

DRIVER PROFICIENCY TESTING

Welcome to the Carriage Association of America's Driver Proficiency Program

The National Drive will again offer the CAA Driver Proficiency evaluation. We hope that your participation in this program will help to increase your awareness and knowledge of driving and how to do so safely and correctly.

In addition to evaluating drivers' proficiency at the various levels, this program also allows for those interested in becoming driving instructors to at the levels. This will ensure that traditional driving and horsemanship skills will continue.

Level I:

The basic level (but not for complete beginners) is for those ready to drive away from home. This is a competence evaluation and will confirm that you are doing things safely. This level covers harness knowledge, harnessing and putting to, practical driving, horse care, and general knowledge. Any safe style of driving is accepted.

Road Driving Assessment:

Recommended before driving horses/ponies on public roads and in traffic.

Level II:

This level is suited to the more experienced driver who participates in some form of competitive driving, and it may include pair driving. The prerequisites for this level are successful completion of Level I and the Road Driving Assessment, followed by additional driving instruction/experience. Typical drivers at this level will be able to drive an unfamiliar horse, work competently in a driving environment with some responsibility, drive competently in company of other horses and perhaps in competition, and look after a group of horses/ponies competently and maintain them over a period of time both in work and at rest. Drivers must be able to drive with the traditional English or Achenbach style of driving.

Level III:

The highest recognition offered this level requires demonstration of horsemanship and driving ability, continuing with unit-based competence. In order to achieve a full certificate for Level III, a candidate must complete all the compulsory Units, 1,2,3, plus any one of the optional Units 4,5, or 6. Candidates will receive credit for all units they complete successfully.

Level III's Compulsory Units:

1. Training of the Driven Horse
2. Practical Driving – Single Horse
3. Vehicles and Harness

Level III's Optional Units:

Any one Unit is required for the full certificate:

4. Pair Driving - Advanced Level
 5. Driving with Four Reins – Tandem
 6. Driving with Four Reins – Team
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Summary of Level I Standard

It is important that anyone taking this evaluation has a copy of the Level I syllabus which is available from the CAA office. That contains full guidance and shows the requirements of the evaluation. You will only be asked to do the things shown in the syllabus and at a basic level. These notes are a summary of what you will be expected to do.

Level I – Basic level (but not totally a beginner) – for those ready to drive out on the road. The evaluation asks “Have you reached this level?” No more is required. This is a competence evaluation and is to confirm you know how to do things safely – safety for both you and the horse and those about you. You will receive a certificate upon completing the following three units:

Unit 1: Driving Preparation

A. Harness Knowledge

What you will be asked to do

You will be provided with a set of leather driving harness with both breast and full collar. It could be stripped down before you start or you may be asked to do this.

You will be asked to clean a few parts of the harness with cleaning materials provided. You will be asked to name to parts of the harness and you will assemble the whole set including the collar.

You will be asked to talk about

The reasons why you need to clean harness and identify the areas you need to check for wear. You will need to know about harness cleaning and the equipment you need (for cleaning various types of harness). Demonstrate cleaning/drying of harness after use and storage.

B. Harnessing and putting to

What you will be asked to do

You will be provided with a 2 wheeled vehicle, a set of harness and a pony. (You can use your own if suitable.) You will need a ‘groom’ or the Organizer will provide one for you.

You will show the Evaluator the areas on the vehicle with the greatest potential to weakness. You need to know something about the equipment required to go on the vehicle, such as: spares, whip, gloves, and reflectors.

You will put the harness on the pony and talk about fitting the harness. You will then put to. You will get into the vehicle and show a good driving position with the reins in coachman style and the whip in hand. You will then get out of the vehicle. The groom will be with you throughout to assist.

This practical side of this section is now complete. The Organizer will arrange to have the pony taken out and the harness removed and put away. You may like to help with this. If using your own turnout you will do this yourself.

You will be asked to talk about

Safe fitting of harness and ways of making it fit. Balance of the vehicle and how to make adjustments to make it balance. Discuss getting into and out of the vehicle. What is a good driving position – posture, hands, feet, seat? Discuss the importance of having a groom and his/her role.

Unit 2: Practical Driving

If you are driving your own 2 wheeler this section may continue as part of section 2 (above), otherwise it will take place later in the day. The turnout will be harnessed and ready to drive. It could be your own turnout or borrowed, and either a two or four-wheeled. The Evaluator will sit in the vehicle beside the driver. You will not be driving on the public roads. The aim is to ensure that you are in control and know what to do.

Unit 3: Horse Care and General Knowledge

All equipment will be provided.

What you will be asked to do

Put a halter on a horse and secure with a quick-release knot
Describe grooming kit essentials
Perform daily grooming care
Put a bridle on and lead horse, turn and return.
Remove bridle

You will be asked to talk about or could be asked to demonstrate

Feeding – different types of hay, fill hay net, and tie up
Recognize feed samples
Preparation of sugar beet, barley, oaks, commercial feeds, etc.
Qualities/types of feed to size/weight and work
Methods of providing water and its importance
Horse kept in pasture
Fencing for horses
Poisonous plants
Mucking out and stable tools, bedding
Points of the horse
The well horse/sick horse
Common ailments and problems including lameness and treatment
Worming and vaccinations
First aid equipment
How to recognize a worn shoe.
Signs of well shod foot.
Blacksmiths tools
Conditioning
Care of horse at work
Protective clothing
What to do in case of accident or fire
Emergency procedures and equipment

What you will be asked to do

In a field or arena, drive using any safe style. You will do some basic driving figures and patterns

on both reins, such as circles using walk and trot. Halt and know how to salute. Drive through a limited number of cones.

Using coachman style you will drive through some simulated road junctions turning right and left. There could be a simulated intersection and railway crossing. Show how to position the turnout on the road and how to look around for traffic, and use the appropriate road signals.

Return to hitching area, park safely. You and the Evaluator dismount from vehicle. Take horse out of vehicle and remove harness. The groom will head the horse for you and may assist under your direction.

You will be asked to talk about

The use of voice and whip as aids. Some knowledge of basic paces used at beginner level. Some basic knowledge of rules of the road in relation to driving, such as necessity for reflectors, road signals, PL&PD insurance, etc. The dos and don'ts of driving. Some knowledge of the way a horse behaves when it is working alone or in company.

Safe procedures will be discussed; cooling down procedures and care of horse after use; and the care and storage of vehicle and whips.

Candidates are encouraged to talk about what they are doing (and why) when doing the practical activities. With some practice everything can be covered with minimal questioning by the Evaluator. Remember Evaluators are not examining your depth of knowledge. They will only ask what's on the syllabus. If you tell them everything they want to know, they won't ask too many questions! The Evaluator is there to support you and to ensure you know what you are doing. They want you to pass.

Program Options for The National Drive Participants:

- Level I Syllabus – complete manual including evaluation specifics – is available at a cost of \$15.00 plus postage from CAA Office (details below).
- Sign up for a private lesson with Andy Marcoux or Marsoe Larose, contact CAA office (details below). Cost will be \$65.00 per private 45-minute lesson. *Lessons are recommended as a review of your knowledge and further instruction, before taking your evaluation.*
- Orientation (*a classroom overview of knowledge and what to expect during the Evaluation – ideally for those who do not take a private lesson prior to evaluation, but all are welcome*), contact CAA office (details below). Cost is \$15.00 and includes a copy of the Level I Syllabus, or \$5.00 for those already registered for an Evaluation.
- **To register for the Level I Evaluation at The National Drive, contact CAA office (details below). Fees are as follows:**

CAA Members - \$50.00

Non-CAA Members - \$65.00

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