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FREE STUDY GUIDE · USA 2026

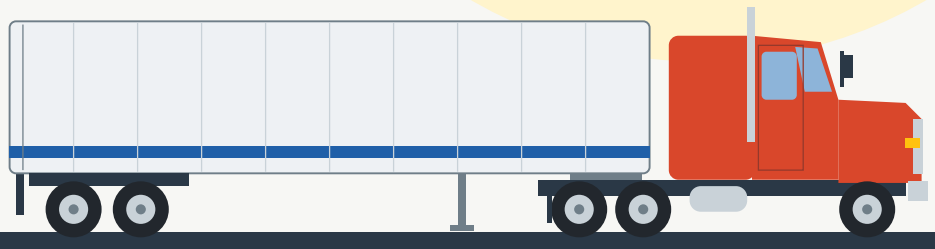
CDL 2026

STUDY GUIDE

CLASS A · B · C

Learn the path to a commercial driver's license: classes and endorsements, the CLP, ELDT training, the DOT medical card, pre-trip inspection, air brakes and hours of service. Plus 40 practice questions.

- Classes A, B, C + endorsements
- CLP, ELDT, medical card, skills test
- Pre-trip + air brake 7-step check
- Hours of service, made simple
- 40 practice questions + answers



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read it in order once. Then review the study pages until you score 8 of 10 in every practice test.

1 KNOW THE LICENSE

Pages 3-4: Class A, B and C, endorsements and restrictions.

2 FOLLOW THE PATH

Pages 5-7: CLP, ELDT, medical card, Clearinghouse and the skills test.

3 KNOW THE JOB

Page 8: what drivers do and the BLS median pay.

4 STUDY

Pages 9-13: safe driving, pre-trip, air brakes, coupling and hours of service.

5 TEST YOURSELF

Pages 15-18: 40 original questions. Check page 19 after each section.

6 GET STARTED

Pages 20-21: paid-training contracts, ready messages and an 8-step plan.

WHAT'S INSIDE

3 Class A, B and C
4 Endorsements + restrictions
5 The path: CLP, ELDT, CDL
6 Age, medical card, Clearinghouse
7 The skills test: 3 parts
8 The job + BLS median pay
9 Driving safely: space, speed
10 Pre-trip inspection checklist
11 Air brakes + 7-step check
12 Coupling + uncoupling
13 Hours of service (HOS)
14 Glossary: 30 terms EN / ES
15 Practice: license + rules
16 Practice: general knowledge
17 Practice: air brakes
18 Practice: combination
19 Answer key with explanations
20 First job: contracts + messages
21 Your 8-step plan

THE LICENSE
Classes, endorsements, path

SAFETY
Pre-trip, air brakes, HOS

BILINGUAL
EN / ES glossary

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Free guide

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CDL CLASSES: A, B AND C

The class depends on the weight rating and on what you tow or carry. Choose it by the job you want.



CLASS A Tractor-trailer



CLASS B Straight truck, bus



CLASS C 16+ passengers, hazmat

Class	What it covers	Examples
A	Combination with a GCWR of 26,001 lb or more, when the towed unit is over 10,000 lb GVWR	Tractor-trailers, tanker and flatbed combos, livestock haulers
B	Single vehicle of 26,001 lb or more GVWR, or one towing a unit of 10,000 lb or less	Straight and box trucks, dump trucks, city and school buses
C	Not A or B, but built for 16+ people (driver included) or carrying placarded hazmat	Passenger vans, small buses, small hazmat trucks

WORDS YOU NEED

- GVWR: the maximum loaded weight the maker rates a vehicle for.
- GCWR: the rating for the truck plus everything it tows.
- CMV: commercial motor vehicle.

WHICH CLASS FOR YOU?

- Long haul and most freight jobs: Class A.
- Local delivery, dump, garbage, bus: often Class B.
- Not sure? Read job ads in your area before you pay for school.

WHAT YOUR CLASS COVERS

- Class A can also drive Class B and C vehicles, with the right endorsements.
- Class B can also drive Class C vehicles, with the right endorsements.
- Buses also need P or S (page 4).

KNOWLEDGE TESTS

- Everyone: general knowledge.
- Air brakes: if you will drive with air brakes.
- Class A: combination vehicles.
- Plus one test for each endorsement.

MEMORIZE

A = combination, 26,001+ lb

B = single vehicle, 26,001+ lb

C = 16+ people or hazmat

Sources: 49 CFR 383.91 (commercial motor vehicle groups) and 383.5 (definitions: CMV, GVWR, GCWR). Weights in pounds. Your state may print the license in its own format.

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ENDORSEMENTS + RESTRICTIONS

Endorsements add what you may drive or haul. Restrictions limit it. Both are printed on your CDL.

Code	Endorsement	What you need
H	Hazardous materials (placarded loads)	Knowledge test + TSA background check with fingerprints
N	Tank vehicle (liquids or gases in bulk)	Knowledge test
P	Passenger vehicle (16+ people, driver included)	Knowledge test + skills test in a bus
S	School bus	Knowledge and skills tests; P is also required
T	Double or triple trailers	Knowledge test (Class A)
X	Tank vehicle + hazmat combined	Knowledge tests for N and H + TSA check

RESTRICTIONS: AIR BRAKES

- L: no full air brake. Added if you fail the air brake test or test in a vehicle without full air brakes.
- Z: no full air brake (you tested with air-over-hydraulic brakes).

