

Group Talk: Students choose a topic and talk for several minutes about one of the questions. Then discuss in the group.

1. How difficult was it to get a U.S. visa?
2. What are things you are NOT allowed to do with your visa? (ex: work, attend school, stay beyond a certain date)
3. Do you have a Texas driver's license? How difficult was it to get?
4. Talk about learning to drive. How old were you when you learned? How old must you be to drive in your country?
5. What traffic laws are different here than in your country? (ex: side of the road you drive on, seat belts, children in the car, driving with learner's permit, insurance requirements, legal age to drive)
6. Do most people own cars in your country? How many cars do most families own?

Frequently Asked Questions about Driving

1. What agency enforces traffic laws? Where do I go to apply for a Texas driver's license?

Many states have a government agency called the Department of Motor Vehicles that licenses drivers and enforces traffic laws. But in Texas, it is called DPS, Department of Public Safety. This website: http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/administration/driver_licensing_control/rolodex/search.asp lists all the DPS offices in Austin where you can get a driver's license.

2. I have a driver's license from California. Can I just use it while I live in Texas? How long can I drive on my International Driver's Permit (IDP)?

If you have a driver's license from another state or country, you have 90 days to get a valid Texas driver's license. If you have an International Driver's Permit (IDP) you have one year to get a Texas license.

Application for a driver license must be made in person. You can download an application form at the website www.dps.texas.gov.

3. What should I bring to the DPS office when I apply for a driver's license? Can I bring copies?

You must provide documents which verify:

- a-your identity (passport)
- b-your residence in Texas
- c-your citizenship or lawful presence (green card or visa)
- d-your social security number

You must bring originals or certified copies of all documents. (Certified copies will usually have a seal on them.) If you are not eligible for a social security number (SSN) you will be asked to swear to that.

There is a very useful brochure available online at <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/internetforms/Forms/DL-57.pdf> which explains what documents are acceptable.

4. What do I do if I fail the test? Do I have to pay the fee each time I take the test?

The fee to take the test allows you to take the test 3 times. If you fail after 3 attempts, you must apply again and pay the fee again.

5. Do I have to take a written test AND a driving test?

Yes, you must pass both a written and driving test.

6. Do I have to register my car in Texas?

You must register your car with the county tax assessor-collector. You must register in the county where you live. If you live in Austin, you live in Travis County. If you live in Round Rock, you live in Williamson County. You will be given a registration sticker which must be displayed on the lower left side of the windshield.

7. There are two stickers on my windshield. What is the second one?

The other sticker is a vehicle inspection sticker. You must have your car inspected once a year. The sticker will show the month your car was inspected, and the last digit of the year it was inspected. You can be ticketed if your inspection sticker is expired.

8. Do I have to pay for car insurance?

All drivers must have liability insurance. Liability insurance pays the other driver for any damage YOU cause. Your insurance company will give you a certificate that shows you have liability insurance. If you are stopped by a policeman, you will have to show your liability insurance certificate.

9. What is collision insurance?

That is insurance that covers damage to your car if you are in a wreck. You should have collision insurance, but it is not required by law.