

THE TEST

A Taking the test is something every driver should consider. Not only will you have the satisfaction of knowing that you are as good a driver as you think you are, but also that you have developed your skills on the road to that of an expert.

B **We are here to help you pass.**

There is a nationwide network of local groups waiting to offer you free advice and assessments to prepare you for your big day. Details of how to contact them are available from our Administrative Officer. [Isle of Wight Group of Advanced Motorist contact Ms Jill Shead - 524831]

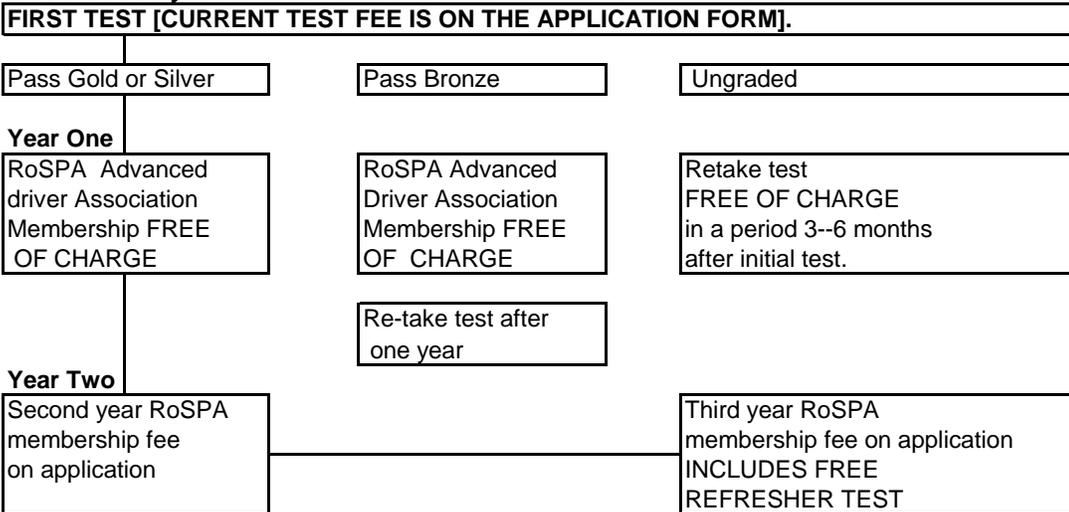
C **You will gain too, from :-**

Better insurance premiums. Improved fuel consumption. Less wear and tear on your vehicle and that is not all--you will become more confident and skillful, able to demonstrate a safe and systematic approach to your driving.

D The following pages contains guidance notes for you to help you understand the basic principles behind the test. If you are a motorcyclist or HGV driver, contact us and we will send you the information specific to your test.

The following TEST notes are for your guidance. Your appointed Observer will take you through each phase on your observed runs, until you are ready for your pre-test run, prior to the test.

How the test system works :-



All members of RoSPA Advanced Drivers Association also receive a regular copy of **Care on the Road-- FREE OF CHARGE.**

NOTE: Fees could change for second and subsequent years check with the Chief Observer or Chairman of IWGAM for any price change.

GUIDANCE NOTES FOR CANDIDATES

Administration

- All test administration is handled at RoSPA headquarters in Birmingham. The administrative officer can be contacted during office hours. Outside office hours an answer service operates. Please preface message for RoDA Association.
- Many examiners are serving police officers who work shifts, so please book your test a month in advance.
- You may be asked to travel a short distance to meet the examiner or to start the test away from a congested area e.g. Central London.
- All examiners hold a UK Police Class One driving qualification. You are therefore assured of a uniformly high standard from one of the best trained drivers in the country. Many are Police Driving Instructors.
- On receipt of your application we will contact the nearest examiner to you. He will choose the most suitable of your alternative dates and then either send or telephone you with details of a convenient meeting place and time. Test will last at least one and a half hours and cover a variety of road conditions. Please be prepared to produce your driving licence and insurance certificate to the examiner. A senior examiner may wish to travel on the test to check on standards. He will take no part in testing you and will not accompany the test if you object.
- If at the moment you are prevented from keeping your appointment, it is unlikely that we will be able to cancel the examiner's journey. He may even have taken a day's leave to test you. Please only cancel your appointment in unavoidable circumstance. A short notice postponement i.e. less than three days will incur a charge.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

