

Community Resources for Maintaining Driving Fitness: Retraining for the Experienced Driver

- Classroom Driver Safety Courses: Why They Are Valuable

Although no one study has found that these classes prevent crashes, they do keep older drivers current on the rules of the road, stimulate the mind and offer some suggestions for staying driving fit.

- Driving Specialists: When They Count

Driver rehabilitation specialists conduct off-road and on-the-road evaluations. The specialist's assessment gives the older driver a good baseline of his or her capabilities. The specialist also can provide off-road and on-road training in safe-driving techniques, or recommend adaptive devices and provide training on their use if they are appropriate for you.

Many certified rehabilitation specialists are occupational therapists whose services may be paid for by health insurance companies, but more frequently must be paid for out of pocket. Medicare does not pay for testing and refresher courses.

Some rehabilitation centers can conduct a driving assessment based on a doctor's order. The assessment can test strength, coordination, vision (night vision and depth perception), divided attention, brake reaction, and perception of the meaning of road signs. It can include an on-the-road driving test. Costs for hospital assessments vary, but are commonly \$200 - \$600.

To find a driver rehabilitation specialist in your area, go to www.aota.org/olderdriver. In some instances, you may need to travel to a nearby community to get the services of a specialist.

Community Resources

- Private On-the-Road Driving Classes: Practice the Good Habits

In some states, driving schools hire State-certified instructors experienced with older or disabled persons to provide an impartial behind-the-wheel evaluation. A certified instructor creates a written report (sometimes even a videotape) detailing the performance.

<i>Driving Discussion</i>	
Questions and Suggestions	Your Answers
<p>1. How you will know when to change your driving habits?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving at night • Driving in traffic • Driving in bad weather • Driving when your health changes <p>What strategies can you develop so you are ready to face these driving challenges?</p>	
<p>2. What events and activities are important for you to attend?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go back to the list of activities that you developed in the last section and enter the most important ones here. • Family and loved ones need to know that these activities play an important role in your life. 	
<p>3. Problem-solve how you might get to specific places in the event your driving becomes restricted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of possible resources: Friends, bus, subway, taxi, family members, volunteers or religious organizations van. 	
<p>4. With whom do I need to discuss these strategies?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When would be a good time? 	