

*The Child Brain Injury Trust is a national charity supporting anyone affected by childhood acquired brain injury. The following information has been developed to help the reader understand more about brain injury and some of the associated issues. Every effort has been taken to ensure the information is accurate and up to date. If you require advice, information or wish to make a referral please visit: <https://childbraininjurytrust.org.uk/how-we-help/advice-information-referrals/>*

In addition to the information contained in our Factsheets, the Child Brain Injury Trust also have a range of freely available e-Learning sessions covering a broad range of topics to support professionals and families alike. Once you have registered to view the eLearning you will be able to access all sessions without charge, and no further registration is required. Please follow the link below:

[E-Learning Library - Child Brain Injury Trust](#)

## Learning to drive a car

Learning to drive tends to be seen as a rite of passage – an exciting and appealing option which becomes possible at the age of 17. You will need to have your provisional licence before you can start to learn. You can apply up to three months before your 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

You can drive a car when you are 16 if you get, or have applied for, the enhanced rate of the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

Learning to drive involves quite a number of skills, including the ability to:

- judge distances
- react quickly to situations
- have good vision
- concentrate without distraction
- make quick decisions
- recognise left from right
- read signs and understand pictures
- recognise danger
- manage frustrating and often unpredictable situations and
- do more than one thing at once, such as driving the car and negotiating traffic.

Driving won't always be an option for a person with an acquired brain injury and accepting this can be very difficult, particularly if your friends are learning to drive.

You will need to tell the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) about your condition by completing a confidential medical questionnaire when applying for your provisional licence.

**Driving Mobility**, a network of 16 main sites (and many satellite sites) of independent organisations covering England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, that offer professional advice and assessment to people who have a medical condition which may affect their ability to drive, access or exit a motor vehicle. You can attend whichever centre is most convenient for you. Although independent, the Centres are recognised by other mobility organisations including Motability and the DVLA.

All new drivers should have professional driving lessons and disabled learner drivers may want to look for instructors who have specialist knowledge of their needs. Look for instructors who have taken a special course and are listed on the Disability Driving Instructors website [www.disabilitydrivinginstructors.com](http://www.disabilitydrivinginstructors.com)

### **Top Tips**

- If you receive, or have applied for, the enhanced rate of the mobility component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), you can learn to drive at age 16!
  - The ultimate decision as to whether a person can drive or not rests with the DVLA so it is best to leave the final decision to them. So, parents or carers don't have to be the bearers of bad news.
  - Have a look at the Forum of Mobility Centres website at <https://www.drivingmobility.org.uk/> or call them on 01872 672520 to find your local centre.
  - When you book your driving **theory test** you should say if you have any special needs. This is so the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) can make reasonable adjustments for your test.
  - If you are disabled, you will take the same **practical test** as every other candidate, regardless of your impairment or condition. However, when you book your test, let the DVSA know if you:
    - are deaf or have severe hearing difficulties
    - are in any way restricted in your movements
    - have any physical disability
  - Disabled drivers may be allowed extra time for their test. This is to allow you to explain to your examiner the nature and function of any adaptations you use and also to allow you extra time to get in and out of the car.
  - Driving examiners are specially trained to understand any special needs that may arise from disabilities.
  - Cars with automatic transmission; power steering; central locking; headlights that automatically switch on when it gets dark; wipers that automatically switch on when it rains and parking sensors can all help, but they are also costly if you haven't already got a car with these features built in.
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## MAKE A DONATION TODAY

The Child Brain Injury Trust relies on grants and donations to enable us to continue our work supporting families affected by childhood acquired brain injury.

Please help us to continue our work by making a donation today – [CLICK HERE](#) to make a one off donation or set up a monthly gift.

*Thank you – your donation does make a difference.*



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