Illinois Driver Education Standards

The Illinois Driver Education Standards were adopted with the enactment of Public Act 102-0951, which required the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to develop rigorous learning standards for driver education for the 2024-2025 school year. A stakeholder group including educators, administrators, a student representative, and representatives from the Illinois Secretary of State, Illinois State Police, Illinois Department of Transportation, and ISBE created the standards.

Driver Education Practices

The Illinois Driver Education Standards were adapted from the Novice Teen Driver Education and Training Administrative Standards, which were developed and written by the Association of National Stakeholders in Traffic Safety Education in affiliation with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration.

The Illinois Driver Education Standards encompass both classroom and behind-the-wheel activities. Students should master the classroom lessons before being introduced to the corresponding behind-the-wheel standards to ensure they are able to both comprehend and apply the necessary knowledge and skills. The standards shall be implemented with the most current version of the Illinois Rules of the Road, published by the Illinois Secretary of State, as the primary supporting text.

In addition, there are state rules and regulations that may apply to driver education coursework or curriculum. These rules and regulations can be found in the Illinois Vehicle Code [625 ILCS 5] and 92 Ill. Adm. Code 1030.

All standards are coded for ease of use and reference. The code is keyed as follows:

"Content Area.Content Domain.Number of Standard"

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Illinois Driver Education Standards
Classroom Standards

DE.C.1. Preparing To Operate a Vehicle

DE.C.1.1. Graduated Driver License (GDL) Requirements and Responsibilities

DE.C.1.1.1. Identify the GDL requirements and responsibilities.

DE.C.1.1.2. Understand driving with temporary impairment and permanent disabilities, including the use of controlled substances (i.e., illegal and legal drugs that are controlled by the government and are more likely to be abused by individuals) and the use of prescription and over-the-counter medicines.

DE.C.1.1.3. Identify the risk of injury for drivers and passengers in a vehicle.

DE.C.1.2. Rules of the Road, State and Local Requirements

DE.C.1.2.1. Identify and describe the purpose of signs, signals, and road markings.

DE.C.1.2.2. Identify and describe legal stops and speed regulations.

DE.C.1.2.3. Describe pedestrian and bicyclist rights and responsibilities.

DE.C.1.3. Vehicle Operating Space

DE.C.1.3.1. Identify visual limitations to the front, rear, and sides of the vehicle.

DE.C.1.3.2. Identify the length and width of the vehicle's blind spot.

DE.C.1.3.3. Identify how to mitigate the impact of blind spots through the use of enhanced mirror settings.

DE.C.1.4. Preparing to Drive a Vehicle

DE.C.1.4.1. Describe the impact of mental and physical well-being on the operation of a motor vehicle.

DE.C.1.4.2. Identify strategies for managing emotions while operating a motor vehicle.

DE.C.1.4.3. Identify and describe proper use of safety equipment to protect self and others (e.g., active/passive restraints and guidelines for children, airbags, and impact protection).

DE.C.1.4.4. Describe pre-check procedures to ensure personal safety (e.g., checking outside and inside vehicle before opening door and locking doors after entry).

DE.C.1.4.5. Identify and describe how to make basic vehicle adjustments necessary for safe operation (e.g., adjustments to seats, mirrors, safety restraints, etc.).

DE.C.1.4.6. Identify and describe the functions of basic gauges, alerts, and warning lights.

DE.C.1.4.7. Identify the purpose and use of a vehicle's owner manual.

DE.C.1.4.8. Describe the importance of routine vehicle checks and the importance of performing scheduled maintenance to ensure tire and engine safety.

DE.C.2. Understanding Vehicle Controls

DE.C.2.1. Identify visual and mental requirements.

DE.C.2.1.1. Identify the three basic visual fields (i.e., central, fringe or focal, and peripheral) and how they are used in the driving task.

DE.C.2.1.2. Compare visual skills to mental perception

DE.C.2.1.3. Identify techniques to improve visual skills.

DE.C.2.1.4. Identify techniques to improve mental perception of traffic events.

DE.C.2.1.5. Identify techniques to overcome visual deficiencies.

DE.C.2.2. Define targeted line of sight, target to end path of travel, and reference vehicle to path of travel.

