

Veygo Learner Driver Report

2020

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In the UK, learning to drive is often on many of our to-do lists and is a huge milestone for young adults. With commuting, socialising and of course, independence, being huge priorities for many young people, the need to get behind the wheel has never been more prominent. But what does the learner driver landscape look like in 2019? How has it changed over time and what is the true cost of swapping your green license to pink? The team at Veygo have gone behind-the-scenes, delving into data and surveying 2,000 British drivers to reveal every angle of learning to drive in 2019.

1. The Toughest Locations to Pass Your Test

Tests can be nerve-racking, no matter what, but sometimes where you live can put you in a much trickier position. Is shedding those L-plates in busy cities harder? Perhaps passing your test in the countryside is a little less stressful?

We analysed pass rates from every test centre in the UK to see whether you are more, or less, likely to be passing with flying colours.



The Toughest (& Easiest) Locations to Pass your Driving Test

Pass Rates

- Toughest ● Easiest
- | | | |
|----|-------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 29.6% | Birmingham (The Pavilion) |
| 2 | 32.3% | Birmingham (South Yardley) |
| 3 | 32.6% | Speke (Liverpool) |
| 4 | 32.8% | Enfield (Brancroft Way) |
| 5 | 33.5% | Erith (London) |
| 6 | 33.8% | Leeds |
| 7 | 33.8% | Belvedere (London) |
| 8 | 34.0% | Barking (Tanner Street) |
| 9 | 34.3% | Wolverhampton |
| 10 | 34.5% | Leicester (Cannock Street) |
| 1 | 84.9% | Inveraray |
| 2 | 83.3% | Mallaig |
| 3 | 83.3% | Gairloch |
| 4 | 78.5% | Pitlochry |
| 5 | 77.8% | Isle of Mull |
| 6 | 75.5% | Lochgilphead |
| 7 | 74.1% | Llandrindod Wells |
| 8 | 73.7% | Ullapool |
| 9 | 72.4% | Islay Island |
| 10 | 70.1% | Ballater |



It turns out that the toughest place to pass your test in 2019 would be Birmingham. In fact, the two lowest pass rates are both in the city of Birmingham. The easiest place to pass is much further north, in Scotland, Inveraray. Passing your test in Scotland must be a lot easier, because the six highest pass rates have all originated there. The pass rates are higher in rural areas and lower in busy cities, but there could be other contributing factors.

Learners that want to give themselves the best chance of passing may want to journey to another test centre in the UK – it is permitted. While it may mean you would have to use your own car and get someone to drive you there first, it could mean a higher chance of a first-time pass!

2. Is It Getting Tougher To Pass Your Driving Test?

The driving test in the UK today consists of two parts – the theory and the practical. We may all be aware of the structure and what we have to go through to get our license in 2019, but today’s learner drivers will have a very different experience to that which their parents did. In 2017, the driving test was even modified to include sat nav testing.

As driving conditions change and technology advances, the test has been adapted to modern drivers, but does this mean it’s getting tougher, or easier?

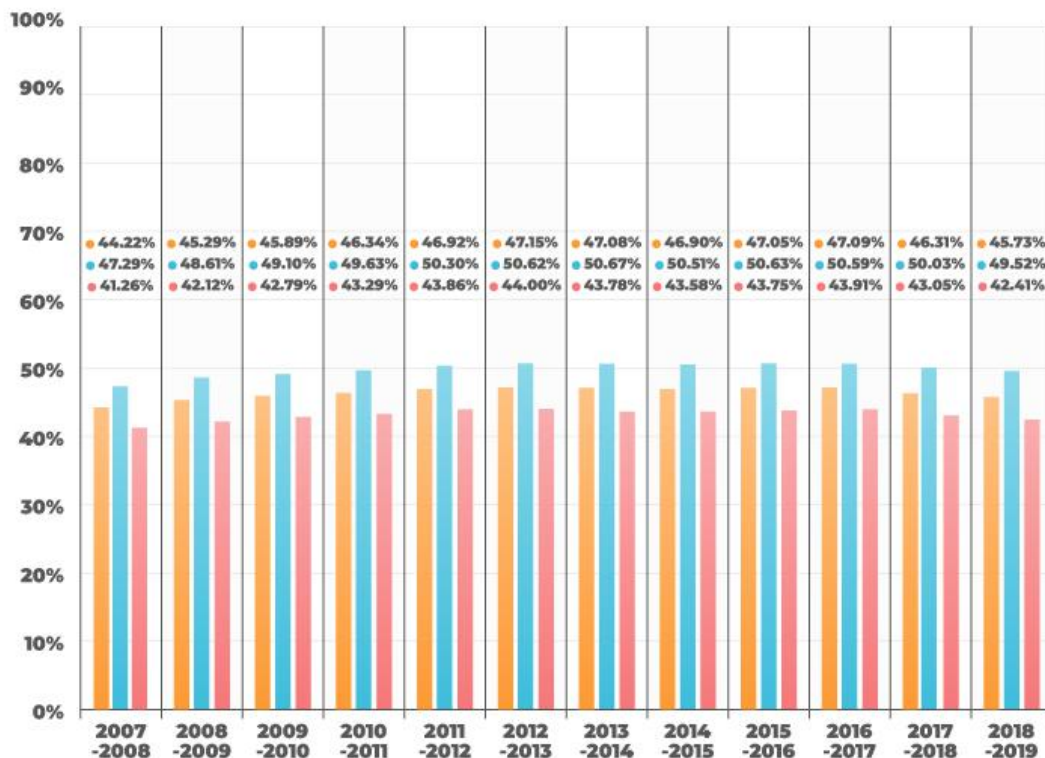


Is it Getting Tougher To Pass Your Driving Test?

