

New Hampshire DMV

Permit Practice Test 2026

40-question test with answer key · permitpractice.us

New Hampshire permit test: quick facts

Questions on the real test	40
Passing score	80% (32 of 40 correct)
Wrong answers allowed	8
Minimum age	15½
Testing agency	Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)
Official permit name	None - New Hampshire does not issue learner's permits. Learners practice under RSA 263:25; drivers aged 16-20 receive a Youth Operator License.
Permit fee	No permit fee (no permit issued). License fee is paid before testing: Youth Operator License \$10.00 per year up to age 21; standard Operator \$50.00 (non-REAL ID) / \$60.00 (REAL ID)
If you fail	10 calendar days before retesting a failed Operator knowledge test (5 days for CDL); exams are randomized so a retake is a different test
Online testing	No - the knowledge test must be taken in person.
Driver's education	Required for applicants under 18.
Supervised practice	40 hours of supervised driving in addition to the approved Driver Education program (under 18), logged on the Driver's Out-Of-Class Log Sheet signed by a parent/guardian
Under-21 alcohol limit	0.02% BAC or higher

How to use this PDF

1. This test has 40 questions, the same number as the real New Hampshire DMV knowledge test.
2. Answer every question before you look at the answer key. To pass you need 80% (32 of 40 correct).
3. Time: We found no published time limit for the New Hampshire knowledge test.
4. Take it online, with every answer explained, at <https://permitpractice.us/new-hampshire/> - the mock test there marks your answers only at the end, like the real test.

Questions are original study questions written from the New Hampshire driver's handbook and general traffic law. They are not copies of actual DMV exam questions. State facts last reviewed 2026-09-28. Free for personal study; do not resell. © 2026 permitpractice.us

New Hampshire Permit Practice Test: 40 Questions

Circle your answer. Answer key with explanations starts on the last pages.

1. A five-sided (pentagon) sign that points upward indicates:

- A) A railroad crossing ahead
- B) A school zone or crossing
- C) A hospital zone ahead
- D) A no-passing zone

2. When should you check your tire pressure?

- A) Once a year at your oil change or state inspection
- B) After driving a while, when tires are warm
- C) Monthly and before long trips, with cold tires
- D) Only when the warning light comes on

3. What does a sign in the shape of an octagon always mean?

- A) Wrong way
- B) Yield
- C) Do not enter
- D) Stop

4. When should you use your vehicle's emergency hazard lights?

- A) When you plan to change lanes or make a turn
- B) To thank a driver who let you merge
- C) When your car is disabled on or near the road
- D) When parking briefly in a no-parking zone

5. If a tire blows out while you are driving, the first thing you should do is:

- A) Steer hard toward the shoulder right away
- B) Brake hard to stop as quickly as you can
- C) Turn on hazard lights and stop in the lane
- D) Hold the wheel firmly and ease off the gas

6. What does a downward-pointing triangle sign mean?

- A) Merge
- B) Do not enter
- C) Yield
- D) Stop ahead

7. A yellow diamond sign showing a 'T' shape indicates:

- A) A truck route begins here
- B) A four-way crossroad ahead
- C) A side road enters from one side
- D) Your road ends at a T ahead

8. Your gas pedal is stuck and you switch off the engine to slow the car. What should you expect?

- A) The car will speed up for a few seconds
- B) Steering and braking will take more effort
- C) The car will come to a stop almost at once
- D) The brakes will stop working completely

9. Using a handheld cell phone while driving is:

- A) Legal for every driver in every state
- B) No riskier than talking to a passenger
- C) Safe as long as you keep your eyes on the road
- D) Banned in most states and a major crash risk

10. What does a sign showing a car with curved skid marks indicate?

- A) Loose gravel ahead
- B) Winding road
- C) Sharp curve
- D) Slippery when wet

11. A rectangular white sign reading 'KEEP RIGHT' with an arrow means:

- A) Stay in the right lane to pass
- B) Pass the divider on either side
- C) Go to the right of the divider
- D) Right turns only

