

Homeschool parents have many concerns and questions when their child reaches the age to drive. Here are links and information that may answer your questions, help you find a driver's ed course, and help you save on your insurance rates.

### Driver's Permit

Teenagers may test for their driver's permit as soon as they turn 15 years old. The Alabama Department of Public Safety issues the driver's licenses for all first-time drivers in this state. You may obtain a copy of the Driver Handbook from the DPS.

To apply for a driver's permit in Alabama, your student will need his birth certificate, social security card, and a *School Enrollment/Exclusion Form (DL-1/93) filled out by the parent and signed by the Church School Administrator* . This form verifies that your student is enrolled in a church school. Go to <http://dps.alabama.gov/Home/wfContentTableColumned.aspx?ID=30&PLH1=DLFORMS> and download Enrollment/Exclusion (DL-1/93). Fill out Section I and mail it to Outlook Academy with a self-addressed stamped envelope. We will fill out Section II, sign and return it in the envelope you provide. There is no extra charge.

*Do not wait until the day your child plans to take the driver's test to send the form.* It may take 7-10 days after your initial request to receive it.

### Driver's Education

Alabama does not require any type of professional driver's education course, but you may qualify for a discount from your insurance company. Check the numbers and see if the discount is worth the cost of hiring a professional before deciding to use one.

Local high schools do not allow homeschoolers to participate in their driver's ed classes. However, you may be able to find local driver's education businesses, such as the Alabama Traffic Safety Center ( <http://www.montevallo.edu/atsc/TDC/> ) in Montevallo and Wyatt Driving Academy (Bill Wyatt, 271-1777 or 549-0226 cell) in Montgomery. Additionally, the New Driver Car Control Clinic ( <http://www.carcontrol.com/City.aspx?City=Birmingham,AL> ) in Birmingham provides hands-on experience on crash-avoidance techniques. The Driver's Edge is a non-profit organization that travels the country with its innovative behind-the-wheel program; check the web site at <http://www.driversedge.org> to see if the program will be coming to your area.

Some online driver's education programs may qualify you for lower insurance rates. Check with your insurance company before enrolling in a program to make sure it meets requirements. Whether the program qualifies you or not, your teen may benefit from instruction.

- National Driver Training Institute - <http://www.usdrivertraining.com>
- Driver's Ed Guru - <http://www.driversedguru.com/>
- Teen Driving - <http://www.teendriving.com/>

### Books

*Crash-Proof Your Kids: Make Your Teen A Safer, Smarter Driver* by Timothy C. Smith provides instruction in how to teach driving and starts out very slowly with a lot of work in parking lots first. This should help you give your teen the needed time to build up his or her confidence.

### Games

Online games may also benefit your new teen driver.

- Drivers Ed Game - <http://driversed.com/games/drivers-ed-game.aspx>
- Drivers Ed Online Game - [http://www.mofunzone.com/online\\_games/driversed.shtml#](http://www.mofunzone.com/online_games/driversed.shtml#)
- Learn To Park - <http://www.driverseddirect.com/game/>

### Tips

Use some of these tips to save on rates.

-

Most automobile insurance companies offer discounts for good grades, usually As and Bs. Check with your company to see if you qualify.

-

Most insurance companies give discounts for taking a driver training program. Some offer their own driver education programs, so ask about them.

-

Put your new teen driver as the primary driver, or family driver, on the oldest and least costly vehicle.

-

Before buying a new or used car, check with your insurance company to see what the rate will be for the teen. Sports cars and other expensive automobiles will likely have higher rates.

-

Check the crash safety rating and average repair cost for any car you might buy.

-

If getting new insurance, research several companies for the best rates and services.

-

Keep a disposable camera in your car in case of accidents to record the damage to all cars and the actual placement of the cars. Stay out of the traffic when taking the picture so you won't get hit while documenting the accident.

### **More Information**

For more information for first-time drivers in Alabama, go to <http://www.dmv.org/al-alabama/first-time-drivers.php>

Read what Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) has to say about driver's education for homeschoolers. Go to [http://www.hsllda.org/docs/nche/Issues/P/Parent\\_Taught\\_Drivers\\_Ed.asp](http://www.hsllda.org/docs/nche/Issues/P/Parent_Taught_Drivers_Ed.asp) and <http://nche.hsllda.org/docs/nche/000/00000036.asp>

For a complete summary of the driver education laws in all 50 states, visit [http://www.highwaysafety.org/laws/state\\_laws/grad\\_license.html](http://www.highwaysafety.org/laws/state_laws/grad_license.html)