

Driver Assessment Matrix:

This document describes a set of components which can be used to assess the competency level of a driver. There are three components to this assessment when being used by instructors during behind the wheel lessons.

- The first component is a scoring matrix used to assess driver decisions, actions, and behaviors by assigning a score for each of 10 independent assessment categories.
- The second component is a description of minimum driver actions which must be observed on each instructional lesson to apply the scoring matrix.
- The third component is a method of assessing the consistent and appropriate application of the scoring matrix by various instructors.

Desired Outcome:

A driving school utilizing all three components as described will be able to reasonably assess the competency of each student passing through their courses and will be able to reasonably ensure students are completing their courses with at least a minimum acceptable level of competency. Training schools will also be able to advise students regarding their progress towards competency and give them recommendations for beneficial independent practice.

This document may be used to assess a driver of any age, level of experience or degree of skill who is participating in an instructional lesson or assessment by a licensed driving instructor who has been trained and supervised in the application of this matrix.

History of this work:

This matrix and its associated components have been heavily influenced by the work of David Zaidel in a technical memorandum published in 1992. That memorandum, titled "Quality of Driving with Route Guidance Assistance", was a result of collaboration between Mr. Zaidel, Sue MacNiel, and others researching and working in the traffic safety industry. A result of that collaboration was the formation of a private company named Driver Competency Assessment Protocols which operates through various training facilities in Canada and the United States. The concept of assessing drivers based on their competency has been endorsed by the Driving School Association of the Americas (DSAA) and is similar in nature to assessment methods currently used in parts of Europe.

This matrix seeks to create a modern interpretation of past work involving driver competency. It also seeks to improve application of the matrix to facilitate use by training schools in various areas regardless of population density, road infrastructure or other variables. This matrix also includes details involving modern vehicle technology and a driver's social behavior in ways not included in the original work. As vehicle technology continues to develop, and the demands of the human occupants evolve, it is expected that this work will continue to adapt as it seeks to accurately define what constitutes a "competent" driver.

Uses of the Matrix:

Component one consists of a comprehensive scoring system for the purpose of assessing any driver. Examples of drivers this matrix has been prepared for include:

- New unlicensed drivers
- New unlicensed motorcycle riders
- Experienced drivers immigrating from other parts of the world
- Drivers who are recovering or rehabilitating from a physical or cognitive injury
- Drivers who require assessment due to significant crash or infraction history
- Drivers who exhibit signs of decline as a result of age or other factors
- Any Driver seeking professional assessment for the purpose of self-improvement

This matrix would require minimal adaptation to meet the unique needs of evaluating professional or commercial drivers. It could also be adapted for law enforcement use as a guideline for assessing driver competency by an observing officer. Bicycle safety trainers could reasonably adapt this matrix for the purpose of training cyclists who regularly ride on public roadways. Additional work would be required by subject matter experts and stakeholders in each of these fields, but this matrix creates a stable foundation for such work.

The fundamentals of this matrix consist of the core decisions and actions drivers perform every time they are behind the wheel. It would be highly appropriate for regulatory agencies to adapt this matrix into a test to determine a driver's eligibility to be licensed or to have a license renewed or re-instated.

Key terms:

Assessor / Instructor: A person trained in the application of the scoring matrix and legally authorized to do so, if a professional license is required in the jurisdiction services are being performed.

Driver / Student: A person operating the vehicle while an assessment or lesson is occurring.

Road user: Any driver, passenger, pedestrian, bicyclist or anyone occupying physical space on or adjacent to a public roadway. They may be in motion or stationary, but their access to independent and safe use of the roadway may be influenced by the driver being assessed.

Regulatory Compliance:

A review of the Washington State Driver Education Standards (2024 Revision) has found that application of this scoring matrix as described meets all the requirements established in sections BTW1 through BTW 6 of the standards. In many cases, it requires multiple assessment categories to be scored in order to meet an individual standard, but when reviewing this matrix holistically, the expectations in the standards are fully met.

Component 1 – The Matrix

Approximate scale values:

The following variables are scored on a scale of 5 with 1 being the least appropriate and 5 being the most appropriate. It is understood that a score of 3 is the average driving characteristic for that variable. Each of the following variables will be explained in more detail. The perspective that is taken for scoring is that of safety. When there is a conflict between a legal or safe option, higher scores will be given to the safe decision or action. While there is overlap between the variables, one tries to score each category as a separate entity. If a category was not observed enough to establish a score, the default score is 3.

Each of the 10 scoring categories independently represents necessary skills a competent driver must possess to operate a motor vehicle safely and responsibly on public roadways. The categories are not listed in any order of importance, nor is there any implied “weighting” to their value as an assessment component. There is some crossover among the categories whereas a low score in one category may necessitate a similarly low score in another category. Similarly, a high score in some categories will often indicate a likelihood for a high score in other categories.

The scoring should be viewed as cumulative over the entirety of an instructional lesson or assessment; to obtain a score of 5, drivers must exhibit none of the negative attributes of 1, 2 & 3, but all the positive attributes of 3, 4 & 5.

Assigning a score:

Each of the five scores in the matrix are individually described in their associated category with examples of driver actions that fit into each score. The examples are intended to help the assessor interpret observed actions and assign a consistent score. Assessors must use discretion when applying scores and must not allow pre-conceived notions or biases influence their scoring. It should be understood that there is a range of performance built into each individual score. It may be possible to observe a progression of skill while still considering the overall performance to reside within one score value (ie, low 3 to high 3). Below is a general guidance on each of the five scores:

- **1-Lacking:** An action that causes harm to the driver, vehicle, passengers, other road users or private property. In addition, any action that would likely have caused harm if not for the action of the assessor or other party. A score of 1 is the only score that could be assigned after a single incident and should be assigned after any action by the driver resulting in the premature ending of the lesson / assessment.
- **2-Emerging:** Actions that lack the appropriate level of knowledge or skill to ensure the safety and protection of the driver, vehicle, passengers, other road users or private property. Some assistance may be required by the assessor at times. No incidents occur which require prematurely ending the lesson / assessment.
- **3-Average:** The driver is performing actions in a predictable manner compared to other road users. Minimal assistance provided by the assessor.
- **4-Exceeding:** The driver demonstrates a high level of knowledge and skill in the assessed category but may still make minor errors at times.
- **5-Optimal:** The driver demonstrates the highest level of competency possible in the assessed category over the entire lesson / assessment. A score of 5 is expected to be uncommon.