Pass Rates Over Time

● Overall ● Male ● Female

All data taken from April - March



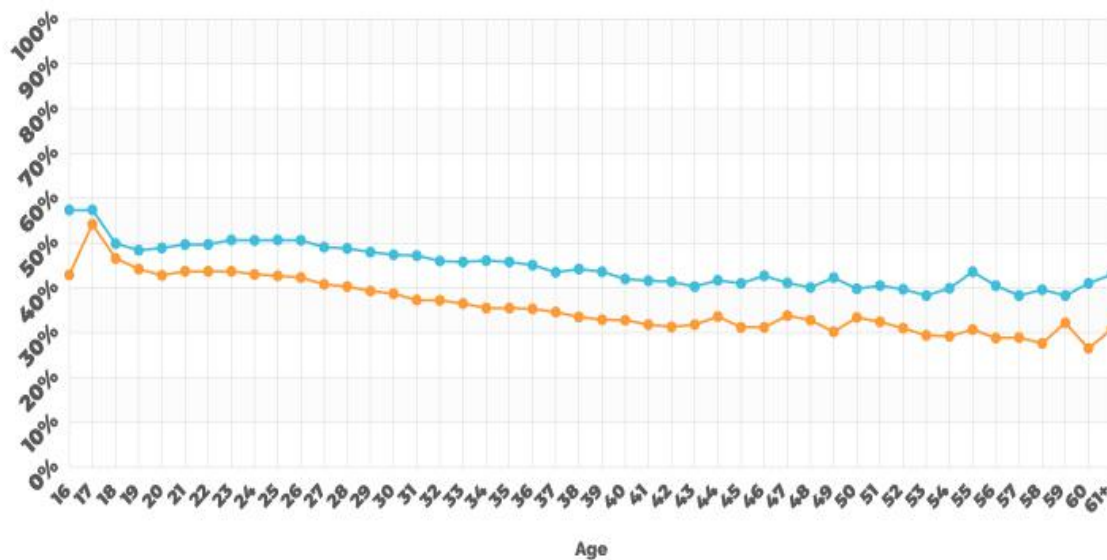
The number of passes has seen a recent dip, but so have the failures. When you combine the two and look at the overall pass rate, there seems to be a constant balance. In fact, the pass rate has only fluctuated between 44-47% between 2007 and 2019.



Practical Test - Male vs. Female

● Male: average - 44.9% ● Female: average - 36.4%

2018-2019 Data



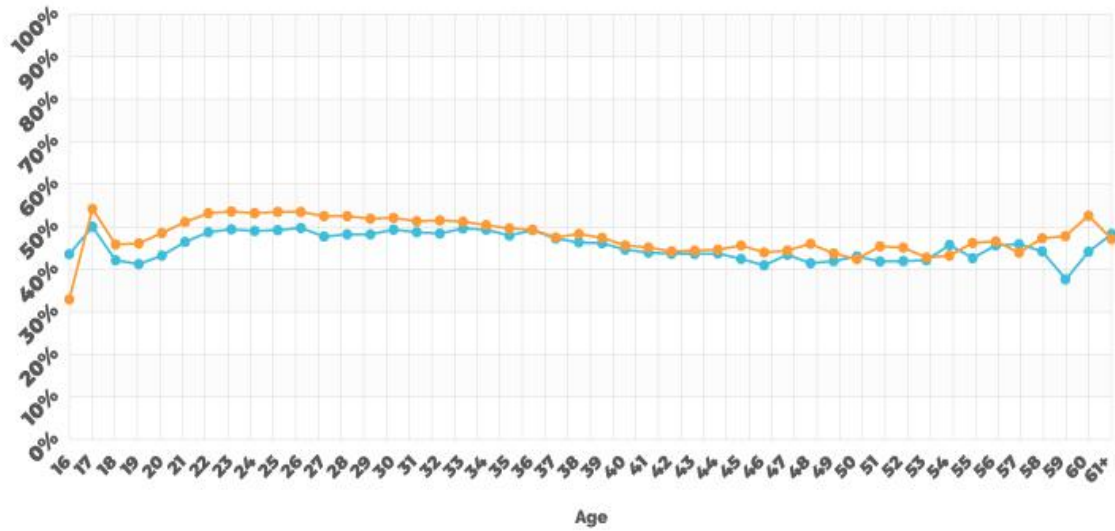
It seems that men have the advantage when it comes to the practical driving test. With a higher pass rate overall and fewer failures altogether, the numbers show that ever since 2007, men seem to find passing the practical side of the exam much easier. However, when it comes to the theoretical side, women have a higher pass rate.



Theory Test - Male vs. Female

● Male: average - 44.4% ● Female: average - 46.8%

2018-2019 Data



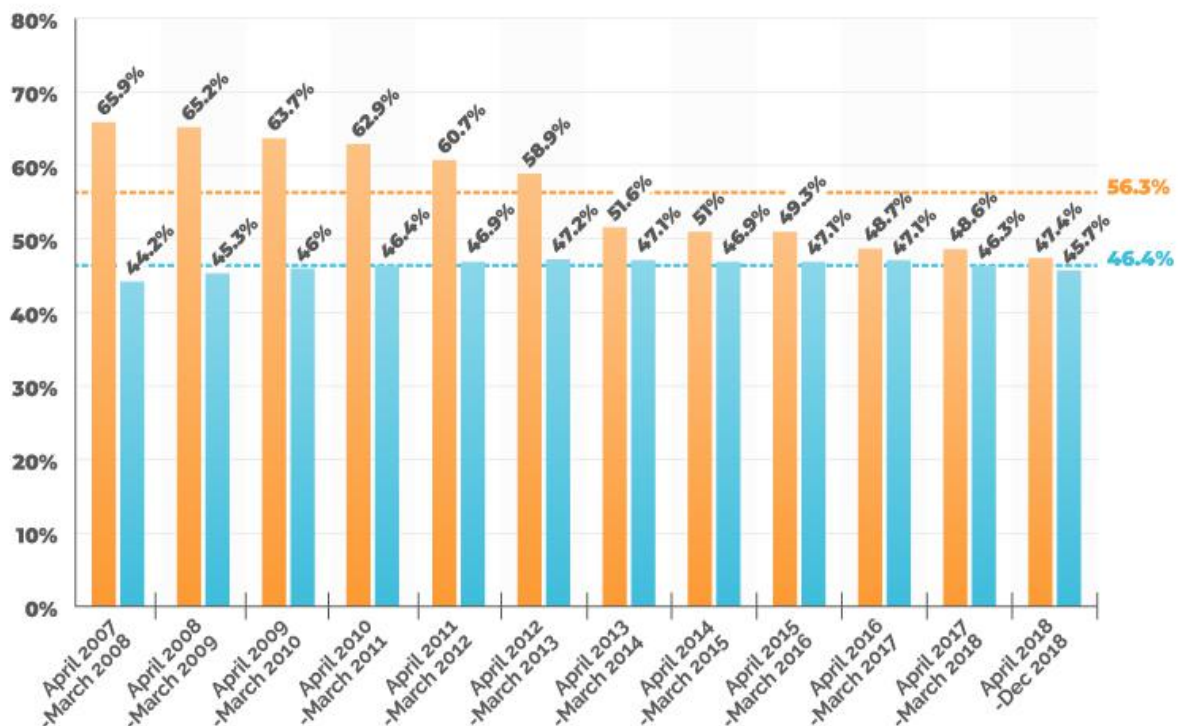
Do Learner Drivers Find The Practical Driving Test Difficult?



