



## Choosing an Instructor

Driving is a life skill,  
so it pays to get the best tuition available.

It isn't always easy to find the right instructor for your son or daughter and yet it is one of the most important decisions you / they will ever make.

The instructor isn't there just to teach them how to pass their test; his/her role is far greater than that. It is to coach them on how to drive carefully and responsibly. To help them identify potential hazards and respond accordingly. To highlight how they can help minimize risks.

According to research carried out by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA), **nine out of every ten learners who pass their practical test at the first attempt were taught by a DVSA licenced Approved Driving Instructor (ADI)**

Your son or daughter therefore has the best chance of passing their test if they are taught by an ADI.

### Qualifications

All driving instructors are required to display an appropriate badge identifying their qualification status and they **must** be on the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency register. If they aren't displaying their badge, ask them to show it to you.

So what should you look out for?

This green badge indicates a fully qualified Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) who is licenced by the DVSA.

It shows that they have passed their own test first i.e. they have proven ability to teach to a specified DVSA standard.





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### How the DVSA maintains and checks standards of ADIs\*

The DVSA is responsible for maintaining and checking the standards of all ADIs. To qualify, they must:

- ▶ **be registered with the DVSA**
- ▶ **have passed a criminal record check**
- ▶ **pass a much tougher theory and practical driving test, and pass a test of their ability to give instruction**
- ▶ **display an ADI identification certificate on the windscreen of the tuition vehicle**
- ▶ **maintain a high standard of instruction - DVSA checks this standard regularly**

To maintain this 'high standard of instruction', they have to go through a continuous grading process every few years. Their grades reflect their performance during a one hour test lesson – usually a normal lesson which is conducted with a representative of the DVSA observing it.

#### **Grades are given from B to A and reflect the following:**

**Grade B (31-42 test score)** – Instructor has shown a satisfactory standard of instruction and will remain on the register as an ADI.

**Grade A (43-51 test score)** – Instructor has shown a high standard of instruction and will remain on the ADI register.

#### **Failure to pass.**

**Fail (0-30 test score)** – The performance of the instructor is unsatisfactory. (The instructor will have 2 more attempts to pass and if they fail 3 times, they will be removed from the approved driving instructors (ADI) register and have to go through the application and assessment process again.

\* Source: [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)



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This Pink badge is displayed by instructors who are still in training themselves. They are known as Potential Driving Instructors (PDIs).

Although not yet fully qualified, they are still allowed to teach and charge for lessons providing they are registered with the DVSA.

It is important that you are aware that they have not been assessed on their teaching ability, and may not pass this final exam. If they don't pass this final exam within 6 months of starting to teach on their trainee licence they would have to stop teaching your son or daughter.

**The choice is yours.**

### Choosing an instructor

If you haven't been given a solid recommendation from someone who has used a particular instructor and found their coaching skills to be particularly good then it might be easier to use online searches for a list of Instructors in your local area.

It's a good idea to ring a few and ask a number of questions **first** to assess their suitability. Your final choice should not be based on either cost or on 'pass rate' as both can be misleading.

Cheaper rates deserve investigation because good instructors know their value and will charge accordingly.

Pass rates on their own might also be misleading because there are some excellent instructors who, for a variety of reasons, have taught less pupils so their overall pass rate might be lower.



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Some useful questions might include:

- ▶ **Are you fully qualified or is the Instructor you intend to send me fully qualified?**
- ▶ **How long have you/they been an Instructor?**
- ▶ **What is your/their present check test grade? (remember 0-30 is a fail, 31 and over is ADI approved Grade B or A.)**
- ▶ **Can we meet the Instructor before we book a lesson?**
- ▶ **Will I always have the same Instructor? (Consistency is very important)**
- ▶ **Will the instructor help me with my theory studies or offer any form of study materials.**
- ▶ **Can I bring a relative or friend with me to observe some of my lessons?**
- ▶ **Has the Instructor agreed to abide by the DVSA Code of Conduct and has he/she signed up to the DSA's 'Find your nearest Instructor''directory?**

NEVER pay large sums of money for block bookings **before** you are sure that you have found the Instructor that best suits your son or daughter and whom they will be comfortable with.

If the Instructor has a website, look for testimonials from previous pupils.

**Not all Instructors are the same, so it pays to shop around, ask lots of questions and find out as much as you can about the person who is about to teach them a critical life skill; *before* booking any lessons.**