The Training or Assessment vehicle:

This document makes no recommendation of the vehicle being used to conduct an assessment. The vehicle in use may be subject to regulatory requirements by the jurisdiction where the assessment is

occurring. No special equipment is required to be installed or used by the driver or assessor for the proper application of the matrix.

Communicating the results:

Instructors are encouraged to use scores as a method of communication with the driver, other responsible parties, and fellow instructors. This communication may include documenting scores showing a progression of skill over the course of the lesson. For example, if a driver begins the lesson demonstrating a skill of 3 on a category and they do not improve, then a final score of 3 is suitable. Similarly, if a driver begins the lesson demonstrating a 2 on a category, but by the end has improved to a 3, then documenting a 2/3 may be useful in communicating the progression of skill observed during the lesson. If choosing to document multiple scores for a category, the higher score reflects the final score for the assessed category.

Another communication benefit could be the addition of a + or – to an assigned score. For example, a 3- could represent a score on the low end of the 3 scale (above 2), whereas a 3+ could represent a score on the high end of the 3 scale (almost 4). If choosing to add special characters like this, they would only serve as communication tools. The number assigned represents the actual assessed score.

It is the goal of this scoring matrix to accurately assess the strengths and weaknesses of each driver as they perform a lesson. The resulting scores from each lesson should be communicated to the driver for the purpose of guiding them toward independent practice to improve their driving skills and potentially prepare for future lessons.

Determination of acceptable outcome:

- **New / Novice drivers:** For a new driver to be assessed as minimally competent, they must obtain a final score of 3 or higher in each of the 10 categories of this matrix. When applying this matrix in a series of instructional lessons, the scores given for the last lesson are considered the final score.
- **Experienced drivers:** It may be appropriate for this matrix to be used for the assessment of experienced drivers from time to time. It is recommended that experienced drivers be assessed following any instance of significant physical or cognitive decline. In such instances, a minimum score of 3 or higher in each of the 10 categories represents a minimal level of competency.
- **Professional & Commercial drivers:** When evaluating drivers who possess a professional or commercial license which requires periodic evaluation, training schools and/or fleet management companies are encouraged to apply a minimum score of 3 in each of the 10 categories and a minimum average score of 3.3 by totaling all scores and dividing by 10.

When assessed unacceptable:

When the assessment has concluded with an unacceptable outcome, the driver may perform additional assessments until they can demonstrate competency. This document provides no guidance on who provides ongoing assessments, where or how frequently they occur, except to say they should be performed by assessors who are similarly trained in the use of this matrix. The assessor should ensure the driver understands the decisions or actions which resulted in the low score(s) and should provide guidance on how to improve. The instructor or assessor should remain mindful that their professional obligation is to assist drivers to reach a competent level of driving performance. It is insufficient to simply treat this assessment as a pass or fail activity.

Professional responsibility:

There may be instances during instructional lessons when an instructor identifies the performance of the driver is not on a likely trajectory to be assessed as competent by the completion of the lessons provided in the course. A reasonable effort should be made to communicate the potential need for additional lessons and provide recommendations for independent practice which may accelerate their development. Instructors and schools should avoid to the extent possible surprising the customer with the requirement for more lessons and additional fees.

Speed Maintenance:

The extent that speed is within safe bounds, adaptive to traffic conditions, changes in a timely and smooth place, maintained in a consistent manner.

- A driver is considered too slow if they force another driver to pass and the other driver is not travelling inappropriately fast; loose gaps because of not accelerating enough to get into the line of traffic, etc.
- A driver is considered too fast if the traction conditions do not warrant the speed, they are pushing other drivers, they go over the speed limit while the flow of traffic goes slower, the car goes out of balance on curves and corners, or the vision is not sufficient to make decisions with the available amount of information.

The Speed is:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Very inconsistent (varying for no apparent reason)	Adjusted late to the point where the front or rear gaps have been reduced	Not great, but a speed expected of other drivers (predictable)	Independent (not relying on the driver ahead)	Very consistent
Very wrong (too fast or too slow)	Adjusted poorly (too much or too little brake or accelerator pressure)	Adjustments are made purposefully, but not always as smoothly or timely as possible	Maintained suitable for the conditions	Always the best possible speed
Dangerous (not adjusting for traction, vision, road condition)				Always adjusted very timely and smoothly
Too fast and following too close				

Distance Maintenance Front & Rear:

The extent that the following and being followed distance of the vehicle from other road users is safe. How effectively the driver is adapting to traffic conditions and allowing for good visibility.

The following and being followed distance is:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Far too close to the vehicle ahead	Following too closely without adjustment	Average in their reaction to others	Considerate of the space ahead when making decisions about following	Always allowing adequate space between forward and rear vehicles
Too close behind other road users when stopped	A little too close to vehicle ahead	Average in the amount of space they leave	More than average in distance from others	Discouraging of being followed too closely from behind
Lacking margins of space between vehicles	Unable to improve distance to the rear	Allows the actions of other to influence safe space to the front or rear	Making most adjustments independent of others	Consistent and appropriate
Unaware of unsafe condition to the rear			Not reliant on others actions to initiate space adjustments	

Lane Positioning:

The extent that placement of the vehicle within a lane and the choice of a lane are consistently appropriate, free of uncontrolled drifting and do not infringe on the path of other road users. Vehicle placement either when the vehicle is moving or stationary. It is imperative that the vehicle be congruent with other communication such as signaling. Lane placement and position at intersections are considered important as well.

