



Commercial Driver License Guide

Following is a step-by-step process for obtaining a Commercial Driver License (CDL)

01 Determine the CDL classification required. A vehicle that meets the class requirement you would like to receive licensure for must be used during the skills portion of the testing process.

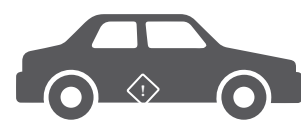
- **Class A Combination Vehicles.** Any combination of vehicles with gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 26,001 or more pounds falls in Group A provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is more than 10,000 pounds.



- **Class B Heavy Straight Vehicles.** Any single vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds falls in Group B, or any such vehicle towing another vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR.



- **Class C Small Vehicles.** Any single vehicle with a GVWR less than 26,001 pounds falls in Group C, or any such vehicle towing another vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR. However, vehicles of this size are included in the CDL program only if they are: 1) Designed to carry 16 or more passengers including the driver, or (2) Used to transport hazardous materials in quantities requiring placarding under the Hazardous Materials Regulations (49 CFR Part 172, Subpart F) or is carrying material listed as a select agent or toxin in 42 CFR part 73.



02 *Complete the Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT) requirement. This requirement is for applicants who, as of February 7, 2022, meet any of the following conditions:

- Applicant is seeking a Class A or B license for the first time.
- Applicant is seeking to upgrade an existing Class B license to a Class A license.
- Applicant is seeking to obtain a School Bus (S), Passenger (P), or Hazardous Materials (H) endorsement for the first time.

Note:

If an applicant who obtains a CLP prior to February 7, 2022, obtains a CDL before the CLP or renewed CLP expires, the applicant is not subject to the ELDT requirements.

For more information about the ELDT regulations and the Training Provider registry, visit the [Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration \(FMCSA\)](#) website.

*The written exam(s) can be taken before the ELDT requirement is met, but both must be completed before taking the skills exam.

03 Schedule the written portion of the testing process to obtain your permit by contacting one of the [State's Driver Service Centers](#). The written exam for the class B license will consist of 2 portions: General Knowledge and Air Brakes. For the class A license, a third exam (Combination Vehicles) is required.

04 Bring the following items to your exam:

- a. Valid DOT Medical Card (employees of governmental entities are exempted unless applying for a CDL with a HazMat, Passenger, or School Bus endorsement. If using the exemption, bring proof of government employment.)
- b. Proof of Social Security Number
- c. Valid Driver's License
- d. [Two proofs of domicile in Tennessee](#)
- e. Proof of U.S. citizenship or lawful permanent resident status.

05 After passing the general knowledge, air brakes, and combination test (if applicable) the applicant will be issued a Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP). After holding the CLP for a minimum of fourteen (14) days and having received all required Entry Level Driver Training (ELDT), the applicant can schedule a skills test at any [Tennessee Driver Service Center](#) or at a certified [Third Party Program Participant](#).

06 Additional endorsements may be required, depending on the vehicle and/or type of cargo. To obtain endorsements an additional knowledge test, and in some cases an additional skills test is required. Most endorsement knowledge tests can be taken on the same date as the applicant's written permit test. Available endorsements are as follows:

- a. Double/Triple Trailers (knowledge test)
- b. Passenger (knowledge and skills tests)
- c. Tank Vehicle (knowledge test)
- d. Hazardous Materials (knowledge test and fingerprint-based background check)
- e. School Bus (knowledge and skills tests)

Additional Resources

- [Tennessee Commercial Driver License Website](#)
- [Tennessee ELDT Website](#)
- [CDL Customer Service Center](#)
- [Commercial Motor Vehicles Guide](#)
- [HazMat Endorsements](#)
- [Medical Certification Requirements](#)
- [CDL Skills Test Military Waiver](#)