.
- Do they stop correctly when using the available stopping space?
- Ask them to try to estimate how many seconds it will take for the car to come to a complete stop.



Following distances

Have a go at judging whether your driver is travelling at a safe following distance from the car in front, by using the two second rule:

- Watch the vehicle in front of you pass an object by the side of the road, such as a tree. As soon as the end of the vehicle passes the object, count two seconds ("one thousand, two thousand"). If you are travelling at a safe distance, your car should not reach that same object until the two second count has finished.

Hazards

Hazards include anything on or near the road, changes in the road condition, objects on the road and other road users who may stop abruptly or change lanes without notice.

Here are just some of the things you can do to help your learner to react appropriately to a hazard:

- Teach the learner to scan the driving environment.
- Encourage the learner to check mirrors and blind spots regularly.
- Look ahead to anticipate what is happening in the distance.
- Anticipate possible events – being legally in the right doesn't always mean it's a good idea to proceed. Just because traffic lights are green, it doesn't mean the intersection is clear. Encourage learners to assume that other drivers will make mistakes, so they need to anticipate what might happen.
- Explain driving hazards – a hazard, or danger, does not have to be caused by a human or an animal. It can be caused by bright sunlight, dark shadows, oil residue on the road, a pothole and/or debris.