INTRASTATE ONLY

- K: you may drive only inside your state. Common for drivers under 21.
- Also used when a state allows a medical condition only for intrastate driving.

RESTRICTIONS: MANUAL AND MORE

- E: no manual transmission (you tested in an automatic).
- O: no tractor-trailer (Class A test without a fifth wheel).
- V: medical variance on record.

REMOVING A RESTRICTION

- Usually: pass the matching test, for example a skills test in a manual truck or with full air brakes.
- Ask your state DMV what it requires.

MEMORIZE

T = doubles / triples

N = tank, H = hazmat, X = both

E = no manual; L / Z = no full air

Sources: 49 CFR 383.93 (endorsements), 383.95 (restrictions), 383.153 (codes on the license); 49 CFR part 1572 (TSA threat assessment for H). Letters are the federal codes; check how your state prints them.

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THE PATH TO YOUR CDL

The usual order in most states. Your state DMV can add steps, fees or waiting times.

1 CLP
Pass the knowledge and vision tests; show your documents and medical card.
AT THE DMV

2 ELDT
Theory + behind-the-wheel training with a registered provider.
REGISTRY

3 SKILLS TEST
Inspection, basic control and road test, after 14+ days with the CLP.
IN THE TRUCK

4 CDL
The state issues your CDL with your class, endorsements and restrictions.
STATE

WITH A CLP YOU CAN

- Drive a CMV on public roads with a qualified CDL holder beside you.
- Do the behind-the-wheel part of ELDT.
- Take the skills test after holding it at least 14 days.
- Use it for up to 1 year (renewal rules depend on your state).

WITH A CLP YOU CANNOT

- Drive alone.
- Haul hazmat that needs placards.
- Carry passengers, except trainers, testers or other trainees.
- Drive a tank vehicle unless it is empty and cleaned (purged).

RED FLAGS IN SCHOOL ADS

- "Job guaranteed" or "pass guaranteed": nobody can promise that.
- The school is not on the FMCSA Training Provider Registry.
- "Free" training with a contract you cannot read before you sign.
- Behind-the-wheel time that is only videos or a simulator.

ELDT (ENTRY-LEVEL DRIVER TRAINING): GOOD TO KNOW

- Required since February 2022 for a first Class A or B, an upgrade from B to A, and a first P, S or H endorsement.
- No minimum hours: you must score at least 80% on the theory test and show skill behind the wheel.
- Your provider reports completion to the Registry; the state checks it before your skills test (or H test).

Sources: 49 CFR 383.25 (CLP), part 380 subpart F (ELDT, compliance date February 7, 2022), 383.113 (skills test). The Training Provider Registry is run by FMCSA. Check your state DMV and the FMCSA website.

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AGE, DOT MEDICAL CARD + CLEARINGHOUSE

Before the CLP: self-certification, the DOT medical exam and a Clearinghouse check.

1 SELF-CERTIFY

Tell the state if you will drive across state lines or only inside it, and if the job is "excepted".

2 DOT MEDICAL EXAM

Done by a medical examiner listed on the FMCSA National Registry. If you pass, you get a medical card.

3 CARD ON FILE

Send a copy to your state licensing agency the way it asks, and renew it before it expires.

If your medical card expires, the state can downgrade (remove) your commercial driving privilege.

Age	What it usually means
Under 18	No CLP and no CDL.
18 to 20	Intrastate only (inside your state) in most states. Often shown as a K restriction.
21 and up	Interstate driving: across state lines.
Hazmat (H)	Usually 21 or older, plus the TSA background check.

THE DOT MEDICAL EXAM CHECKS

- Vision: 20/40 or better in each eye (with or without glasses) and signal colors.
- Hearing: a forced whisper at 5 feet, with or without a hearing aid.
- Blood pressure, heart, medical history and medicines.
- Urine: sugar, protein and other signs (it is not the drug test).
- Some conditions, like insulin-treated diabetes, have special rules.

MEDICAL CARD

2 YEARS MAX

Valid up to 24 months. Some conditions get a shorter card, like 1 year.

BRING TO THE EXAM

- Photo ID
- Glasses / hearing aid
- List of medicines
- Doctor's notes

DRUG & ALCOHOL CLEARINGHOUSE (IN GENERAL TERMS)

WHAT IT IS

An FMCSA online database of drug and alcohol violations (positive tests, refusals) by CDL and CLP holders.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

Employers check it when hiring and every year; states check it before issuing a CLP or CDL. A violation keeps you off the road until return-to-duty is done.

Testing: expect a drug test before your first driving job, plus random tests later. Refusing a test counts like a positive result.

Sources: 49 CFR 383.71 (self-certification, medical card), 391.11 (age 21 interstate), 391.41-391.45 (physical qualification), part 382 subpart G (Clearinghouse), 382.301 (pre-employment test). Plain-word summary; check your state DMV and the FMCSA website.

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THE SKILLS TEST: 3 PARTS

You take it in a truck of the class you want. In most states you must pass each part to go on to the next.

Part	What happens	Tips
1. Vehicle inspection (pre-trip)	You inspect the truck and explain out loud what you check and why	Point, touch and name each part (page 10)
2. Basic control	Backing in a marked area: straight line, offset, parallel parking or alley dock	Get out and look when allowed; use few pull-ups
3. Road test	Turns, intersections, lane changes, curves, railroad crossings, highway, grades	Mirrors, signals, safe gaps, smooth speed

BEFORE TEST DAY

- ELDT done and reported to the Registry by your provider.
- CLP held for at least 14 days.
- Book with your state or with a third-party tester it approves.