Theory Test vs. Practical Pass Rates 2007-2018

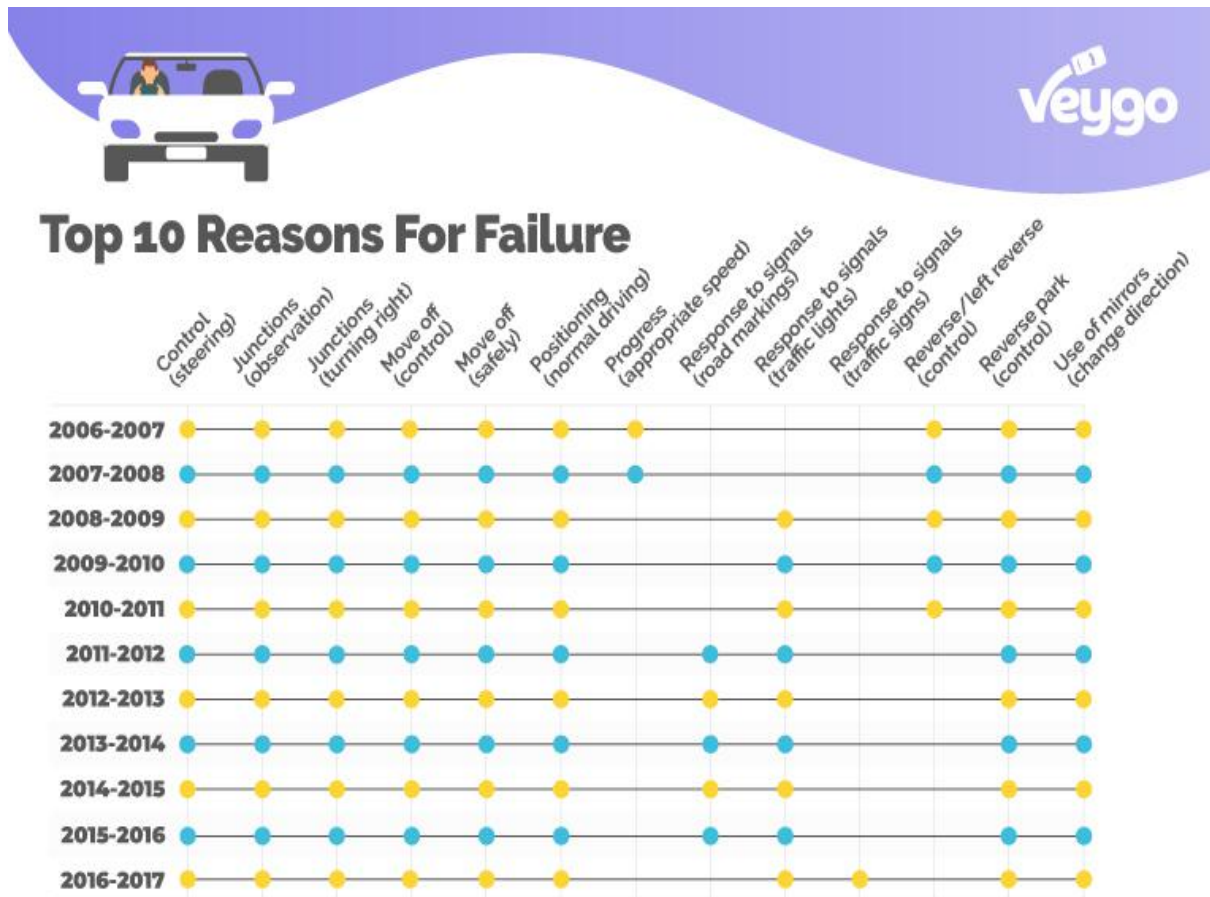
Theory Test ● Theory Test Average - - -
Practical Test ● Practical Test Average - - -

All data taken from April - March (2018 data from April - December)



2.2. Test Failures and Reasons

Sometimes, it just doesn't go our way, and a pass won't be on the cards. You're not alone and the reasons for failure are all very similar. Some people don't even make it to the test itself due to cancellations. So, just what are the main reasons for cancellation and failure?

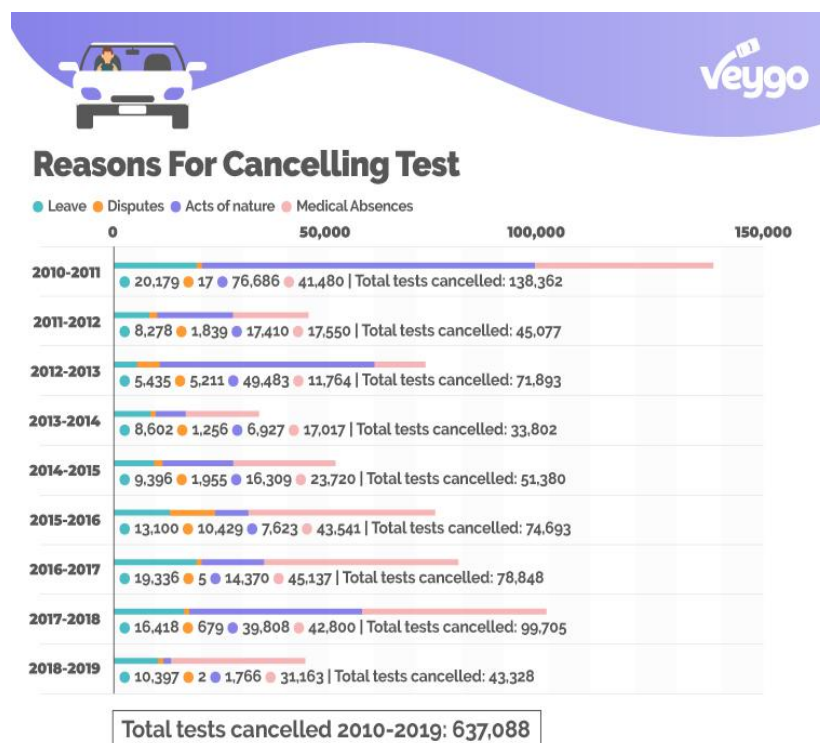


Top 10 Reasons for Failure Overall

1. Junctions (observation)
2. Mirrors (change direction)
3. Control (steering)
4. Junctions (turning right)
5. Move off (safely)
6. Positioning (normal driving)
7. Move off (control)
8. Response to signals (traffic lights)
9. Reverse park (control)
10. Response to signals (Traffic Signs)