DE.C.2.3. Identify or describe basic motion control techniques, maintaining suspension balance, and communication techniques.

DE.C.2.3.1. Describe how speed affects vehicle direction.

DE.C.2.3.2. Describe basic concepts essential for maintaining suspension balance while placing a vehicle into motion and maneuvering the vehicle in a variety of conditions.

DE.C.2.3.3. Identify the purpose of the dead pedal.

DE.C.2.3.4. Identify and describe appropriate use for each communication technique, including the use of a turn signal before turning and changing lanes, use of headlights for visibility, and use of the horn.

DE.C.2.3.5. Describe how to apply a firm squeezing braking force at the beginning of the braking process and how to bring the vehicle to a smooth stop.

DE.C.3. Introducing Traffic Entry Skills

DE.C.3.1. Identify and describe all signs, signals, and pavement markings featured in the Illinois Vehicle Code.

DE.C.3.2. Identify and describe roadway characteristics, including intersection types, traffic calming devices, surface conditions, slope/grade, traction potential, highway conditions, and lane controls.

DE.C.3.3. Utilize the space management system (i.e., the Identify, Predict, Decide, and Execute (IPDE) process).

DE.C.3.3.1. Identify conditions for searching changes to path of travel, changes to the line of sight, and changes in road surface and condition.

DE.C.3.3.2. Identify situations for evaluating alternative paths of travel, appropriate position, appropriate speed, and communication.

DE.C.3.3.3. Describe skills needed to execute decisions, including speed changes, position changes, and communication needs.

DE.C.4. Space Management and Vehicle Control Skills in Moderate Risk Environments

DE.C.4.1. Identify and describe the principles of the IPDE process for managed-risk vehicle operations.

DE.C.4.1.1. Practice commentary response to identify speed and position adjustment development, reference points for maneuvers, and rear space/zone view conditions.

DE.C.4.1.2. Identify blind spots and truck no-zones for different types of vehicles.

DE.C.4.2. Identify and describe basic procedures for reduced-risk speed management.

DE.C.4.2.1. Describe procedures for reduced-risk speed management for a variety of driver, road, and vehicle positions.

DE.C.4.2.2. Identify or describe strategies, as appropriate, for navigating roadway and traffic flow in varying contexts on limited access roadways and roadways without limited access at speeds up to 55 m.p.h. (e.g., space management, intersection entry, curve navigation, and planned passing).

DE.C.4.2.3. Identify or describe strategies, as appropriate, for navigating roadway and traffic flow in varying contexts on limited access roadways and roadways without limited access at maximum highway speeds (to include, but not limited to space management, intersection entry, curve navigation, and planned passing).

DE.C.5. Factors Affecting Driver Performance

DE.C.5.1. Define legal responsibility to not use alcohol, cannabis, and other substances that affect the ability to operate a vehicle safely and develop strategies for alternative means of safe transportation.

DE.C.5.2. Discuss the importance of driver fitness to aid managed-risk driver performance and identify factors that can cause inattention to task and may result in injury and physical damage crashes (e.g., internal/external vehicle distractions, fatigue, and aggression).

DE.C.5.3. Describe the impact of temporary impairments and long-term disabilities and identify strategies to compensate or enhance for managed-risk driver performance.

DE.C.5.4. Describe the importance of driver attentiveness and identify types of internal/external distractions that could lead to inattentive and distracted driving (e.g., passengers, electronic devices, and other tasks).

DE.C.6. Managing Adverse Conditions

DE.C.6.1. Describe the impact of varying weather conditions on visibility and traction and identify appropriate strategies to navigate roadways and maneuver a vehicle in varying contexts.

DE.C.6.2. Describe the impact of driving in low or no light conditions on visibility and space management and identify strategies to ensure safe operation of a vehicle.

DE.C.6.3. Describe the increased risk of driving through road construction and maintenance zones and identify appropriate strategies to navigate roadways and ensure safe operation of a vehicle.

DE.C.7. Other Roadway Users

DE.C.7.1. Describe the characteristics and limitations of a variety of motorized vehicles and identify appropriate space management principles to apply in varying contexts (e.g., heavy commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles, trailers, motorcycles, farm vehicles, snowmobiles/ATVs, and funeral processions).

