

Safer for **Older Drivers**

For information on road safety please visit:
www.SussexSaferRoads.gov.uk

An illustration showing a pair of hands, one on the left and one on the right, gripping a black steering wheel. The hands are rendered in a light tan color, and the sleeves are a vibrant red. The background behind the wheel is a mix of grey and black, suggesting the interior of a car. The overall style is flat and graphic.

Sussex Safer Roads

PARTNERSHIP



**Road safety
is everyone's
responsibility.**

Introduction

For most people, driving is a part of life. Most of us drive on a weekly or daily basis, partly for the independence and freedom, but also because we enjoy driving.

Almost everything involves risk and driving is no exception. However, there are steps we can take to reduce these and make the roads safer for ourselves and others.

We are working with organisations such as Age UK, local authority road safety teams and the emergency services to ensure older drivers feel they have a safe and positive driving future.

What the Law Requires

As the driver it is your responsibility to make sure you are driving within your own capabilities and that your vehicle is safe to drive.

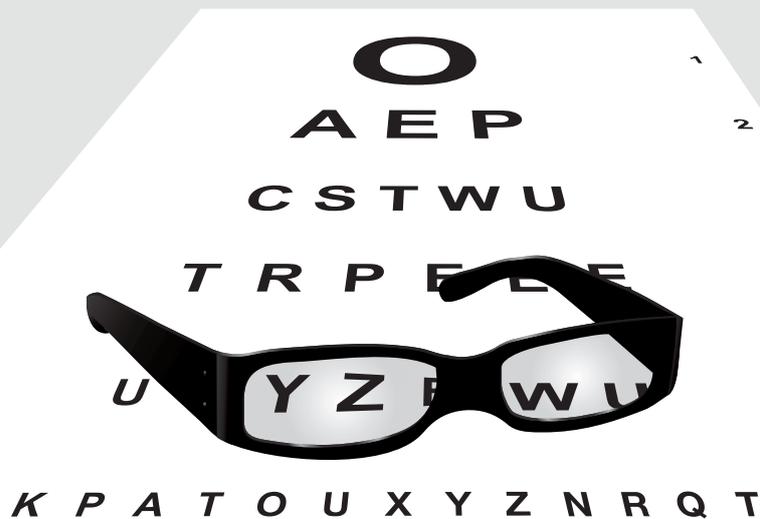
Older age is not necessarily a barrier to driving. Your driving licence will expire when you turn 70 but you can renew it for three years, and you'll need to keep renewing it for as long as you keep using it. You will need to declare that you are fit and able to drive safely. If you are not confident that you are able to make this judgement yourself you can seek professional advice.

As we get older our bodies gradually change. Some of these changes can affect our ability to drive, such as slower reaction times, weaker eyesight or weaker muscles. It is worth considering all these contributing factors when deciding if you are still fit to drive safely.



Health

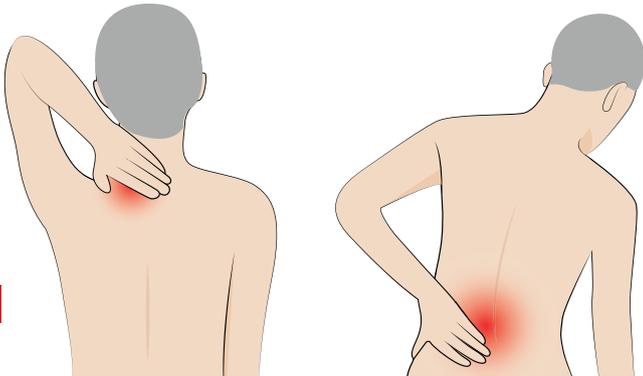
Eyesight - It is vitally important that you can see clearly and meet the 'standards of vision for driving.' You must be able to read a car number plate from 20 metres or 67 feet (with your glasses or contact lenses if you wear them). If you cannot do this then you should not be driving. If you are in any doubt you should see an optician or optometrist.



Medical condition - You must tell the DVLA if you have a medical condition or disability that could affect your ability to drive safely. These can include: epilepsy, strokes, mental health conditions, physical disabilities and visual impairments.

