

How to choose a driving school

Ask every school the same five questions: licence status, price per lesson, package terms, vehicle and transmission, and who books the test. Then compare the written answers.

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Ask every school the same five questions. Is it approved or licensed where you live? What does one lesson cost, and how long is it? What does the package cover, and when does it end? Which vehicle and transmission will you learn in? Does the school help you book your tests? Write down the answers. Then compare them line by line.

Start with the listing. Check the address and phone number. They come from OpenStreetMap, so confirm them with the school. Open the school's own website if the listing links to one. Look for a published price page. A listing shows a lesson price only when the school publishes one. No current listing shows a price yet, so ask for the figures in writing before you pay.

Call two or three schools. Say what you need in plain words: first lessons, refresher lessons, an intensive course, or motorcycle or truck training. The directory has categories for motorcycle training and truck and CDL training. Ask for the total price in writing. A package that ends before you are ready for the test may cost more later.

Check the practical points early. If you need lessons in another language, ask who teaches in it. The listing has a languages field, but it is blank on the current listings. If you must learn on a manual gearbox, or want an electric car, say so. The listing has fields for transmission and vehicle type, and they are also blank. Ask the school directly. If you need evening or weekend lessons, ask for the times the instructor keeps. The hours on a listing are office hours, not lesson times.

Think about the test. Some schools help you book the tests and supply the car for the test day. Ask what that costs and what happens if the test date moves.

Check the licence or approval. In Ontario, the government publishes a list of approved driving schools. Elsewhere, ask your licensing authority who regulates driving instruction.

Compare the written answers. If a school will not put prices on paper, or adds items you did not ask for, consider another school.

This guide is general information. It is not legal advice. For the rules that apply to you, ask a qualified driving instructor or your licensing authority.

Frequently asked questions

How many schools should I compare?

Two or three are easy to compare. Ask each one the same five questions so the answers line up.

Is the cheapest school the best choice?

Not always. Compare what each price covers: lesson length, pickup, the car for the test and

whether the package has an end date.

Sources

Ontario government: approved driving schools — <https://www.ontario.ca/page/government-approved-driving-schools>

OpenStreetMap (ODbL) driving school data — <https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright>