Definitions

Articulated bus is a bus consisting of more than one rigid section with passenger access between the sections and the sections connected to one another so as to allow rotary movement between the sections.

Articulated motor vehicle is a motor vehicle consisting of a prime mover and a trailer that is pivoted to and superimposed on the prime mover (a semi-trailer).

B-double is an articulated motor vehicle that has a further semi-trailer superimposed on the semi-trailer that forms part of the articulated motor vehicle.

Bus is a motor vehicle designed for the principal purpose of carrying passengers and designed to carry more than 12 seated persons.

Converter dolly is a trailer with one axle group or single axle and a fifth wheel coupling designed to convert a semi-trailer into a dog trailer.

Dog trailer means a trailer (including a trailer consisting of a semi-trailer and converter dolly) with:
(a) one axle group or single axle at the front that is steered by connection to the towing vehicle by a drawbar; and
(b) one axle group or single axle at the rear.

Agricultural implement is a vehicle without its own automotive power, built to perform agricultural tasks.

Fifth wheel coupling is a device, other than the upper rotating element and the kingpin (which are parts of a semi-trailer), used with a prime mover, semi-trailer or a converter dolly to permit quick coupling and uncoupling and to provide articulation.

Gross combination mass (GCM) means a limit on the gross combination mass of a motor vehicle determined by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles under the Road Traffic Act.

Gross vehicle mass or GVM of a vehicle is:
(a) the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle:
   (i) as specified by the vehicle’s manufacturer; or
   (ii) as specified by the registrar if
      (a) the manufacturer has not specified a maximum loaded mass; or
      (b) the manufacturer cannot be identified; or
      (c) the vehicle has been modified to the extent that the manufacturer’s specification is no longer appropriate; or
      (b) if neither the vehicle’s manufacturer nor the registrar has specified the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle - the unladen mass of the vehicle.

Motor bike is a motor vehicle (not being a trailer) with two wheels, and includes a two wheeled motor vehicle with a sidecar attached to it that is supported by a third wheel.

Motor trike means a motor vehicle with three wheels, but does not include:
(a) a two wheeled motor vehicle with a sidecar attached to it and supported by a third wheel; or
(b) a motor vehicle with three wheels that has a body type commonly known as, or similar to, a sedan, station wagon, coupe, convertible, roadster, utility, tray top or van.

Rigid means not articulated, other than in respect of an articulated bus.

Road train is a combination of vehicles, other than a B-double, consisting of a motor vehicle towing at least two trailers (counting as one trailer a converter dolly supporting a semi-trailer).

Special purpose vehicle is a motor vehicle that does not carry passengers or goods and whose primary purpose is not the carriage of passengers or goods.

NB: The holder of any class of driver’s licence is authorised to ride a “moped”. A “moped” has an engine capacity not exceeding 50 millilitres and is not capable of being propelled by its engine to a speed exceeding 50 km/h. (A “moped” cannot be ridden by the holder of a learner’s permit, unless the learner’s permit is for class R-DATE or R.)

Minimum driving experience

Minimum driving experience is based on the total time that a driver has held a driver’s licence of the appropriate class, rather than age. Driving experience includes any period that the person was subject to provisional or probationary licence conditions. However, it does not include experience gained on a learner’s permit, any period whilst unlicensed, cancelled, disqualified from holding a driver’s licence or suspended from driving.

The minimum driving experience for each class of licence is stated in the table under the heading Minimum age/driving experience (see overleaf).

Learner permits

To obtain the first licence, an applicant must qualify for a learner’s permit. The minimum age for the issue of a learner’s permit is 16 years. Applicants for a class C, class R-DATE and any person who has received an exemption from the minimum driving experience, must obtain a learner’s permit.

The learner’s permit is obtained by providing satisfactory evidence of identity and the payment of the prescribed fee.

If the applicant for a learner’s permit does not already hold a licence, the learner’s permit must be held for at least twelve months if the applicant is under 25 years of age and a minimum of six months if the applicant is aged 25 years or over; 75 hours of supervised driving must be completed and recorded in the approved log book (The Driving Companion) before applying for the provisional P1 Licence.

Gross combination mass (GCM) means a limit on the gross combination mass of a motor vehicle determined by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles under the Road Traffic Act.

Gross vehicle mass or GVM of a vehicle is:
(a) the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle:
   (i) as specified by the vehicle’s manufacturer; or
   (ii) as specified by the registrar if
      (a) the manufacturer has not specified a maximum loaded mass; or
      (b) the manufacturer cannot be identified; or
      (c) the vehicle has been modified to the extent that the manufacturer’s specification is no longer appropriate; or
      (b) if neither the vehicle’s manufacturer nor the registrar has specified the maximum loaded mass of the vehicle - the unladen mass of the vehicle.

Minimum driving experience is based on the total time that the applicant for a learner’s permit does not already hold a licence, the learner’s permit must be held for at least twelve months if the applicant is under 25 years of age and a minimum of six months if the applicant is aged 25 years or over; 75 hours of supervised driving must be completed and recorded in the approved log book (The Driving Companion) before applying for the provisional P1 Licence.

Obtaining a driver’s licence

Any person who has a medical condition that may impair their ability to drive a motor vehicle or a motor vehicle of a particular class, will be required to produce a medical certificate in support of their application for a learner’s permit, P1 or P2 provisional, probationary or full driver’s licence.