Reasons for Cancelling Test

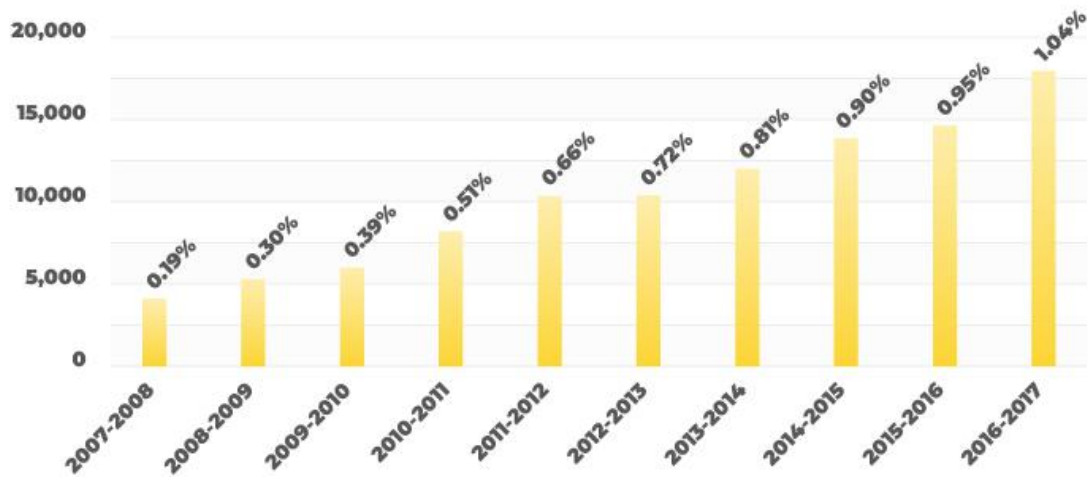
Each year, thousands of tests are cancelled, with the four main reasons being leave (annual leave (i.e., holidays) and special leave (e.g., bereavement, compassionate leave, emergencies), disputes (industrial action and strikes), acts of nature (poor weather conditions and bad light) and medical absences (sickness and medical appointments). Since 2010, just over 637,000 tests have been cancelled altogether with the most recent common reason for cancellation being medical-related.



The number of tests passed with 0 faults has seen an increase over the years. Since 2007-2008, the number has risen from only 3,329 to a huge 17,950 in 2016-2017.



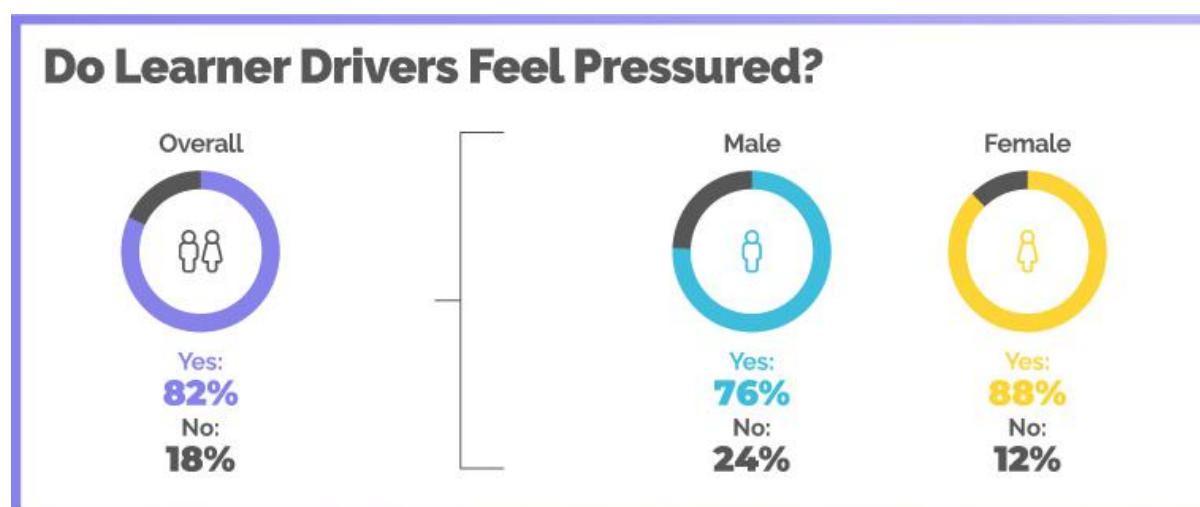
Tests Passed With 0 Faults



Do Learner Drivers Feel Pressured?

Ever felt bullied by another driver on the road? Learning to drive inevitably comes with pressure, but sometimes other factors come into play too. We may know what the main reasons for cancelled tests are, but just how pressured do learner drivers feel, especially by other road users?

We surveyed 2,000 British drivers, asking them if they ever felt (or feel) pressured on the road as a learner due to other drivers. This can be everything from tailgating to honking or a sense of road rage.



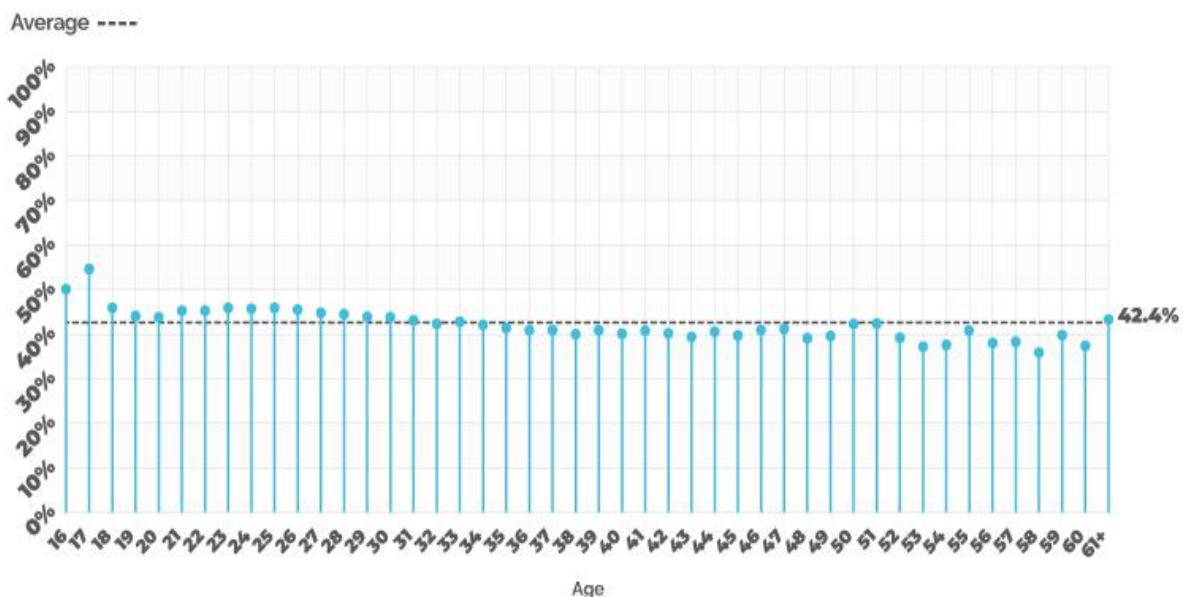
It turns out that overall, a huge 82% of people feel or have previously felt pressured by other drivers. That's 8 in 10 learners that feel pressure from others when on the road. Women also feel more pressured by other drivers than men do.