FAIL A PART?

- Usually the test stops and you come back another day.
- Retest rules, waiting times and fees depend on your state.

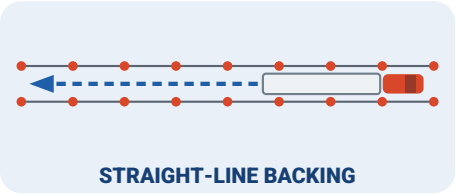
THE TRUCK YOU BRING

- It must match the class you want: A, B or C.
- Automatic = E restriction. No full air brakes = L restriction.
- It must be safe and legal, or the test can be canceled.

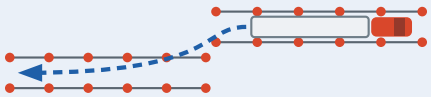
ON TEST DAY

- Bring your CLP, ID and medical card.
- Ask questions before you start, not in the middle.
- Drive the way you trained: calm and steady.

BASIC CONTROL: COMMON BACKING EXERCISES (SEEN FROM ABOVE; YOUR STATE MAY USE OTHERS)



STRAIGHT-LINE BACKING



OFFSET BACKING



ALLEY DOCK

MEMORIZE

- **Inspection, control, road**
- **Name it, touch it, explain it**
- **Test in the class you want**

Sources: 49 CFR 383.113 (skills test: vehicle inspection, basic vehicle control, on-road driving), 383.25 (14 days with the CLP), 380.603 (ELDT before the skills test). Each state sets its own routes, exercises and scoring.

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WHAT A TRUCK DRIVER DOES

You move freight safely and on time: pick up, deliver, inspect the truck and keep your hours of service legal.

$58,600	$28/HR	2.2 MILLION	21+
Median pay per year (BLS)	**Median pay per hour (BLS)**	**Jobs in the US (2025)**	**Age to drive interstate**
May 2025, rounded	$28.19, rounded	BLS, rounded	18+ intrastate in most states

Median: half earn more, half less. Pay changes by state, company, freight and experience. No pay is guaranteed.

A NORMAL DAY

- Pre-trip inspection and paperwork
- Pick up and deliver loads on schedule
- Record hours of service on the ELD
- Secure the cargo and check it on the way
- Plan routes, fuel and rest stops
- Post-trip inspection and defect report

WHY THERE IS DEMAND

- Almost every product moves by truck at some point.
- BLS projects about 214,500 openings per year (2025-35), mostly to replace drivers who leave.
- Many carriers hire new CDL graduates and pair them with a trainer.

TYPES OF TRUCKING JOBS

Long haul (OTR) · Regional · Local delivery · Dedicated routes · Flatbed · Refrigerated (reefer) · Tanker · LTL freight · Construction / dump

HOW YOU GROW

CLP student — Knowledge tests + ELDT

→ **New driver** — Rides with a trainer

→ **Solo driver** — Builds a safe record

→ **Specialist** — Hazmat, tanker, doubles

→ **Trainer / lead** — Trains new drivers

Pay, jobs and openings: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (median pay May 2025: $58,640 per year, $28.19 per hour; 2,221,200 jobs in 2025; projections 2025-35), rounded by us. National figures, not a promise of income.

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DRIVING SAFELY: SPACE, SPEED, EMERGENCIES

Most of the general knowledge test is here. A loaded truck needs much more room to stop than a car.

Situation	What the manual teaches
Seeing ahead	Look 12 to 15 seconds ahead and check your mirrors often
Following distance	1 second for each 10 ft of vehicle length below 40 mph; add 1 second above 40 mph
Curves and ramps	Slow down before the curve, not in it; posted speeds can be too fast for trucks
Wet or icy roads	Slow down; bridges freeze first; hydroplaning can start at about 30 mph
Long downgrade	Pick a low gear before you start down; snub brake to about 5 mph below safe speed
Railroad crossing	Never shift on the tracks; buses and placarded hazmat stop 15 to 50 ft before them
Stopped on the road	Hazard flashers on; 3 warning triangles out within 10 minutes

FOLLOWING DISTANCE MATH

- 40 ft truck at 35 mph: 40 / 10 = 4 seconds.
- 70 ft rig at 55 mph: 70 / 10 + 1 = 8 seconds.
- Bad weather or night: leave even more.

PHONES AND ALCOHOL

- No texting or hand-held phone while driving, even stopped in traffic.
- BAC of 0.04% or more in a CMV: you lose your CDL for at least 1 year.
- No alcohol within 4 hours before going on duty.

WARNING TRIANGLES

- Two-way road: 10 ft from the truck, about 100 ft behind and 100 ft ahead.
- Divided or one-way road: 10, 100 and 200 ft toward the traffic.
- Hill or curve in the way: move the back one up to 500 ft.

FATIGUE

- Coffee and an open window do not fix it: only sleep does.
- Plan the trip with rest stops and your hours of service (page 13).

MEMORIZE

1 s per 10 ft (+1 s over 40 mph)

Look 12 to 15 s ahead

Triangles within 10 minutes

Sources: CDL manual guidance used by most states (seeing, space, speed, downgrades, emergencies); 49 CFR 392.22 (warning devices), 392.80 and 392.82 (texting, hand-held phones), 392.5 (alcohol), 392.10 (railroad crossings).

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PRE-TRIP INSPECTION CHECKLIST (SUMMARY)

Do it before every trip, and know it out loud for the skills test. Summary by area of the truck.