12. A round (circular) sign indicates:

- A) A stop ahead
- B) A one-way street
- C) A speed limit change
- D) A railroad crossing

13. When two lanes merge and there are 'zipper merge' signs, you should:

- A) Use both lanes to the merge point, then take turns
- B) Merge early - as soon as you see the sign - to be polite
- C) Let all vehicles in the other lane go first
- D) Stop and wait for all traffic to clear

14. How much of a traffic lane is a motorcycle entitled to?

- A) Only the right third of the lane
- B) Whatever space other traffic leaves
- C) Half a lane, so a car may share it
- D) A full lane, the same as a car

15. Blue signs along a highway typically indicate:

- A) Parks and recreation areas
- B) Gas, food, and lodging services
- C) Rules such as speed limits
- D) Exits and distances to nearby cities

16. A front tire blows out while you are driving on the highway. When should you start using the brakes?

- A) After the car has slowed and is under control
- B) As soon as the car starts to pull to one side
- C) Right away, pressing the pedal as hard as you can
- D) Immediately, using quick hard pumps of the pedal

17. A yellow sign showing a truck tilted on two wheels warns of:

- A) A steep downhill grade for trucks
- B) A truck inspection station
- C) A curve where trucks may tip over
- D) A road with soft shoulders ahead

18. What is the purpose of an anti-lock braking system (ABS)?

- A) To let you pump the brakes faster in a skid
- B) To brake for you when a car ahead stops
- C) To keep wheels from locking so you can steer
- D) To stop your vehicle faster by automatically pumping brakes

19. Total stopping distance is made up of:

- A) Perception, reaction, and braking distance
- B) Braking distance plus one car length
- C) Reaction distance and braking distance only
- D) Perception distance and braking distance

20. When may a driver enter or cross a bike lane?

- A) To turn or cross to parking, yielding to cyclists
- B) To wait in it while the car ahead of you turns
- C) Never, under any circumstances
- D) To pass slower cars when traffic is heavy

21. What is the purpose of a broken white line between lanes?

- A) Lanes are one-way only
- B) You may not change lanes or pass here
- C) Lane changes are permitted when safe
- D) Traffic moves in opposite directions

22. Hydroplaning is most likely to occur when:

- A) Braking gently on an icy road in the cold
- B) Driving slowly through deep, soft snow on a hill
- C) Driving on dry pavement on a very hot day
- D) Driving fast on a wet road, mainly with worn tires

23. What is the only real cure for drowsiness while driving?

- A) Turning the radio up loud
- B) Drinking strong coffee
- C) Getting sleep or rest
- D) Opening a window for cold air

24. In many areas a curb is painted yellow. What should you understand from this?

- A) It is reserved for motorcycles
- B) You may park there for as long as you like
- C) Stopping or parking is restricted there
- D) It shows a spot reserved for disabled drivers

25. A warning sign showing a truck on a downgrade indicates:

- A) A steep downhill grade ahead
- B) A runaway truck ramp ahead
- C) A truck weigh station ahead
- D) A truck crossing ahead

26. What is the safest action when you are being tailgated?

- A) Ignore them and maintain your exact speed
- B) Tap your brakes hard to warn them off
- C) Speed up well past the limit to pull away from them
- D) Move over or add space ahead and let them pass

27. How do most state handbooks tell you to measure a safe following distance?

- A) Count the seconds between it and you passing a fixed point
- B) Count car lengths - one car length is enough at any speed
- C) Stay close enough to read the license plate of the car ahead
- D) Follow at a distance in feet equal to your speed in mph

28. What does a blue traffic sign indicate?

- A) Recreation areas such as state parks
- B) Motorist services like gas and food
- C) Rules you must obey, such as limits
- D) Highway route information

29. When should you use your high-beam headlights?

- A) In fog for maximum light
- B) When following another car at night
- C) On open roads with no vehicles close by
- D) Whenever it is dark, regardless of other traffic

30. If you begin to skid on ice or a slippery surface, you should:

- A) Turn the wheel sharply in the opposite direction
- B) Brake firmly and hold the wheel straight
- C) Shift to neutral and pull the parking brake
- D) Ease off the gas and steer where you want to go