DE.C.7.2. Describe the characteristics and limitations of a variety of non-motorized vehicles and pedestrians and identify appropriate space management principles to apply in varying contexts (e.g., pedal/bicycles, personal transport, horse-drawn equipment, and pedestrians).

DE.C.7.3. Describe the characteristics and limitations of a variety of tracked vehicles and identify appropriate space management principles to apply in varying contexts (e.g., freight trains, passenger trains, rapid transit, and cable/trolley cars).

DE.C.8. Responding to Emergencies, Vehicle Malfunctions, and Crashes, and Understanding Vehicle Technology

DE.C.8.1. Describe a variety of vehicle malfunctions and identify appropriate managed-risk responses for varying contexts (e.g., electronic, signals, engine/fuel/ignition systems, steering/suspension systems, tires, and braking systems).

DE.C.8.2. Discuss applications and limitations for current and emerging vehicle technologies as they become available in the future.

DE.C.8.3. Discuss how the roadway system is managed by law enforcement and other State agencies to assist with emergencies, crashes, and vehicle malfunctions.

DE.C.8.4. Describe the responsibilities for attending to a crash scene situation.

DE.C.8.5. Identify appropriate responsibilities and responses when encountering emergency or disabled vehicles on or near a roadway (see Section 11-907 of the Illinois Vehicle Code).

DE.C.8.6. Identify and describe law enforcement procedures for traffic stops and appropriate interactions with law enforcement, including a demonstration of the proper actions to be taken during a traffic stop by drivers and passengers.

DE.C.8.7. Describe proper actions to be taken following vehicle disablement for a variety of roadside emergencies in varying roadway and environmental conditions.

DE.C.9. Making Informed Consumer Choices

DE.C.9.1. Perform map-reading and trip planning exercises using current and emerging technology, including, but not limited to, static maps and interactive maps.

DE.C.9.2. Identify factors to consider when purchasing vehicle insurance and an automobile.

Illinois Driver Education Standards

Behind-the-Wheel Instruction Learning Standards

DE.BTW.1. Preparing To Operate a Vehicle

DE.BTW.1.1. Identify the visual limitation to a vehicle for the front, rear, right side, and left side.

DE.BTW.1.2. Describe the limited visual view in the rear-view mirror.

DE.BTW.1.3. Identify how to appropriately apply the traditional and enhanced mirror view settings for the rear and side view mirrors in a variety of contexts.

DE.BTW.1.4. Adjust head restraints, seat position, mirrors, safety restraints, and steering wheel position, as appropriate.

DE.BTW.1.5. Check all occupants for appropriate safety restraint use.

DE.BTW.1.6. Identify basic indicators and gauges that need attending before placing the vehicle into motion.

DE.BTW.1.7. Follow basic procedures to start the vehicle.

DE.BTW.1.7.1. Identify and place brake in set position, as required by law and the vehicle's owner's manual.

DE.BTW.1.7.2. Identify and select proper gear for starting the vehicle.

DE.BTW.1.7.3. Identify and secure foot brake pedal.

DE.BTW.1.7.4. Identify and describe alert lights for safety accessories.

DE.BTW.1.7.5. Demonstrate proper use of ignition starting device.

DE.BTW.1.7.6. Select appropriate gear for movement.

DE.BTW.1.7.7. Turn on headlights and identify appropriate settings for automatic features and manual selection for a variety of environmental factors.

DE.BTW.2. Placing the Vehicle into Motion

DE.BTW.2.1. Follow basic procedures to place the vehicle into motion.

DE.BTW.2.1.1. Identify open space to enter before moving foot from brake to accelerator.

DE.BTW.2.1.2. Place the vehicle into motion smoothly.

DE.BTW.2.2. Follow basic procedures to appropriately bring the moving vehicle to a stop.

DE.BTW.2.2.1. Identify braking needs after searching ahead of the vehicle.

DE.BTW.2.2.2. Apply controlled braking with heel of foot on the floorboard.

DE.BTW.2.2.3. Bring the vehicle to a smooth stop by squeezing on and off brake pedal.

DE.BTW.2.2.4. Visually check the rear zone/space before, during, and after braking actions.

DE.BTW.2.3. Follow basic procedures to appropriately steer a vehicle in motion.

DE.BTW.2.3.1. Appropriately use targeting procedures for intended path of travel.