Area	What to check
Engine compartment	Leaks; oil, coolant and power steering levels; belts, hoses, wiring, air compressor
Cab and start-up	Gauges, air pressure builds, horn, wipers, mirrors, heater and defroster, emergency kit
Lights and reflectors	Headlights, turn signals, flashers, brake and clearance lights; clean reflectors
Steering and front	Steering box and linkage tight; wheel play not more than about 10 degrees
Wheels, tires, brakes	Tread at least 4/32 in on steer tires, 2/32 in on others; rims, lug nuts, drums, hoses, slack adjusters
Suspension and frame	Springs, air bags, shocks and mounts; cracks or missing bolts
Coupling and trailer	Fifth wheel, kingpin, locking jaws, air lines, electrical cord, landing gear, doors

SAY IT OUT LOUD

- Name the part and its condition: "mounted, secured, not cracked, bent or broken".
- Point to or touch each part.
- Learn your state's checklist word by word.

THE 7-STEP METHOD

- 1 Vehicle overview, 2 engine compartment, 3 start the engine and check the cab.
- 4 Engine off, check lights, 5 walk-around.
- 6 Check signal lights, 7 start the engine and check the brakes (page 11).

FOUND A DEFECT?

- Do not drive an unsafe vehicle. Report it in writing (DVIR).
- Fix it first; the repair is signed off before the truck goes out.

SAFETY FIRST

- Wheels chocked and parking brake set.
- Engine off and keys in your pocket while you check the engine area.
- 3 points of contact getting in and out.

MEMORIZE

Tread: 4/32 steer, 2/32 others

Name + condition + touch

Defect = report it (DVIR)

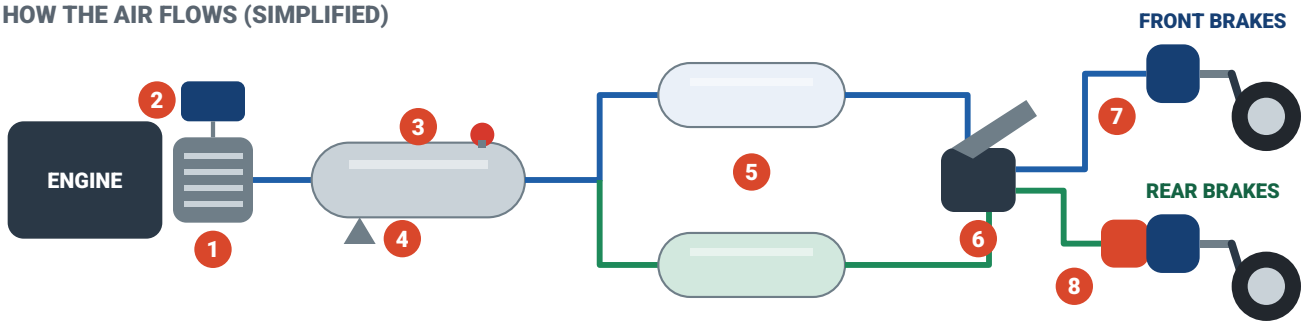
Sources: inspection method of the CDL manual used by most states; 49 CFR 393.75 (tires), 396.13 (inspection before driving), 396.11 (vehicle inspection report). Test checklists vary by state.

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AIR BRAKES: PARTS + THE 7-STEP CHECK

Air brakes use compressed air to push the brakes on. Learn the parts, then the check you do before driving.

HOW THE AIR FLOWS (SIMPLIFIED)



THE PARTS

1. **Compressor**
   Pumps air into the tanks; the engine drives it.
2. **Governor**
   Stops the pumping at about 125 psi (cut-out); restarts near 100 psi (cut-in).
3. **Supply tank**
   First tank. Its safety valve opens at about 150 psi.
4. **Drains**
   Remove water and oil from the tanks (manual or automatic).
5. **Primary + secondary**
   Dual system: two separate tanks and lines, usually rear and front brakes.
6. **Foot valve**
   The brake pedal. Press harder = more air to the brakes.
7. **Chamber + slack adjuster**
   Air pushes the rod; the slack adjuster turns the S-cam and the shoes press the drum.
8. **Spring brakes**
   Held off by air. When air drops low, strong springs apply them.

THE 7-STEP AIR BRAKE CHECK (IN GENERAL)

#	Check	How you do it	Typical pass
1	Static leak	Engine off, tanks full, wheels chocked, parking brakes released; wait 1 minute	Loss under 2 psi (single) or 3 psi (combination) in 1 min
2	Applied leak	Hold the brake pedal down firmly for 1 minute	Loss under 3 psi (single) or 4 psi (combination)
3	Low-air warning	Key on, fan the brake pedal to lower the pressure	Buzzer and light on before 60 psi
4	Spring brakes	Keep fanning and watch the parking brake knobs	Knobs pop out at about 20 to 45 psi
5	Build-up rate	Start the engine at operating rpm and time the gauge	85 to 100 psi within about 45 seconds (dual system)
6	Governor	Watch where the compressor stops and starts again	Cut-out about 125 psi, cut-in about 100 psi
7	Brakes hold	Parking brake: pull gently against it. Service brake: brake firmly at about 5 mph	Truck holds; it stops straight without pulling

Order and exact numbers vary by state manual and by truck. Learn your state's version word by word.

