

Chapter 10: Physical Condition of the Driver

To obtain a driving licence, it will be necessary to pass certain medical tests.

People with disabilities may obtain a special permit with limitations.

Mood affects driving.

Distractions, speed, fatigue and alcohol adversely affect driving.

Under normal conditions, reaction time is between 0.5 and 1 second.

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FATIGUE	DROWSINESS	DISTRACTIONS	VISION-HEARING
<p>Causes: Monotonous roads, traffic jams, bad lighting, alcohol, driving inexperience, speed, heat, uncomfortable seats, night driving.</p> <p>Effects: + Reaction time. + Errors and risks. + Nerves and aggressiveness. Changes in posture. Blurry vision. Abrupt reactions. Less Reaction capacity. Less accuracy and concentration.</p> <p>Advice: Rest every two hours or 200km for 30 minutes. Ventilate the vehicle, keep a temperature of about 20 to 23 degrees C.</p>	<p>Causes: Early morning or early afternoon, poor sleep, heavy meals, monotony, bad road conditions, alcohol, drugs, coffee, medication.</p> <p>Effects: + Reaction time + Errors and risks + Nerves and aggressiveness Changes in posture. Abrupt reactions. Blurry vision. Less reaction capacity Less accuracy and concentration.</p>	<p>Causes: Fatigue, drowsiness, alcohol, drugs, stress, depression, mobile/cell phone, GPS, smoking, complex traffic, monotonous roads, traffic jams, bad lighting, summer and weekends especially during the day. Most common ages: 18-25 or over 70. Most common roads: motorways and dual carriageways (too monotonous)</p>	<p>Vision: Night vision is worse. Glare, tunnel vision. It is not mandatory to carry spare glasses.</p> <p>Hearing: No loud music, hearing impaired special permit with limitations.</p>

SMOKING	MOBILE/CELL PHONE	GPS
Not forbidden but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Distractions +Risks Advice: No smoking while driving.	The fastest growing cause of accidents because of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Distractions +Risks +Infractions +Reaction time Advice: Do not use the phone, even if the conversation lasts less than a minute. The sound of the phone may surprise the driver.	Place where it will not obstruct your vision, away from the airbag. Do not use while driving. Can be used as speed control. It should be programmed before starting to drive.

10.1 Alcohol and drugs

	BLOOD	AIR
General limit	0.50 gr/l	0.25mg/l
Novice (2 years) and professionals	0.30gr/l	0.15mg/l

Even small amounts have negative effects.

The safest level is 0.0g/L

The maximum level is reached 30 to 90 minutes (1 hour approx.) after the last drink.

Alcohol is eliminated at a rate of 0.2 grams per hour, slower during sleep.

It produces effects including increased reaction time, decreased attention and ability to drive, increased fatigue and drowsiness, reduced visual field (tunnel vision) and incorrect assessment of distances and speeds.

Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs may be punished with imprisonment.

Fermented beverages (wine) are absorbed more slowly than distilled beverages (rum).

Effects are greater in those under 18 and over 65.

The danger multiplies if mixed with drugs.

Injuries in case of accident have a more serious prognosis.

You will be forced to do breathalyzer tests:

- If you are a pedestrian and are found at-fault for the accident
- If you are driving:
 - When you are found at-fault for an accident
 - At drinking control stops
 - Upon committing any offense
 - If an officer notes signs of intoxication

If the test result is positive, you are entitled to a second test 10 minutes after the first. If you are not satisfied with the second test, a third test may be performed in a medical centre. If tested positive, expenses will be paid by the driver.

The vehicle may be immobilized when:

- You refuse to take the test
- You test positive
- When the officer thinks you may be dangerous, even if you test negative

You will be required to submit to drug testing if requested by officers.

CANNABIS: + Reaction time - Concentration. Drowsiness and poor perception of surroundings.

COCAINE: + Aggressiveness. - Fatigue. Overestimation of abilities. Poor perception of surroundings.

AMPHETAMINES: + Aggressiveness. Overestimation of abilities. Psychomotor alterations.

ECSTASY: Optical illusions and blurred vision. More sensitivity to glare. Depression and exhaustion.

LSD: Distortion of reality. + Aggressiveness. Effects last 10-12 hours.

10.2 Medicines, allergies and state of the driver

Medicines

- 1.- See the package leaflet or consult your doctor. Do not self-medicate.
- 2.- The most dangerous medications for driving indicate this on the package.
- 3.- Those with chronic illness should recognize the symptoms of an episode.
- 4.- Flu medications always produce drowsiness.

conditions.

Drivers who have ingested psychotropic drugs (e.g. tobacco or caffeine) may travel on public roads because they do not alter the physical or mental condition of the driver.

Illnesses

Some illnesses may involve some risk for driving. The most dangerous are: neurological disorders and mental illness.

Allergies

They are medicated with antihistamines. Mixed with alcohol or other drugs, they can cause drowsiness. It's recommended to:

- Drive with the windows closed
- Use gentle air conditioning
- Keep vents and the interior clean
- Do not mix alcohol with medications
- Avoid self-medication
- Try not to make long journeys
- Wear sunglasses, aiming to protect the eyes
- Avoid driving at dawn and in humid areas, which often have large concentrations of pollen

Stress

You should not drive under stress. It increases aggressiveness, fatigue and distractions.

Depression

Treatment for depression is very dangerous when driving. It increases insecurity, fatigue, drowsiness, nervousness, anxiety, etc. Consult a specialist.

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