

Your Road to Becoming a Driving Instructor



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DRIVING ACADEMY



Congratulations on taking the first step toward an exciting and rewarding new career!

This guide will walk you through every stage of the process, including what to do, who to contact, and where to find the forms you'll need. Keep this document safe, as it contains all the essential links for your journey to qualification.

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Is an ADI career for me?

Becoming a driving instructor can be an incredibly rewarding career, but like anything worth doing, it has its highs and lows. If you enjoy meeting new people, helping others grow, and want a job that fits around real life, it can be a brilliant choice. Here's a brief look at what the role is really like.

You've Got to Love People

At its core, being an instructor is about working with people – all sorts of people. If you enjoy chatting, supporting others, and watching learners gain confidence, you'll feel right at home. There are always learners looking to get on the road, so there's no shortage of individuals who need your help to build skills and stay test-ready.

Flexibility

One of the biggest perks is flexibility. You can organise your diary in a way that works for you. Whether you prefer early mornings, later evenings, or fitting lessons around school runs, you can usually make it work. Just remember, you'll still need to manage admin, planning, and the natural ups and downs of your schedule.

Making a Difference Every Day

Here's the part many instructors love most: helping someone go from nervous and unsure to confident and capable. You meet learners from every background and with every kind of personality – and every single one teaches you something new. It keeps the job fresh, meaningful, and much more human than most careers.

Career Development

There's plenty of room to grow once you're qualified. You can specialise, train new instructors, or build your own team. And with the constant demand for driving lessons, it's a career that offers stability as well as freedom.



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Before You Begin

To start your training, you should:

- Have a full UK driving licence
- Be aged 21 or over
- Have held your full licence for at least 3 years
- Ideally have a clean (or close to clean) driving record

You can check your eligibility using the following links to the GOV.uk website:

[Check if you can become a driving instructor](#)

[Read about driving instructor responsibilities](#)



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Step 1 — Apply for a DBS Check

Before you can apply to become an ADI (Approved Driving Instructor), you must obtain a new enhanced DBS check — even if you already have one for another role.

[Apply for a DBS here!](#)

Step 2 — Apply to Become an ADI

Once your DBS check is complete, you can submit your application to register as a driving instructor.

After your application is approved, you'll receive a Personal Reference Number (PRN). This will stay with you throughout your entire career, both as a PDI (trainee) and a fully qualified ADI.

[Apply to become an ADI](#)

Step 3 — Part 1: Theory Test

Your first exam is the ADI Part 1 theory test. It includes:

- 100 multiple-choice questions
- A series of hazard perception clips

You have unlimited attempts to pass the theory test.

Once passed, you'll have two years to successfully complete Parts 2 and 3.

[Book your Part 1](#)

Book your Part 2

Apply for a trainee licence

You can proceed directly to Part 3 but you can't charge for lessons until you have passed it.

Step 4 – Part 2: Driving Ability Test

This is the practical driving test. You are allowed 3 attempts but if you fail your third attempt, you have to wait 2 years before retaking part 1.

Step 5 – Apply for a Trainee "Pink" Licence (optional but recommended)

Once you've completed 40+ hrs of training with a fully qualified ADI trainer, you can apply for your trainee licence which allows you to:

- Gain up to 6 months of real teaching experience
- Provide paid driving lessons
- Prepare for your Part 3 test with practical skills

Step 6 – Part 3: Instructional Ability Test

This is your final assessment and the last step toward becoming a fully qualified ADI. Before taking the test, you must complete an additional 20 hours of instructor training, signed off by your trainer and you will have 3 attempts to pass.

Book your part 3

What to Expect from ADI Training

Training to become a driving instructor is more than learning a syllabus – it's about developing the mindset, skills, and confidence you'll need to teach safely and effectively. Here's what you can expect when you're actually in your ADI lessons, and how each part of the process helps you grow into a knowledgeable, calm, and capable instructor.

Support Through the Qualification Process

Your ADI lessons are designed to guide you step by step through all three parts of the qualification. A good trainer won't just teach you what to do – they'll help you understand the reasoning behind each skill so you can apply it confidently with real learners. Expect regular check-ins, clear explanations, and guidance on what to practise between sessions. You'll always know where you are in the process, what comes next, and how to prepare.

Managing Test Nerves

Nerves are completely normal – and your ADI lessons will prepare you to handle them. You'll learn simple techniques to help your pupils to stay calm, focused, and in control. Including breathing strategies, grounding techniques, and ways to break big worries into smaller, more manageable steps.

Getting the Most From Your Training

During each session, you'll be encouraged to reflect, ask questions, and take an active role in your learning. Expect your trainer to:

- Review your progress
- Agree clear goals for the session
- Encourage you to analyse what went well
- Help you identify what to work on next

Taking notes, practising between lessons, and being open to feedback will help you grow more quickly and confidently.



What to Expect from ADI Training (continued)

Risk Assessing During Lessons

A key part of ADI training is learning how to keep the car safe without taking over unnecessarily. You'll learn how to spot early signs of risk, put preventative measures in place and understand your responsibilities as an instructor. You will also recognise when to step in at the right time, and step back when it's safe. Your trainer will help you develop good judgement, calm decision-making, and clear communication – the foundation of safe, effective teaching.