Lane positioning is:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Wrong or dangerous (being on the wrong side of the road with vehicles approaching)	Allowed to drift within or outside of their lane	A position that one would reasonably expect	Consistent in placing vehicle on a safe path	Always the best position for hazards
Identified as wrong too late to adjust	Incorrect while navigating curves	Relatively consistent in position and lane choice	Adjusted early for upcoming changes	Accurately identifying of instances with multiple hazards
Making recurring large steering corrections to stay in lane (pingponging)	Incorrect at intersections (too far left or right for the desired turn)	Relatively smooth staying in the desired position	Consistently chosen to clear the way for other road users	and choosing the best position to address each
Never checking blind areas before making a position change	Makes constant small steering corrections to stay in lane (micro steering)	Generally aware of things in blind areas, but may make position changes without considering the concerns of others		
	Sometimes making a position change without checking blind areas			

Turning & Crossing:

The extent that drivers follow an appropriate sequence of visual checks, position and speed adjustments prior to and while crossing or turning onto a lane of travel. Also accounting for the margin of safety taken in gap acceptance and other conflict points.

Turning & Crossing maneuvers are:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Failing of checks for other road users	Occasionally not checked for traffic in intersections before entering	Average in their checking behavior	Consistently checking all intersections and potential conflict points	Considering areas of potential conflict that need to be assessed by adjusting speed or changing position if the information is not readily available
Failing of recognition if intersections are controlled or uncontrolled (goes through a stop sign or stops where there is no sign)	Not observant of driveways and other non-street connections	Generally noticing and accepting of responsibility at intersections	Ready to cover the horn or brake early if a conflict may arise	Using the intersection in a way that enhances the safety of all road users (taking into account pedestrians, other road users' visual needs, yielding and right of way)
Not giving way to another legitimate road user	Speed or motion not appropriate for the turn	Understanding reasonably well of various yielding responsibilities	Using appropriate communication to warn other road users of potential conflict	
Turning into or from the wrong lane	Cutting the turn or travelling wide requiring correction	Not congesting intersections unnecessarily	Maintains reasonable vehicle balance	
Travelling thru turn so quickly as to upset vehicle handling			Consistently choose correct lane to turn from and into	
Stopping before every turning situation				

Traffic Control Devices:

The extent that drivers correctly interpret the meaning of signs, signals, markings and other control devices; grasp the positions, rights and intentions of other road users, and negotiate their course in accordance to the rights, restrictions, and opportunities afforded by the controls. All signs and signals as well as lane markings are included in this category. The degree of sophistication a driver demonstrates regarding how the system operates within the parameters of the traffic control devices is considered.

Interaction with Traffic Control Devices are:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Often incorrect causing a high risk situation (incomplete stops at signs or lights)	Not observant of cross street signs	Average in reaction to traffic control	Aware of how the traffic control devices affect all road users and actions are appropriate	Analyzing where traffic is most likely to be coming from and placing the vehicle in the best position (i.e. when making right turns at complex multi-lane intersections where there are designated lights)
Non conforming (Placing vehicle in incorrect lane, position, or speed to execute a maneuver safely)	Lacking in appropriate timing and spacing for decisions about yellow lights Inappropriate for the rules for right of way	Lacking recognition of green traffic lights that have become stale, sometimes clearing intersection when red	Recognizing of fresh or stale green lights and is prepared for them	
Not considerate of pedestrians or other road users (blocking crosswalk right on red)	Misunderstanding of the active / inactive status of school zone speed controls	Observant of pedestrians and other road users, but may not yield appropriately	Observant of pedestrians and other road users and yields appropriately	Sequenced so the approach of lights maximizes the timing in their favor
Lacking communication (failing to signal approaching an intersection with a turn)	Occasionally incorrect in a risky way (nearly, but not completely stopped at signs or lights)	Does not always use center two-way left turn lane correctly to assist traffic flow		Identifying the needs of emergency vehicles and ensuring their path is not impeded
Failing to re-check condition of light after yielding to other road users	Incorrectly communicated (signaling the wrong way)	Using proper turn only lane, but may enter unnecessarily early		
Appearing unaware of emergency vehicles approaching	Lacking understanding of proper use of center two-way left turn lane. Entering turn only lane too late	Yielding to emergency vehicles, but sometimes late or not in best way		

Situation Awareness:

The degree to which drivers look ahead in time and space. Uses secondary cues about the evolving traffic situation, placing themselves in a position to increase the time available to see, think, act, anticipate likely future positions of road users, and avoid getting into situations requiring conflict resolution. Inherent in situation awareness is the notion of judging motion and velocity, and the ability to time maneuvers to coincide in space. This category also addresses pre-drive and post-drive actions which may impact the driver or vehicles readiness to be driven.

The driver situational awareness is:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
<p>Assessing information too late and only the most immediate information</p> <p>Mis-judging the amount of time required to complete a maneuver (very short or overly long gap choice)</p> <p>Processing information out of sequence so the information cannot be used (checks the opposite blind spot while preparing for a turn)</p> <p>Operating the vehicle without using necessary features (headlights while dark, wipers during significant rain, defrost while glass obscured)</p> <p>Attempting to drive with obvious vehicle flaw (flat tire)</p>	<p>Only reading the road a few second ahead of the car or overdriving the headlights</p> <p>Constantly being caught off guard causing surprise</p> <p>Driving quickly up to a red light or a stopped vehicle and initiating braking late</p> <p>Operating the vehicle without using features that improve the situation (no headlights during low light situations, does not use wipers or cleaner to improve visibility, does not clear all glass surfaces for visibility)</p> <p>Driving with no seat belt or not adjusted for good control</p>	<p>Visually scanning approximately 10 seconds ahead but sometimes not properly utilizing the information</p> <p>Sometimes lacking recognition of the relationship between space and time</p> <p>Allowing some weather situations to diminish control without taking action (does not lower visor to improve glare, does not use rear wiper to improve visibility)</p> <p>Failing to set the parking brake when securing the vehicle</p> <p>Not always ensuring other passengers are belted and loose items secured</p>	<p>Using fairly consistent information (10-15 seconds ahead) and allowing time for things to work themselves out</p> <p>Understanding of and using vehicle features beneficially in most cases (headlights, wipers, defrost, etc.)</p>	<p>Controlling of the vehicle in such a way as to assist other road users and minimize conflict (slowing early at a four way stop so that the stopping will clearly indicate to the other driver the right to go first)</p> <p>Always fully preparing the vehicle for weather conditions before beginning to drive</p> <p>Always ensuring all passengers and loose items are fully secured before vehicle movement</p>