31. In New Hampshire, the BAC limit for drivers under 21 is:

- A) 0.05
- B) 0.02
- C) 0.10
- D) 0.08

32. What should you do before opening your car door after parking on a street?

- A) Open it fully so passing drivers will steer around
- B) Check mirrors and look for traffic and cyclists
- C) Open it slowly so others can see it move
- D) Check only the side mirror, then open

33. What score do you need to pass the New Hampshire DMV written knowledge test?

- A) 83%
- B) 70%
- C) 75%
- D) 80%

34. A diamond-shaped orange sign indicates:

- A) A work zone ahead
- B) A slow-moving vehicle ahead
- C) A yield ahead
- D) A school zone

35. A motorcycle coming toward an intersection has its turn signal blinking. What should you do before pulling out in front of it?

- A) Go - a blinking signal means it will turn
- B) Flash your headlights and then pull out
- C) Wait until you are sure it is really turning
- D) Pull out quickly before it reaches you

36. In most states, which left turn may you make on a steady red light after a full stop, if no sign forbids it?

- A) From a one-way street onto another one-way street
- B) From a two-way street onto another two-way street
- C) From a two-way street into a store's driveway
- D) From any street when no oncoming car is in sight

37. When you reach an intersection with a flashing red light in your direction and a flashing yellow in the cross direction, you must:

- A) Stop, then go first - cross traffic must yield
- B) Stop, then go when safe - cross traffic won't stop
- C) Slow down and go - the cross traffic has to stop
- D) Stop and wait until your light turns solid green

38. Traffic is backed up just past a railroad crossing. When should you start across the tracks?

- A) Whenever the crossing lights are not flashing
- B) Only when there is room to get fully past the tracks
- C) When the car ahead of you has started to cross
- D) Right away, since no train is in sight now

39. When turning left at a green light (not a green arrow), you must:

- A) Turn first - oncoming traffic must yield to you
- B) Wait for oncoming traffic to stop
- C) Yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians
- D) Turn immediately - green means go

40. What does 'covering the brake' mean?

- A) Pressing the brake and gas at the same time
- B) Pumping the brake to warn the drivers behind you
- C) Resting your left foot on the brake pedal
- D) Holding your foot over the brake, ready to stop

Answer Key & Explanations

1. B - A school zone or crossing

An upward-pointing pentagon sign marks a school zone or school crossing. It is typically yellow-green and warns that children may be present.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2A.05, Table 2A-1 Use of Sign Shapes

2. C - Monthly and before long trips, with cold tires

Check tire pressure monthly and before long trips, using a gauge when tires are cold (not recently driven). Proper inflation improves fuel economy, tire life, and braking performance.

Source: sd.gov - SD handbook - Vehicle maintenance

3. D - Stop

An octagon (8-sided shape) is used exclusively for STOP signs. The unique shape lets drivers identify it even when snow-covered or viewed from behind.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2A.05, Table 2A-1 Use of Sign Shapes; 2B.04

4. C - When your car is disabled on or near the road

Hazard lights warn others that your vehicle is stopped, disabled or a hazard. Rules for using them while moving (for example in heavy rain) differ between states, so follow your state handbook.

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Using Your Emergency Flashers

5. D - Hold the wheel firmly and ease off the gas

During a blowout, hold the steering wheel firmly to keep the vehicle straight, ease your foot off the accelerator, and let the car slow gradually. Hard braking can cause a spin. Pull off the road only after you have control.

Source: ksrevenue.gov - KS handbook - Tire blowout

6. C - Yield

An inverted (downward-pointing) triangle is always a YIELD sign. Slow down, be ready to stop, and give the right of way to traffic and pedestrians.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2A.05, Table 2A-1 Use of Sign Shapes

7. D - Your road ends at a T ahead

A 'T' symbol warns that the road you are on ends ahead at a T-intersection. Be prepared to stop or yield and turn left or right.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2C.41

8. B - Steering and braking will take more effort

With the engine off you lose power steering and power brake assist, so the wheel and pedal feel much heavier. They still work - push harder and steer to a safe stop.