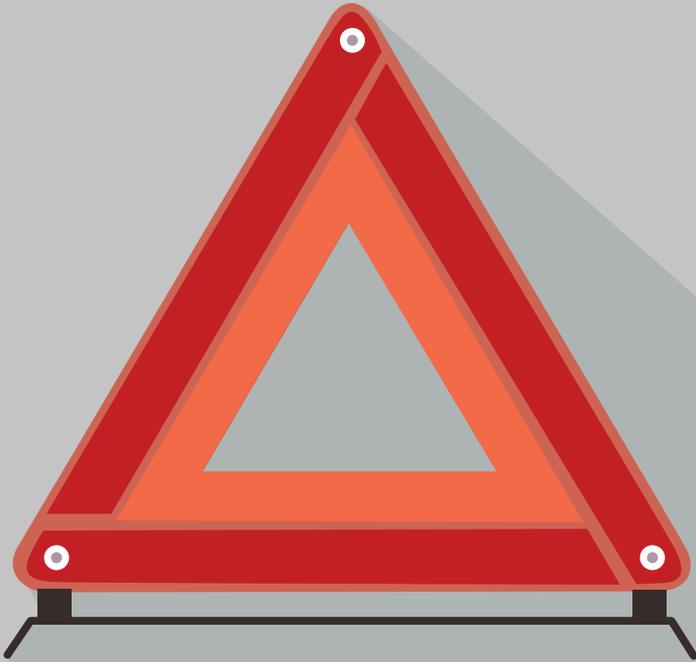
Hearing - For a car or motorcycle licence, you do not need to tell the DVLA if you are deaf, but we would advise that if you wear a hearing aid you keep it switched on whilst driving.

Flexibility and strength - Stiff joints, limited head movement, arthritis and muscle pain can reduce the ability to move, as well as the body's overall flexibility. This can affect your ability to drive safely. A simple exercise programme can help you stay fit, strong and supple.



Medicines - They can affect your concentration and reaction times and therefore your ability to drive. Driving under the influence of certain drugs is a criminal offence, even if they have been prescribed by a doctor. Always read the label and instructions and check with your doctor or pharmacist about any medications you have been prescribed.





Change how you Drive

If you find it difficult to drive in certain conditions, such as in the dark or when it is raining, then try to avoid these conditions.

If you feel you need to give yourself more time to react to situations, then do so by approaching a junction or hazard more slowly.

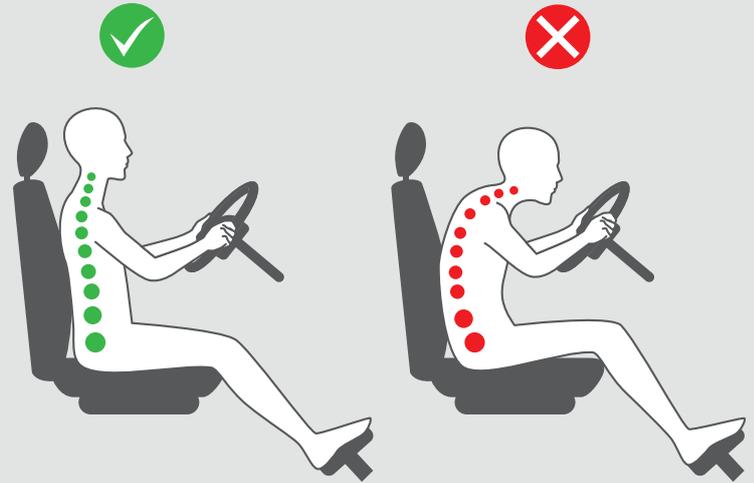
Give yourself enough time before moving off, making sure you have checked all around before you pull away.

Allow plenty of time for your journey so that you are not under pressure. Plan your route, including where you will park, include time for rests so that you are not tired.

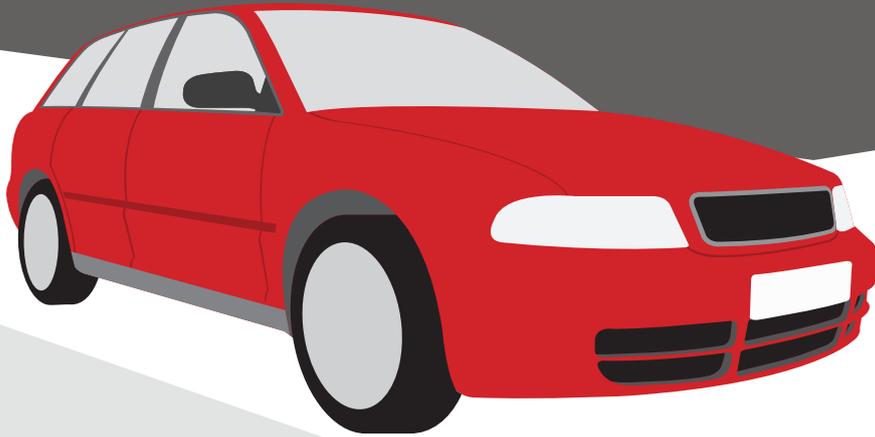
Preparation will give you confidence and time to think about the safest places to stop.

Are you sitting comfortably?