3. How Many Learners Pass The First Time?

Many people taking the practical driving test don't pass the first time. Some don't pass the second time and some go on to take the tests over five or six times. Everyone is different, with some people perhaps needing a little longer, or even a practice run. There's no shame in that! Are you in the majority?



What Percentage of Learners Pass The First Time?



Many people taking the practical driving test seem to pass the first time. In fact, the average first time pass rate is 42.4%. However, the second attempt pass rate is 41%, which shows just how little difference there is. People taking their test for the 6th (or more) time have an average pass rate of 33%.

4. Provisional License v Full License

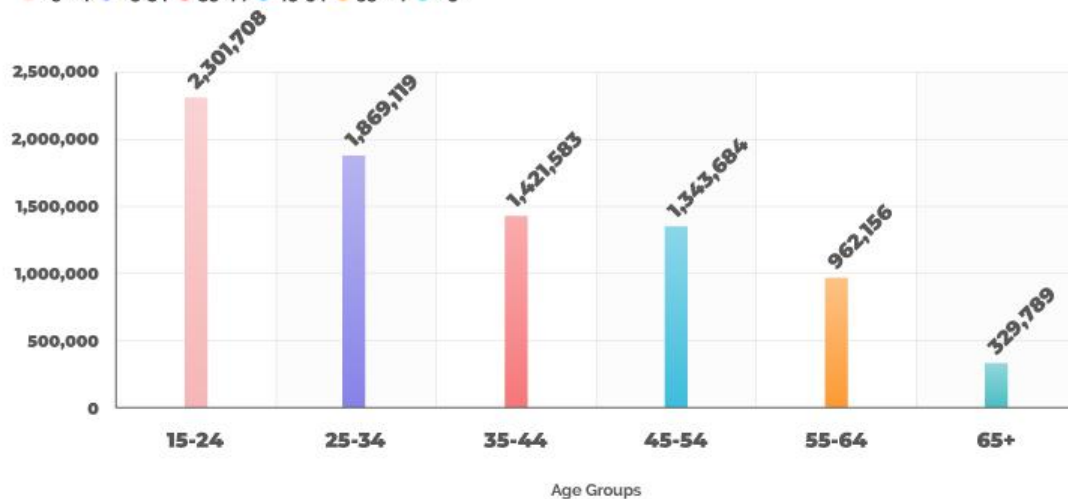
Anyone can apply for a provisional driving license once they reach a certain age. But, who turns that little green card into a fully-certified pink UK driving license? Who are the people behind the wheel in the UK – is it more men or women? Younger drivers or older drivers? We've looked at the population of the UK (aged 15 and over) and compared the figures to see just what the UK driving landscape looks like.



