

New Mexico MVD

Permit Practice Test 2026

25-question test with answer key · permitpractice.us

New Mexico permit test: quick facts

Questions on the real test	Not published by the MVD
Passing score	70% correct
Wrong answers allowed	Depends on test length (not published)
Minimum age	15
Testing agency	Motor Vehicle Division (MVD)
Official permit name	Instructional Permit
If you fail	No mandatory wait (may retake the same day) but no more than 2 attempts in one week; after 3 failures must wait 6 months from the application date
Driver's education	Yes - an approved driver education course is required.
Supervised practice	50 hours incl. 10 at night (required before the provisional license)
Permit holding period	6 months
Under-21 alcohol limit	0.02% BAC or higher

How to use this PDF

1. The MVD does not publish how many questions the real test has. This test uses 25 questions, the length of our online mock test.
2. Answer every question before you look at the answer key. To pass you need 70% correct.
3. Time: We found no published time limit for the New Mexico knowledge test.
4. Take it online, with every answer explained, at <https://permitpractice.us/new-mexico/> - the mock test there marks your answers only at the end, like the real test.

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

New Mexico Permit Practice Test: 25 Questions

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

1. A black-and-white rectangular sign reading 'NO TURN ON RED' means:

- A) Turn on red only if no cars are coming
- B) Turns are never allowed here
- C) Only left turns on red are banned here
- D) No turning on red, even after stopping

2. A yellow diamond sign showing arrows that curve around in a circle indicates:

- A) A roundabout ahead
- B) A detour loop ahead
- C) A U-turn area ahead
- D) A dead-end turnaround

3. Which lane position helps other drivers see you and gives you the best view of the road ahead?

- A) Stay close behind a larger vehicle to block the wind
- B) Ride beside other cars so they always see you
- C) Keep space around you and stay out of blind spots
- D) Keep to the far left edge of your lane

4. A yellow diamond sign showing a deer means:

- A) A wildlife park entrance
- B) A nature trail crossing
- C) Deer may cross the road
- D) Hunting is allowed nearby

5. What does a yellow pennant-shaped sign (a sideways triangle pointing right) on the left side of the road mean?

- A) No-passing zone begins
- B) A sharp curve
- C) Passing lane begins ahead
- D) Merge ahead

6. You are stopped at a steady red light and no sign prohibits turning. What must you do before you turn right?

- A) Stop fully, then yield to people and cross traffic
- B) Honk to warn others, then turn ahead of them
- C) Wait for the light to turn green before turning
- D) Slow to a crawl, then turn if the way looks clear

7. 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

8. When are you required to use headlights?

- A) Only at night on roads without streetlights
- B) At night and when visibility is reduced
- C) Only on highways at night, not on city streets
- D) Only when it is fully dark, not in bad weather

9. 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

10. A sign that reads 'DO NOT ENTER' on a red and white background means:

- A) Enter only after a full stop
- B) Only local traffic may enter
- C) Enter only if no cars are coming
- D) You may not enter the road ahead

11. 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

12. 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

13. 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

14. What does the 'basic speed law' require?

- A) Never drive more than 10 mph below the posted limit
- B) You may always drive at the posted limit, whatever the conditions
- C) Drive no faster than is safe for current conditions
- D) Keep up with the flow of traffic, even above the limit

15. 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

16. 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

17. At a 4-way stop sign, two cars arrive at exactly the same time. Who goes first?

- A) The car going straight
- B) The car on the left
- C) The car that signals first
- D) The car on the right

18. A pentagon (5-sided) shaped sign is associated with:

- A) Hospital zones
- B) Construction areas
- C) No-passing zones
- D) School zones

19. 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

20. When driving in heavy rain, you should:

- A) Use cruise control to keep a steady, safe speed
- B) Use low beams and leave more following distance
- C) Turn on hazard lights and drive at normal speed
- D) Use high-beam headlights to see better

21. A long train has just passed a crossing that has two sets of tracks. Before you cross, you should:

- A) Look for a second train on the other track
- B) Honk to warn any train and then cross quickly
- C) Cross as soon as the gates begin to rise
- D) Go at once, because the train has cleared the road

22. What does a yellow traffic light mean?

- A) Proceed normally
- B) Stop at once, no matter how close you are
- C) The light is about to turn green
- D) Stop if it is safe to do so

23. When entering a highway from an on-ramp, who has the right of way?

- A) The larger vehicle, such as a truck
- B) The merging vehicle
- C) Whoever reaches the merge point first
- D) Traffic already on the highway

24. In New Mexico, a driver of a commercial vehicle is over the alcohol limit at a BAC of:

- A) 0.10
- B) 0.08
- C) 0.04
- D) 0.02

25. Your regular brakes have failed and pumping did not help. How should you use the parking (emergency) brake?

- A) Only after the car has stopped
- B) Apply it and release it rapidly
- C) Apply it slowly and gradually
- D) Pull it on as hard as you can

