

## Driving Test Guide Special Supplement



*Independent driving was introduced into all tests including car, vocational, motorcycle, extended tests, taxi and ADI Part 2 on the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2010*

*This part of the test lasts approximately 10 minutes.*

Candidates are asked to drive without step-by-step instruction from their examiner for about ten minutes, showing that they can make decisions by themselves. They will be asked to either follow a series of road signs or a number of verbal directions or a combination of both these methods.

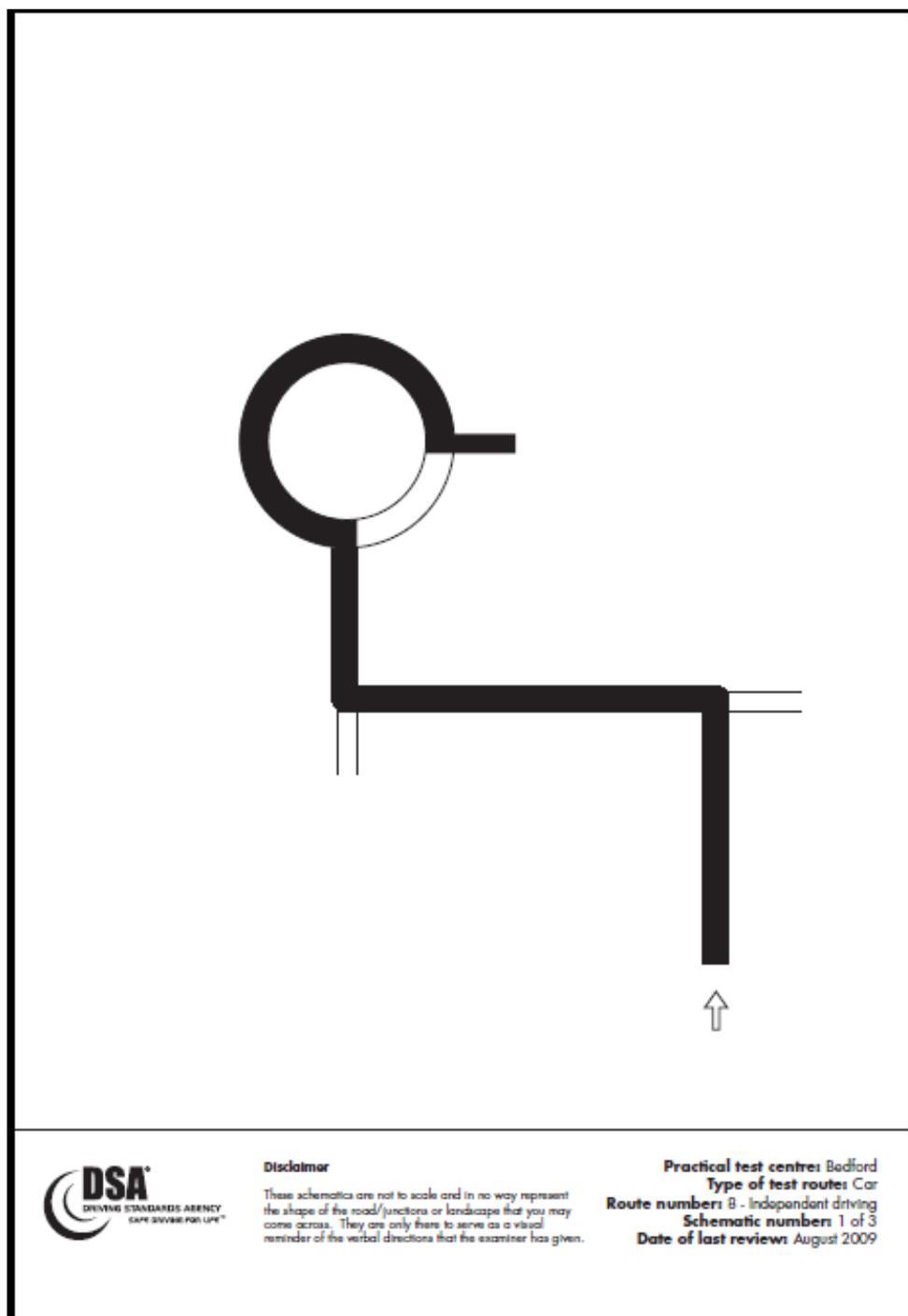
Where verbal directions are given there will only be 3 or a maximum of 4 directions given at a time. For this method the examiner will always ask the candidate to pull up to receive the directions. They will not be given on the move. DVSA also provide diagrams to support the verbal directions they are not maps but very simple directional aids, examples of which are produced for your information on pages 3 & 4 of this leaflet.

(The examples show the old DSA logo as that was the organisation responsible in 2010)

Up to three of these diagrams can be used on a test.

