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Canada • Class 7 Knowledge Test

Alberta

Study Guide

KNOWLEDGE POINTS	CHAPTERS	EDITION
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CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1: Licensing Information

1.1 Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Program

All new drivers in Alberta, regardless of age, are part of the GDL program, which consists of a Learner stage (Class 7) and a Probationary stage (Class 5-GDL) before obtaining a full, non-GDL Class 5 licence.

- ✓ Stage 1 (Learner - Class 7) requires being 14+, passing vision and knowledge tests, and holding the licence for at least one year.
- ✓ Stage 2 (Probationary - Class 5-GDL) requires being 16+, holding a Class 7 for a year, and passing the Class 5 road test. This stage lasts a minimum of two years.
- ✓ Stage 3 (Full Class 5) requires being 18+, completing the 2-year probationary stage, and being suspension-free for the last 12 months.
- ✓ A GDL driver is suspended upon accumulating 8 or more demerit points.
- ✓ GDL drivers must maintain a zero alcohol and drug level when driving.

1.2 Class 7 Learner's Licence Conditions

Drivers with a Class 7 licence are in the first stage of the GDL program and must adhere to specific restrictions to gain experience safely.

- ✓ Must be accompanied by a fully-licensed (non-GDL), 18+ driver seated next to them.
- ✓ Not permitted to drive between midnight and 5 a.m.
- ✓ Not permitted to have more passengers than seat belts.
- ✓ Must have a zero alcohol/drug level when driving.

1.3 Class 5-GDL Probationary Licence Conditions

After passing the Class 5 road test, drivers enter a two-year probationary period with specific conditions.

- ✓ Must have no more passengers than seat belts.
- ✓ Suspended at 8 or more demerit points.
- ✓ Must have a zero alcohol/drug level when driving.
- ✓ Cannot re-class to a commercial licence (Class 1, 2, 3, or 4).
- ✓ Cannot act as a supervising driver for a learner.

1.4 Class 5 Road Test Requirements and Failures

The Class 5 road test assesses a driver's ability to operate a vehicle safely. Certain actions will result in an automatic failure, regardless of the point total.

- ✓ Vehicle must be in acceptable working condition (lights, brakes, horn, tires, etc.) with valid registration and insurance.
- ✓ Automatic failures include: exceeding the speed limit, failing to stop completely at stop signs or for right turns on red, failing to yield right-of-way, and obstructing traffic.
- ✓ Climbing a curb while parking or being unable to park legally in three attempts is an automatic failure.
- ✓ Failing to slow down and observe adequately at uncontrolled intersections is an automatic failure.

1.5 Licence Classes and Vehicle Operation

A Class 5 licence allows for the operation of most cars and light trucks, but has restrictions.

- ✓ A Class 5 licence permits operation of a 2-axle vehicle, an RV with up to 3 axles, and towing a trailer without air brakes.
- ✓ A Class 5 licence holder cannot operate a motorcycle (unless learning), a vehicle with seating for more than 15 people (transporting passengers), a vehicle for hire, or a vehicle with air brakes without a 'Q' endorsement.

1.6 Medical Requirements and Condition Codes

Drivers have a legal obligation to disclose any medical condition that may affect their ability to drive safely. Conditions or endorsements may be added to a licence.

- ✓ A medical report is required for drivers aged 75 and older at renewal.
- ✓ A medical report is required for Class 1, 2, or 4 licence applications and renewals.
- ✓ Condition codes (e.g., 'A' for corrective lenses) indicate special requirements.
- ✓ Endorsement codes (e.g., 'Q' for air brakes) indicate special training.

1.7 New Alberta Residents

New residents must exchange their out-of-province licence for an Alberta licence within a specific timeframe.

- ✓ New residents from other parts of Canada must exchange their licence within 90 days of moving to Alberta.
- ✓ It is illegal to hold more than one Canadian driver's licence at a time.
- ✓ Alberta has reciprocal licensing agreements with several jurisdictions, which may simplify the exchange process for a Class 5 licence.

CHAPTER 2

Chapter 11: Alberta Specifics

2.1 High-frequency Points

- ✓ Dual Left Turn Lanes: This is a classic Alberta trap. If turning from the second lane from the left, which lane must you enter? (Answer: The corresponding second lane on the new road).
- ✓ The 60 km/h Rule (Expanded): Your current bank mentions this, but the exam often asks: "On a multi-lane highway, does the 60 km/h limit apply only to the lane adjacent to the emergency vehicle or all lanes?" (Answer: All lanes in the same direction).
- ✓ Block Heaters & Winter Prep: Since Alberta is famously cold, the manual recommends using a block heater when temperatures drop below -15°C.
- ✓ Uncontrolled Intersections (Urban vs. Rural): Questions specifically about "T-intersections" where no signs exist (the vehicle on the right still has right-of-way).
- ✓ School Bus with "Amber" vs. "Red" lights: Alberta uses an 8-light system. Amber means "preparing to stop," Red means "stop immediately."