Sources: air brake section of the CDL manual that most states use as a base; 49 CFR 393.51 (low-pressure warning), 393.40-393.52 (brakes). Typical values; your state manual and the truck maker have the final word.

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COMBINATION VEHICLES: COUPLING + UNCOUPLING

Needed for Class A. A bad coupling can drop a trailer on the road, so check every step.

Coupling step	What to do
1. Inspect	Fifth wheel greased, jaws open, release handle in auto-lock; area clear, trailer wheels chocked
2. Line up	Tractor straight in front of the trailer; trailer slightly lower than the center of the fifth wheel
3. Air lines	Connect the glad hands: emergency (red) and service (blue); supply air, then lock the trailer brakes
4. Back under	Slowly and straight until the fifth wheel locks onto the kingpin
5. Tug test	Pull gently forward in low gear against the locked trailer brakes
6. Check	Get out and look: no gap between the plates, jaws closed on the kingpin shank, lock engaged
7. Finish	Electrical cord and air lines secured, landing gear fully up, wheel chocks removed

UNCOUPLING

- Firm, level ground. Chock the trailer wheels.
- Lower the landing gear until it makes firm contact.
- Lines off, release the fifth wheel, pull out slowly and check the landing gear.

ROLLOVER AND CRACK-THE-WHIP

- High center of gravity: slow down before curves and ramps.
- Steer smoothly: sudden moves grow toward the last trailer.

TURNS AND BACKING

- The trailer's rear wheels cut inside: turn wide as you finish the turn.
- Backing: turn the wheel the opposite way. Get out and look.

AIR SYSTEM PARTS

- Tractor protection valve: keeps the tractor's air if the trailer lines break.
- Trailer air supply knob: pull it out to set the trailer brakes.
- Trailer hand valve: for testing, never for parking.

MEMORIZE

Red = emergency, blue = service

Tug test after coupling

No gap at the fifth wheel

Sources: combination vehicle, coupling and uncoupling sections of the CDL manual that most states use as a base. Always follow your truck maker and your carrier's procedure.

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HOURS OF SERVICE (HOS): THE BASICS

Federal limits for drivers of property-carrying trucks, in plain words. Bus drivers have other limits.

11 HOURS
Max driving after 10 hours off duty

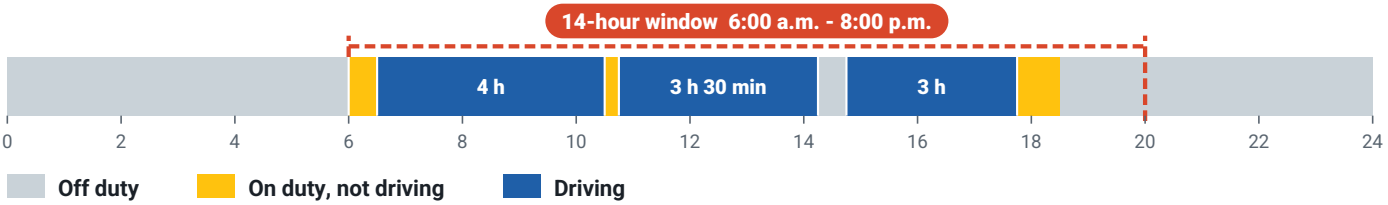
14 HOURS
No driving after the 14th hour on duty

30 MIN
Break after 8 hours of driving

60/70 HOURS
On duty in 7 / 8 days, then stop driving

10 HOURS
Off duty in a row before a new day

EXAMPLE DAY (THE MATH IS CHECKED BY CODE)

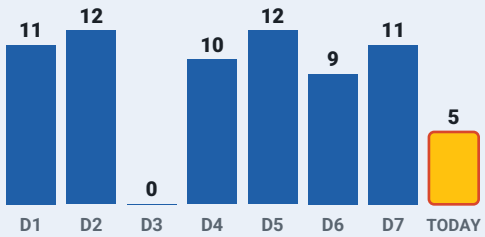


Driving: 10 h 30 min of 11 h · Window: 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. · 30-min break after 7 h 30 min of driving · Off duty at 6:30 p.m. · Next start after 10 h off: 4:30 a.m.

CAN YOU STILL DRIVE?

Situation	Answer
Start 6:00 a.m., now 1:00 p.m.; driven 5 h today, 5 h since the last 30-min break.	YES: 3 h now, then a 30-min break.
Start 5:00 a.m., now 7:30 p.m.; driven 9 h today, 2 h since the last 30-min break.	NO: the 14-hour window ended at 7:00 p.m.
Start 7:00 a.m., now 4:00 p.m.; driven 11 h today, 3 h since the last 30-min break.	NO: all 11 hours of driving are used.
Start 4:00 a.m., now 12:00 p.m.; driven 8 h today, 8 h since the last 30-min break.	NOT YET: take a 30-min break first.
Start 8:00 a.m., now 5:00 p.m.; driven 7 h today, 1 h since the last 30-min break.	YES: up to 4 h more (11-hour limit).

THE 70-HOUR / 8-DAY RULE



Last 7 days: 65 h on duty. Today you can be on duty up to 5 h more before you must stop driving.

34-hour restart: 34 or more hours off duty in a row resets the 60/70 count.

THE 4 DUTY STATUSES ON YOUR ELD (ELECTRONIC LOGGING DEVICE)

OFF DUTY
Free time: no work, and you are free to leave the truck.

SLEEPER BERTH
Rest in the truck's sleeper. It can count toward the 10 hours off.

DRIVING
All time at the controls of a CMV that is moving.