Any licence holder, who has a medical condition that may impair their ability to drive a vehicle, should call 13 10 84 before undertaking training to obtain a higher class of licence.

Medical fitness to drive

Minimum driving experience

Minimum driving experience is based on the total time that a driver has held a driver’s licence of the appropriate class, rather than age. Driving experience includes any period that the person was subject to provisional or probationary licence conditions. However, it does not include experience gained on a learner’s permit, any period whilst unlicensed, cancelled, disqualified from holding a driver’s licence or suspended from driving.

The minimum driving experience for each class of licence is stated in the table under the heading Minimum age/driving experience (see overleaf).

Learning to drive a heavy vehicle

Applicants, who hold a current licence and have complied with the minimum driving experience for the class of licence being sought, may drive a motor vehicle of that class without a learner’s permit under the conditions stated below.

- Must not drive while there is any alcohol present in their blood or the presence of THC (cannabis) or methylamphetamine (speed) in their blood or oral fluid
- Must carry their current licence while driving
- Must display ‘L’ plates to the front and rear of the vehicle they are driving
- Must be accompanied (seated alongside the driver) by a qualified supervising driver who has held an unconditional driver’s licence in the class of licence being sought for at least 2 years; must hold the class of licence to that of the vehicle being driven by the learner driver and the qualified supervising driver must not have a blood alcohol level of 0.05 or higher.

Mopeds

The holder of any class of driver’s licence is authorised to ride a “moped”. A “moped” has an engine capacity not exceeding 50 millilitres and is not capable of being propelled by its engine to a speed exceeding 50 km/h. (A “moped” cannot be ridden by the holder of a learner’s permit, unless the learner’s permit is for class R-DATE or R.)

For further information

For further information telephone 13 10 84, visit www.sa.gov.au or visit a Service SA customer service centre.

Driver’s licence classifications

This pamphlet has been prepared to provide information on the classes of driver licences in South Australia.

Details of the classes are shown in the pamphlet together with a general description of the types of vehicles authorised to be driven by each licence class. It should be noted this is a guide only. It should not be taken as a precise legal interpretation of the legislation. If you require a more detailed explanation of the licence classes, you are advised to refer to the regulations under the Motor Vehicles Act.

- Must not exceed any speed limit by more than 10 km/h. (Exceeding any speed limit is an offence under the Road Traffic Act).
- Must not exceed 100 km/h.

For all classes of licences, except HC and MC, applicants may choose to undertake either a vehicle on road test (VORT) or a competency based training (CBT) course.

- For classes HC and MC, applicants must successfully complete the appropriate South Australian CBT course.

These courses are delivered through heavy vehicle training organisations (see Driving Schools in the Yellow Pages).

On passing the VORT or CBT course, the authorised or accredited instructor will issue a certificate of competency, which the applicant must present with their current licence.

The licence will be endorsed with the new class on payment of an administration fee. Learner’s conditions still apply until the licence is endorsed with the upgraded class.

NOTE: While driving vehicles over 4.5 tonne GVM, drivers must carry their licence with them at all times.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Authorises the holder to drive:</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Minimum age/ driving experience</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LR</td>
<td>A motor vehicle authorised to be driven by a licence of the preceding class. (a) a bus designed to carry more than 12 seated persons; or, (b) a motor bike or motor trike.</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must be at least 17 years old. • if you are under the age of 25 you must have held your learner’s permit for at least 12 months • if you are aged 25 or over you must have held your learner’s permit for at least 6 months.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MR</td>
<td>A motor vehicle authorised to be driven by a licence of the preceding class. (a) a bus designed to carry more than 12 seated persons; or, (b) a motor bike or motor trike.</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must have held a class C for at least one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>A motor vehicle authorised to be driven by a licence of the preceding class. (a) a bus designed to carry more than 12 seated persons; or, (b) a motor bike or motor trike.</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must have held: (a) a class C for at least two years or (b) a class LR or MR for at least one year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HC</td>
<td>Must have held a class C for at least one year.</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must have held a class MR or HR for at least one year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Must have held a class C for at least one year.</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must have held a class C for at least one year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>R-DATE*</td>
<td>A motor bike or motor trike that-- (a) has an engine capacity not exceeding 660 mL and a power to weight ratio not exceeding 150 kW per tonne; and, (b) is of a kind approved from time to time by the Registrar by notice in the Gazette. (*means the expiry date of the learner’s permit or the date falling one year after class R-DATE was endorsed on the licence. It indicates the date on which the holder may apply for a class R licence.)</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must have held a class R-DATE* for at least one year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Any motor bike or motor trike.</td>
<td>Examples of vehicles which may be driven: sedans, station wagons, panel vans, utilities, light delivery vans, small trucks, quad bikes, special purpose vehicles (e.g. farm machines, small tractors, forklifts, or other like machinery).</td>
<td>Must have held a class R-DATE* for at least one year.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*R-DATE means the expiry date of the learner’s permit or the date falling one year after class R-DATE was endorsed on the licence. It indicates the date on which the holder may apply for a class R licence. The holder of a class R-DATE licence remains restricted to a motorcycle with an engine capacity of up to 660ml with a power-to-weight ratio of 150kW/t until granted a class R licence despite the fact that the date included in the classification has passed.

NOTE: The class of licence required to drive a commercial vehicle is determined by the number of axles and/or the vehicle’s gross vehicle mass, not the load the vehicle is carrying.