

Be aware. **And prepared.**

TEN STEPS TO A SWISS DRIVER'S LICENSE

1. First Aid Course for the Swiss Driver's License

2. Apply for Your Learner's License

Since January 1, 2021, you can start the application process from your 17th birthday. From then, you must go through a "Learning Phase" (Lernphase) of 12 months if you apply for your Learner's License before your 20th birthday.

- Pick up an application form from your local community, a police station or the road traffic office of your canton, or download it from the road traffic office's website.
- Take an eyesight test at an authorised optician. A list of authorised opticians is available online from your road traffic office. The eyesight test is only valid for 2 years.
- For a first time application, you must personally hand in all the documents at either your local community or the road traffic office.
- You must also bring the following documents when handing in your application form:
 - your ID (if you are non-Swiss, you must also bring your original Swiss residence permit)
 - Bring 2 passport photos. Note: some cantons require 3 passport photos.
 - Don't forget your first aid certificate, which may not be older than 6 years.
- Once all documents are handed in, you will receive a registration letter to sign up for the theory test.

3. Take the Basic Theory Test

- The basic theory test can only be taken the earliest one month before your 17th birthday (1 month before reaching the minimum age) and is valid for 2 years. The fee for the theory test is approx. CHF 36 and will be invoiced.
- Usually, the questions are answered at a computer and the answers are evaluated immediately afterwards.
- You must bring the following documents to the theory test:
 - ID (passport and foreigners also residence permit)

Note: If you fail to present both these documents, you will not be allowed to take the test.

Note 2: If you are late or do not come at all or the appointment is cancelled less than 4 working days in advance, you will still have to pay the examination fee.
- Once you have passed the theory test, the learner's license is mailed within 3 working days.
- If you don't pass the theory test first time round, you will receive a new permit afterwards. A period of minimum 14 days must lie between a failed theory test and a new attempt.
- You can only apply for the theory test once you have applied for the learner's license.
- Description of the theory test
 - 20 questions to be answered in 18 minutes
 - maximum points awarded 60
 - maximum error points 6



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3.1. Study for the Basic Theory Test

- You can study for the basic theory test using CDs or apps. The CD “CH-Fahrschule”, available online, at driving schools and bookshops, allows you to practise official test questions in 9 languages (German, French, Italian, English, Spanish, Portuguese, Turkish, Serbo-Croatian and Albanian) and costs approx. CHF 70.
- You can also download the iTheory app: <https://itheorie.ch/en>. The full programme is offered in English, German, French and Italian. Additionally, exam questions can be displayed in the following auxiliary language: Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Portuguese, Spanish, and Turkish.

3.2. Languages of the Basic Theory Test

- Not all cantons allow you to take the basic theory test in English. If your canton does not offer the test in your language, you can ask to transfer your basic theory test to a canton that offers it.
- The following cantons allow you to take the basic theory test in English: Bern, Glarus, St. Gallen, Thurgau, Neuenburg, Schwyz, Solothurn, Waadt und Zürich. For more details contact your cantonal road traffic department (Strassenverkehrsamt).

4. Your Learner's License

- Once you have passed the basic theory test, your learner's license and the permit for the practical test will be mailed to you.
- The Learner's License has a limited validity of 24 months. It expires after that time or if you failed the practical test three times in that period.

5. Take Practical Lessons (of course) and Get Lots of Driving Experience

Your Learner's License allows you to drive when accompanied by a person who is at least 23 years old and has had a category B driver's license for at least 3 years.

6. Verkehrskundeunterricht (Road Awareness Theory classes)

You can take the **Road Awareness Theory classes** any time before your practical driving test. You must attend all eight 90-minute lectures.

Note: the Road Awareness Theory classes are valid for 24 months and may only be taken after you have passed your basic theory test and you have been issued your Learner's License.