Vehicle Handling:

The extent that drivers use vehicle motion and balance controls appropriately, in a correct sequence, with little overt attention to them; the apparent synchrony between driver, vehicle and the roadway that results in a consistently smooth ride.

The driver is managing vehicle handling by:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Using the wrong control by mistake (uses the gas instead of the brake etc. in cases where risk may be elevated due to the error.)	Rough handling, not sensitive to the controls of the vehicle	Average in balance skills	Initiating braking smoothly and timely	Functioning and interacting with the controls of the car automatically
Using the correct control but very inappropriately (too much gas or too much brake or too much steering)	Signaling incorrectly or inappropriately	Occasionally braking in the middle of a turn	Completing braking by smoothly taking pressure off the pedal	Driving smoothly and in the correct sequence or timing for any driving task
Excessively spinning the tires or skidding (when road conditions are not a significant cause)	Braking late or inappropriate in accelerating or steering	Steering while both braking and/or accelerating	Making corrections dealing with speed and direction appropriately	
Travelling completely inappropriately for road surface conditions (Too fast for gravel or wet surface)	Being awkward with the controls	Occasionally driving with only one arm on the wheel	Consistently maintains 2 points of contact on the steering wheel	
	Consistently steering with one arm or making turns with hand inside the steering wheel (long periods of resting hand on gear selector or elbow on door sill)	Allows steering wheel to straighten on its own after a turn		

Space Management:

The degree to which a driver is aware of their surroundings, understands the implications of the time space relationship and optimizes the space to the best of their ability for themselves and other road users. Drivers' ability to maintain an optimum space independent of other road users is considered important as well as the ability to separate out hazards and deal with each as an isolated incident.

The driver is managing space by:				
1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
<p>Hitting objects</p> <p>Being exceptionally awkward when maneuvering the vehicle at slow speeds (needs multiple attempts to park the vehicle)</p> <p>Getting too close to objects including cars, barriers and curbs without good reason</p>	<p>Lacking strong or consistent gap selection and is inappropriate with the choices of space needed to complete the maneuver (waits too long when making a right turn for the vehicle coming from the left)</p> <p>Failing to separate hazards and/or chooses inappropriate hazards to be close to</p> <p>Allowing their vehicle to remain in someone's blind spot too long</p> <p>Occupying more than one parking space when parked (not caused by the proximity of other vehicles or hazards)</p>	<p>Keeping an average amount of space to sides and rear</p> <p>Maintaining a reasonable following distance</p> <p>Being influenced by the car ahead, making the driver dependent</p> <p>Selecting parking spaces based on convenience over safety</p> <p>Entering intersection on green, sometimes without checking to the sides first</p>	<p>Consistently considering the presence of vehicles to the front, rear and sides</p> <p>Choosing following distance independent of the vehicle ahead</p> <p>Increasing space when vision or traction are reduced</p> <p>Usually enters intersection on green after a delayed start</p>	<p>Placing the car in such a position as to maximize the amount of space surrounding their vehicle while minimizing any potential inconvenience for other road users.</p>

Driver Behavior:

The extent that a driver demonstrates an appropriate level of independent action representing their willingness to consider driving as an interactive social activity.

- The driver should be able to assess the driving environment in real time.
- They should be able to reasonably predict the actions of other drivers and adjust their driving to maintain an appropriate level of respect and interaction with all road users.
- When the driver observes other road users behaving in negative ways, they should react appropriately to the situation.

This category also looks at the driver's willingness to accept and follow instruction from the instructor or assessor. Lower scores will be assessed for drivers who disobey instruction and for students who are unwilling or unable to maintain a state of mind beneficial to the learning experience.

The driver is behaving by:

1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
<p>Making decisions with no regard for the reactions taken by other road users in the area (cuts off traffic while merging, fails to yield to pedestrians or bicyclists, stops blocking areas of traffic egress, backs into road with no regard for traffic)</p> <p>Willfully disobeying the instructor or repeatedly performing actions different than instructed (turns left instead of right, fails to adjust speed as directed)</p> <p>Reacting to the negative actions of other road users very emotionally, resulting in an aggressive dangerous reaction</p> <p>Consistently lacking confidence resulting in dangerous or unpredictable actions</p>	<p>Lacking consistent ability to drive in a way that does not impede the reasonable actions of other road users</p> <p>Lacking awareness of the negative perception their actions are portraying to other road users</p> <p>Lets pre-conceived notions about driving interfere with direction from instructors</p> <p>Having some difficulty following instructions, but never due to willful disobedience</p> <p>Lets the actions of other road users result in a strong emotional response which may result in a dangerous reaction</p> <p>Never performing a driver action purely to assist other road users</p> <p>Often struggling with nervousness or low confidence about their driving, creating risky situations</p>	<p>Making most decisions and actions independently</p> <p>Letting the actions of other road users result in a strong emotional response but does not react dangerously as a result</p> <p>Sometimes questioning or resisting directions from instructors if they do not align with pre-conceived notions</p> <p>Rarely performing a driver action purely to assist other road users</p> <p>Sometimes gets nervous and lacks confidence about their driving</p> <p>Sometimes acting from a position of over-confidence</p>	<p>Requiring few and infrequent corrective directions from the instructor; rarely makes decisions or actions which impede or frustrate other road users</p> <p>Not letting the actions of other road users result in strong emotional reactions</p> <p>Trying to follow the instructor's direction at all times</p> <p>attempting to act in ways that assists other road users, but sometimes is too slow or too late to achieve the desired result</p> <p>Occasionally getting nervous, but maintaining a reasonable level of confidence</p>	<p>Consistently observing the actions of nearby road users and avoids actions which could frustrate or impede their actions</p> <p>Never reacting emotionally to the actions of other road users</p> <p>Requiring no corrective direction from the instructor and follows all instructions timely and correctly</p> <p>Always seeking actions which will assist other road users in a positive way</p> <p>Always driving with a calm, confident and even disposition</p>

