



Transport Malta

Driving Test Faults Explained

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	Vision Test	Unable to read a number plate from the prescribed distance of 20.5 meters, approximately 5 car lengths.
1	Vehicle Checks	Answers Show Me Tell Me questions incorrectly
2	Precautions	Jumping forward whilst attempting to start the engine with the car in gear. Rolling backwards or forwards whilst attempting to restart the engine.
3	Moving Off	
3.1	Safely	No attempt to look around No Blind spot checks – 360° Observations Incorrectly timed checks Lack of Observation ahead and to the rear Move away when unsafe.
3.2	Under Control	Stalls the engine Moving off with parking brake on Attempting to move off without engine gear Attempting to pull away in too high gear Moving away at too high speed Rolls back
4	Emergency Stop	
4.1	Promptness	Slow reaction to signal Not stopping quickly enough
4.2	Control	Uses footbrake & clutch together Clutch pedal used too soon Harsh application of footbrake Used parking brake to stop Lock front or rear wheels & no action taken
5	Reverse Right/Left	
5.1	Control	Poor clutch control Stalls engine Excessive acceleration Footbrake not used when required Erratic use of steering Touches kerb. Mounts the pavement

		Unable to enter side road
		Too far from the kerb at the completion of the manoeuvre.
		Vehicle not parallel to the kerb
		Vehicle over the centre of the side road
5.2	Observation	Does not look out of rear window – Direction of Travel
		No effective observations before starting manoeuvre 360°
		Does not take all-round observations throughout
		Uses Nearside mirror only for observations
		Ignore other road users
		Does not give way to other road users
		Does not pull forward to allow another vehicle to emerge from the side road. (Abort manoeuvre and start again if there is a vehicle behind wanting to emerge)
6	Reverse Parking	
6.1	Control	Poor clutch control
		Stalls engine
		Excessive acceleration
		Insufficient or excessive steering
		Harsh use of footbrake
		Too close to the parked car
		Strikes the kerb with the front or rear nearside wheel
		Too far away from the left-hand kerb at the completion
		Vehicle finishes up at an angle to the kerb
		Unable to complete within two car lengths
6.2	Observation	No effective observations before starting manoeuvre 360°
		Does not look out of the rear window – Direction of Travel
		Does not take all-round observations throughout
		Uses Nearside mirror only for observations
		Ignore other road users esp. pedestrians on the pavement
		Does not give way to other road users
7	Straight Reverse / Turn in the Road	
7.1	Control	Poor clutch control
		Stalls Engine
		Excessive acceleration
		Harsh use of footbrake
		Not applying the parking brake properly
		Strikes the kerb with front or rear wheels
		Mounts pavement with front or rear wheels
		Overhangs the kerb with front or rear of the vehicle
		Unable to complete the exercise within 5 moves

		Turns the steering wheel in the wrong direction
		No attempt to correct steering on forward or reverse moves
7.2	Observation	No effective observations before starting manoeuvre 360°
		Does not look out of the rear window – Direction of Travel
		Does not take all-round observations throughout
		Uses Nearside mirror only for observations
		Ignore other road users esp. pedestrian on the pavement
		Does not give way to other road users
8	Control of:	
8.1	Accelerator	Excessive pressure causing wheel spin ¹
		Not removing pressure whilst changing gears
		Applying pressure too soon after changing gears ²
8.2	Clutch	Jerky Control
		Lack of control
		Releases too quickly
		Riding the pedal
		Not pressing fully to the floor
		Not used when stopping
8.3	Gears	Incorrect gear selection
		Reluctant to select higher gears
		Labours the engine
		Does not match gear with road speed
		Excessive speed in gear
		Looking down when changing gear – Losing steering control
		Unnecessary gear changes
		Used to reduce speed instead of brakes
		Selected too soon for hazards
		Selected too late for hazards
		Coasting with clutch down
		Coasting in Neutral
8.4	Footbrake	Not used when required
		Uncontrolled use resulting in pulling up too early or too late.
		Late use on approach to hazards
		Harsh use by pressing too fiercely

¹ Uneven pressure causing jerk – move forward suddenly & powerfully forwards.