CHAPTER 3

Chapter 2: Traffic Control

3.1 Traffic Light Signals

Traffic lights direct the flow of traffic at intersections. Understanding each color and symbol is critical for safety.

- ✓ Red Light: Stop before the stop line or crosswalk. A right turn is permitted after a full stop unless a sign prohibits it. A left turn from a one-way to a one-way is also permitted after a full stop unless prohibited.
- ✓ Yellow Light: Stop before the intersection unless the stop cannot be made safely.
- ✓ Green Light: Proceed if the intersection is clear. Yield to pedestrians and vehicles already in the intersection.
- ✓ Flashing Red Light: Treat as a stop sign.
- ✓ Flashing Yellow Light: Proceed with caution.
- ✓ Green Arrow: Proceed only in the direction of the arrow after yielding to pedestrians and vehicles in the intersection.

3.2 Sign Shapes and Colours

The shape and colour of a traffic sign provide instant information about its meaning.

- ✓ Octagon (Red): Stop.
- ✓ Triangle (Red/White): Yield.
- ✓ Diamond (Yellow): Warning of a hazard ahead.
- ✓ Pentagon (Fluorescent Yellow-Green): School zone or school crosswalk ahead.
- ✓ Square (Black/White): Regulatory information like speed limits.
- ✓ Rectangle (Green): Guide and information signs.
- ✓ Orange: Construction and maintenance warning.

3.3 Regulatory Signs

These signs inform drivers of traffic laws or regulations and are mandatory to obey.

- ✓ Speed Limit: Indicates the maximum legal speed in ideal conditions.
- ✓ Prohibitive Signs (Red circle with a slash): Indicate an action is not permitted (e.g., No U-Turn, No Left Turn).
- ✓ Permissive Signs (Green circle): Indicate an action is permitted.
- ✓ Designated Lane Signs: Show which lanes must be used for specific movements like turning or going straight.

3.4 School and Playground Zones

These zones have reduced speed limits to protect children. The times they are in effect are critical to know.

- ✓ School Zone: Has a reduced speed limit that is in effect on school days during specified hours.
- ✓ Playground Zone: Has a reduced speed limit that is in effect every day from 8:30 a.m. until one hour after sunset.

3.5 Construction Zones

Construction zones are indicated by orange signs. Drivers must slow down and be cautious.

- ✓ Obey all signs and instructions from flag persons.
- ✓ Be prepared for lane closures, detours, and sudden stops.
- ✓ Speeding fines are doubled in construction zones when workers are present.

3.6 Pavement Markings

Lines and symbols painted on the roadway guide traffic and indicate regulations.

- ✓ Yellow Lines: Separate traffic moving in opposite directions. A broken yellow line means passing is allowed when safe; a solid yellow line means passing is not allowed.
- ✓ White Lines: Separate traffic moving in the same direction. A broken white line means lane changing is allowed; a solid white line means lane changing is discouraged or prohibited.
- ✓ Stop Line: A solid white line indicating where to stop at an intersection.
- ✓ Crosswalk: Marked by two parallel white lines or a ladder pattern; drivers must yield to pedestrians within it.

3.7 Pedestrian Signals

Pedestrian signals at intersections indicate when it is safe for pedestrians to cross. Drivers must yield to pedestrians.

- ✓ White 'Walk' Symbol: Pedestrians may begin to cross.
- ✓ Flashing Orange 'Don't Walk' Hand: Pedestrians should not start crossing; those already in the crosswalk should finish crossing.
- ✓ Solid Orange 'Don't Walk' Hand: Do not enter the intersection.

CHAPTER 4

Chapter 3: The Basics of Driving

4.1 Parking on a Hill

When parking on a hill, the front wheels must be turned in a specific direction to prevent the vehicle from rolling into traffic if the brakes fail.

- ✓ Uphill with a curb: Turn wheels to the left (away from the curb).
- ✓ Uphill without a curb: Turn wheels to the right (toward the shoulder).
- ✓ Downhill (with or without a curb): Turn wheels to the right (toward the curb or shoulder).
- ✓ Always set the parking brake firmly.

