



# The DVLA and your eyesight

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Information for patients from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) and the East Kent Hospitals' Ophthalmology Department

## What is the role of the DVLA Drivers Medical Group?

The Drivers Medical Group works within the DVLA to independently assess that drivers with medical conditions meet the required medical standards for safe driving.

## Driving eyesight rules

- You must wear glasses or contact lenses every time you drive, if you need them to meet the 'standards of vision for driving'.
- You must tell the DVLA if you have got any problem with your eyesight that affects both of your eyes, or the remaining eye if you only have one eye. This does not include being short or long sighted or colour blind. You also do not need to say if you have had surgery to correct short sightedness and can meet the eyesight standards.
- Check if you need to tell the DVLA about your eyesight problem by searching the A to Z of medical conditions that could affect your driving. (<https://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving>)
- **You could be prosecuted if you drive without meeting the standards of vision for driving.**

## What are the eyesight requirements for driving a Group 1 car / motorcycle?

- People driving a Group 1 car / motorcycle, in good light (with glasses or contact lenses if worn) should be able to read a vehicle registration number plate made after 1st September 2001 from 20 metres.
- You must meet the minimum eyesight standard for driving by having a visual acuity of at least decimal 0.5 (6 / 12) measured on the Snellen scale (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) using both eyes together, or if you have sight in one eye only, in that eye.
- You must have an adequate field of vision; your optician can tell you about this and carry out a test.

## What are the eyesight requirements for driving a lorry or bus?

- You must have a visual acuity at least 0.8 (6 / 7.5) measured on the Snellen scale in your best eye, and at least 0.1 (6 / 60) on the Snellen scale in your other eye.
- You can reach this standard using glasses with a corrective power not more than (+) 8 dioptres, or with contact lenses. There is no specific limit for the corrective power of contact lenses.
- You must have an uninterrupted horizontal visual field of at least 160 degrees with an extension of at least 70 degrees left and right and 30 degrees up and down. No defects should be present within a radius of the central 30 degrees.
- You must tell DVLA if you have any problem with your eyesight that affects either eye.
- You may still be able to renew your lorry or bus licence if you cannot meet these standards but held your licence before 1 January 1997.

## Is my eyesight tested during my practical driving test?

Yes. At the start of your practical driving test you have to correctly read a number plate on a parked vehicle. If you cannot do this you will fail your driving test and your test will not continue. The DVLA will be told and your licence will be revoked.

When you reapply for your driving licence, the DVLA will ask you to have an eyesight test with the DVSA (Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency). This will be at a driving test centre. If you are successful, you will still have to pass the DVSA standard eyesight test at your next practical driving test.

## When should I tell the DVLA?

The DVLA need to know about any eye condition that affects your sight or field of vision. Some common eye conditions are:

- macular degeneration
- nystagmus
- optic atrophy
- optic neuritis
- tunnel vision
- retinopathy
- glaucoma
- monocular vision
- diabetic retinopathy
- other retinal disorders, such as blocked vein / artery
- any other conditions producing visual field defect, for example strokes

- double vision
- night blindness
- cataract (eyesight may be improved following surgery).

You should contact the DVLA if you have any of the above eye conditions, after you have been diagnosed by an ophthalmologist.

### Further information

More information on your health and driving is available on the government web site.  
(<https://www.gov.uk/driving-eyesight-rules>)

**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.**

#### Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

#### You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments**, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email ([ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)).

**Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient information leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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