Answer Key & Explanations

1. D - No turning on red, even after stopping

A 'No Turn on Red' sign prohibits turning while the signal is red, even after a complete stop. You must wait for a green light to turn.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2B.60

2. A - A roundabout ahead

The Circular Intersection sign (a yellow diamond showing arrows curving counterclockwise in a circle) warns of a roundabout ahead. Slow down, yield to traffic already in the circle, and enter when there is a safe gap. Round signs are used only for railroad crossing advance warnings.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) Section 2A.05, Table 2A-1 and Section 2C.02

3. C - Keep space around you and stay out of blind spots

Maintain a space cushion around your vehicle and avoid lingering in others' blind spots. This keeps you visible, gives you escape routes, and improves your view of developing hazards.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - MN handbook - Blind spots

4. C - Deer may cross the road

A deer symbol warns that animals frequently cross this stretch of road. Be especially alert at dawn and dusk, scan the roadsides, and slow down.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2C.55

5. A - No-passing zone begins

A yellow pennant-shaped sign on the left side of the road marks the beginning of a no-passing zone. It supplements the solid yellow line on the pavement.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2C.53

6. A - Stop fully, then yield to people and cross traffic

A right turn on red is allowed only after a complete stop and only after yielding to pedestrians and all crossing traffic. A NO TURN ON RED sign takes this option away.

Source: publicsafety.ohio.gov - Section 5 - Learning to Drive, A driver must stop

7. 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

8. B - At night and when visibility is reduced

Every state requires headlights at night and when visibility is reduced. The exact period varies: some states say sunset to sunrise, many say 30 minutes after sunset to 30 minutes before sunrise. Many states also require headlights whenever your wipers are on or you cannot see a set distance (often 500 or 1,000 feet) ahead.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Chapter 9, Headlights

9. 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

10. D - You may not enter the road ahead

A 'Do Not Enter' sign means you must not enter the road or ramp ahead - usually because it is one-way or an exit ramp. Entering would put you in oncoming traffic.

Source: mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov - MUTCD 11th ed. (Dec 2023) 2B.46

11. 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

12. 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

13. 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

14. C - Drive no faster than is safe for current conditions

Every state has a basic speed rule: never drive faster than is reasonable and safe for traffic, weather, visibility and road conditions. You can be cited for driving too fast for conditions even while under the posted limit.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Basic speed law

15. 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

16. 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

17. D - The car on the right

When two vehicles arrive at a 4-way stop simultaneously, the driver on the LEFT must yield to the driver on the RIGHT. This is the standard right-of-way rule.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Right-of-Way at Intersections

18. D - School zones

Pentagon-shaped signs (pointing up or down) are used for school zones and school crossings. They are yellow-green in color and alert drivers that children may be present.

Source: dps.texas.gov - TX handbook - Chapter 5, Table 17: Signs by Shape

19. 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

20. B - Use low beams and leave more following distance

In rain, use low-beam headlights (high beams reflect off rain), reduce speed, and increase following distance to at least 4-6 seconds. High beams can reduce visibility in rain.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - MN handbook - Weather: rain

21. A - Look for a second train on the other track

One train can hide another coming from either direction on a second track. Wait until you can see clearly both ways and all signals have stopped.

Source: oregon.gov - p.64 (PDF p.72), Railroad Crossings

22. D - Stop if it is safe to do so

A yellow (amber) light means the signal is about to turn red. You should stop if it is safe to do so. Only proceed if stopping would be unsafe (e.g., you are too close to the intersection).

Source: dmv.ca.gov - CA handbook - Traffic Signals, Solid Yellow Light

23. D - Traffic already on the highway

Traffic already on the highway has the right of way. The merging driver must adjust speed to safely enter the flow of traffic - do not force other drivers to slow down.

Source: flhsmv.gov - FL handbook - Entering a limited-access highway

24. C - 0.04

New Mexico sets the commercial-vehicle alcohol limit at 0.04 - half the 0.08 limit for ordinary drivers.

Source: nmlegis.gov - NMSA 1978 § 66-8-102(C)(2), current-law text as printed in 2022 HB 54

25. C - Apply it slowly and gradually

Setting the parking brake too hard or too fast can lock the wheels and throw the car into a skid. Apply it slowly while you steer to a safe place.

Source: assets.dps.mn.gov - p.84 (PDF p.87), Brake failure

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

Official MVD website: <https://www.mvd.newmexico.gov/>

Official New Mexico driver's handbook: <https://realfile.tax.newmexico.gov/English%20Drivers%20Manualver11.19.19.pdf>