Source: alea.gov - p.75 (PDF p.77), Stuck accelerator pedal

9. D - Banned in most states and a major crash risk

Handheld cell phone use while driving is banned in most US states. Using a phone quadruples crash risk. Even hands-free calls significantly impair attention. Use do-not-disturb mode when driving.

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Distracted driving

10. D - Slippery when wet

A yellow warning sign with a car and curved skid lines means the road is slippery when wet. Slow down and increase following distance in rain or snow.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2C.30

11. C - Go to the right of the divider

A 'Keep Right' sign directs you to pass to the right of a traffic island, median, or obstruction. It keeps traffic flowing correctly around the divider.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2B.39

12. D - A railroad crossing

A round, yellow sign with a black X and two R's warns of a railroad crossing ahead. The circular shape is used exclusively for railroad advance-warning signs.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) Section 2A.05 and Table 2A-1 (W10-1)

13. A - Use both lanes to the merge point, then take turns

Where zipper-merge signs are posted, stay in your lane until the merge point, then take turns with the other lane like the teeth of a zipper. Merging early leaves one lane empty and makes the queue longer; the Minnesota Department of Transportation reports that the zipper merge can cut the length of a backup by as much as 40 percent.

Source: dmv.colorado.gov - CO handbook - Zipper Merge

14. D - A full lane, the same as a car

A motorcycle has the right to use a full lane. Never drive alongside a motorcycle in the same lane, even if the rider is far to one side.

Source: alea.gov - p.26 (PDF p.28), Sharing the road with motorcycles

15. B - Gas, food, and lodging services

Blue signs indicate motorist services - gas stations, food, lodging, hospitals, and rest areas - available at or near an exit.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 1D.05 Color Code

16. A - After the car has slowed and is under control

Braking hard during a blowout can make you lose control. Hold the wheel firmly, ease off the gas, let the car slow down, and brake gently only once it is under control.

Source: in.gov - p.60 (PDF p.65), Vehicle Equipment Failures - Tire Blowout

17. C - A curve where trucks may tip over

This sign warns of a curve sharp enough that trucks and top-heavy vehicles risk rolling over. All drivers should reduce speed before entering.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2C.11

18. C - To keep wheels from locking so you can steer

ABS prevents wheels from locking during hard braking, allowing you to maintain steering control. When ABS activates, you may feel pulsing in the brake pedal - this is normal. Press firmly and steer.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - MN handbook - Anti-lock brakes

19. A - Perception, reaction, and braking distance

Total stopping distance = perception distance (seeing the hazard) + reaction distance (moving your foot to the brake) + braking distance (the vehicle physically stopping). All three increase with speed, which is why higher speeds are far more dangerous.

Source: flhsmv.gov - FL handbook - Total Stopping Distance

20. A - To turn or cross to parking, yielding to cyclists

Bike lanes are for bicyclists. You may enter or cross one only when needed to turn, enter or leave a driveway or alley, or park where allowed, and you must yield to bicyclists first. States differ on details: California lets you merge into the bike lane before a turn, while Connecticut and Hawaii only let you cross it.

Source: portal.ct.gov - CT handbook - Bicyclists

21. C - Lane changes are permitted when safe

Broken (dashed) white lines separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction. You may change lanes when it is safe to do so.

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Broken White Lines

22. D - Driving fast on a wet road, mainly with worn tires

Hydroplaning happens when a layer of water builds between your tires and the road, usually at higher speeds on wet pavement. Worn tires and standing water increase the risk. Slow down in the rain to keep tire contact with the road.

Source: dmv.ny.gov - NY handbook - Hydroplaning

23. C - Getting sleep or rest

Coffee, cold air and loud music may help for a short time, but they do not last. Only sleep or rest fixes fatigue, so stop and rest when you are tired.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - p.91 (PDF p.94), Drugs and fatigue

24. C - Stopping or parking is restricted there

Curb colors are not uniform across states. In California and Nevada yellow means a loading zone; in Florida, Tennessee and several other states a yellow curb means no parking. In every case it signals a restriction, so read nearby signs and follow state and local rules.