4.2 Pre-Drive Checks

Before starting the vehicle, a driver should perform a quick check around the vehicle and adjust the cabin for safety.

- ✓ Walk around the vehicle to check for obstacles, children, or pets.
- ✓ Adjust your seat, mirrors, and steering wheel.
- ✓ Ensure all passengers have fastened their seatbelts.

4.3 Steering Control

Proper hand position and steering technique are essential for vehicle control.

- ✓ Keep both hands on the outside of the steering wheel.
- ✓ Recommended hand positions are 9 and 3 o'clock or 8 and 4 o'clock.
- ✓ Use hand-over-hand or push-pull steering methods for turns.

4.4 Stopping Distance

The total distance it takes to stop a vehicle is composed of perception time, reaction time, and braking time. It is affected by various factors.

- ✓ Stopping distance increases with speed.
- ✓ Poor road conditions (wet, icy) and poor vehicle conditions (worn tires, brakes) significantly increase stopping distance.
- ✓ Driver impairment or fatigue increases reaction time and stopping distance.

4.5 Reversing

Backing up requires careful observation as visibility is limited.

- ✓ Before reversing, check that the path is clear.
- ✓ Look over your right shoulder through the rear window for the best view.
- ✓ Use mirrors for assistance, but do not rely on them alone.
- ✓ Reverse slowly and be prepared to stop.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter 4: Intersections and Turns

5.1 Right-of-Way at Intersections

Right-of-way rules determine who should yield and who should proceed at an intersection to prevent collisions. The law specifies who must yield.

- ✓ At an uncontrolled intersection (no signs or signals), yield to the vehicle on your right.
- ✓ At a 4-way stop, the vehicle that arrives first proceeds first. If two vehicles arrive at the same time, the vehicle on the right proceeds first.
- ✓ When turning left, you must yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.
- ✓ Drivers must yield to pedestrians at all marked and unmarked crosswalks.

5.2 Uncontrolled Intersections

These intersections have no signs or signals and require extreme caution.

- ✓ Slow down as you approach and be prepared to stop.
- ✓ Scan for traffic from the left and right.
- ✓ Yield the right-of-way to any vehicle that is in the intersection or to the vehicle on your right if you arrive at the same time.

5.3 Traffic Circles and Roundabouts

These circular intersections are designed to improve traffic flow, but have specific rules for entry and exit.

- ✓ Slow down on approach.
- ✓ Yield to traffic already circulating within the circle (vehicles approaching from your left).
- ✓ Enter the correct lane based on your intended exit.
- ✓ Use your right signal to indicate you are exiting.

5.4 Proper Turning Procedures

Executing turns safely requires proper lane positioning, signalling, and speed control.

- ✓ Signal your intention well in advance.
- ✓ Scan for hazards, check mirrors, and check your blind spot.
- ✓ For a right turn, approach in the far right lane and turn into the far right lane of the new road.
- ✓ For a left turn from a two-way street, approach in the lane closest to the centre line and turn into the lane to the right of the centre line on the new road, yielding to all oncoming traffic.

5.5 Two-Way Left Turn Lanes

A shared centre lane marked for left turns from both directions of traffic.

- ✓ This lane is to be used only for preparing to make a left turn.
- ✓ Do not use this lane for passing or as a through-traffic lane.
- ✓ Do not enter the lane too early.

5.6 U-Turns

A U-turn is a 180-degree turn. They are illegal and unsafe in many situations.

- ✓ U-turns are not permitted at intersections controlled by traffic lights.
- ✓ U-turns are not permitted where a sign prohibits them.
- ✓ Do not make a U-turn unless you can see at least 150 metres in both directions and it will not interfere with other traffic.

CHAPTER 6

Chapter 5: Highways and Freeways

6.1 Entering a Highway (Merging)

Merging safely onto a high-speed highway requires matching the speed of traffic in the acceleration lane.

- ✓ Use the acceleration lane to build up speed to match the flow of traffic on the highway.
- ✓ Signal your intention to merge.
- ✓ Look for a safe gap in traffic and merge smoothly.
- ✓ Traffic on the highway has the right-of-way; do not force your way in.

6.2 Exiting a Highway

Exiting a highway requires signalling in advance and using the deceleration lane to slow down.

- ✓ Signal your intention to exit well in advance.
- ✓ Move into the deceleration lane (exit lane).
- ✓ Begin to slow down only after you are in the deceleration lane, not on the main highway.
- ✓ Be aware of the lower speed limit on the exit ramp.

6.3 Passing on a Highway

Passing other vehicles must be done safely and legally.