Personal Responsibility:

The extent a driver can reasonably manage the wide array of information present while driving. The ability to utilize vehicle technology in beneficial ways while minimizing negative influences. The degree to which the driver maintains an appropriate level of concentration despite distracting or confusing influences inside and outside the vehicle.

This category will be assessed differently based on various factors. Vehicle technology varies, and some technologies may be enabled or disabled in the vehicle being driven. It is also assumed that drivers who are knowingly being assessed will consciously avoid performing some distracting, illegal or inappropriate activities they may otherwise perform privately. Low scores for this category should be limited to behaviors actually observed and behaviors clearly demonstrating a lack of understanding how to operate the vehicle in a safe and responsible manner.

The driver is demonstrating personal responsibility by:

1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
<p>Relying completely on vehicle technology with no regard for operator responsibility (lets autonomous features operate without supervision, changes lanes based solely on vehicle warning features)</p> <p>Using personal electronic devices or infotainment systems in a manner leading to long periods of time not physically or mentally focused on the driving task</p> <p>Entering into deep conversations with other passengers causing significant distraction</p> <p>Attempting to drive obviously under the influence of a substance that impairs safe operation</p> <p>Attempting to drive dangerously sleep deprived</p>	<p>Using autonomous features without sufficient knowledge about how to supervise and resume control</p> <p>Using assistance features unsafely or inappropriately (backs while only using the rear camera)</p> <p>Allowing personal electronic devices or infotainment systems to create instances of distraction</p> <p>Participating in non-electronic distracting activities (checks hair or makeup, reads printed materials)</p> <p>Allowing conversations among passengers to become briefly distracting</p> <p>Driving while moderately impaired by a substance or sleep deprivation</p>	<p>Using autonomous features with basic knowledge of how to supervise and resume control, but not prepared for emergencies</p> <p>Making an effort to be aware of traffic and obstacles, but occasionally is alerted unaware by driver assistance features</p> <p>Allowing the use of personal electronic devices and infotainment systems to become distracting for periods of time with no negative outcome on themselves or other road users</p> <p>Having conversations with passengers, but maintaining a reasonable level of control at all times</p> <p>Driving when it is possible they may still be impaired by a substance or drowsiness, but no obvious sign of such condition</p>	<p>Using autonomous features with an appropriate knowledge of how to supervise and resume control, even in emergency situations</p> <p>Relying primarily on their vision and awareness of traffic and hazards</p> <p>Relying on driver assistance features to be secondary</p> <p>Avoids using personal electronic devices in distracting ways</p> <p>Limiting interactions with the infotainment system to brief moments when emergencies are unlikely</p> <p>Maintaining consistent cognitive focus on the driving task even with passengers</p> <p>Never driving under the influence of an illicit substance, but may drive under mild influence of medications or drowsiness</p>	<p>Only enabling autonomous features after becoming fully aware of their functions and limitations, including full understanding of how to disable the feature and resume full control in any situation</p> <p>Operating the vehicle in such a way that assistance features never activate</p> <p>Avoiding all interaction with personal electronic devices while the vehicle is moving</p> <p>Avoiding all interaction with the infotainment system while the vehicle is moving</p> <p>Avoiding all non-electronic distractions including conversations</p> <p>Never driving after consuming any impairing substance until all effects have fully passed</p> <p>Never driving in a drowsy condition</p>

Component 2 – Lesson Components

Lesson Training Objectives: Novice Drivers

When performing an instructional behind the wheel lesson, the primary objective is to assist the driver to obtain and apply their knowledge and skill in a progressively more safe and responsible manner. Instructors assist the student in various ways.

- **Knowledge sharing:** The instructor may share information they know about a driving scenario in order to build understanding by the student. (Ex, You can turn right while the light is red after you have completely stopped and checked to make sure the path is clear)
- **Physical or mental demonstration:** The instructor may demonstrate the correct way to perform a maneuver while the student observes, or they may have the student mentally visualize a scenario being described. (Ex, Imagine we're on an uphill grade and need to secure the vehicle)
- **Verbal direction:** The instructor may direct the driver to perform a specific action. (Ex, At the next corner, turn right.)
- **Other methods:** Instructors should be encouraged to discover new and imaginative methods to engage with the student in ways that create positive outcomes.

Lesson Components: Novice Drivers

For a course of instruction to meet its training objectives, each lesson must have pre-determined components intended to support the development of the driver. These components are described as "Training Components" and "Route Components".

- The training components are things that must occur during a lesson with the expectation that the instructor will assist the driver to improve in those activities.
- The route components are a list of minimum requirements that must be performed during a lesson to fairly and consistently apply the scoring matrix.

Lesson Training Components: Novice Drivers

Before a student attending an instructional lesson can be fairly assessed, they must be provided with guidance from the instructor that seeks to improve their driving knowledge and skill. The scoring of the matrix categories should occur at the end of the lesson allowing for the instructor to attempt to positively influence the drivers score by providing instruction. The provided lesson structure has established a set of tasks for the student to be introduced to in each lesson. Training schools are encouraged to adapt these tasks to align best with their course curriculum and individualized training objectives.