ON DUTY, NOT DRIVING
Work that is not driving: inspections, fueling, loading, paperwork.

Exceptions exist (short-haul, bad weather, sleeper berth splits). Your carrier and ELD training explain them.

Sources: 49 CFR 395.3 (property-carrying limits), 395.1 (exceptions), 395.8 (records of duty status, ELD). Summary only; the rule text and your carrier's policy count.

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WORK ENGLISH: 30 TERMS

The words you will hear at the yard, the dock and the DMV. Useful for mixed English and Spanish crews.

English	Español
1. Commercial license	Licencia comercial (CDL)
2. Learner's permit	Permiso de aprendiz (CLP)
3. Endorsement	Permiso adicional
4. Restriction	Restricción
5. Tractor	Tractocamión
6. Trailer	Remolque (tráiler)
7. Straight truck	Camión rígido
8. Fifth wheel	Quinta rueda
9. Kingpin	Perno rey
10. Landing gear	Patas de apoyo
11. Glad hands	Conectores de aire
12. Air brakes	Frenos de aire
13. Air tank	Tanque de aire
14. Slack adjuster	Ajustador de holgura
15. Spring brakes	Frenos de resorte

English	Español
16. Parking brake	Freno de estacionamiento
17. Pre-trip inspection	Inspección antes del viaje
18. Logbook / ELD	Bitácora / ELD
19. Hours of service	Horas de servicio
20. Off duty	Fuera de servicio
21. On duty	En servicio
22. Weigh station	Báscula
23. Load / freight	Carga / flete
24. Dispatcher	Despachador
25. Hazmat	Materiales peligrosos
26. Tanker	Camión cisterna (pipa)
27. Jackknife	Efecto tijera
28. Rollover	Volcadura
29. Wheel chock	Calza de rueda
30. Warning triangle	Triángulo de emergencia

5 PHRASES FOR THE ROAD

- **My truck is out of service.** ▶ Mi camión está fuera de servicio.
- **Where is the receiving dock?** ▶ ¿Dónde está el andén de recibo?
- **I need my 30-minute break.** ▶ Necesito mi descanso de 30 minutos.
- **The trailer is coupled and locked.** ▶ El remolque está enganchado y asegurado.
- **I'm out of hours for today.** ▶ Ya no me quedan horas hoy.

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PRACTICE · LICENSE + RULES

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 19.

1 **A tractor pulls a trailer rated over 10,000 lb; the GCWR is 26,001 lb or more. You need a:**

(A) Class B CDL
(B) Class A CDL
(C) Class C CDL
(D) Regular driver's license

2 **A straight truck with a GVWR of 30,000 lb, no trailer, needs at least a:**

(A) Class C CDL
(B) Hazmat endorsement
(C) CLP only
(D) Class B CDL

3 **Which endorsement lets you pull double or triple trailers?**

(A) T
(B) N
(C) X
(D) P

4 **The H (hazmat) endorsement also requires:**

(A) A second medical exam
(B) A road test with hazmat
(C) A TSA background check
(D) Owning the truck

5 **You take the skills test in an automatic truck. Your CDL will usually show:**

(A) An H endorsement
(B) No change at all
(C) An E restriction
(D) An X endorsement

6 **How long must you hold a CLP before the skills test?**

(A) At least 14 days
(B) At least 1 day
(C) At least 6 months
(D) There is no minimum

7 **With a CLP, you may drive a CMV on public roads:**

(A) Alone, in daylight
(B) Alone, if the truck is empty
(C) Only with hazmat loads
(D) With a qualified CDL holder beside you

8 **Since February 2022, entry-level driver training (ELDT) must come from:**

(A) Any online video
(B) A provider on the Training Provider Registry
(C) A relative with a CDL
(D) The DMV clerk

9 **A DOT medical card is valid for at most:**

(A) 5 years
(B) 10 years
(C) Life
(D) 24 months

10 **Federal minimum age to drive a truck across state lines (interstate):**

(A) 21
(B) 16
(C) 18
(D) 25

Original practice questions written from public rules and manual topics. This is not an official test.

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PRACTICE · GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 19.

11 **Your rig is 60 ft long and you drive at 50 mph. Minimum following time by the manual's rule:**

- A) 2 seconds
- B) 4 seconds
- C) 7 seconds
- D) 12 seconds

12 **Good drivers look ahead about:**

- A) 1 to 2 seconds
- B) 12 to 15 seconds
- C) Only to the next car
- D) 60 seconds

13 **On a long, steep downgrade you should:**

- A) Coast in neutral
- B) Ride the brakes all the way
- C) Shift up to go faster
- D) Use a low gear and snub braking

14 **Stopped on a divided highway, put out warning triangles:**

- A) Within 10 min: 10, 100 and 200 ft back
- B) Within 1 hour, anywhere
- C) Within 10 min, all in front
- D) Only at night

15 **Alcohol limit (BAC) for driving a commercial vehicle:**

- A) 0.08%
- B) 0.10%
- C) 0.04%
- D) 0.12%

16 **Texting while driving a commercial vehicle is:**

- A) OK at red lights
- B) Prohibited by federal rules
- C) OK below 25 mph
- D) OK on empty roads

17 **After 10 hours off duty, a property-carrying driver may drive up to:**

- A) 11 hours
- B) 8 hours
- C) 14 hours
- D) 16 hours

18 **You come on duty at 6:00 a.m. You may not drive after:**

- A) 5:00 p.m.
- B) 10:00 p.m.
- C) 6:00 a.m. next day
- D) 8:00 p.m.

