

MOTOR VEHICLES

Table 7.35
MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS
(As of January 1, 2000)

State or other jurisdiction	Plates transfer to new owner	Minimum age for driver's license		Child restraints mandatory for passengers under ___ years (d)	Mandatory seat belt law (e)	Liability laws (f)	Vehicle inspection (g)
		Regular	Learner's				
Alabama	16	15	6	★	S	(spot) (h)
Alaska	★	16	14	7	★	S	(spot) (h) (i)
Arizona	★	16 (c)	15 + 7 mo.	5	★	C	(i)
Arkansas	16	14-18	4	★	S, NF	(h)
California	★	18 (c)	15	4	★	C	(i)
Colorado	21	15	4	★	S,NF	(i)
Connecticut	16	16	4	★	S	★
Delaware	★	16 (b)	15 + 10 mo.	4	★	S,NF	★
Florida	16	15	6	★	NF	(i)
Georgia	16	15	4	★	C	(i)
Hawaii	★	15	15	4	★	S, NF	(h)
Idaho	17	15	4	★	S,C	(i)
Illinois	18	15	4	★	S	★
Indiana	16.5	16	4	★	C	(i)
Iowa	18 (c)	14	3	★	S	(spot) (h) (i)
Kansas	16	14	4	★	NF,UM	(spot) (h)
Kentucky	★	16	16 (d)	4	★	C,NF	(i)
Louisiana	15	15	5	★	C	★
Maine	21	15	4	★	C	★
Maryland	16 + 1 mo.	15 + 9 mo.	4	★	C,NF	★
Massachusetts	16	16	12	★	C,NF	★
Michigan	18 (c)	16	4	★	C,NF	(spot) (h)
Minnesota	★	18	15	4	★	C,NF	(spot) (h) (i)
Mississippi	16	15	4	★	S,F	(h)
Missouri	16	15	4	★	C	★
Montana	16	...	4	★	C	...
Nebraska	17	15	4	★	F	...
Nevada	16	15	5	★	F,C	★
New Hampshire	18	...	4	★	S,F	(h)
New Jersey	17	16 + 5 mo.	5	★	S,NF,UJ	★
New Mexico	16	15	11	★	C	...
New York	18	16	4	★	S,C,NF	★
North Carolina	16 (c)	15	3	★	S,C	★
North Dakota	16	14	4	★	S,NF,UM,UJ,C	(spot) (h)
Ohio	18	15 1/2	4	★	C	(spot) (h) (i)
Oklahoma	★	16	15 1/2	4	★	S,C	★
Oregon	★	16	15	4	★	F,C,NF	(spot) (h) (i)
Pennsylvania	16	16	4	★	C	★
Rhode Island	16	16	4	★	S	★
South Carolina	★	16	15	6	★	C,UM	...
South Dakota	★	16	14	5	★	C,UM	...
Tennessee	16	15	4	★	S,F	★
Texas	★	18	15	2	★	S,F,C,UM	★
Utah	16	15+9 mo.	10	★	S,UM	★
Vermont	18	15	5	★	S	★
Virginia	18	15	4	★	S,UM	★
Washington	★	18	15 + 6 mo.	3	★	S,F,C	(i)
West Virginia	16	15	9	★	S,C	(h)
Wisconsin	18	15 + 6 mo.	4	★	S	(spot) (h) (i)
Wyoming	16	15	5	★	S,C	...
Dist. of Columbia	16	16	3	★	C	★
American Samoa	★	16	16	★	★	C	(h)
Guam	16	15	2	★	S	★
Puerto Rico	★	16	16	4	★	C	★
U.S. Virgin Islands	★	18	...	5	★	UJ	(h)

See footnotes at end of table.

MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS — Continued

Source: AAA, *Digest of Motor Laws* (2000) edition.

Key:

★ — Provision.

... — No provision.

(a) Some states reduce the minimum age requirement if applicants meet certain criteria (e.g., they have completed a driver education course or financial hardship). Generally, this table lists the minimum age requirement without such exceptions.

(b) New drivers or permit holders are typically required to have a guardian or parental consent to get their license or permit. They may be required to be enrolled in or have completed a driver education course. When they drive, they may be required to be accompanied by a licensed operator or an adult over 21. New drivers may also be restricted from driving between certain hours (e.g., 11 p.m. - 6 a.m.) and carrying a certain number of passengers.

(c) Graduated driver's license system.

(d) The type of child restraint (safety seat or seat belt) required typically depends on the age of the child. It can mean a federally approved child's safety seat. The majority of states allow for substituting adult safety belts by age 5. Other restrictions include height or weight requirements; typically children under 40 pounds or 40 inches tall.

(e) These states have enacted mandatory seat belt legislation. These laws vary as to whether they cover front seat occupants, back seat occupants or both. There are exceptions for the age, weight or height of the occupants in a vehicle and the type of vehicle (e.g., taxicabs).

(f) Most jurisdictions have a non-resident service of process law. Some

have a guest suit law. In this column only: S—"Security-type" financial responsibility law (following accident report, each driver/owner of the vehicles involved must show ability to pay damages which may be charged in subsequent legal actions arising from accident); F—"Future-proof type" financial responsibility law (persons who have been convicted of certain serious traffic offenses or who have failed to pay a judgement against them for damages arising from an accident must make a similar showing of financial responsibility); C—"Compulsory insurance" law (typically, motorists must show proof of financial responsibility liability insurance usually as a condition of vehicle registration); NF—"No-fault insurance" law (vehicle owner looks to own insurance company for reimbursement for accident damages, rather than having to prove in court that the other party was responsible); UJ—"Unsatisfied judgement funds" law (state-operated funds financed with fees from motorists unable to provide evidence of insurance or from assessments levied on auto insurance companies to cover pedestrians and others who do not have no-fault insurance); UM—"Uninsured motorist" law (insurance companies must offer coverage against potential damage by uninsured motorists).

(g) "Spot" indicates spot check, usually for reasonable cause, or random roadside inspection for defective or missing equipment.

(h) Safety inspection. Inspections can be limited to certain counties or municipalities. Inspections can be limited to certain vehicles (e.g., commercial trucks) and certain vehicle model years.

(i) Emission inspections. Inspections can be limited to certain counties or municipalities. Inspections can be limited to certain vehicles (e.g., commercial trucks) and certain vehicle model years.