- If I am accepted as a member of The RoSPA Advanced Drivers Association, I will regard driving of a motor vehicle of any kind, as a responsible task which requires full concentration. I believe that road safety depends on skilful handling, unselfish thinking and a total acceptance of responsibility for all that the vehicle does.
I undertake :--
- To do everything possible to further these ideals amongst other road users.
- To remember that all people have equal rights on the road.
- To take a regular refresher test.
- To pay such annual and retest fees which shall be prescribed.
- To notify the Administrative Officer if I am convicted of a driving offence attracting penalty points and to undergo a further test if so required.
- To return the badge [the property of the Association] to the Administrative Officer on my ceasing for any reason, to be a member of the Association.

The Test

The following notes give some of the basic points which examiners will look for during a test and they in no way replace a careful study of 'Roadcraft'.

The examiner will do his best to set you at ease. He will expect to see that your car appears to be in a roadworthy condition and that visibility is not obscured by misting or for other reasons. Before starting you should have carried out a full safety check and the examiner will expect a check on brakes as you first move away. [Known as, cockpit check and rolling brake check].

It is unlikely that anyone will gain a Gold Pass without a good knowledge of 'Roadcraft' the Police driver's handbook, which is obtainable at most bookshops or local groups.

The RoSPA publication 'Road Sense' will also help you. Police Class One drivers have had many weeks of full time training in order to achieve their grade. It is appreciated that this is not possible for other motorists, but the examiner will nevertheless be looking for a satisfactory display of systematic driving. He will explain any points which are causing difficulty. It is worth explaining here that not all police drivers have the police Class One qualification. For example the driver of a local patrol car is likely to have had only limited extra tuition. However all Association examiners will have had considerable experience of many types of police vehicles, at Class One.

The use of the Controls.

Your use of the steering wheel will be watched to see that you position the vehicle correctly. Your hand and arm position and the way you hold and move the steering wheel will be assessed.

Your use of the clutch should be smooth and delicate. Single declutching will be accepted although your examiner will be pleased to see double declutching where appropriate, if you have been taught this method. Slipping or riding should not occur.

The use of the gearbox will tell the examiner a lot about your ability. The way you make the change, the position of your hand on the gear lever, the matching of the engine revolutions to road speed and the correct timing of your changes will all be considered.

Intelligent use of the intermediate gears, omitting them when appropriate, may well make a difference to the final grade you achieve.

The use of 'hold' and 'kickdown' on the automatic box, together with starting and heavy traffic procedures will be noted.

The use of the brakes will play a big part in the examiner's final assessment. He will look for smoothness, early braking at the right place in the 'system' skid avoidance by correct technique and a 'tapering' of the pressure so that the vehicle is brought to a smooth halt without any jerkiness.

Is the accelerator being used correctly - firmly where it is needed and precisely and under control at all times? Is the driver displaying acceleration sense, varying the speed of the car to meet changing conditions without braking and smoothly applying power in the right quantity at all times?

The 'system' will also play a big part in the use of mirrors. You will certainly be expected to use them properly in the correct sequence, but additionally to have a very accurate knowledge of what is going on behind you at any given moment. Over the shoulder looks in the appropriate places are required.

The examiner will ask himself 'Does the candidate use the horn when it is necessary, with the right note for the situation? On the other hand is he/she aggressive in its use?'

Driving Performance.

Moving off and stopping is it smooth, precise and were all safety measures applied and the 'system' used? Could you carry a theoretical bucket half-full of water in the boot without it slopping over?

The examiner will want to see a knowledge of the 'system' displayed so that your driving actions are always in the correct sequence. Amongst other things he will look to see if you brake before or after changing gear and whether your signals are too early or too late.

The way the car is positioned at junctions, on the approach to roundabouts and on the open road will be commented on with particular reference to the approach to hazards and the use of lanes.

Cornering both in town and at maximum speed on the open road will be of major importance. Does the line you take at speed give maximum vision and safety margin, and allow you to compensate for any tendency of the car to over or understeer? Was the speed selected properly and were all controls used correctly whilst cornering?

The examiner will note carefully whether your signals are missed, or unnecessary, or wrongly timed. He will be looking for reinforcement of indicators by arm signal where necessary and will also note your reaction to traffic signs, which must be in good time and correct.

You will be asked to reverse, safely, competently and precisely.

Advanced drivers must be capable of controlling their vehicle at up to the legal maximum speed. While the use of speed must at all times be safe and legal, the examiners will want to see a brisk drive with good progress made where possible.

Overtaking manoeuvres require the driver to ask himself at least ten questions and examiners will look for evidence that those questions are being considered.

General Ability

No driver who slumps at the wheel or rests an elbow can be considered advanced and your alertness will be considered.

Your consideration for other road users and self discipline will also reveal itself, as will your temperament which---at least when driving--- should be calm and relaxed, but decisive.

We expect an Association member to respect his vehicle and drive in a way which will not abuse it or produce potential faults waiting to trap a future driver---'kerbing' front near side wheels is a good example of the latter.

- One of the principal differences between the novice and expert driver is a huge amount which the latter sees and applies to his driving plan. He will be looking far ahead at speed covering a field of vision considerably wider than the road itself and always looking for clues which will tell him what is likely to happen around the next bend.
- In congested traffic, while not able to look so far ahead, he will always be fitting observations into a plan of action, watching not just the car in ahead, but the one in front of the one in front of that. He will not be forced into an unplanned action or move out of the correct system sequence. If you wish to give a commentary to the examiner to demonstrate your powers of observation, he will be pleased for you to do so, but this is not regarded as essential. The examiner may invite you to 'think aloud' for a few minutes and this will obviously greatly help him to judge your driving.
- Your ability to judge distance, relating this to the speed of your own and other vehicles will be noted, as also will the way you link this ability with your braking and acceleration.
- Finally to conclude the test, you will be asked several questions on the Highway Code and basic car mechanics. The examiner will certainly want to see evidence that you have studied the code, which is a must for everyone, but will not expect you to hold a degree in engineering.

After the test

- At the end of the test the examiner will discuss any points that have arisen and will inform you whether you have passed the test and if so, what class you have achieved. He will follow this with a report to us which will be typed and sent to you within four to six weeks. Examiners do not handle cash for badges etc, these will be offered to you in a covering letter with the report. Candidates who pass the advanced test will also be sent a signed certificate.
- If you achieve a Gold or Silver pass in your test drive you will be expected to take a refresher test at subsequent three-year intervals. This is included in the annual subscription fee. Members who wish to take a refresher test before their fee test is due will normally be expected to pay a re-test fee. All bronze members must take a test once a year until they achieve an upgrading. Candidates who do not reach the bronze standard are permitted to take a retest after a period of three months, during which it is hoped they will have been able to improve their technique through the guidance offered. A member who is downgraded below the Bronze standard is required to take a retest between three and six months in order to retain membership. Examiners decisions on grading are final and cannot be altered except by retest as above.
- If your grading was below Gold, and you wish to improve it, we do suggest that if possible you join a local group, since you will then be in touch with other members who can offer advice and perhaps informal tuition. Visits to skid pans and other events of interest to enthusiastic motorists are also arranged by many groups.
- Finally, when your retest is due, you will receive a reminder and a booking form. The retest or refresher test must be taken within a reasonable time in order to retain membership.