Number of Licence Holders

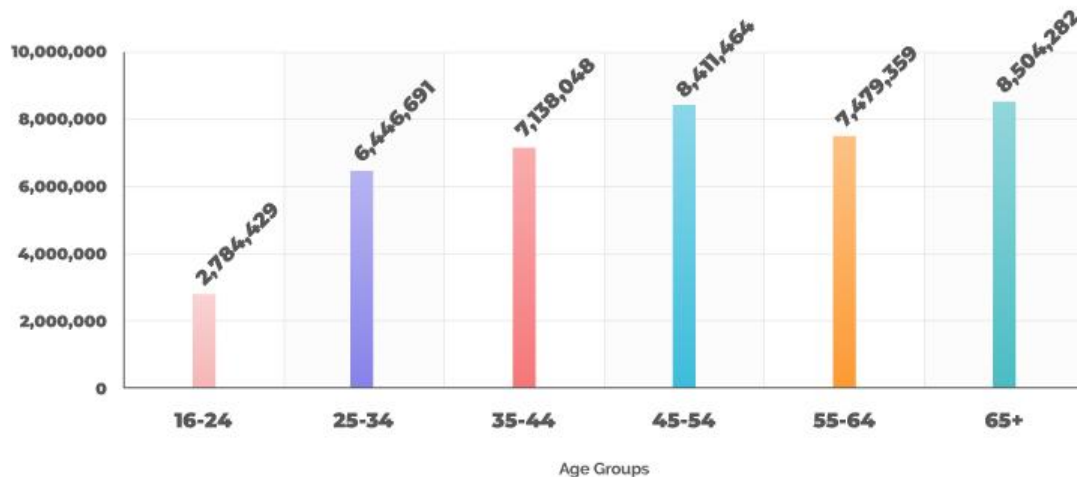
Provisional Licence

15-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+



Full Licence

16-24 25-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+





Licenses - Men vs. Women

● Men ● Women

Provisional Licence



Full UK Driving License



5. At What Age Do People Pass Their Test?

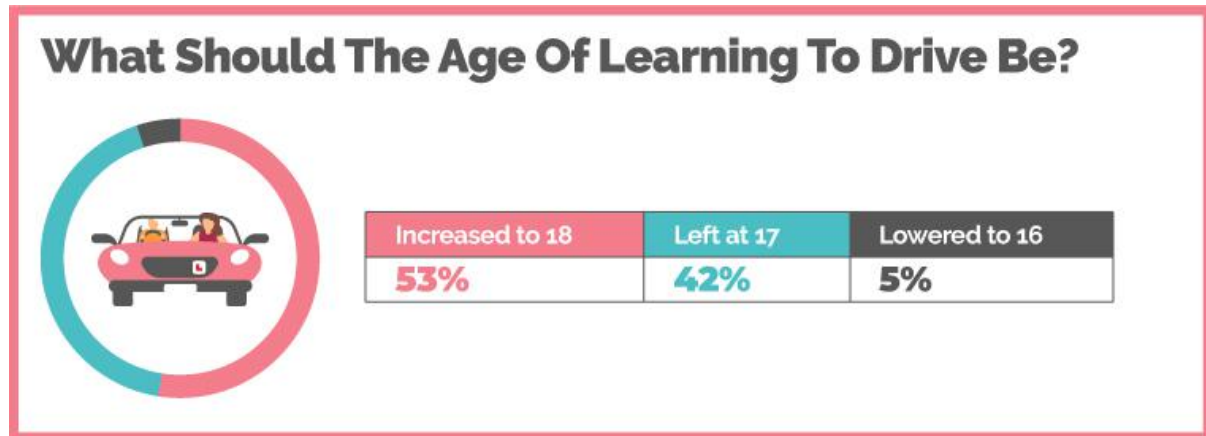
We looked into pass rates over attempts and the ages of 1st-time passers, 2nd-time passers and so on to see what the prime age is to get that license first time!



Perhaps as expected, the age group with the highest first-time pass rate is between 16-25, with a 46.6% pass rate. Not far behind, however, is the 26-35 age group and then more surprisingly, in third place, aged 61 or above. The worst first-time pass rate is those aged 45-60.

What Should The Age Of Learning To Drive Be?

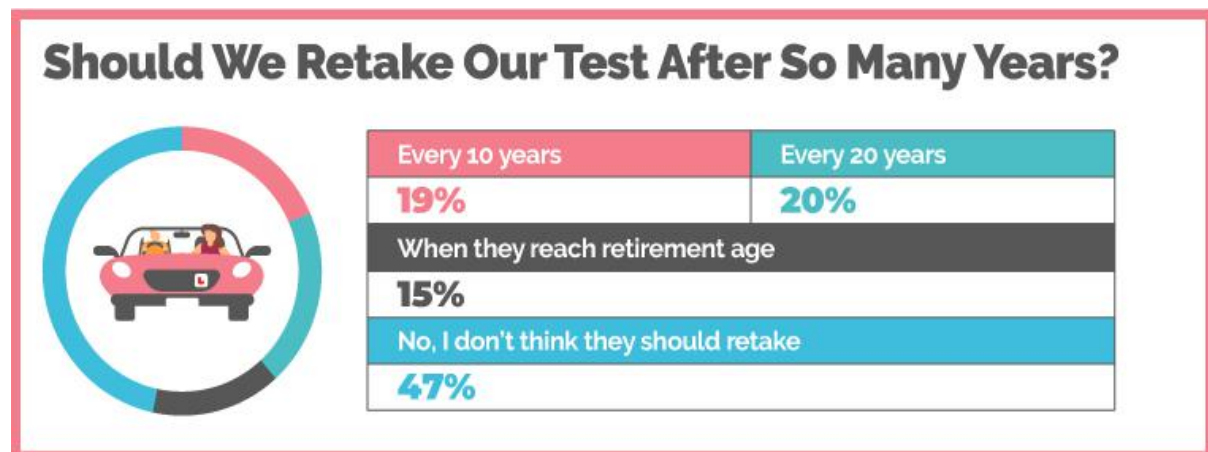
We asked 2000 drivers and learners what they think the age of learning to drive should be. Should it stay the same, be raised or lowered?



The majority of people believe that the age of learning to drive should be increased slightly to 18, however, 42% of people think that it's fine just the way it is. There is still a small percentage of people who would like it to be lowered to 16.

Should We Be Required To Retake Our Driving Tests At Any Stage?

Questions are constantly raised over whether we should retake the test/s at some point to refresh our memories and update ourselves on road rules. We turned to our 2,000 survey-takers to find out what the everyday road-user thinks. Should we retake our driving test every 10 years, 20 years, when we reach retirement, or simply not at all?



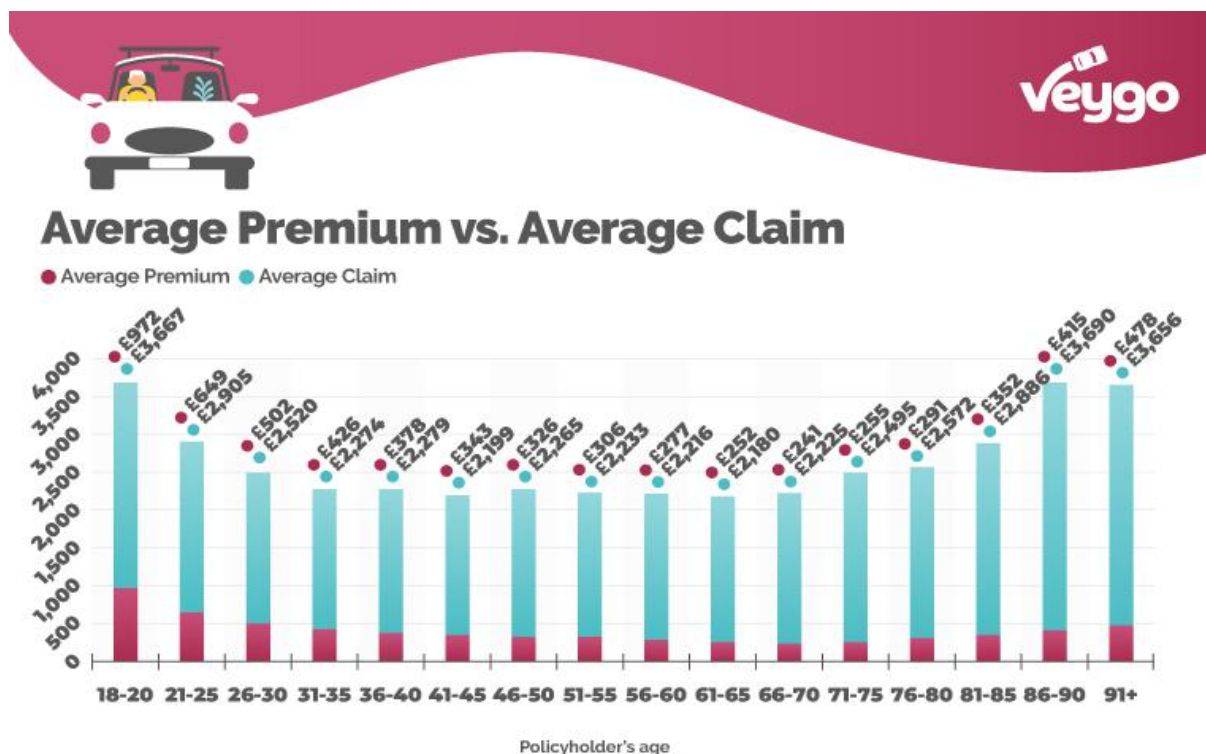
It so happens that the majority of people don't think that we should retake our tests at any point. However, 1 in 5 Brits still think that drivers should retake their test every 10 years. 20% also think drivers should retake every 20 years. 1 in 2 Brits are completely against driving test retakes for older drivers.