Source: dmv.nv.gov - NV handbook - Colored Curb Markings

25. A - A steep downhill grade ahead

A sign showing a truck on a slope warns of a steep downhill grade. Trucks should use a lower gear; all drivers should check brakes and control speed.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2C.14

26. D - Move over or add space ahead and let them pass

When tailgated, do not brake-check. Move to another lane if possible or increase the gap to the vehicle ahead so you have more room to stop gradually - this gives both you and the tailgater more reaction time.

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Space: tailgaters

27. A - Count the seconds between it and you passing a fixed point

Handbooks teach a time-based gap: pick a fixed object and count the seconds after the vehicle ahead passes it. The minimum differs by state (2, 3 or 4 seconds), with most recommending 3 to 4 seconds in good conditions; add time in rain, at night or behind large vehicles. Check your state handbook for its exact number.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Following distance

28. B - Motorist services like gas and food

Blue signs provide information about motorist services: gas stations, food, lodging, hospitals, and rest areas. They help drivers find services along the route.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Chapter 5, sign colors

29. C - On open roads with no vehicles close by

Use high beams on open roads when there is no oncoming traffic and no vehicle close ahead. Dim them within 500 feet of oncoming traffic and 200-300 feet when following. High beams reflect off fog, rain, and snow, reducing visibility.

Source: wisconsindot.gov - WI handbook - High beams

30. D - Ease off the gas and steer where you want to go

In a skid, take your foot off the gas (do not brake hard) and gently steer in the direction you want the front of the car to go. Smooth inputs are key - sudden movements worsen the skid.

Source: dmv.ny.gov - NY handbook - Skids

31. B - 0.02

New Hampshire sets the BAC limit for drivers under 21 at 0.02, compared with 0.08 for adults.

Source: gc.nh.gov - RSA 265-A:2, I(b)

32. B - Check mirrors and look for traffic and cyclists

Before opening your door into traffic, check your mirrors and look over your shoulder for approaching vehicles and cyclists. 'Dooring' a passing cyclist is dangerous and illegal in many states.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Parking

33. D - 80%

To pass the DMV test you need 80% (32 of 40 correct).

34. A - A work zone ahead

Orange diamond-shaped signs indicate construction or work zones. Speed limits are often reduced and fines are doubled in work zones. Slow down and stay alert.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Chapter 5, sign colors

35. C - Wait until you are sure it is really turning

Many motorcycle turn signals do not cancel by themselves, so a rider may have forgotten one. Wait until the motorcycle actually starts to turn.

Source: publicsafety.ohio.gov - Section 9 - Sharing the Road, Motorcyclists

36. A - From a one-way street onto another one-way street

Most states allow a left turn on red from a one-way street onto another one-way street that carries traffic to the left. You must stop fully and yield to pedestrians and traffic first.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - p.66 (PDF p.69), Left turn on red

37. B - Stop, then go when safe - cross traffic won't stop

A flashing red light works like a stop sign: stop completely, then go when safe. The cross traffic with a flashing yellow only needs to slow and proceed with caution - they do not stop, so you must yield to them.

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Flashing lights

38. B - Only when there is room to get fully past the tracks

Never stop on railroad tracks. Wait behind the crossing until there is enough space on the other side for your whole vehicle.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - p.53 (PDF p.56), Railroad crossing safety

39. C - Yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians

A green ball (not arrow) allows a left turn only after yielding to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. A green arrow means you have a protected turn and oncoming traffic is stopped.

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Flashing Yellow Arrow / left turns

40. D - Holding your foot over the brake, ready to stop

Covering the brake means moving your foot from the accelerator to a position over, or lightly on, the brake pedal when you see a possible hazard, so you can brake with less reaction time.

Source: tn.gov - TN handbook - Covering the brake

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<https://permitpractice.us/new-hampshire/>

Official DMV website: <https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/dmv/>

Official New Hampshire driver's handbook: <https://www.dmv.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt416/files/inline-documents/nhdm.pdf>