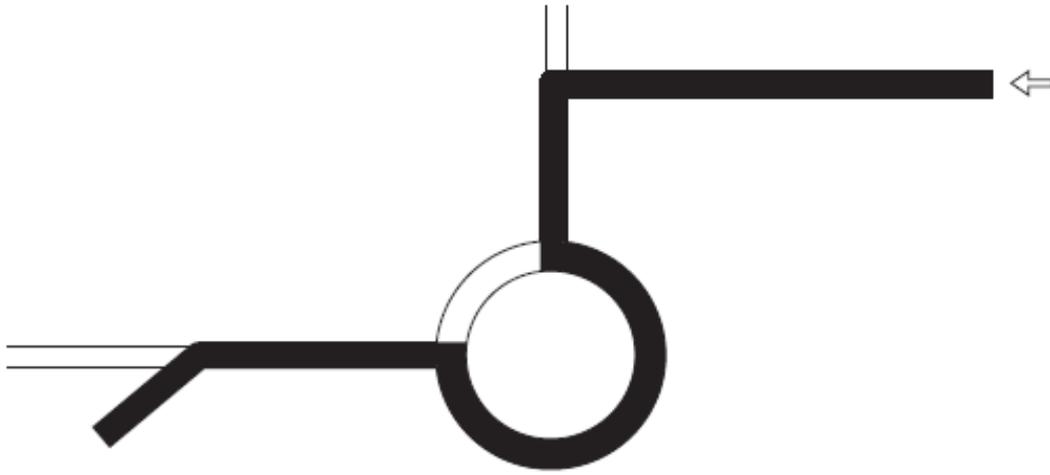
Coinciding with the introduction of independent driving will be a new approach to testing manoeuvres for learners, the ADI exams will not be included in these changes for the time being. DSA have decided, following consultation, to focus less on manoeuvres and more on general driving. Driving test routes tend to be built around the need to complete two manoeuvres that include reversing, which means that on many routes large parts of the test are spent on housing estates and areas with low traffic volumes whilst in road safety terms learning to manoeuvre is important, it is not usually a high risk activity.

There will be no change to the type of manoeuvres, however only one manoeuvre will be tested. And just like now, the one exercise to be tested will be selected at random. This means your candidate will still need to be taught all of the existing manoeuvres.



These diagrams have been reproduced with kind permission from the DSA. The diagrams don't stand alone, they will simply support the route by showing the intended direction of travel. The examiner may use up to three of these on each test, there will also be verbal interaction from the examiner when showing candidates the diagrams, such as the road is long and bendy, but at the end of the road you should turn right, or it's the first left just after the supermarket etc. The diagrams will be reproduced on cream vellum paper which cuts down on visual distraction which can be a problem for people with dyslexia.

Although Independent Driving is being introduced, examiners will not be assessing independent driving. They will of course continue to assess the candidate's ability to drive safely across all criteria while driving independently, therefore there will be no need to alter the existing DL25 (examiners marking sheet).



**Disclaimer**

These schematics are not to scale and in no way represent the shape of the road/junction or landscape that you may come across. They are only there to serve as a visual reminder of the verbal directions that the examiner has given.



**Practical test centres:** Bedford  
**Type of test routes:** Car  
**Route numbers:** 8 - Independent driving  
**Schematic number:** 3 of 3  
**Date of last review:** August 2009



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**Practical test centres:** Bedford  
**Type of test routes:** Car  
**Route numbers:** 8 - Independent driving  
**Schematic number:** 2 of 3  
**Date of last review:** August 2009

## Frequently asked questions about Independent Driving

**The DSA Chief executive recently said;** *we want to broaden the practical driving test so that it becomes more reflective of 'real driving', and a better assessment of whether candidates are ready to drive unsupervised after passing their test. We believe that this new element will lead to better and safer drivers. It's important that ADIs and candidates understand the changes and know what to expect during the test, so we've put together the following frequently asked questions to answer the most common queries and dispel any **misconceptions about the new element of the test.***

**Q:** If the candidate goes off route during the independent driving section, will the test be terminated?

**A:** No. Wherever possible the examiner will get the candidate back on route and continue with the independent driving section. The test won't be terminated.

**Q:** Would it be a fault if the candidate takes you off route?

**A:** No. Just like the current test, independent driving is not a test of the candidate's orientation skills. Provided the candidate does not commit a fault, there is nothing to assess. Any faults that did occur would be assessed as usual under the circumstances at the time.

**Q:** Is the approximate ten minutes of independent driving the same for all categories?

**A:** Yes. All categories will have to demonstrate approximately ten minutes of independent driving.

**Q:** Does the reduced number of manoeuvres apply to Category B (Car) only?

**A:** Yes. Manoeuvres in other categories remain unchanged.

**Q:** When following traffic signs the candidate approaches a junction but there are no signs to the destination that the examiner specified. How will this be dealt with?

**A:** There will be times, due to poor or obscured signage, when the examiner may have to intervene. In this instance the examiner would say: "There are no signs here. Just continue ahead please," and then after the junction: "Now, carry on following the signs to..."

**Q:** During the independent driving section, if the candidate asks for a reminder of the directions, will the examiner be able to tell them?

**A:** Yes, of course. Just as with the current test, the examiner will be happy to confirm the directions.

**Q:** What will happen if a candidate has special needs such as dyslexia and they can't follow directions?

**A:** DSA is determined that no member of society should suffer detriment due to any change we introduce. We already have in place procedures to identify special needs or disability at booking stage, both on our internet and telephone booking systems.

Instructors are asked to make sure that they, or their candidate, always follow the current practice when booking a practical test. Once the booking is made, the type of special need is flagged to the examiner so that reasonable adjustment can be made.

**Q:** What if the candidate has hearing difficulties?

**A:** The examiner will tell them what will happen by using written notes at the start of the test the examiner will also look at the candidate to help them lip read if that is helpful.

The examiner will usually give directions as hand signals these will be explained and shown using written cards before the test starts.

Candidates can bring their own sign language interpreter but must pay any fees themselves. An ADI can be an interpreter.

During Independent Driving, the Examiner will ask the candidate to carry out a controlled stop on every test. This should not be confused with the emergency stop which will still be carried out on 1 in 3 tests as it has been. The Controlled Stop is probably better known as the Angle Start, the only difference is that the examiner will usually ask the candidate to stop at a specific place to carry out the manoeuvre, E.g. pull in just past the lamppost, pull in just before the car etc.

For further information on training or any other subject, please contact:

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