Road Awareness Theory classes are divided into four components:

1. Traffic View - understanding dangers of road traffic, functioning of the five senses, visual techniques for drivers)
2. Traffic Environment - other road users, understanding roads, weather and road conditions and time of day)
3. Traffic Dynamics - car safety, basic forces while driving, understanding moving and driving in road traffic)
4. Traffic Tactics - driving ability, eco-driving, looking ahead, vehicle maintenance



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Detailed explanations of the four components under: [http://translate.google.ch/translate?hl=en&sl=de&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fde.wikibooks.org%2Fwiki%2FAutofahren_\(Schweiz\)%3A_Theorie](http://translate.google.ch/translate?hl=en&sl=de&tl=en&u=http%3A%2F%2Fde.wikibooks.org%2Fwiki%2FAutofahren_(Schweiz)%3A_Theorie)

Most driving instructors only offer them in the local language.

7. Take the Practical Test

- You will be assessed by an expert from the road traffic department. When you pass, you will receive a provisional license, which is valid for 3 years during which you must participate in the mandatory further education classes required to receive the final license.
- You will be assessed on the following:
 - Motor vehicle drivers must have the ability and demonstrate behaviour that allows them at all times to:
 - control their vehicle and thus avoid dangerous traffic situations or react appropriately should such a situation arise.
 - observe and follow road regulations, in particular those that help avoiding accidents and ensuring smooth traffic flow.
 - contribute to the safety of all traffic participants through considerate and thoughtful behaviour, in particular towards weaker traffic participants.
 - drive economically and environmentally friendly.

Note: If you fail the practical test a second time, you need to provide a letter from the driving instructor that you are capable of driving. Failing a third time means you must pass an aptitude test before being allowed to try again.

8. Provisional License (2-Phase-Training)

- After having passed your practical driving test, you will be awarded a "Provisional License". The probation period is 3 years.
- In order to be granted to full license, you must attend the compulsory further education classes and you are subject to a stricter penalty regime.
 - The probation period will be extended by 1 year if your driver's license is revoked.
 - A second revocation leads to the annulment of your Learner's License and you must start the application process from the beginning. Furthermore, you are subject to a psychological assessment. A new license can only be awarded minimum 1 year after the revocation.

9. Compulsory Further Education

- Within the 3-year probation period you must participate in a one-day further education courses (from January 2020).
- Aim of this course is to learn to avoid dangerous traffic situations. The course is run as group training and is offered by accredited providers. Duration of the course is 1 day.
- The course day should be taken within 12 months of being awarded the Learner's License.



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- The course aims at helping new drivers develop a better understanding of everyday life on the streets and to draw the right conclusions for the future safety in road traffic. In practical exercises on training grounds, participants experience the physics of driving in their own car and learn their own limits and the limits of their vehicle to improve driving safety.
- The consequences when not participating in the compulsory further education course are that you will not be awarded a full driver's license. In case of illness or other serious circumstances, a grace period of 3 months is offered.

10. Full Driver's License

- After attending the compulsory further education course and if you were not involved in any traffic incidences during your probation period, you can apply for a full Driver's License.

Notes for Applicants for a Motorbike License

A motorbike learner's license is valid for four months. During this time, you have to attend the mandatory basic motorcycle courses 1, 2 and 3.

Category AM (small motorcycles):

Small motorcycles up to 45 km / h can be driven from 15 years of age.

Compulsory 3 basic motorcycle courses, practical test

Category A1 (motorcycles up to 125 ccm and max. 11KW power):

Since 2021 onwards, motorcycles up to 125 cc can be driven from the age of 16.

Compulsory 3 basic motorcycle courses, practical test.

(Holders of category B do not have to take an exam)

Category A2 (motorcycles up to 35KW)

This category replaces the previous A limited category and can be acquired from the age of 18.

Compulsory 3 basic motorcycle courses, practical test

A (motorcycles without restriction)

Anyone who wants to ride the most powerful motorcycles must first ride a category A2 motorcycle limited to 35 kW for at least 2 years. Direct entry into the stronger motorcycle categories is only possible for people who are professionally dependent on driving such motorcycles, such as motorcycle mechanics, police officers or traffic experts.

Practical exam

The three compulsory basic courses only have to be completed once. Either for category AM, or A1, or A2. This also applies to the theory test and the VKU.

While I have made every effort to provide you with the most-up-to-date and correct information, I cannot guarantee that the information is up-to-date, correct or complete.