Lesson Route Components: Novice Drivers

For the scoring to accurately reflect overall driver competency, each lesson must navigate on various roads any varying levels of traffic density and practice progressively difficult driving tasks. It is assumed the experience level of the driver is lowest when appearing for the first lesson at a school and will improve with each lesson they attend. The following guidance defines how to structure a series of lessons for optimal application of the scoring matrix.

For this component, it is assumed that the school will be providing 6 lessons of 1 hour each. For schools providing a different total number of lessons, the school may adapt the lesson structure as

needed. Regardless of the number of lessons, the goal is to assess a novice driver as minimally competent before considering them to have completed the course.

Care should be taken to ensure the route components allow sufficient time for the instructor to individualize the instruction to the needs of the student. If the minimum route components consume the majority of available lesson time, the individual needs of the student may not be met in the interest of meeting route standards. Instructors should be encouraged to make sure they meet all the minimum route requirements for each lesson and then use the remaining lesson time to focus on the areas that individual student needs the most assistance to improve.

This guidance takes no position on school policy regarding instructors following pre-determined lesson routes. The guidance establishes a list of minimum actions to be performed during each lesson. Instructors should refer to previous lesson scores and provide remedial instruction on areas receiving a score of 2 or below. Instructors are encouraged to add actions based on the observed ability of the driver, but the actions listed for each lesson should still be performed and scored.

Lessons: Experienced Drivers

When using this assessment matrix for the purpose of assessing experienced or professional drivers, the driving skills and behavior observed should be modified to mimic the driving environment typical for that driver. The lesson structure below is suitable for new or novice drivers in common driving environments but may not be suitable for drivers in large vehicles, vehicles pulling trailers, or drivers primarily operating in significantly rural areas. Training schools may use the structure below as a template for the creation of a structure that meets the individual characteristics of their students' needs.

Lessons: Challenge Assessments (Not Washington State Approved)

It may be appropriate, if approved by the training school regulatory body, to offer a challenge assessment which would allow the driver to demonstrate competency without participating in lessons which would otherwise be required. In this case, great care must be taken to ensure the assessment is robust enough to reasonably demonstrate competency. The driver should be able to demonstrate a level of competency higher than the minimum course requirements with minimal assistance from the instructor to be assessed as competent in this manner. It is recommended a successful challenger receive a minimum assessed score of 4 or higher in 5 or more categories, and no categories below a score of 3. Alternately, a total average score of 3.5 or higher with no individual scores below 3 would meet the same criteria. This higher benchmark will serve to discourage low skill drivers from trying to "shortcut" training before they can demonstrate they have the necessary skill.

If a driver attempts a challenge assessment and does not score high enough to be assessed competent, they should be advised on the areas they need to improve. They can be offered lessons to improve, or they can practice independently until they are ready to schedule another challenge assessment.

Sample Assessment Form: Novice Drivers

The included form serves as a template for documenting the progression of a driver through a 6 hour behind the wheel course assessing each of the 10 categories. It can be adapted as needed by a training school for the purpose of communicating competency progression to the driver, parents / guardians, employers / responsible parties, or regulatory agencies.

Component 3 - Evaluating the assessor:

Assessment Norming:

The efficacy of any scoring matrix relies on its equal application by multiple assessors. If the matrix is not similarly used by all the assessors, the individual outcome will lack credibility and the communicative benefits of the scores will be diminished. To ensure all assessors are performing the assessment correctly, there must be adequate training, followed by periodic evaluations of the assessor by a licensed trainer of trainers.

Evaluation methods:

There are several ways that an assessor can be evaluated. Trainers can use the method they feel best produces the typical performance of the individual assessor. Below are some common examples of evaluation methods, but trainers should be encouraged to adapt their own methods as well. There is no recommendation for how long an evaluation must take to complete. Availability of suitable locations for activities will vary from school to school. The evaluation must take the time it takes to meet the evaluative objectives.

- **Observational method:** A trainer may ride along during a live lesson and observe the instructor perform the lesson. The trainer may choose to score the lesson as if they were the instructor and then compare scores after the conclusion of the lesson. Trainers choosing this method should be mindful that any interaction they have with the instructor or student during the lesson may influence the evaluation.
- **Electronic method:** A trainer may view audio / video recordings of a lesson or segments of several lessons. This method may be particularly useful if working with an instructor on a specific skill set. Trainers should be mindful that the video may not be as representative of situations as they were for the driver and instructor in real time.
- **Route based method:** Trainer of trainers may create a route used to conduct the evaluation which includes the actions that are being evaluated. It is not required that a route be used consistently for all assessments, but care should be taken to ensure any route used is not inherently more or less difficult for the assessor or evaluator. The route should be conducted on roads and areas familiar to the assessor to ensure they are able to focus on application of the scoring matrix.

Evaluation frequency:

Each assessor should be evaluated periodically for their application of the matrix. For instructors new to this matrix, it is recommended they be evaluated after conducting approximately 100 lessons. Experienced assessors should be evaluated at least once per professional license cycle, or at any time a trainer of trainers becomes aware of scoring discrepancies among assessor staff.

Corrective action:

In the event an assessor is found to lack knowledge, skill, or consistent application of the scoring matrix, they should be provided training in the specific areas they were found to be lacking. Training may be provided at the discretion of the trainer of trainers. When the assessor completes the necessary training, it is recommended they be assessed after completion of approximately 100 lessons to ensure long term appropriate application of the matrix.

