

Driving and vision

What standard of vision is needed for driving?

Car drivers (group 1) must meet the vision standards shown at the bottom of this leaflet.

Please also see www.gov.uk/driving-eyesight-rules and read guidance from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-standards-of-vision-for-driving-cars-and-motorcycles-group-1

Lorry and bus drivers (group 2) must meet more stringent eyesight requirements, with a medical and vision check when they first apply for their bus or lorry licence, and then every five years from age 45 and every year from age 65.

For more information see, www.gov.uk/driving-eyesight-rules

Licensed taxi drivers must meet the vision requirements of their local authority, which vary but are often the same as for group-2 drivers.

How to check your vision

Although we believe that a vision-testing programme should be introduced, which drivers must take before they apply for a licence, you can test yourself against the current standard by reading (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after 1 September 2001 from 20 metres. You should check this yourself regularly. Your optometrist will check your vision on a Snellen chart during a sight test.

Driving with eyesight below the required standard is illegal and may also mean your motor insurance is not valid.

Medical conditions

You must tell the DVLA about certain eye or general medical conditions. For a full list of conditions you must declare, see www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving

The most common conditions (but not the only ones) affecting vision are age-related macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy.

If you are a group-1 driver, you must tell the DVLA if you have a medical condition affecting both eyes, including different conditions in each eye. You can either **report your condition online** or fill in **form V1** and send it to the DVLA. The address is on the form.

If you are a group-2 driver, you must tell the DVLA if you have a medical condition affecting either eye by filling in **form V1V** and sending it to the DVLA. The address is on the form.

The DVLA may send you for a field of vision test in which lights are flashed in the edge of your vision to make sure you can see them. People are generally very poor at judging their own field of vision, and blind spots in your vision create a risk of accidents, especially involving pedestrians.

What should I do if I feel my vision is getting worse for driving?

You should see your optometrist who will be able to tell you if you need a new prescription, whether you need to be referred to an ophthalmologist (eye doctor), or if you have a condition that should be declared to the DVLA.

About the AOP

The Association of Optometrists (AOP) is the voice of the optical profession, representing over 80% of practising optometrists. The AOP elevates the work of its members, safeguards their interests, and champions eye health across the UK. For more information, visit www.aop.org.uk

Optometrist form for car drivers (group 1)

The following form is to be completed by the examining optometrist.

Car drivers (group 1) – meeting the necessary standard

You must be able to do the following.

- 1 Read (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) a car number plate made after 1 September 2001 from 20 metres. You should check this yourself regularly.**

YOUR OPTOMETRIST WILL FILL IN THIS SECTION.

- 2 Read the 6/12 line of letters on a Snellen chart (with glasses or contact lenses, if necessary) using both eyes together or, if you have sight in one eye only, in that eye.**

- You meet this standard.
- You must wear glasses or contact lenses to meet this standard.
- You were not able to meet the standard (even with glasses or contact lenses). You should tell the DVLA.

- 3 Have an adequate field of vision. The DVLA can arrange a test for this at an accredited centre if your sight test suggests that there may be a problem with your peripheral vision.**

- There is no declared history of an eye injury or medical condition which may affect your binocular field of vision (central or peripheral).
- There is a declared history of an eye injury or medical condition which may affect your binocular field of vision (central or peripheral). You should tell the DVLA who will arrange a field of vision test.

Date:

Patient name:

Name of practitioner:

Signature:



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