19 **A 30-minute break is required after:**

- A) 4 hours of driving
- B) 8 hours of driving
- C) 11 hours of driving
- D) Every fuel stop

20 **70-hour/8-day rule: you worked 65 hours in the last 7 days. Hours left today:**

- A) 0 hours
- B) 11 hours
- C) 5 hours
- D) 14 hours

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PRACTICE · AIR BRAKES

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 19.

21 **The governor in an air brake system:**

(A) Controls when the compressor pumps air
(B) Limits top speed
(C) Opens the tank drains
(D) Cools the brakes

22 **The low-air warning must come on before pressure drops below:**

(A) 100 psi
(B) 125 psi
(C) 20 psi
(D) 60 psi

23 **Spring brakes usually come on by themselves when air drops to about:**

(A) 100 to 125 psi
(B) 20 to 45 psi
(C) 60 to 80 psi
(D) 150 psi

24 **Air tanks are drained to remove:**

(A) Brake fluid
(B) Fuel
(C) Water and compressor oil
(D) Antifreeze

25 **Static leak test, single vehicle, brakes released. Max loss in 1 minute:**

(A) Under 10 psi
(B) Under 20 psi
(C) Under 6 psi
(D) Under 2 psi

26 **Applied leak test (pedal held), combination vehicle. Max loss in 1 minute:**

(A) Under 4 psi
(B) Under 10 psi
(C) Under 25 psi
(D) Under 40 psi

27 **Dual air system: pressure should build from 85 to 100 psi within about:**

(A) 5 minutes
(B) 3 seconds
(C) 45 seconds
(D) 15 minutes

28 **Brakes released, you pull the pushrod by hand. It should move no more than about:**

(A) 4 inches
(B) 1 inch
(C) 6 inches
(D) 1 foot

29 **The safety valve on the supply tank opens at about:**

(A) 150 psi
(B) 60 psi
(C) 20 psi
(D) 300 psi

30 **Brake lag in an air brake system means:**

(A) Brakes act faster than hydraulic
(B) The pedal is loose
(C) The tanks are empty
(D) Air takes a moment to reach the brakes

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PRACTICE - COMBINATION VEHICLES

10 original questions. Pick one answer for each. Answers and explanations on page 19.

31 **The trailer emergency (supply) air line is usually coded:**

A) Blue
B) Green
C) Yellow
D) Red

32 **When you line up to couple, the front of the trailer should be:**

A) Much higher than the fifth wheel
B) Resting on the ground
C) Slightly lower than the fifth wheel center
D) Level with the cab roof

33 **The tug test after coupling means:**

A) Pull gently forward, trailer brakes locked
B) Back up fast
C) Kick the tires
D) Use the hand valve while driving

34 **When you inspect the coupling, you should see:**

A) A 2-inch gap
B) No gap between upper and lower fifth wheel
C) Grease on the jaws only
D) The safety lock released

35 **The trailer hand valve (trolley valve) should:**

A) Be used to park on hills
B) Never be used for parking
C) Replace the parking brake
D) Stay on while driving

36 **Combination vehicles roll over more easily than cars because they:**

A) Have more mirrors
B) Have wider tires
C) Are lighter
D) Have a higher center of gravity

37 **Crack-the-whip (rearward amplification) is worst on:**

A) The tractor
B) The first trailer of a double
C) The last trailer of a triple
D) A straight truck

38 **In a turn, off-tracking means the trailer's rear wheels:**

A) Follow a shorter path than the tractor
B) Follow a wider path
C) Lift off the road
D) Steer by themselves

39 **The tractor protection valve:**

A) Keeps tractor air if the trailer leaks badly
B) Locks the fifth wheel
C) Adds air to the tires
D) Stops the engine

40 **Uncoupling: lower the landing gear until it:**

A) Is halfway down
B) Lifts the tractor's rear
C) Makes firm contact with the ground
D) Stays 6 in above the ground

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ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Score each section. 8 of 10 or more: you know the theory. Your state's official test may ask it in other words.

LICENSE + RULES

1 · B Class A = combination of 26,001+ lb when the towed unit is over 10,000 lb.

2 · D Single vehicle of 26,001 lb or more = Class B (a Class A covers it too).

3 · A T = doubles and triples. N = tank, P = passenger, X = tank + hazmat.

4 · C Hazmat needs a knowledge test plus a TSA security threat assessment.

5 · C Testing in an automatic usually adds E: no manual transmission.

6 · A Federal rule: hold the CLP at least 14 days before the skills test.

7 · D A CDL holder with the right class must ride with you.

8 · B ELDT counts only if the provider is listed on the FMCSA Registry.

9 · D Up to 24 months; the examiner can give a shorter card.

10 · A 21 for interstate. Most states allow 18 for intrastate only.

AIR BRAKES

21 · A It cuts out at about 125 psi and cuts in at about 100 psi.

22 · D Buzzer and light on before 60 psi. Then stop safely.

23 · B Typical range 20-45 psi. Stop safely while you still have control.

24 · C Water and oil build up; they can freeze or damage the brakes.

25 · D Released: under 2 psi single, under 3 psi combination.

26 · A Applied: under 3 psi single, under 4 psi combination.

27 · C About 45 seconds at operating rpm. Slower may mean a problem.

28 · B More than about 1 inch: probably out of adjustment. Report it.