6. How Much Does it Cost To Learn To Drive?

Anyone who has passed their test or is currently learning to drive will understand that the costs can rack up. Even if you have never driven before, you may be aware of the constant fluctuation of fuel prices, the battle with insurance costs and much more. Even before you pass your test, the lessons can add up.

The first person to ever pass their test (Mr Beere, 1935) may have paid a grand total of 37.5p to take his test, but today is a very different picture. So just what is the average cost of learning to drive in 2019?

Passing your test is an amazing feeling, but once you've achieved this and bought your first run-around, the most daunting financial factor can be the insurance. As a young and new driver, these costs are known to be quite steep. So just how does age matter for insurance policies and claims?



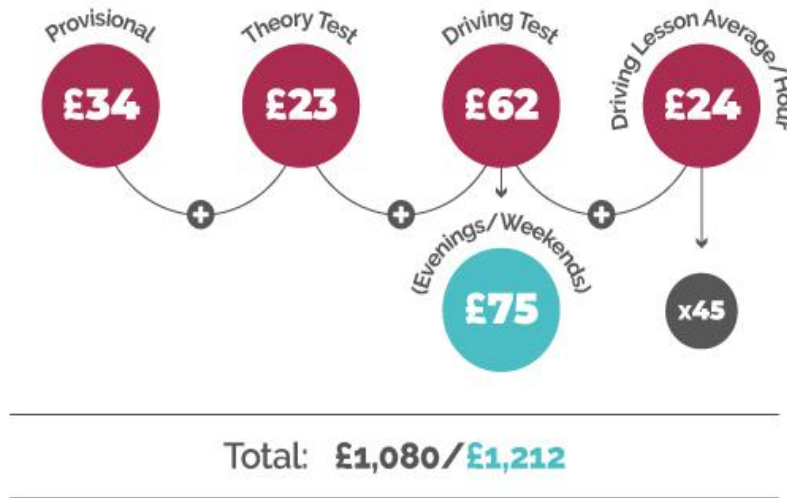
How Does The UK Finance Learning To Drive?



How Much Does it Cost To Learn To Drive?

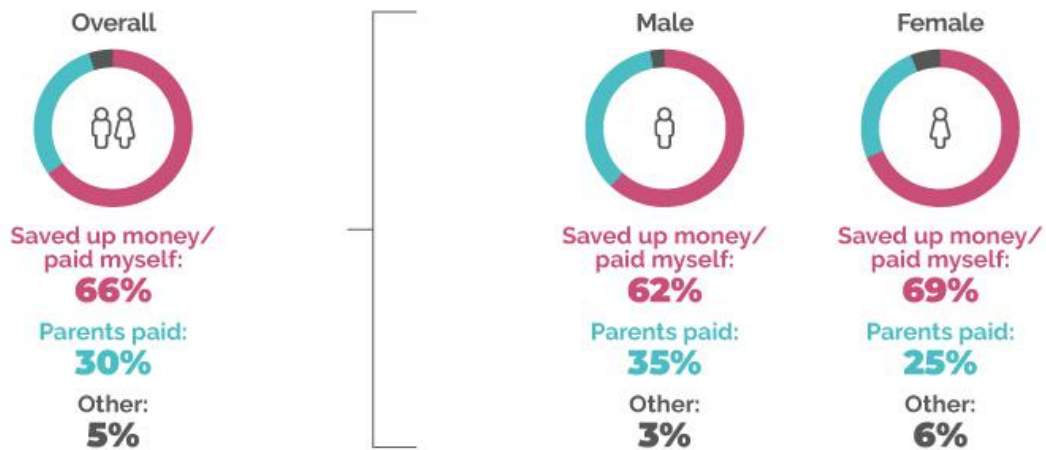
(Based on 45 Hours of Lessons)

● Weekends/Evenings



We asked our survey-takers how they financed their journey to P-plates. We are all aware of the costs attached and it can be a stressful ordeal, but just how do the British learner drivers finance every step?

How Does The UK Finance Learning To Drive?



While around 66% of learner drivers saved up the dosh themselves and paid with their own hard-earned cash, 3 in 10 Brits' parents have paid for their driving lessons. Females tend to pay themselves whereas young male drivers are more likely to ask parents for financial help.

How Much Do Parents Spend On Their Children Learning To Drive Every Year?



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30% of learner drivers depend on their parents to finance their journey to p plates.



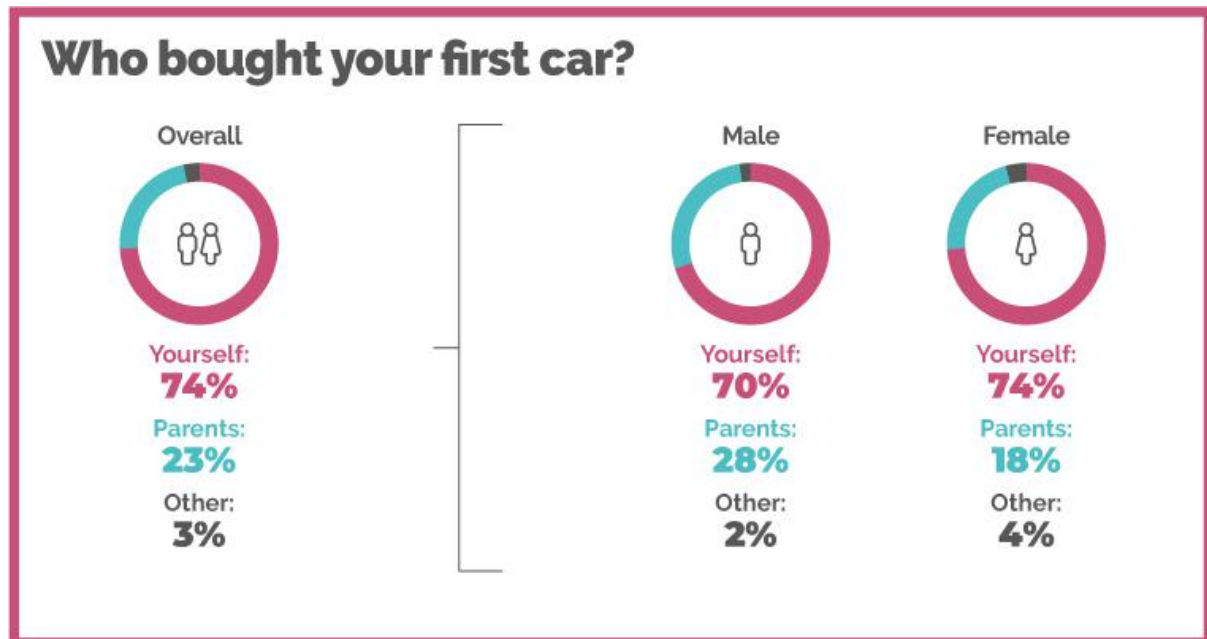
When you take this cost and add in our survey results, we discovered that collectively, every year, UK parents spend an average of £119,841,249 on their children learning to drive.