² Harsh Acceleration

8.5	Parking Brake	Not applied when necessary – Pause becomes a Wait
		Not released properly
		Moving away with it partially on
		Applying on the move or to stop
		Rolling backwards or forwards after stopping
8.6	Steering	Unable to maintain a steady course in normal driving
		Incorrect hand position on the wheel
		Losing control by crossing hands
		Allowing wheel to spin back after turning
		Retaining left hand on the gear lever for too long
		Remove both hands from the steering wheel
		Overshooting when turns
		Over steers on corners
		Under steers on corners
		Steering with the right arm on the window ledge
		Striking the kerb when stopping
10	Planning Ahead	
	Awareness & Anticipation	Failure to judge what other road users are going to do and react accordingly
		Not anticipating that pedestrians are about to cross the road at any time
		Not giving way to pedestrians at junctions or pedestrian crossings
		Not anticipating that cyclists may be passing on the left or right
		Not anticipating that cyclists are about to make a change of direction
		Not anticipating or showing awareness of direction signals given by other drivers
		Not anticipating or showing awareness of vehicles displaying hazard flashers
		Not anticipating or showing awareness of vehicles reversing lights & brake lights
		Not anticipating the actions of other drivers changing speed or direction
11	Mirrors & Blind Spots	
11.1	When Signaling	Does not use Mirror-Signal-Manoeuvre routine (MSM)
		Signalling before checking mirrors
		Looking & Signaling at the same time
		Does not take appropriate action after observing traffic in mirrors

		Signals regardless of following traffic situation
11.2	When changing direction	Does not consult ³ mirrors before turning left / right
		Does not consult mirrors before changing lanes
		Does not consult mirrors before overtaking
		Does not consult mirrors after overtaking
11.3	When Changing Speed	Does not consult mirrors before increasing speed
		Does not consult mirrors before reducing speed
		Does not consult mirrors before slowing / stopping
12	Signals	
12.1	When Necessary	Omits ⁴ signals when they could benefit other road users
12.2	Properly Timed	Signalling too early
		Signalling too late
		Signals for too short a period of time
		Signals too long a period of time
12.3	Correctly	Signalling unnecessarily
		Gives signals in the wrong direction
		Gives misleading signals
		Does not cancel signals after completion of the manoeuvre
		Using any signal not related to the Highway Code
		Having the hazard lights on whilst on the move
		Unnecessary use of the horn
		Beckoning ⁵ Pedestrians
13	Response to:	
13.1	Traffic Lights	Disregards to speed limit signs
		Does not obey mandatory signs
		Ignores warning signs
		Ignores prohibiting signs
13.2	Road Markings	Does not act in accordance with lane direction arrows
		Crosses or straddles double white lines
		Drives in bus lanes at prohibited times
		Parks on double yellow lines
		Disregards box junctions markings
		Stops on worded markings such as "Keep Clear."
		Parks on Zig Zag lines

³ Consult – take effective observations

⁴ Omits – leave out

⁵ Beckoning - make a gesture with the hand, arm, or head. e.g inviting people to cross

13.3	Traffic Lights	Attempts to drive through a red light
		Does not stop on an Amber light when it was safe to do so
		Drives away on red and amber
		Proceeds on a green light when unsafe to do so
13.4	Traffic Controllers	Disregards signals given by police or a traffic warden
		Disregards signals given by a person in charge of road works
		Disregards signal given by school crossing patrol
13.5	Other Road Users	Disregards clearly given signals by other drivers
		Disregards hazards created by other road users
14	Use of Speed	Drives in excess of the Speed Limit
		Drives at a speed which is too fast for the road and traffic conditions
15	Following Distance	Drives too close to large vehicles ahead
		Does not apply the two-second rule
		Drives closer than thinking distance ⁶ in heavy traffic
		Stops too close to vehicles ahead in traffic queues
16	Progress	
16.1	Appropriate Speed	Crawls along at slow speeds on clear roads
		Makes no attempt to achieve maximum speeds for the road when safe to do so
		Reduces speed excessively when the conditions do not merit doing so
		Makes slow progress through the gears in normal driving ⁷
16.2	Undue Hesitation	Makes predetermined stops at junctions and other hazards
		Waits unnecessarily when it is safe to proceed at junctions
		Waits for the green light at pelican crossings when on flashing amber
		Waits for other drivers who are clearly giving way
17	Junctions	
17.1	Approach Speed	Approaches at too high a speed
		Approaches at too low a speed

⁶ the distance a vehicle travels in the time it takes for the driver to apply the brakes after realising they need to stop