29 · A It protects the tank from too much pressure. If it opens, get it checked.

30 · D Air brakes take a little longer to apply: keep extra following distance.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

11 · C 60 / 10 = 6 s, plus 1 s above 40 mph = 7 s.

12 · B 12 to 15 seconds ahead: at highway speed, about a quarter mile.

13 · D Low gear first. Brake to about 5 mph below safe speed, release, repeat.

14 · A Within 10 minutes. Divided road: 10, 100 and 200 ft toward traffic.

15 · C 0.04% in a CMV. No alcohol within 4 hours before going on duty.

16 · B Texting and hand-held phone use are banned for CMV drivers.

17 · A Up to 11 hours of driving after 10 hours in a row off duty.

18 · D 14-hour window: 6:00 a.m. + 14 h = 8:00 p.m.; breaks do not extend it.

19 · B After 8 hours of driving. Off duty or on duty not driving both count.

20 · C 70 - 65 = 5 hours. A 34-hour restart resets the count.

COMBINATION VEHICLES

31 · D Emergency line = red. Service (control) line = blue.

32 · C Slightly low, so the tractor lifts it a little as you back under.

33 · A A gentle pull against locked trailer brakes shows the kingpin is locked.

34 · B No gap, jaws closed around the kingpin shank, lock engaged.

35 · B Air can leak off. Park with the spring (parking) brakes.

36 · D Keep cargo low and slow down before curves and ramps.

37 · C Sudden steering grows toward the rear: the last trailer can turn over.

38 · A Rear wheels cut inside. Turn wide as you finish; don't swing left first.

39 · A It closes when trailer air drops, protecting the tractor's air supply.

40 · C Firm contact. Too far lifts the trailer off the fifth wheel.

Missed a question? Go back to the matching study page (3-13) and read that topic again.

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FIRST JOB: TRAINING CONTRACTS + HIRING

Some carriers pay for your CDL school if you agree to drive for them. It can be a good start: just read the contract first.

COMPANY-PAID SCHOOL: READ BEFORE YOU SIGN

HOW IT WORKS
The carrier pays the school (or trains you itself). You agree to drive for it for a set time, for example one year.

IF YOU LEAVE EARLY
Many contracts make you repay the training cost, sometimes with fees. Find the exact amount in dollars.

PRORATED?
Ask if the amount goes down for each month you stay. Get the answer in writing.

PAY WHILE TRAINING
Is there pay during school and while you ride with a trainer? How much per week?

OTHER CLAUSES
Look for non-compete rules, fees for gear or the truck, and who keeps your training records.

YOUR COPY
Take the contract home before you sign. Every promise should be in writing.

Not sure about a clause? Ask legal aid or a lawyer before you sign. This guide is not legal advice.

WHERE TO TRAIN AND GET HIRED

- Carriers with paid CDL training (read the contract).
- Community colleges and private schools on the Training Provider Registry.
- Your local American Job Center: some people qualify for training funds (WIOA).
- Local companies: delivery, construction, waste, buses.
- Job sites: "CDL A trainee", "CDL B driver", "student driver".

ASK THE RECRUITER

- How many weeks of training, and with whom?
- Pay per mile, per hour or per load?
- Home time: daily, weekly, every 2 weeks?
- Automatic or manual trucks?
- What do I owe if I leave before the contract ends?
- Can I get the contract in writing today?

READY-TO-SEND MESSAGES

To a CDL school

Hi, I'm interested in your Class A program. Are you on the FMCSA Training Provider Registry? What is the total cost, and how many hours will I drive the truck?

To a recruiter

Hi [Name], thanks for the information about your paid training. Can you send me the full agreement, including what I would owe if I leave early?

After the interview

Thank you for your time today, [Name]. I have my CLP and medical card and I'm ready to start training on [date].

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YOUR 8-STEP PLAN

An example path from zero to your CDL. Go at your own pace and check each step with your state DMV.

STEP 1

CHOOSE YOUR CLASS

- [ ] Read local job ads
- [ ] Class A or B? (page 3)
- [ ] Pick endorsements for later

STEP 2

MEDICAL CARD

- [ ] DOT exam, examiner on the Registry
- [ ] Bring glasses and medicine list
- [ ] Send the card to your state

STEP 3

STUDY FOR THE CLP

- [ ] General knowledge + air brakes
- [ ] Combination for Class A
- [ ] 40 questions (pages 15-18)

STEP 4

GET THE CLP

- [ ] Documents + vision test at the DMV
- [ ] Pass the knowledge tests
- [ ] Hold it 14+ days before testing

STEP 5

PICK A SCHOOL

- [ ] It must be on the Registry
- [ ] Compare cost and contract (page 20)
- [ ] Ask how much time in the truck

STEP 6

FINISH ELDT

- [ ] Theory: 80% or more
- [ ] Behind the wheel: range + road
- [ ] Provider reports to the Registry

STEP 7

SKILLS TEST

- [ ] Practice the pre-trip out loud
- [ ] Basic control + road test
- [ ] Same class as your goal

STEP 8

FIRST JOB

- [ ] Apply with your new CDL
- [ ] Ride with a trainer if offered
- [ ] Keep a clean safety record

Example only. Order, fees and waiting times vary by state. No job or pay is guaranteed.

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FROM PERMIT TO CDL

Study, get your CLP, train with a registered provider, pass the skills test and keep the habits: inspect, look ahead, keep your space. More free guides at vifalio.com.

CLP → ELDT → Skills test → CDL → First job

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