Lesson 7: RMV Practice Tests - How to Study for the Test

Goal:

This lesson will offer strategies to **study and prepare by using the MA Driver’s Manual.** While the last lesson introduced the topics of the test, this lesson covers studying, developing testing strategies for, and taking the test.

Review:

After the last lesson, what do you expect will be difficult about taking the practice test? How can you best prepare to take the test?

It can be intimidating, but the Practice Test only gives you about one minute per question. This is an extra obstacle for test-takers who have limited experience with multiple choice tests, the language of the test, and the content of the test. Even when you know the answer to the question, the wording or phrasing of the question might be confusing.

Eliciting Prior Knowledge:

Have you taken a multiple choice test before? If so, what features or elements stand out? What test-taking strategies have you used in the past?

Taking Practice Tests

The best way to study is by answering many questions. Unfortunately, the RMV does not have an official study guide for the test. Therefore, it can help to find an unofficial practice exam, like this one: [https://driving-tests.org/massachusetts/rmv-practice-test/](https://driving-tests.org/massachusetts/rmv-practice-test/)

If you haven’t taken a multiple-choice test before, review some of the kinds of questions you may be asked. Some questions will ask you to “finish the sentence,” like this question from [this practice test](https://driving-tests.org/massachusetts/rmv-practice-test/):

Designed by the UMass Amherst/International Language Institute project on Driving in English. See [https://ili.edu](https://ili.edu) for more information and contact rlorimer@umass.edu with questions.
Traffic warning signs in work zones are usually…

- a. Red
- b. Yellow
- c. Green
- d. Orange

Other questions will ask a direct question and list possible answers, like this question:

Which of the following statements about making turns is true?

- a. Start from the lane further from where you want to go
- b. Always start from the rightmost lane
- c. Always start from the leftmost lane
- d. Start from the lane closest to where you want to go

Some questions will ask you to “fill in the blank,” like this one:

The driver of a car being passed must ________ until the pass is complete.

- a. Stop
- b. Move to the left
- c. Increase speed
- d. Not increase speed

During this lesson, practice taking the test as much as you can - preferably on a computer, if you can access one. Here are some more tips for taking multiple-choice tests:

1) Read the full question and the potential answers, in full, before answering.
2) If you’re confused about a question, or don’t know the answer, try to rule out any answers that are obviously wrong, rather than choosing the right answer. At the very least, this increases your chances of guessing correctly.

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3) Be aware of the time!
4) Make sure you know some test-taking vocabulary, like “all of the above,” “none of the above,” etc.

Using the Driver’s Manual to Answer Questions

While you study, you should use the Driver’s Manual to check answers or to look up answers you don’t yet know. This will help identify sections of the Manual to study.


If the test asks you, for instance:

A digital word search can help us find the answer. Open the Driver’s Manual pdf. Hold down the keys “Control” and “F”. This enables you to search for specific terms in the document. Then choose a distinct word or phrase of the question - in this case, “peripheral vision” - and search the document. See below:

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Developing personal strategies

Tutors and tutees should rely on the experience of taking many practice tests to determine the best test-taking strategy. Some tutees will struggle with the time of the test, while others will struggle with tricky or unclear wording. Be sure to develop specific strategies for each tutee, to be practices in tutoring sessions and at home, if possible.

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