⁷ taking long to change gears in order to do progress

17.2	Observation	Only look in one direction ⁸ at junctions before emerging
		Looks in both directions after emerging ⁹
		Does not look in the direction of travel while emerging
		Takes no observation whatsoever at unmarked crossroads
		Emerges at too low speed
		Emerges when traffic is too close or too fast (poor judgement)
		Emerges into the path of approaching traffic
17.3	Turning Right	Positions Over the centre lines
		Positions left of centre in narrow roads
		Does not position near enough to centre lines
		Does not move into the protected centre lane
		Does not use tight hand lane when one is available
		Does not proceed far enough forward when giving way to oncoming traffic
		Does not move out to the centre of the side road when turning right at traffic lights
		Sits behind the stop line at green lights with room to move forwards
17.4	Turning Left	Too far from left-hand kerb on the approach
		Swings out to the right on approach
		Too close to the kerb on approach
		Drives over the kerb with rear nearside wheel
17.5	Cutting Corners	Cuts across onto the wrong side of the side road while turning the corner
18	Judgement	
18.1	When overtaking	Attempts to overtake in an unsafe location
		Attempts to overtake when traffic conditions make it unsafe to do so
		Takes too long a time and distance to carry out the manoeuvre
		Does not give enough clearance to other vehicles
		Cuts back in too soon after overtaking
18.2	Meeting Traffic	Causes oncoming traffic to slow down or stop
		Drives on towards other vehicles when other vehicles have priority

⁸ usually candidates look to their right only and forgetting their left

⁹ look ahead in the direction of travel

18.3	Crossing Traffic	Inconveniences oncoming road users by cutting across in front of them when turning right
		Inconveniences the following traffic when changing lanes
19	Positioning	
19.1	Normal Driving	Drives too close to the left kerb
		Drives too far out towards the middle of the road
		On dual carriageways driving in the right-hand lane the overtaking lane
		Cutting across the normal road positions when going ahead at roundabouts
19.2	Lane Discipline	Chooses incorrect lane when proceeding ahead at roundabouts or traffic lights
		Straddles lane markings
		Wanders back and forwards from one lane to another
19.3	Normal Stops	Stopping in an unsafe or inconvenient location
		Blocking an entrance or driveway when stopping
		Causing an obstruction to other road users
		Stopping too far away from the pavement
		Stopping with one or more wheels on the pavement
20	Clearance to	
20.1	Vehicles / Obstructions	Drives too close to the rear of stationary vehicles before pulling out
		Drives too close to the side of stationary vehicles while driving past
		Cuts back to the left too soon after passing stationary vehicles
21	Pedestrian Crossings	Does not reduce speed on the approach when vision is restricted (parked cars on either side of the crossing)
		Approaches at too high a speed with pedestrians on the crossing
		Overtaking on zig-zag lines on approach
		Not giving precedence ¹⁰ to pedestrians on a crossing
		Not stopping at give way or stop lines when necessary
		Not acting in accordance with the traffic lights controlling the crossing
		Harassing pedestrians
		Waving pedestrians over a crossing

¹⁰ priority of importance

		Moving away before pedestrians have crossed over in front of the vehicle
		Attempting to proceed when unsafe to do so
		Moving off the crossing when pedestrians did not reach the other side of the pavement
		Stopping on the actual crossing
22	Ancillary Controls	Not able to locate and operate essential ancillary controls ¹¹
		Not operating the front or rear windscreen wipers or washers when necessary
		Not operating the side or headlamp controls when necessary
		Not operating the horn when necessary
		Not operating the heated rear screen control when necessary
		Not operating the demister controls when necessary
		Not operating the hazard warning lights when necessary
		Not knowing the meaning of the most common warning lights on the dashboard ¹²

Minor/Technical Fault		Not potentially dangerous, but if you make the same fault throughout your test it could become a serious fault.
Grievous Fault	G	A Grievous fault is one, which is potentially dangerous. - (an offence but there is no immediate danger around)
Perilous Fault	P	A Perilous fault is one involving actual danger to the examiner, candidate, the general public or property.

¹¹ Lights, Indicators, Windscreen wipers, De-misters, Heated rear windscreen, Heater/air conditioning, Horn, Hazard warning lights.

¹² Indicator, Main beam, Handbrake, Seatbelt, Airbag, Brake, Oil