Lesson Planning

You'll spend time learning how to plan driving lessons that are structured but still flexible. This includes how to:

- Set clear, achievable goals
- Build lessons around the learner's needs
- Adjust the plan if things change
- Make sure each session has purpose and direction

As your confidence grows, lesson planning becomes more intuitive – and you'll start to think like an instructor, not just a driver.

Teaching Strategies

Throughout your training, you'll explore a range of teaching methods. You'll build a toolkit of strategies so you can adapt to any learner, any challenge, and any type of lesson.

Types of Learners

Your ADI lessons will introduce you to the many different kinds of learners you'll meet in real life. Together with your trainer, you'll look at anxious learners, confident but inexperienced learners, neurodivergent learners, learners with different processing or communication styles and those who need a slower, steadier pace. Understanding how different people learn helps you become supportive, patient, and genuinely effective as an instructor.

Using Questions to Promote Learning

A big part of ADI training is learning how to ask the right questions at the right time. You'll practise using questions to:

- Help learners think for themselves
- Check understanding
- Build awareness of risk
- Encourage reflection

What to Expect from ADI Training (continued)

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- Check understanding
- Build awareness of risk
- Encourage reflection
- Support decision-making

Instead of giving constant instructions, you'll learn to guide learners toward becoming safe, independent drivers.

ADI training lessons are practical, supportive, and full of opportunities to grow. You'll develop technical skills, teaching strategies, and the confidence to work with all kinds of learners — all while building a clear understanding of how to keep lessons safe and productive.

By the end of your training, you won't just be ready to pass the tests — you'll be ready to teach with clarity, empathy, and confidence.

If you chose to learn with Kendall's

Qualifying with Kendall's means joining a supportive, human-centred training environment where your growth genuinely matters. Our ethos is built on honesty, encouragement, and a genuine passion for helping people build fulfilling careers. Unlike some driving schools, we never tie you into long contracts or financial commitments — you simply pay an hourly rate for the training you need, with complete transparency and flexibility. More importantly, guiding people into this profession is one of the most rewarding parts of what we do; many of our trainees stay in touch long after they qualify, becoming part of a close, ongoing community. And support doesn't stop at passing your tests — I continue to offer guidance for Standards Checks, professional development, and anything else you need as your career grows.

 [07522 059477](tel:07522059477)

 info@kendalls.academy

 kendallsdriving.academy

Getting Started

Starting Your Journey as a Newly Qualified ADI

Earning your green badge is a huge milestone – well done! Now comes the exciting (and sometimes overwhelming) part: deciding how you want to work and getting your new career off the ground. Here's a simple, honest look at what to expect as you get started.

Joining a Franchise

Most new ADIs begin with a franchise because it's the simplest way to step into the job. Big names and local schools alike can give you instant visibility, ongoing pupils, and support with admin like bookings and marketing. It's also reassuring when you're still finding your feet.

The trade-off is that franchises usually involve a fixed weekly fee or a share of your earnings, so it's worth checking the small print. Some deals also set your working hours, which might feel a bit restrictive if flexibility is a top priority. But for many new instructors, the stability and steady stream of learners make it a great place to start.

Working Independently

Going independent gives you full control – your hours, your prices, your pupils, your brand. You'll need to handle enquiries, finances and marketing, but it also means you get the freedom (and the income) that comes with building your own business.

Marketing also doesn't need to be complicated. A friendly social media presence, a simple website, or even a clear business card can take you far. Most learners look online first, so it helps to show your personality and share what makes you different. And happy pupils are your best advert!

Choosing Your Car

Your car becomes your classroom, so pick one you enjoy spending time in. Manual is still most popular, but automatics and hybrids are becoming more common – and automatic-only instructors are in big demand. Dual controls are essential and easy to get fitted, and there are plenty of specialist suppliers who can advise you on the best setup.

Our Top Tips!

1. Tax & Going Digital

HMRC is moving towards Making Tax Digital, which means you'll need to keep clearer digital records and use approved software to submit updates throughout the year. It sounds daunting, but it's really just a new way of staying organised – and starting now will make life easier later. If numbers aren't your thing, don't panic. A good accountant can talk you through what you can and can't claim, how to structure your income, and how to avoid overpaying.

2. Insurance You Actually Need

Your personal car insurance won't cover driving lessons, so make sure you take out proper ADI instructor insurance before you start teaching. Cover can vary depending on things like your age, the car you use, and how many lessons you teach. If you're leasing the car with dual controls, always check what's included so you're not caught out.

3. Running Costs & Business Tools

Being an ADI comes with a few behind-the-scenes costs: fuel, dual-control servicing, tyres, advertising, apps, and any extras like pupil resources.

4. Associations & Support Networks

There are several professional associations for driving instructors, each offering helpful extras such as CPD training, legal representation or webinars and resources. You don't need to join one straight away, but they're great for advice and keeping your skills sharp.

6. Referrals & Word of Mouth

Your best marketing tool? Happy pupils. Most instructors fill their diary through recommendations, so every positive learning experience really does count. Some businesses also pay referral fees for sending learners your way – but make sure you're comfortable with their approach before you sign anything.



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If you'd like to explore whether becoming a driving instructor is the right path for you, we'd be delighted to help.

Get in touch to arrange a free, no-obligation call, and we can talk through your goals, answer any questions, and help you decide if this rewarding career is the perfect fit. I look forward to hearing from you!

 Cromer, Norfolk

 07522 059477

 info@kendalls.academy

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