- ✓ On multi-lane highways, the left lane is for passing. The right lane is for travel.
- ✓ Ensure you have a clear path and it is legal to pass (broken line).
- ✓ Check mirrors and blind spots before changing lanes.
- ✓ Return to the right lane only when you can see the entire front of the vehicle you passed in your rearview mirror.

6.4 Emergency Stopping Lane (Shoulder)

The shoulder of a highway is reserved for emergencies only.

- ✓ Do not stop on the shoulder to make a phone call, check a map, or rest.
- ✓ If you have an emergency, pull over as far to the right as possible.
- ✓ Turn on your hazard lights to warn other drivers.

CHAPTER 7

Chapter 6: Emergency Situations and Challenging Conditions

7.1 Responding to Emergency Vehicles

When an emergency vehicle or tow truck is stopped on the side of the road with its lights flashing, drivers must slow down and move over.

- ✓ When passing a stopped emergency vehicle or tow truck with flashing lights in the adjacent lane, you must slow to 60 km/h, or the posted speed limit if it is lower.
- ✓ If the road has two or more lanes in your direction, you must move into a lane farther away from the stopped vehicle if it is safe to do so.
- ✓ Fines are doubled for speeding past stopped emergency vehicles.

7.2 Loss of Control (Skidding)

A skid occurs when tires lose their grip on the road. The correct response is crucial to regain control.

- ✓ Look and steer in the direction you want the front of the vehicle to go.
- ✓ Take your foot off the accelerator and the brake.
- ✓ Do not make any sudden movements with the steering wheel, accelerator, or brakes.

7.3 Driving in Challenging Conditions

Adverse weather and road conditions require adjustments to driving, such as reducing speed and increasing following distance.

- ✓ In rain, fog, or snow, reduce your speed and turn on your headlights (low beams in fog).
- ✓ Increase your following distance to allow for longer stopping distances on wet or icy roads.
- ✓ Be aware of hydroplaning on wet roads, which is a loss of contact between the tires and the road surface.

7.4 Vehicle Mechanical Problems

Knowing how to react to sudden vehicle failures can prevent a more serious situation.

- ✓ Tire Blowout: Grip the steering wheel firmly, ease off the accelerator, and brake gently once the vehicle is under control.
- ✓ Brake Failure: Pump the brake pedal rapidly. If that fails, use the parking brake gently and shift to a lower gear.
- ✓ Stuck Accelerator: Shift the vehicle into neutral (N) and apply the brakes.

7.5 Involvement in a Collision

If you are involved in a collision, there are specific legal duties you must perform.

- ✓ Stop your vehicle at or near the scene without obstructing traffic.
- ✓ Provide assistance to anyone who is injured.
- ✓ Exchange names, contact information, and insurance details with the other driver(s).
- ✓ Report the collision to the police if anyone is injured or if the total property damage exceeds the provincially mandated amount.

CHAPTER 8

Chapter 7: Responsible Driving

8.1 Passenger Safety

The driver is responsible for the safety of their passengers, which includes ensuring they are properly restrained.

- ✓ It is the driver's responsibility to ensure all passengers under the age of 16 are properly secured with a seatbelt or in a child safety seat.
- ✓ All occupants of a vehicle must wear a seatbelt.
- ✓ Children must be in an appropriate, government-approved child safety seat based on their age, height, and weight.

8.2 Proactive (Defensive) Driving

Proactive driving involves anticipating potential hazards and taking action to avoid them. It is a key component of being a safe driver.

- ✓ Maintain a safe following distance. Use the two-second rule in good conditions, and increase it in poor conditions.
- ✓ Continuously scan your surroundings, including far ahead, to the sides, and in your mirrors.
- ✓ Always have an escape route in mind in case of a sudden hazard.
- ✓ Communicate your intentions to other road users using signals, brake lights, and horn when necessary.

8.3 Fuel Efficiency and Environmental Responsibility

Driving habits have a direct impact on fuel consumption and the environment.

- ✓ Avoid aggressive driving, such as rapid acceleration and hard braking.
- ✓ Maintain a steady speed and observe speed limits.
- ✓ Avoid unnecessary idling for more than 60 seconds.
- ✓ Ensure your vehicle is well-maintained, with properly inflated tires.

CHAPTER 9

Chapter 8: Sharing the Road

9.1 School Buses

Special rules apply when approaching a school bus to ensure the safety of children.