<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 1</p> <p>Training Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Approach • Gauges and Controls • Securing and Exiting • Reference Points • Stopping at specific locations (stop line, crosswalk, sidewalk) • Maneuvering along obstacle on right (curb edge, painted line) • Maneuvering along obstacle on left (curb edge, painted line) • Basic precision maneuver (U-Turn, Y-Turn) <p>Route Components: (Minimum of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 stop sign intersections proceeding straight • 3 stop sign intersections turning right • 3 stop sign intersections turning left • 3 left turns at intersection not requiring stop • 3 right turns at intersection not requiring stop • Travel primarily on low traffic density streets with few curves or other visual challenges with speed limits at or below 25MPH 	<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 2</p> <p>Training Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lane Position Control • Turn Tracking • Hill Park • Front Angle Park • Front Perpendicular Park • Right of Way and Yielding • Speed Control & Adjustments <p>Route Components: (Minimum of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 uphill park with curb • 1 uphill park without curb • 1 downhill park with curb • 1 downhill park without curb • 3 stop sign intersections with 2nd stop • 1 all-way stop intersection • 1 intersection with flashing light (all way stop Red-Red or two-way stop Red-Yellow) • 1 school speed zone (active or inactive) • Travel primarily on low to medium traffic density streets with minimal curves, visual challenges and speed limits between 25-35 MPH 	<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 3</p> <p>Training Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lane Change • Timing Gaps • Vehicle Balance Control • Backing straight to a rear limiting location • Backing while turning maneuver (Washington backing maneuver) <p>Route Components: (Minimum of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 uncontrolled intersection (if available) • 3 traffic light intersections travelling straight • 3 right turns at traffic light intersection without turn lane • 3 left turns at traffic light intersection without turn lane • 3 lane changes (multi-lane roads, entering turn lanes, to/from side of road) • Travel primarily on medium traffic density streets with multiple curves, visual challenges and speed limits between 25-35 MPH
<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 4</p> <p>Training Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tight space maneuver (parallel park) • Proper use of center two-way turn lane (to/from parking lot, to/from street intersection) • Traffic Congestion • Vulnerable Road Users (Bicyclists / Pedestrians / etc.) <p>Route Components: (Minimum of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 left turns at traffic light from and onto multi-lane road • 3 right turns at traffic light from and onto multi-lane road • 1 left turn from stop sign onto multi-lane road • 1 right turn from stop sign onto multi-lane road • 1 railroad crossing (if available) • 1 single lane traffic circle (if available) • Travel primarily on medium to high traffic density streets with speed limits between 30-45 MPH 	<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 5</p> <p>Training Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check oil / Coolant / Tires • Freeway Entry / Exit • High speed lane position / lane change • High speed following / being followed distance <p>Route Components: (Minimum of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 merges onto controlled access multi-lane roadway with a speed limit of 50MPH or higher • 2 exits from controlled access multi-lane roadway with a speed limit of 50MPH or higher • 2 lane changes travelling straight on roadway with a speed limit of 50MPH or higher • 1 multi-lane traffic circle (if available) • Travel primarily on available high speed roadways 45MPH and faster <p>Recommended: (if equipped)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting and disabling cruise control • Observing blind spot warning system • Interacting with lane keeping feature 	<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 6</p> <p>Training Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of hand turn signals • Backing and turning maneuver (Washington backing maneuver) • Tight space maneuver (parallel park) <p>Route Components: (Minimum of)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 hill parking maneuver • 1 lane changes while travelling on a multi-lane road • 1 lane changes into a right turn only lane approaching an intersection • 1 lane changes into a left turn only lane approaching an intersection • 1 left turns at a traffic light intersection onto a multi-lane road • 1 right turns at a traffic light intersection onto a multi-lane road • 1 left turns from a stop sign intersection onto a multi-lane road with speed limit of 35MPH or higher • 1 right turns from a stop sign intersection onto a multi-lane road with speed limit of 35MPH or higher • 1 intersection with flashing red lights • 1 intersection with flashing yellow lights • 1 All-way stop intersection • Travel on a diverse variety of roadways present in the surrounding area

BTW DRIVE SHEET

		DRIVE 1	DRIVE 2	DRIVE 3	DRIVE 4	DRIVE 5	DRIVE 6	
Category		Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Final Score	
Name: _____ Student Phone: _____ Parent Phone: _____	Speed Maintenance							
	Distance Maintenance							
	Lane Positioning							
	Turning & Crossing							
	Traffic Control Devices							
	Situation Awareness							
	Vehicle Handling							
	Space Management							
	Driver Behavior							
	Personal Responsibility							
	DRIVE ONE	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME		
	Date:	NOTES:				IN:		
						OUT:		
DRIVE TWO	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME			
Date:	NOTES:				IN:			
						OUT:		
DRIVE THREE	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME			
Date:	NOTES:				IN:			
						OUT:		
DRIVE FOUR	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME			
Date:	NOTES:				IN:			
						OUT:		
DRIVE FIVE	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME			
Date:	NOTES:				IN:			
						OUT:		
DRIVE SIX	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME			
Date:	NOTES:				IN:			
						OUT:		
OBSERVATION	Instructor Signature/#:		Student Initials:		DRIVE TIME			
Date:	NOTES:				IN:			
						OUT:		

