

**SUSSEX
SAFER
ROADS**

PARTNERSHIP



Safer for
**Mature
Drivers**

Road safety
is everyone's
responsibility...



...whichever way
you choose to
get around.

Many people, drive on a regular basis, whether socially or for work, for independence, or simply because we enjoy driving and the freedom it brings.

Almost everything we do in our day to day lives involves risk, and driving is no exception. However, there are a number of steps we can take to reduce risk on the roads and make our experiences safe for ourselves and others.

Sussex Safer Roads Partnership believes road safety is everyone's responsibility, whichever way we choose to get around. **Read on for information about fitness to drive, driving safely in Sussex, and alternative modes of transport.**



As a driver it is your responsibility to ensure that you are confident that you are fit and safe to continue driving.

Read more to find out how your driving can be affected as a mature driver:

The Law.

As the driver, it is your responsibility to make sure you are driving within your own capabilities and that your vehicle is roadworthy. Driving in older age is not necessarily a barrier to safe driving.

Your driving licence will automatically expire when you turn 70, but you can renew it for 3 years. You'll need to keep renewing it for as long as you keep using it, and you will need to declare that you are fit and able to drive safely.

Medical Conditions.

You must tell the DVLA if you have a medical condition or disability that could affect your ability to drive safely. These can include epilepsy, strokes, mental health conditions, physical disabilities, and visual impairments. Medicines can also affect your concentration and your ability to drive. Driving under the influence of certain drugs is a criminal offence, even if they have been prescribed by your doctor. Always read the label of any medications and check with your doctor or pharmacist if you have any concerns about your ability to drive.



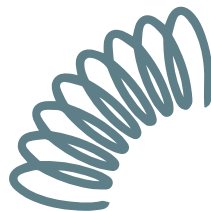
Eyesight:

It is vitally important that you can see clearly and meet the legal standards of vision for driving. You must be able to read a car number plate in good daylight from 20 metres (with your glasses or contact lenses if you wear them). If you cannot do this, you should not be driving. If you are in any doubt, you should speak to an optician or optometrist.



Hearing:

For a car or motorcycle licence, you do not need to notify the DVLA if you are deaf, but we would advise that if you wear a hearing aid you keep it switched on whilst driving.



Flexibility and Strength:

Stiff joints, limited movement, arthritis, and muscle pain can reduce ability to move, as well as the body's overall flexibility. When driving, you should be able to turn your head to look over your shoulder to check blind spots when changing lanes or reversing.

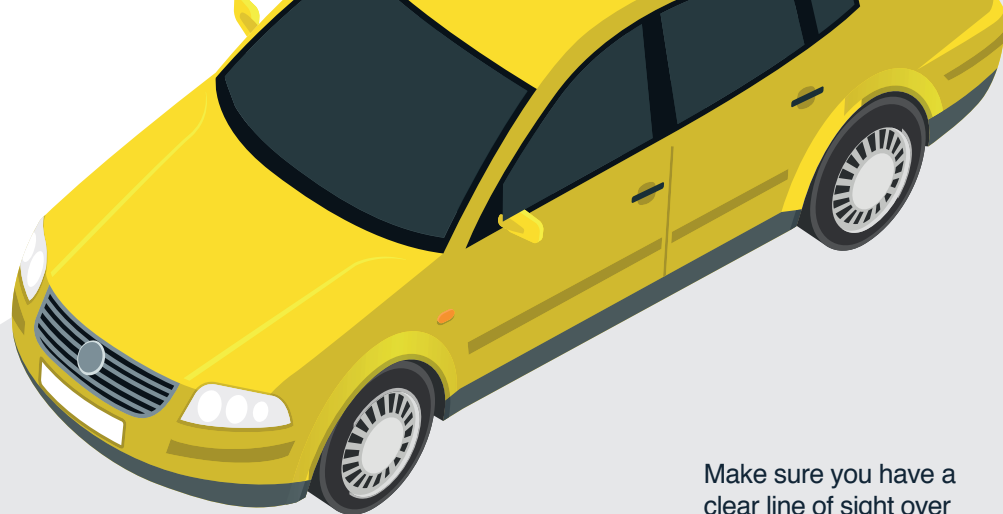


Reaction Times:

As we get older, our reaction times often increase. It is important that you retain awareness of your reaction times and seek additional support from your GP if you feel your reaction times are affecting your driving.

Prepare for a drive

Before you set off.



If you find it difficult to drive in certain conditions, such as in the dark or when it is raining, then try to avoid travel or find alternative modes of transport, such as the bus, train or taxi.

Conduct a weekly vehicle check, including:

- Petrol (or appropriate fuel)
- Oil
- Water
- Damage
- Electrics or charge
- Rubber - tyres and wiper blades



Make sure you have a clear line of sight over your steering wheel, with your eyes at least 8cm above the steering wheel.

There should be at least 25cm between your chest and the steering wheel.

