

# Enforcement: Backing up Graduated Licensing

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## A safe start for new drivers

Graduated licensing allows new drivers to gain the driving experience they need in a controlled, lower-risk environment. The driving skills new drivers learn in their first three years of driving establish habits that last a lifetime. In addition to obeying the rules of the road, new drivers must also observe conditions and restrictions. These are gradually reduced as new drivers gain experience.

B.C.'s Graduated Licensing Program (GLP) was introduced in 1998. In its first three years, GLP reduced the new driver crash rate by 16 per cent.

Meanwhile, drivers in the novice stage are still over-represented in crashes, being about 45 per cent more likely to be involved in a crash than more experienced drivers. As well, these crashes tend to be more severe. One in four crashes involving GLP novice drivers results in an injury or fatality. The risk of being in a crash, for new drivers, is very real.

That's why additional rules and conditions were introduced in 2003 for both the learner and novice stages (see back for new driver conditions). Graduated licensing saves lives and reduces injuries.

## Consequences of breaching conditions

A new driver may be fined \$109 and have penalty points recorded on their driving record if they break **any** of the learner or novice stage driving restrictions. They may also be fined and have penalty points and/or driver risk premiums recorded on their driving record for speeding or other traffic violations.

More points or more serious offences may result in a prohibition from driving. The prohibition may be from one month to a year or more.

## Breaching zero Blood Alcohol Content (BAC)

If a new driver violates the blood alcohol restriction, or operates a vehicle while under the influence of drugs, they may receive an immediate 12-hour roadside suspension or 24-hour roadside prohibition. Police may also impound their vehicle.

Suspensions and prohibitions will be recorded on their driving record and they may face a further prohibition as a result. They may also have to pay a Driver Risk Premium (DRP).

## Driving while prohibited

A new driver who drives while prohibited is subject to significant penalties including vehicle impoundment, penalty points, a stiff fine and jail.

## Graduated licensing conditions\*

### Learner stage

In this stage of the program, new drivers:

- must be accompanied by a supervisor aged 25 or more who holds a valid Class 1-5 licence (for passenger vehicle learners) or Class 6 licence (for motorcycle learners)
- must have a zero blood alcohol content while driving
- must display an official "L" new driver sign
- may carry one passenger in the vehicle in addition to the supervisor (motorcycle learners may not carry any passengers)
- can drive between 5 a.m. and midnight only.

### Novice stage

In this stage of the program, new drivers:

- must have a zero blood alcohol content while driving
- must display an official "N" new driver sign
- may carry only one passenger in the vehicle unless the other passengers are immediate family ("immediate family" is defined as: mother, father, sister, brother, spouse, child, or grandparent — this includes step or foster relationships.) or there is a supervisor aged 25 or older who holds a valid Class 1-5 driver's licence.
- must drive a minimum of 24 consecutive months without a driving prohibition.

\*These conditions are shown as restrictions on a learner's or novice's driving licence. Some of these conditions have been added or changed, effective October 6, 2003. For drivers in GLP prior to October 6, 2003, the previous GLP conditions continue to apply until:

- they renew their licence under the new rules
- they pass the Class 7 or 8 road test and receive a novice licence under the new rules
- they receive a driving prohibition. After their prohibition ends, their licence will be re-instated under the new rules
- they pass the Class 5 or 6 road test and exit GLP.

### Statement of Limitation

The information in this publication is intended to provide general information only and is not intended to provide legal or professional advice. We have used plain language to help readers understand some of the laws affecting the topic of this publication at the date it was written. You should follow the more detailed wording and requirements of current applicable statutes and regulations, even if they contradict the wording and requirements set out in this publication.

## New drivers with an unsafe driving record

A new driver who accumulates penalty points by breaking graduated licensing conditions or the rules of the road may, at the discretion of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles, be prohibited from driving.

### Impact of driving prohibition

#### Learner stage

A new driver's stay in the learner stage will be extended by the length of time the driver was prohibited from driving. None of the time spent under prohibition counts as time required in the learner stage of GLP.

#### Novice stage

A prohibition in the novice stage will result in a new driver losing the driving time accumulated in this stage. When a novice driver's licence is re-instated after a prohibition, the driver will have to start the novice stage all over again.

## Need more information?

For more information on graduated licensing, call 1-800-950-1498 (toll-free throughout B.C.) or 250-978-8300 (in Victoria) or visit [icbc.com](http://icbc.com).