	1-Lacking	2-Emerging	3-Average	4-Exceeding	5-Optimal
Speed Maintenance:	Very inconsistent or wrong Dangerous Too fast and following too close	Adjusted poorly or late to the point where the front or rear margins have been reduced	Not great, but a speed expected of other drivers	Independent Maintained suitable for the conditions	Very consistent Always the best possible speed & adjusted very timely
Distance Maintenance Front & Rear:	Far too close to the vehicle ahead Too close behind other road users when stopped	Following too closely without adjustment A little too close to vehicle ahead	Average in their reaction to others Average in the amount of space they leave	Considerate of the space ahead Adjusting independently Not reliant on others	Always allowing adequate space Discouraging of being followed too closely
Lane Positioning:	Wrong or dangerous Identified as wrong too late to adjust	Allowed to drift within or outside of their lane Incorrect while navigating curves or intersections	A position that one would reasonably expect Relatively consistent in position and lane choice	Consistently safe Adjusted early for upcoming changes	Always the best position for hazards Identifying of multiple hazards
Turning and Crossing:	Failing of checks for other road users Failing of recognition of controlled or uncontrolled Turning into or from the wrong lane	Occasionally not checked for traffic in intersections before entering Not observant of driveways and other non-street connections	Average in their checking behavior Generally noticing and accepting responsibility at intersections Understanding of yielding	Consistently checking all intersections and conflict points Ready to cover the horn or brake Using appropriate communication	Considering areas of potential conflict that need to be assessed Using the intersection to enhance safety
Traffic Control Devices:	Often incorrect causing a high risk situation Non conforming Not considerate of pedestrians or other road users Lacking communication	Not observant of cross street signs Lacking in appropriate timing and spacing for yellow lights Misunderstanding of the active / inactive status of school zones	Average in reaction to traffic control Lacking recognition of green traffic lights that have become stale Observant of pedestrians and other road users, but may not yield appropriately	Aware of how the traffic control devices affect all road users Recognizing of fresh or stale green lights Observant of pedestrians and other road users	Analyzing where traffic is most likely to be coming from and placing the vehicle in the best position Sequenced so the approach of lights maximizes the timing in their favor
Situation Awareness:	Assessing information too late and only the most immediate information Mis-judging amount of time required Processing information out of sequence Operating the vehicle without using necessary features	Only reading the road a few second ahead of the car or overdriving the headlights Constantly being caught off guard Driving quickly up to a red light or a stopped vehicle Operating the vehicle without using features that improve the situation	Visually scanning approximately 10 seconds ahead but sometimes not properly utilizing the information Sometimes lacking recognition of the relationship between space and time Allowing some weather situations to diminish control without taking action	Using fairly consistent information and allowing time for things to work themselves out Understanding of and using vehicle features beneficially in most cases	Controlling of the vehicle in such a way as to assist other road users and minimize conflict Always fully preparing the vehicle for weather conditions before beginning to drive
Vehicle Handling:	Using the wrong control by mistake Using the correct control but very inappropriately Excessively spinning the tires or skidding	Rough handling, simply not sensitive to the controls of the vehicle Signaling incorrectly or inappropriately	Average in balance skills Occasionally braking in the middle of a turn Steering while both braking and/or accelerating	Initiating braking smoothly and timely Completing braking by smoothly taking pressure off the pedal Making corrections dealing with speed and direction appropriately	Functioning and interacting with the controls of the car automatically Driving smoothly and in the correct sequence or timing for any driving task

Vehicle Handling: (Continued)		Braking late or wrong acceleration or steering Being awkward with the controls Consistently steering with one arm or hand inside the steering wheel	Occasionally driving with only one hand Allows steering wheel to straighten on its own	Consistently maintains 2 points of contact on the steering wheel	
Space Management:	Hitting objects Being exceptionally awkward when maneuvering the vehicle at slow speeds Getting too close to objects including cars, barriers and curbs without good reason	Lacking strong or consistent gap selection Failing to separate hazards and/or chooses inappropriate hazards to be close to Allowing their vehicle to remain in a blind spot	Keeping an average amount of space Maintaining a reasonable following distance Being influenced by the car ahead Selecting parking spaces based on convenience over safety	Consistently considering the presence of vehicles to the front, rear and sides Choosing following distance independent of the vehicle ahead Increasing space when vision or traction are reduced	Placing the car in such a position as to maximize the amount of space surrounding their vehicle while minimizing any potential inconvenience for other road users.
Driver Behavior:	Making decisions with no regard for reactions by other road users Willfully disobeying the instructor Reacting very emotionally Consistently lacking confidence	Lacking consistent ability to drive in a way that does not impede other road users Lacking awareness of the negative perception their actions are portraying to other road users Having some difficulty following instructions Never performing a driver action purely to assist other road users	Making most decisions and actions independently Letting the actions of other road users result in a strong emotional response but does not react dangerously Sometimes questioning or resisting directions from instructors Rarely performing a driver action purely to assist other road users	Requiring few and infrequent corrective directions from the instructor Not letting the actions of other road users result in strong emotional reactions Trying to follow the instructor's direction attempting to act in ways that assists other road users Only occasionally nervous	Consistently observing the actions of nearby road users and avoids frustration Never reacting emotionally to the actions of other road users Requiring no corrective direction from the instructor Always seeking actions which will assist other road users Always driving with a calm, confident and even disposition
Personal Responsibility:	Relying completely on vehicle technology with no regard for operator responsibility Using personal electronic devices or infotainment systems in a manner leading to long periods of time not physically or mentally focused on the driving task Entering into deep conversations with other passengers Attempting to drive obviously under the influence of a substance that impairs or drives dangerously sleepy	Using autonomous features without sufficient knowledge about how to supervise and resume control Using assistance features unsafely or inappropriately Allowing personal electronic devices or infotainment systems to create instances of distraction Participating in distracting activity. Moderately impaired by a substance or sleep deprivation	Using autonomous features with basic knowledge of how to supervise and resume control Making an effort to be aware of traffic and obstacles, but occasionally is alerted unaware Allowing the use of personal electronic devices and infotainment systems to become distracting for periods of time with no negative outcome on themselves or other road users Having conversations with passengers, but maintaining a reasonable level of control at all times	Using autonomous features with an appropriate knowledge of how to supervise and resume control, even in emergency situations Relying primarily on their vision and awareness of traffic and hazards, relying on driver assistance features to be secondary; avoids using personal electronic devices in distracting ways Limiting interactions with the infotainment system to brief moments when emergencies are unlikely Maintaining consistent cognitive focus on the driving task even with passengers	Only enabling autonomous features after becoming fully aware of their functions and limitations, including full understanding of how to disable the feature and resume full control Operating the vehicle in such a way that assistance features never activate Avoiding all interaction with personal electronic devices while the vehicle is moving Avoiding all non-electronic distractions including conversations