



Frequently Asked Questions

Novice Driver Demerit Points

Who is a Novice driver?

A Novice (inexperienced) driver is a person who has not held a driver's licence for at least two years or periods adding up to two years. This may include:

- a first-time learner's permit holder;
- a holder of a provisional driver's licence; or
- a person who has not held a driver's licence overseas or in Australia for at least two years.

What is the definition of a Novice driver type 1?

A person is a Novice driver type 1 until they have held a driver's licence for a period of at least one year or periods adding up to one year. It also applies to a first-time holder of a learner's permit.

What is the definition of a Novice driver type 2?

A Novice driver type 2 is a person who has held a driver's licence for more than one year but less than two years (or periods adding up to two years).

Why are there demerit points restrictions for Novice drivers?

Research has found that Novice drivers who incur demerit points for traffic offences, are 66 per cent more likely of being involved in a crash. It also shows that these drivers, who break the road rules as a Novice driver, are more likely to be involved in crashes later in life.

Early intervention is critical if we are to reduce the number of new or inexperienced driver's being killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes. Influencing driver behaviour at an early stage of the driving experience, helps Novice drivers to develop safe driving practises that they will keep with them throughout their driving life.

The introduction of the Graduated Driver Training and Licensing (GDT&L) reform in Western Australia (WA) on 1 December 2010, also encompassed changes to the demerit point regime regarding Novice drivers. The threshold for accrual of demerit points by inexperienced drivers was reduced from 12 demerit points to four demerit points for Novice type 1 drivers, and from 12 demerit points to eight demerit points for Novice type 2 drivers.



What driver's licences count towards a Novice driver period?

- Driver licence issued overseas (not an International Driving Permit).
- Provisional driver's licence issued in another Australian State or Territory.
- Extraordinary licence granted in WA.

Am I too old to be a Novice driver?

No. Any person granted a driver's licence who has not held a licence for a period of two years (or periods adding up to two years) will be classified as a Novice driver, regardless of their age. For example, a person could be 40 years of age when applying for a driver's licence for the first time, which would make them a Novice driver.

What conditions/restrictions apply to Novice drivers?

A Novice driver will be subject to:

- a night time driving restriction for the first six months of holding a driver's licence;
- a 0.00% (zero) Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) limit for the entire period of being a Novice driver; and
- demerit point restriction of three points for a Novice driver type 1 and seven points for a Novice driver type 2.

Are Novice drivers restricted to car licences?

No. The Novice driver period is not restricted to a vehicle class. It includes:

- Mopeds (R-N)
- Motorcycles (R-E and R)
- Cars (C)
- Light Rigid (LR)
- Medium Rigid (MR).

When do I cease being a Novice driver?

Once you have held a driver's licence for two years or more (or periods adding up to two years) you are no longer a Novice driver.

Is being a Novice driver the same as being a provisional driver?

No. You can be a provisional licence holder without being a Novice driver. For example, you may get your moped licence at 16 years of age but not get your car driver's licence until you are 17 years of age.



You will cease being a Novice driver once you have held a driver's licence for two years but will remain a provisional licence holder until you are at least 19 years of age.

During the period between completing your Novice driver period and the end of your provisional period, you must continue to display your green P plates; however, the Novice driver demerit point restrictions will no longer apply (i.e. demerit point notice is issued on accrual of 12 or more demerit points).

How many demerit points can Novice drivers accrue?

- A person classified as a Novice driver type 1 cannot exceed three demerit points. If they accrue four or more points, they will be subject to a three-month disqualification after service of a demerit point notice.
- A Novice driver type 2 cannot exceed seven demerit points. If they accrue eight or more points, they will be subject to a three-month disqualification after service of a demerit point notice.

What happens if I exceed the Novice driver demerit point limits?

You will be sent notification that you have exceeded the number of demerit points you can accrue and you will be asked to attend a Department of Transport centre for service of a notice.

Once the demerit point notice has been served, you will be disqualified from driving for three months. The disqualification will normally start twenty-eight days later unless you are already disqualified. If this is the case, your demerit point disqualification will not start until the other disqualification has been completed.

If you hold a provisional driver's licence, the licence will be cancelled when the disqualification starts.

If you have not been granted a driver's licence and hold a learner's permit, the same process applies, however your permit will be suspended and not cancelled.

How do I get my driver's licence or learner's permit back if I am disqualified?

1. Learner's Permit holders - Novice driver type 1

A Novice driver type 1, who is the holder of a learner's permit, and who has completed a three-month demerit period disqualification, can resume tuition provided the learner's permit has not expired or they are not subject to another disqualification (which includes licence suspension orders enforced by the Fines Enforcement Registry for unpaid fines).



2. Provisional licence holders - Novice driver type 1 and 2

A Novice driver type 1 and 2 who is a provisional licence holder, must personally attend a Department of Transport Driver and Vehicle Service centre, regional DoT office or agent, to make a new application for the reissue of their cancelled provisional driver's licence. They will be required to provide primary and secondary identification and pay application and renewal fees; however, they will not be required to undertake additional testing.

Does a disqualification extend my Novice driver period?

Yes. Any period spent on a disqualification will not count towards the Novice driver period. For example, three months spent on a disqualification will extend the Novice driver period by three months.

Likewise, if you hold a provisional driver's licence, any period of disqualification will extend the provisional period you are required to serve.

How are demerit points recorded on the Department of Transport register?

The Department of Transport is notified that you have committed a traffic offence/s when an infringement is paid or is registered with the Department of Justice's Fines Enforcement Registry and will record the offence and any demerit points incurred on the demerit point register.

If you are convicted by a Court in WA for an offence that incurs demerit points, the Department of Transport will be notified.

I am a Novice driver type 2 and received advice I will be served with a demerit point notice and disqualified for accruing four demerit points. I thought this would only occur if I exceeded seven points.

Demerit point penalties for Novice drivers are calculated on the date the offence was committed. Where a Novice driver type 1 accrues four or more demerit points and has since progressed to Novice driver type 2, the service of a demerit point notice and a three-month disqualification period is still applicable.

The same rules apply where a Novice driver type 2 has exceeded the demerit point threshold of seven demerit points but now holds full driver's licence; i.e. demerit point notice(s) issued are still valid and will be served.



I am a Novice driver and have been served with an Excessive Demerit Points Notice for demerit point offences and disqualified for three months. Can I apply for an extraordinary driver's licence?

No.

I am a Novice driver and have been served with an Excessive Demerit Points Notice for demerit point offences. Can I elect a Good Behaviour Period instead of serving the disqualification period?

No. You must hold a valid WA driver's licence that is not provisional to be eligible to make a good behaviour period election.

If you accrued the demerit points as a Novice driver or provisional licence holder and have been served with a notice and now hold an unrestricted driver's licence, you may be eligible to make a good behaviour election after service of an Excessive Demerit Points Notice.