



Theory Test &
Hazard Perception
Test explained



Theory Test & Hazard Perception Test explained

This part of the DSA theory test for car drivers consists of 50 multiple choice questions. Associated with each question is a list of potential answers. You need to select the correct answer, or answers, by touching the appropriate area of the computer screen. Please see below for details. You will be given 57 minutes to complete the test. To pass you need to correctly answer 43 out of the 50 questions (i.e. 86%).

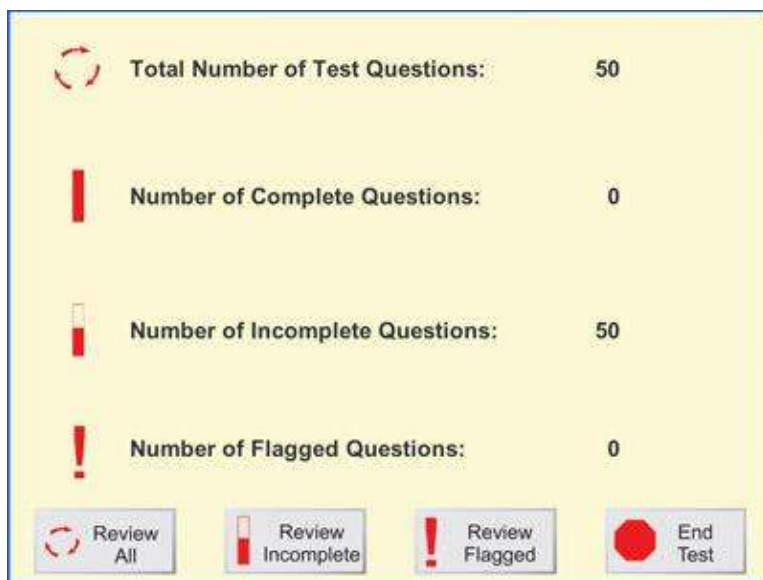
THE EXAMINATION PROCESS

Before you start the test, a short video tutorial will explain how the test should be undertaken. You will be given the opportunity to complete some practice questions to make sure you are familiar with the computer screens.

As you can see from the layout of the theory test computer screens above, you move from one question to the next by touching the arrowed buttons at the bottom. To select any answer, press the button on the screen next to the answer you wish to select. The answer will then be highlighted with a blue background. To deselect an answer simply touch the answer button on the screen again. This will cause the highlighted blue background to disappear.

The red text in the top left-hand corner will tell you how many answers to mark (i.e. to select). This text will flash if you have not selected sufficient answers and try to move onto another screen. If you press again it will let you move on even if you still haven't supplied sufficient answers. In this case the question will be recorded as incomplete.

If you wish to flag a question so that you can review it later, you will need to press the flag button at the bottom of the screen. This will cause the flag button to turn red.



At any point you can call up the review screen by pressing the review button (see above). This screen enables you to check all the questions and your answers from the start. Alternatively you can just review those questions flagged or those questions incomplete (i.e. not fully answered or not attempted). You will also need to press the review button so that you can end the test. To end the test you press the end test button on the review screen.

The test will automatically end if you run out of time. The time you have left to finish answering the questions is shown at the top right hand side of the question and answer screen.

HINTS AND TIPS

Before you press on the end test button in the review screen make sure that the number of complete questions equals 50, the same as the total number of test questions.

If this is not the case review those questions not fully answered or not attempted (i.e. incomplete questions), and any that you have flagged. Incomplete questions require you to select one or more answers until you have marked the required number as indicated by the red text in the top left hand corner of the question and answer screen.

Even if you have completed all the questions, and provided you have the time, it is worth the effort of reviewing all your answers again before pressing the end test button. You can do this by pressing the **Review All** button on the review screen.

Once you have completed the test you will be given the option of a 3-minute break before you move on to the next part of the test, hazard perception.

ANALYSING THE RESULTS

At the end of the theory test (i.e. after completing both parts you will be given your result for this part of the test and a list of those DSA categories where you answered a question incorrectly. Unfortunately, the DSA will not tell you which questions were wrongly answered only the category they relate to.

BOOKING THE TEST

You can obtain a theory test application form from any driving or theory test centre or by telephoning the theory test enquiry line on **0870 0101 372** or 0845 600 6700 in Northern Ireland, between 8am and 6pm Monday to Friday. Welsh speakers can also book on 0870 0100 372. If you are deaf and need a minicom machine telephone 0870 0106 372. Upon booking you will be given a booking number and sent an appointment card as confirmation within 4 days. Please note you can apply for you car provisional driving licence up to three months before your seventeenth birthday. This would enable you to book your theory test on your seventeenth birthday or shortly thereafter.

CANCELLING THE TEST

You are required to give a minimum of three clear working days' notice of your decision to cancel or postpone your test, otherwise you will lose your test fee.

ARRANGING A RE-TEST

If you fail the test you will have to wait a minimum of three clear working days before you can take the test again.

OTHER LANGUAGES SUPPORTED

The test is not only available in English, the following languages are also supported:

Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Cantonese, Farsi, Gujarati, Hindi, Kurdish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu, Welsh.

Through a headset you will be able to listen to the test being read in any of the above languages. In Northern Ireland other language tests are only available in Cantonese, Bengali and Urdu.

OTHER SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

The DSA are required to make every effort to ensure that the theory test can be taken by all candidates. However, it is important that you discuss your needs with them when booking the test.

To help candidates with dyslexia or other reading problems a headset can be provided with an English language voice-over. You can also ask for up to double the normal time to complete the test. If you have any queries please ring the number stated earlier and ask for the Special Needs section.

If you cannot read or write in any of the languages provided, you are allowed to bring a translator with you. However, it must be a DSA approved translator.

Hazard Perception

This part of the theory test requires you to view 14 hazard video clips on the computer screen of approximately one minute each. You are required to watch these clips as if you were the driver. There will be 15 hazards to find - at least one on each clip. However, one clip will have 2 hazards. The hazard clips will not contain any sound - just like the old silent movies.

You click either the left or right mouse button whenever you think you can see a hazard developing. The speed at which you click the mouse button as a hazard develops will determine your score for that particular hazard clip. You can score between 0 and 5 on each hazard. Therefore the maximum you can score is 75 (i.e. 15 hazards x 5). To pass you need a score of 44.

THE EXAMINATION PROCESS

The hazard perception part of the theory test will start with a short video tutorial played on the computer screen that will explain how the hazard perception test works and what you are required to do. At the end of this clip you have the option to go onto the test or play the tutorial again.

Each hazard clip will start with a freeze frame of the start of the video sequence and a count down from 10 will commence. At the end of the count down the clip will start to play and you will be required to click the mouse button each time you see a developing hazard.



To let you know that the program has registered your click a red flag will appear on a grey band across the bottom of the screen – one flag for each click you make in any particular clip. At the end of the clip all the flags will be removed before you start the next clip.

Although each clip contains several potential hazards only the one that materialises into a real hazard and involves other road users is marked. This is known as a **developing hazard**. Therefore, you will only receive a score if you spot a hazard before it fully materialises and is brought about by the action of another road user. You will know if the hazard materialises because the driver will have to take evasive action (e.g. slow down, stop or swerve out of the way).

HOW TO SCORE

The score you obtain will be dependent upon how quickly you spot the developing hazard. The time from when the developing hazard could be potentially seen on the screen to when the vehicle arrives at the hazard is the time frame or window used to determine your score.



This window of time is divided into 5 equal segments. If you click the mouse while in the first segment (i.e. just as the developing hazard appears) you will obtain the maximum score of 5 points. If you click in the second segment of this window of time you will score 4 points, then 3, then 2 and then in the last segment just 1. This is accurate to one twenty fifth of a second.

If you click several times during this window of time the computer will always take your highest score and record that for that particular clip. If you don't click the mouse button in this window of time you will score nothing in respect to that hazard.

If you try to cheat the system by clicking the button repeatedly throughout the video clip the computer program will pick this up. It

does this by analysing the number of clicks over the clip as a whole and the pattern of clicks. Within the scoring window no such checks are made and if you click several times in this window only the first click will be used to determine your score, as stated earlier (i.e. the highest scoring click).

There is a certain maximum number of permitted clicks for any clip. However, this is far higher than the potential hazards anybody could reasonably perceive. If the computer program determines that you may be cheating a message window will appear at the end of the clip letting you know that an irregular clicking activity was detected and that as a result the score for that clip will be zero.

When the clip ends the screen will turn black for a few seconds before the freeze frame for the next video clip appears and the count down commences again, warning you to get ready. This pattern is repeated until all 14 video clips have been shown.

At the end of the hazard perception part of the theory test you will be given the option to complete a customer care survey if you so wish.

You will then be directed to leave the room and collect your score for the two parts of the exam. The maximum score that can be obtained for the hazard perception part of the theory test is 75 (i.e. 15x5). To pass the hazard perception part of the car, moped and motorcycle theory test you must obtain a score of 44. To pass the theory test you must pass both parts. If you fail either part you are required to take both parts of the test again.

HINTS AND TIPS

When watching the video clips do not be frightened to click the mouse button whenever you see a potential hazard involving another road user (i.e. anything that you think may cause the driver to change speed, position or direction). Watch the hazard and if it continues to materialise continue to click the mouse button. This will ensure that you click within the scoring window.

Some of these potential hazards will not materialise and therefore you will not receive a score for spotting them. For example, if the cyclist shown in the developing hazard sequence on the previous illustration stopped at the end of the side road (i.e. at the 4 point stage) the hazard would not have materialised. In the actual clip the cyclist was travelling too fast to stop. This was the real clue to what was going to happen next.

In a few instances it is difficult to determine when a potential hazard becomes a developing hazard and therefore when the scoring window should start. This is why it is safer to click a few times as you see a hazard develop to make sure you don't click too early and miss the opening of this window.



In the example above (supplied by the DSA) you will notice a very young child riding a bike on the pavement. This alone may be

classified as a potential hazard, particularly as the child is unsupervised.

However, the scoring window on this clip doesn't open until the child starts to turn towards the road to cross it as shown below and highlighted by the red circle. This is the point at which the potential hazard becomes a developing hazard and the scoring window opens.



Therefore if you had only clicked your mouse button once as you saw the child riding her bike along the pavement you would have scored zero. Therefore, remember to click the button a couple of times as the hazard develops to avoid this problem.

TYPES OF HAZARD

The types of hazards you need to look for are:

- Pedestrians or cyclists crossing the road
- Vehicles emerging from side roads, parking places or driveways
- Large vehicles moving over to your side of the road
- Meeting oncoming vehicles on narrow roads or where other obstructions or slow moving vehicles make the road narrow
- Where animals may wander onto the road