You must be able to fully depress the pedals without over stretching and you must be able to push the brake pedal down as far as it can go.



Whilst on the road.

- If you feel you need to give yourself more time to react to situations, then do so by approaching a junction or hazard more slowly.
- Give yourself enough time before moving off, making sure you have checked all around before you pull away.
- Allow plenty of time for your journey so that you are not under pressure. Plan your route, including where to park, time for rests and any potential traffic.
- Remember to look out for cyclists, pedestrians and motorbikes. They are not always easy to be seen and can appear quickly and without warning.
- If taking a longer journey, remember to take breaks to ensure you are not tired or unable to concentrate on the road and surroundings.
- If you are not confident with any elements of your journey or driving, read on to find out how you can access further training or advice across Sussex.

Driving Safely in Sussex.

A minority of people, irrespective of age, continue to drive when they are not safe to do so, and this presents a risk to all road users. Some people stop driving altogether when they might have been safe to continue with a little guidance and advice. SSRP are here to support any questions you may have in relation to either continuing or retiring from driving.

Experienced Driver Assessments (EDA's)

offer drivers an opportunity to book a refresher course, aimed at helping motorists think about driving issues, while providing advice and techniques to improve safety, driving skills and enjoyment.

The course consists of an on-road assessment in the driver's own car on local roads. During the assessment, the driver will receive feedback on their driving performance and have the opportunity to discuss any driving issues that may concern them.

Following the session, drivers will receive a written report of the instructor's findings. If any specific concerns are identified, they will be raised with the driver. These concerns may be shared with appropriate family and friends or their GP but will not be reported to the DVLA.



For more information on schemes in your area you can speak with local and national providers:

East Sussex County Council:
01273 482293

**West Sussex County Council
(including Brighton & Hove):**
0330 222 8999

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
(RoSPA) Experienced Driver Assessment:
www.rosipa.com

Institute of Advanced Motorists **(IAM)**
Mature Driver Review:
www.iamroadsmart.com

Many local driving instructors also provide refresher training for mature drivers. Alternatively, get in touch with the SSRP team via email:

communications@sussexsaferroads.gov.uk

Is it time to stop driving?

If you are finding it difficult to drive or are concerned about your safety, then it may be time to think about stopping driving. These concerns could happen after you've experienced some minor scrapes or bumps on your car, or you've been surprised by events on the road. However, this doesn't mean you have to give up the freedom of independent travel. There are many other options to driving and it is well worth checking out these possibilities before making a decision.



Mobility Scooters.

An alternative to driving

Mobility scooters can offer a great deal of independence, particularly if you enjoy the freedom of independent travel but are considering alternatives to a car. It is important that you understand the variety of mobility scooters that are available, and the requirements for keeping yourself safe when using one.

What sort of mobility scooter is right for you?

Class 1: Manual wheelchairs

You use your arms to move them, or you are pushed

Class 2: Powered wheelchairs and scooters

These cannot be used on the road (except when there is no pavement) and have a maximum speed of 4mph

Class 3: Powered wheelchairs and other outdoor powered vehicles, including scooters.

These can be used on the road. They have a maximum speed of 4mph on pavements and 8mph on the road. You must only use a Class 3 vehicle if you are disabled and aged 14 years or over.



A Class 3 vehicle must have the following features:

- Maximum unladen weight of 150kg
- Maximum width of 0.85m
- A device or switch to limit speed to 4mph
- A maximum speed of 8mph
- Front and rear lights and reflectors
- Direction indicators able to operate as hazard warning signal
- Audible horn
- Rear view mirror

Frequently asked questions when using a mobility scooter:



Do I need an eyesight test?

Although there is no legal eyesight requirement to drive a mobility scooter, we recommend being able to read a number plate from 12.3m (40ft).

Do I have to pay vehicle tax?

You do not have to pay vehicle tax for any mobility scooter but must register Class 3 invalid carriages by completing a **V55/4** form (new vehicles) or **V55/5** form (used vehicles).

Do I need vehicle insurance?

You do not have to be insured by law, but we recommend getting at least third-party cover, along with theft, damage or loss. You can often add mobility scooters to your home contents policy.

Where can I use my scooter?

Always follow the Highway Code, never drive in cycle or bus lanes or motorways. Avoid using dual carriageways with speed limits over 50mph. Obey traffic lights and all other road signals, such as stop signs, give way signs and one-way street signage.

Useful Links:

Age UK: www.ageuk.org.uk

Brake Road Safety Charity: www.brake.org

DVLA forms: www.gov.uk/dvlaforms

IAM: www.iamroadsmart.com/guidance-for-older-drivers

My Health Mobility: www.myhealthmobility.co.uk

Older Drivers Forum: <https://olderdriversforum.com/>

RoSPA: www.rospace.com/road-safety/advice/drivers/older

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Find out more about our series
of road safety booklets at

www.SussexSaferRoads.gov.uk



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