- ✓ Do you have a clear line-of-sight over your steering wheel? Your eyes should be at least 8cms (3ins) above the steering wheel.
- ✓ There should be at least 25cms (10ins) between your chest and the steering wheel.
- ✓ Make sure your seats is adjusted properly. Ask a friend to help you adjust the head-restraint so that the cushion is at the centre of the back of your head – not behind your neck.
- ✓ You should be able to fully depress the pedals without over stretching and you must be able to push the brake pedal down as far as it can go.
- ✓ Your seat belt should hold you firmly and comfortably and you should easily be able to buckle and unbuckle it.



- ✓ You should be able to turn your head to look over your shoulders when changing lanes or reversing.
- ✓ You should be able to sit comfortably without stiffness or pain in your body.
- ✓ You should be able to get in and out of the car easily.



Driving Safely

You or someone who cares about you may notice a combination of factors such as: slower reaction times, keeping your foot on the brake, trouble making turns, difficulties with low-light or night time driving, avoidance of driving to new or unfamiliar places or maybe some scrapes and dents in the car.

Some people continue to drive when they are not safe and this is a problem for all road users. Other people stop driving altogether when they might have been safe to continue with a little guidance and advice.

There are many elements that contribute to driving safely. Some of these are:

- vision
- spatial awareness
- hearing
- attention and concentration
- memory
- insight and understanding
- judgement
- adaptive strategies
- good reaction time
- planning and organisation
- ability to self-monitor
- sensation
- muscle power and control
- coordination

Refresher Courses

Experienced Driver Assessments (EDA)

If you are unsure about your ability to drive safely you can book a refresher course.

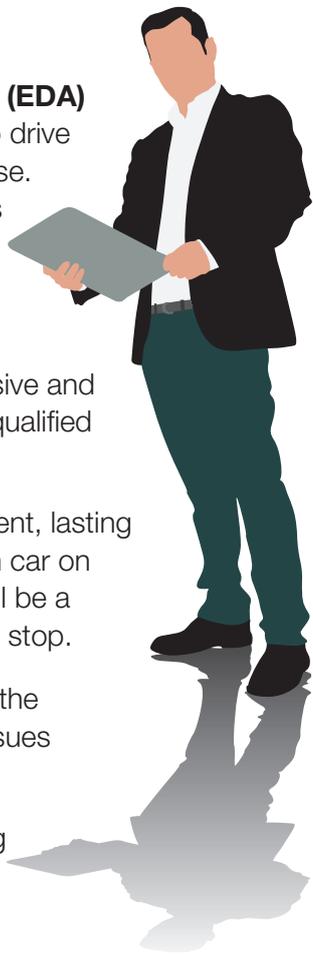
These are aimed at helping motorists think about driving issues and provide drivers with advice and techniques which might help them.

These courses are relatively inexpensive and the sessions are delivered by a fully qualified Approved Driving Instructor (ADI).

They consist of an on-road assessment, lasting about 45 minutes, in the driver's own car on roads they are familiar with. There will be a reversing exercise but no emergency stop.

During the session the driver will get the chance to talk through any driving issues that concern them.

Disabled drivers are welcome as long as they have a suitably adapted car.



Following the session, drivers will receive a verbal report from the ADI and, within a short time, a comprehensive written one. If the instructor has any specific concerns they will raise them with the driver. At this point he or she may decide to share them with family, friends or their GP, but they will not be reported to the DVLA. For further help and advice the driver can be referred to Age UK for counselling.

On the day:

- you need to bring a valid UK driving licence
- proof that the car is insured and roadworthy
- there will be an eyesight check – you will be asked to read a vehicle number plate from 67ft (20 metres)

EDA helps older drivers think about driving issues as they relate to them.

Depending on your local authority, for more information on EDA schemes contact:
Brighton and Hove City Council and West Sussex County Council - **Tel:** 0330 222 8999 (option 1)

e-mail: eda@westsussex.gov.uk

East Sussex County Council - **Tel:** 01273 482293

e-mail: eda@eastsussex.gov.uk

Is it Time to Stop?

If you are finding it difficult to drive or are concerned about your safety then you can drive less or stop driving altogether.

Some people will find it harder to stop driving than others; this may depend on where they live, the places they go or the people they travel with. There are many other options to driving and it is well worth checking out all these possibilities before making a decision.

For many people who have to stop driving it can come as a shock and therefore it is a good idea to plan ahead for this and take steps to slowly reduce driving before it becomes a necessity to stop completely.

Giving up driving could save you money. This simple list can help you work out the expense of running a car.

Loan Payment / Purchase Cost	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Regular Operating costs	
Petrol	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Regular Parking Fees	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Other	<input type="text" value="£"/>

Regular Maintenance Service costs	
Oil Change	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Wiper Blades	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Lights	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Cleaning	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Other	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Long-Term Maintenance	
Tyres	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Brakes	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Annual Service	<input type="text" value="£"/>
MOT Test	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Other	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Car Insurance	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Breakdown Cover	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Road Tax	<input type="text" value="£"/>
Total Cost Per Year	<input type="text" value="£"/>

Web Resources

Search for “older drivers” on:
www.SussexSaferRoads.gov.uk

Brake: www.bit.ly/brakeolderdrivers

ROSPA: www.bit.ly/rosipa-olderdrivers

IAM: search for “older drivers” www.iam.org.uk

Age UK: www.bit.ly/ageuk-carinsurance

Older Drivers: www.olderdrivers.org.uk

Bus Passes

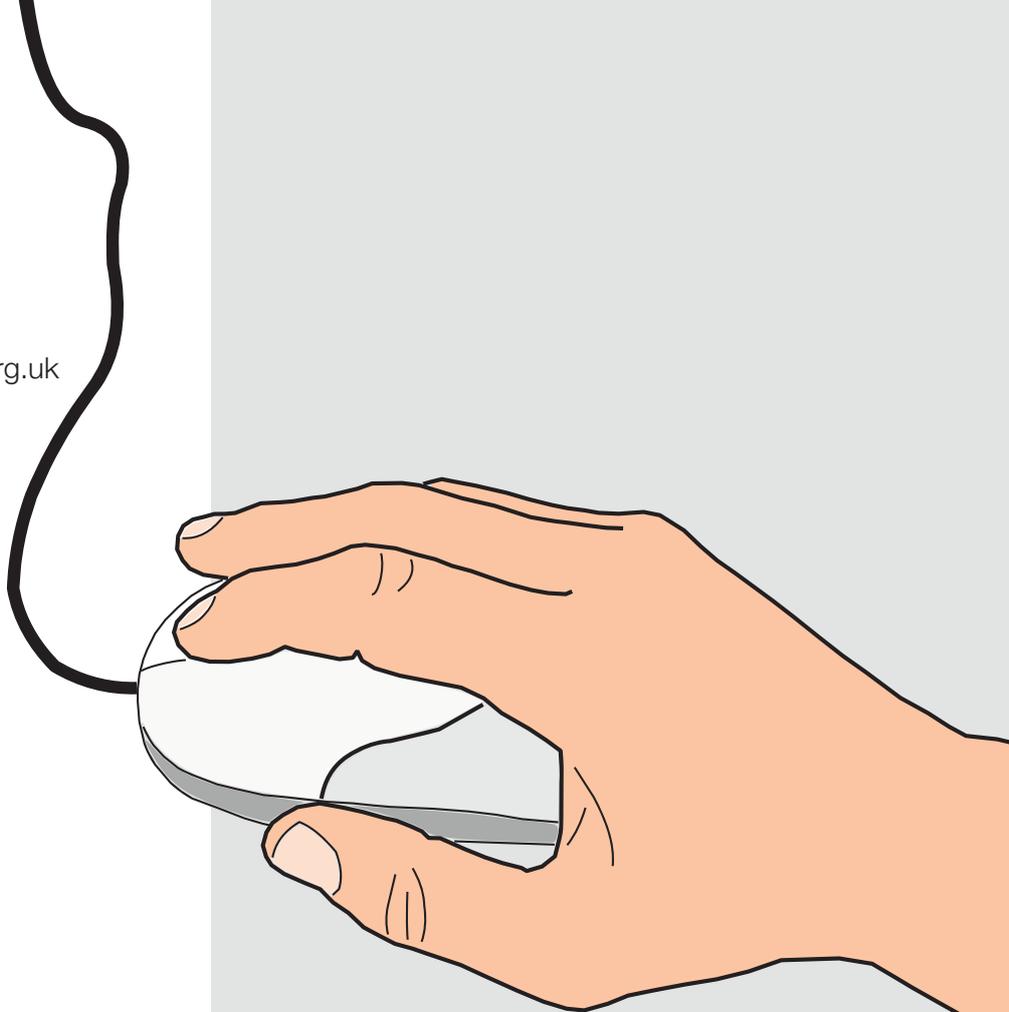
Search “bus pass” on:
www.brighton-hove.gov.uk
www.eastsussex.gov.uk
www.westsussex.gov.uk

Community Transport Links

www.bhct.co.uk
bit.ly/EastSussexCommunityTrans
bit.ly/WestSussexCommunityTrans

Directgov website:

bit.ly/DirectgovRenewLicence





Web: www.SussexSaferRoads.gov.uk

Email: Info@SussexSRP.org.uk

 SaferRoads  @SussexSRP

Produced in 2017 by the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership.
All information correct at the time of going to print.

Sussex Safer Roads
P A R T N E R S H I P



Printed on
recycled paper