DE.BTW.2.3.2. Utilize a balanced hand position on the wheel, as appropriate for the vehicle.

DE.BTW.2.3.3. Maintain intended path of travel by matching speed to steering for a variety of situations.

DE.BTW.2.3.4. Utilize hand-over-hand, hand-to-hand, or evasive action steering methods, as appropriate for a variety of situations.

DE.BTW.2.3.5. Utilize a visual search pattern including checking the rear-view mirror, sideview mirrors, and mirror blind spot areas.

DE.BTW.2.4. Demonstrate appropriate vehicle placement within typical lane positions with appropriate distance from curb or lane lines for a variety of situations (i.e., backing, turning right, and turning left).

DE.BTW.3. Securing the Vehicle

DE.BTW.3.1. Bring the vehicle to a stop in a safe and legal position.

DE.BTW.3.2. Set the parking brake as required by state law and vehicle owner's manual.

DE.BTW.3.3. Shift vehicle into PARK prior to removing foot from brake pedal.

DE.BTW.3.4. Visually check the flow of traffic before opening the door to safely exit the vehicle.

DE.BTW.3.5. Ensure doors are locked and secure any alarm system before leaving the vehicle unattended.

DE.BTW.4. Traffic Entry and Intersection Approach

DE.BTW.4.1. Demonstrate appropriate use of signals, visually check mirrors, and visually check blind spots before moving into roadway.

DE.BTW.4.2. Demonstrate appropriate use of visualization to identify a target, target area, and targeting path to maintain the intended path of travel.

DE.BTW.4.3. Demonstrate appropriate use of searching to the target, target area, and targeting path to determine appropriate strategies to maintain the intended path of travel.

DE.BTW.4.4. Demonstrate appropriate focal vision attention for multiple traffic situations.

DE.BTW.4.5. Make speed and lane position adjustments to maintain an appropriate minimum following distance based on road conditions.

DE.BTW.4.6. Apply appropriate strategies of adjustment when changes to ability to see, line of sight, or path of travel are presented.

DE.BTW.4.7. Identify open, closed, or changing zones/spaces and apply appropriate strategies for a variety of situations.

DE.BTW.4.8. Demonstrate appropriate use of searching and evaluating intersection zones/spaces before entering an intersection.

DE.BTW.4.9. Demonstrate appropriate use of searching and evaluating to apply appropriate speed and position adjustments before entering a curve or hill crest for a variety of situations.

DE.BTW.4.10. Demonstrate appropriate rearview and side view mirror usage for multiple traffic situations.

DE.BTW.5. Vehicle Operation in Moderate Risk Environments

DE.BTW.5.1. As appropriate, utilize managed risk strategies for navigating roadway and traffic flow in varying contexts on limited access roadways and roadways without limited access at speeds up to 55 m.p.h. (e.g., space management, intersection entry, curve navigation, and planned passing).

DE.BTW.5.2. As appropriate, utilize managed risk strategies for navigating roadway and traffic flow in varying contexts on limited access roadways and roadways without limited access at maximum highway speeds (e.g., space management, intersection entry, curve navigation, and planned passing).

DE.BTW.6. Vehicle Operation in Adverse Conditions

DE.BTW.6.1. As appropriate, use managed-risk strategies to navigate roadways and safely operate a vehicle in varying weather conditions.

DE.BTW.6.2. As appropriate, use managed-risk strategies to navigate roadways and safely operate a vehicle while driving in low or no light conditions.

DE.BTW.6.3. As appropriate, use managed-risk strategies to navigate roadways and safely operate a vehicle when sharing a roadway with other motorized vehicles (e.g., heavy commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles, trailers, motorcycles, farm vehicles, snowmobiles/all-terrain vehicles, or vehicles used during funeral processions), non-motorized vehicles (e.g., pedal/bicycles, personal transport, or horse-drawn equipment), pedestrians, and tracked vehicles (e.g., freight trains, passenger trains, rapid transit, or cable/trolley cars).

DE.BTW.7. Demonstrate correct procedures for tasks from the Cooperative Driver Testing Program exam, including uphill and downhill parking, turnabouts, backing, lane changes, stop signs and traffic signals, navigating intersections, and railroad tracks.