- ✓ Alternating flashing yellow lights mean the bus is preparing to stop. You should slow down and be prepared to stop.
- ✓ Alternating flashing red lights and an extended stop arm mean you must stop.
- ✓ When the red lights are flashing, drivers in both directions must stop, unless the highway is divided by a physical median.
- ✓ Do not proceed until the red lights stop flashing and the bus begins to move.

9.2 Vulnerable Road Users

Pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists are more vulnerable in traffic. Drivers must be extra cautious around them.

- ✓ Yield to pedestrians at all marked and unmarked crosswalks.
- ✓ Give cyclists at least one metre of space when passing.
- ✓ Motorcyclists are harder to see and can stop more quickly than cars; increase your following distance.
- ✓ Always check your blind spots for cyclists and motorcyclists before turning or changing lanes.

9.3 Railway Crossings

Extreme caution must be used at all railway crossings.

- ✓ Slow down, listen, and look both ways before crossing.
- ✓ Obey all warning signals, including flashing lights, bells, and gates.
- ✓ Never stop on the railway tracks.
- ✓ Some vehicles, like school buses and those carrying dangerous goods, must stop at all uncontrolled crossings.

9.4 Commercial Vehicles (Trucks)

Large trucks have different operating characteristics, including large blind spots and long stopping distances.

- ✓ Stay out of a truck's 'no-zones' - the large blind spots to the front, back, and sides of the vehicle.
- ✓ Do not cut in front of a truck, as they require a much longer distance to stop.
- ✓ Allow extra space when a truck is turning, as they may need to swing wide.

9.5 Snowplows

Snowplows make winter roads safer but present their own hazards.

- ✓ Stay well back from a snowplow. The recommended following distance is at least 10 car lengths.
- ✓ Do not pass a snowplow when it is in operation, as visibility can be severely reduced by the 'snow cloud'.
- ✓ Be aware that the road surface in front of the plow is likely to be in worse condition than behind it.

CHAPTER 10

Chapter 9: Driving within the Law

10.1 Impaired Driving (Alcohol and Drugs)

Driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs is a serious criminal offence with severe consequences.

- ✓ GDL drivers must have a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC) and zero drugs in their system.
- ✓ For fully licensed drivers, provincial sanctions begin at a BAC of 0.05, and a criminal charge can be laid for a BAC of 0.08 or higher.
- ✓ It is illegal to drive while impaired by any drug, including cannabis, prescription, or over-the-counter medications.
- ✓ Consequences include immediate licence suspension, vehicle seizure, fines, jail time, and a criminal record.

10.2 Distracted Driving

It is illegal to engage in distracting activities while driving, such as using a hand-held electronic device.

- ✓ Drivers are not allowed to use hand-held cell phones, text, email, or use other electronic devices while driving.
- ✓ Other prohibited activities include reading printed materials, writing, and programming a GPS (unless voice-activated).
- ✓ Penalties include a significant fine and demerit points.

10.3 Demerit Points

The demerit point system is used to track driving offences. Accumulating too many points results in licence suspension.

- ✓ A fully licensed (non-GDL) driver receives a warning letter at 8 demerit points and is suspended at 15 points.
- ✓ A GDL driver (Class 7 or 5-GDL) is suspended upon accumulating 8 demerit points.
- ✓ Demerit points remain on a driver's record for two years from the date of conviction.

10.4 Driver Fitness and Fatigue

A driver's physical and emotional state can significantly impact their ability to drive safely.

- ✓ It is dangerous and illegal to drive while fatigued.
- ✓ Recognize the signs of fatigue, such as yawning, heavy eyelids, and difficulty concentrating.
- ✓ If you feel tired, the only solution is to pull over in a safe place and rest.
- ✓ Strong emotions like anger can negatively affect your judgment and driving ability.

CHAPTER 11

Chapter 10: Towing a Trailer

11.1 Towing Equipment and Safety

When towing a trailer, you must ensure it is properly equipped and connected to the towing vehicle.

- ✓ The trailer must be registered and have its own licence plate.
- ✓ Use a proper hitch and two separate safety chains, crossed under the hitch.
- ✓ Ensure the trailer's lights (brake, tail, and signal) are connected and working.
- ✓ Depending on the trailer's weight, it may be required to have its own braking system.

11.2 Driving with a Trailer

Towing a trailer changes the vehicle's handling, acceleration, and braking characteristics.

- ✓ Allow for a much longer stopping distance.
- ✓ Make wider turns to prevent the trailer's wheels from hitting the curb or shoulder.
- ✓ Reduce speed, especially in crosswinds or when driving downhill.
- ✓ When reversing, turn the steering wheel in the opposite direction that you want the back of the trailer to go.