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First Cars

As a new driver, your first car is commonly not a brand-new, expensive or 'flashy' purchase, but no matter how rusty or old the vehicle was, it will always be a memorable one. We took the survey answers of 2,000 drivers to find out just who bought their first car.



Turns out the majority of people proudly bought their first car themselves, however, 23% of new drivers still rely on their parents to get them their first set of wheels. When it comes to a gender comparison, it also seems that parents are more likely to buy their sons their first car than their daughters. Or is it perhaps that males are more likely to rely on their parents to buy their cars rather than females?

How Much Do UK Parents Spend on Their Kids First Car Every Year?

The average parent in the UK spends between £3,492 and £5,274 on their child's first car. This is an average of around **£4,233**. The North West is the biggest spenders on their kids first set of wheels, whereas the South West are much more reserved, spending almost £2,000 less.



How Much Do UK Parents Spend on Their Children's First Car Every Year?

Average spent on young drivers' first cars by region

● £3,000 - £3,999 ● £4,000 - £4,999 ● £5,000+

- 1 **£5,274** North West
- 2 **£5,092** London
- 3 **£4,750** Scotland
- 4 **£4,731** North East
- 5 **£4,385** South East
- 6 **£4,109** Yorkshire & The Humber
- 7 **£3,909** Wales
- 8 **£3,841** Northern Ireland
- 9 **£3,784** East Midlands
- 10 **£3,731** West Midlands
- 11 **£3,696** East of England
- 12 **£3,492** South West



From our recent survey, we revealed that **23%** of UK parents buy their kids their first car. Taking the amount of yearly passes and these costs, we can also reveal that collectively, UK parents spend an average

of **£324,358,209** on their kids first cars. That's just under **£325million** that, overall, the UK spends on their children's first set of wheels.

When you combine this with financing your kid/s through the process of learning to drive, that's some serious cash! In fact, it adds up to a whopping average of **£5,432 per parent/s**. As a nation, combined, **that's a shocking £ 444,199,457.78 that the UK spends on putting their children through lessons/tests and buying first cars**. The bank of mum and dad better get saving!

7. Conclusion

There's no questioning that learning to drive today is very different from the past. With an increase in technology and apps, different forms of financing and payment, new cars and an increase in eco-conscious drivers, the entire landscape is shifting. Give it another ten years and perhaps we won't recognise the process of learning to drive at all.

Methodology & Sources

The main data was taken from the '*research and statistics*' section of the Driving and Motorcycle section on gov.uk.

<https://www.gov.uk/transport/driving-and-motorcycle-tests>

Toughest Locations To Pass

The locations and pass rates refer to specific test centres in the UK. The data is originally sourced from the DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/car-driving-test-data-by-test-centre>

Is It Getting Tougher To Pass?

This was worked out by mapping the pass rates, the number of tests conducted, the passes and failures from 2007 to 2019.

Theory vs Practical

Using a monthly table, from 2007 to 2018, two pass rates of theory and practical tests were mapped against each other to discover which one is more 'difficult'. The same data was then used to map against age and gender to see who has a higher pass rate.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/car-driving-test-data-by-test-centre>

Test Failures/Cancellations

Statistical data originally from the DVSA which shows the top main reasons people fail and/or cancel the practical driving test. The number of tests which were passed with 0 faults was also mapped via this data.

Please note (reasons for cancelling test):

- Leave: annual leave (i.e., holidays) and special leave (e.g., bereavement, compassionate leave, emergencies)
- Disputes: industrial action and strikes
- Acts of Nature: poor weather conditions and bad light
- Medical Absences: sickness and medical appointments

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/driving-test-failure-reasons-data>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/636873/dvsa1207.pdf

Age of Passing Test

[Practical car test pass rates by number of attempts, age and gender:](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/driving-test-statistics-drt) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/driving-test-statistics-drt>

The pass rates were mapped against age to discover the average pass rates for each age and each passing time.

Provisional and Full UK License Holders

Using the UK population (aged 15 years and older) and the number of license holders (UK & provisional) we were able to calculate the percentage of the population and which gender group holds the most amount of each license. This was also used against age group statistics to reveal which age holds the most UK provisionals and full licenses.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/d0be1ed2-9907-4ec4-b552-c048f6aec16a/gb-driving-licence-data>

Cost of Learning to Drive

Using the recommended hours of lessons (by the DVSA) of 45 hours, the costs of a provisional license, theory test, practical test and driving lessons were added up to give an average cost. The average insurance premium based claim against age was taken from The Association of British Insurers and a list discovered on the below links.

<http://home.bt.com/lifestyle/money/insurance/is-age-the-biggest-factor-in-determining-your-car-insurance-costs-11363992148053>

<https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/choosing-the-right-insurance/motor-insurance/age-and-motor-insurance/>

How Much Do Parents Spend On Their Kids Learning To Drive Every Year?

Taking the total cost of learning to drive and the percentage of parents who have paid for their kids lessons, (using the survey results) we worked out how much in total UK parents spend on their kids learning to drive. This is based on the number of passes 2018-19 of 17-30 year olds.

How Much Do UK Parents Spend on Their Kids First Car Every Year?

Using the below survey from Go Compare and taking an average of the region spends and the survey results, we worked out how much in total UK parents spend on their kids first cars, every year. This is based on the number of passes 2018-19 of 17-30 year olds.

<https://press.gocompare.com/news/new-drivers-spend-over-gbp-5-000-on-their-first-car>