

How to Apply for a NYS License

If after reading through the *Drivers from Other Nations* section on the following page, you decide that you need to apply for a NYS license, these are some basic instructions. Most of the following information was obtained from the NYS Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) website. You are strongly encouraged to visit this sight for more information on any subject covered here. All DMV information is subject to change.

<http://dmv.ny.gov/>

- 1) Study the NYS [Driver's Manual](#) to prepare for your test. <http://dmv.ny.gov/driver-license/nys-dmv-drivers-manual-online-drivers-manual-and-study-guide>.
- 2) If you do not have a Social Security card, then you must get a letter from the Social Security Administration (SSA) to prove that you are not eligible for a SS Card. You obtain this proof by visiting the SSA at Room 430, O'Brien Federal Building, 11A Clinton Avenue, Albany. If you do have a Social Security Card, then you do not need to go to Social Security, but you will need to bring your SS card to DMV.
- 3) Bringing appropriate identification to DMV is vital. You will need to bring a total of **6 points** of identification with you to DMV. Students use a combination of these documents that add up to 6 points to prove their identity. **You DO NOT need a status letter from ISSS. It has no value at DMV.**
 - 3 Points** – Your Non-Immigrant Documents including: passport (with visa stamp), I-94 print out (print it from www.cbp.gov/i94), your I-20/DS-2019 (if you received an extension, you must show your original entry document which contains the port of entry stamp, along with your new extension document)
 - 2 Points** – US College ID Card with Photo **and** Official Transcript. You can order a transcript a www.albany.edu/registrar> transcripts>ordering transcript. There is a fee for an official transcript.
 - 2 Points** – A social security card, if you have one. If do not have a SS card, then you will need the letter from SSA listed above and you will need to show some the following items for additional points.
 - 1 Point** – (If issued by the same institution, only one of the following items can be submitted):
 - US Bank statement
 - US Cancelled Check (with your pre-printed name on it)
 - US Cash Card (ATM) (must have your signature and name)
 - Valid Major US Credit Card
 - 1 Point** – US Health Insurance Card. If you have UAlbany international student insurance you can directions on how to print it out at [https://www.albany.edu/iss/assets/Directions for Student to Create UHC Account Online to Access their ID Card Locate Providers and Access Claims.pdf](https://www.albany.edu/iss/assets/Directions%20for%20Student%20to%20Create%20UHC%20Account%20Online%20to%20Access%20their%20ID%20Card%20Locate%20Providers%20and%20Access%20Claims.pdf)
 - Other** - There are a variety of other Acceptable Proofs of Identity. These are the most common used by international students. Visit the <http://dmv.ny.gov/forms/id44.pdf> for more options.
- 4) Submit the necessary application, forms and fee to the DMV office. You will also need to take an eye test while there. You will need to pass a written test based on the Driver's Manual to receive your Learner's Permit. **The Albany Office of DMV is located at 855 Central Avenue Albany NY 1106.**
- 5) Complete a 5-hour mandatory pre-licensing course. You will receive a certificate of completion, which is needed to schedule your road test. You can find approved courses in the Albany phone book under "Driver Instruction".
- 6) Practice for your road test. You may drive with your Learner's Permit as long as you have a licensed driver 21 years or older to supervise you. DMV recommends that new drivers have at least 50 hours of driving (15 at night) before taking their road test.
- 7) Schedule your road test by phone or online, using the certificate of completion for your 5-hour pre-licensing course. You must bring a vehicle to complete the road test and have proper documentation to show that it is registered and passed inspection.
- 8) Once you successfully pass the road test, you will receive a temporary license to keep with your permit. The official Driver's License will be mailed within a few weeks.

Drivers from Other Nations

A valid driver license from another country is also valid in New York State. You do not need to apply for a NYS driver license unless you become a resident of NYS.

According to NYS law, a resident of another country **can** get a NYS driver license. The DMV **does not** recommend this because:

- NYS recognizes your foreign driver license if you remain a resident of the nation that issued the license. You do not need to have a NYS driver license to drive in NYS unless you become a resident of NYS.
- If you do decide to get a NY State license and you have a driver license from any nation except Canada, you must pass a written test, complete a 5-hour pre-licensing course and pass a road test to qualify for a NYS driver license. See "New Drivers - How to Apply" on the DMV website.
- When you receive your NYS driver license, you must surrender your foreign driver license to the DMV road test examiner. The local DMV office keeps your foreign driver license, and then destroys the license after 60 days. If you plan to return to your home country and use your foreign driver license, ask the road test examiner how to make sure that your foreign driver license is not destroyed. If you need to get your foreign driver license, go to the local DMV office where you applied for your NYS driver license.

Home Country License: If you drive using your valid home country license, you must carry your home country license with you. If your license is not in English, you must also carry a certified English translation of your license while you drive.

Obtaining an International Driver's License: We suggest that you obtain a current International Driver's License (also called the International Driving Permit) in your home country, if possible, because it might avoid confusion if the police stop you while driving. You can only obtain an International Driver's License, which is typically valid for one year, in your home country. New York police suggest that you obtain this license because it informs authorities, in several languages, that you have a valid foreign driver license. An International Driving Permit by itself is not valid for driving in New York State. New York honors the underlying license, not the permit alone. U.S. residents usually obtain International Driving Permits from local auto clubs affiliated with the AAA. The DMV does not issue International Driving Permits.

Please Note: Please check what insurance benefits apply to you. As someone driving with a license from another country, the benefits as well as terms and conditions, might be different from someone who has a NY State Driver's license.

Important Information for Drivers

These are just a few of the laws pertaining to driving in the US. These and many more are discussed in the Driver's Manual and on the DMV website. It is your responsibility to be familiar with all laws.

NY State Seat Belt Law: New York State law requires all front seat passengers to wear seat belts. Children under the age of 16 must wear seat belts when they are in the front seat or the back seat. Children under the age of four must ride in safety seats. See the information above about safety restraint systems required for children until their 8th birthday.

Cell Phone/Text Use: Under New York State law you cannot use a hand-held mobile telephone or send a text or an email while you drive. If you use a hand-held mobile telephone while you drive (except to call 911 or to contact medical, fire or police personnel about an emergency) or use a device to text or send email, you can receive a traffic ticket and be subject to a fine, points on your record and a surcharge.

In Case of an Accident: If you are in an accident, you are required to stop and exchange information (driver's license, insurance and registration) with all other drivers involved. If the accident causes vehicle damage only, then you can just exchange information. If a parked car, other property or an animal is injured, you must locate the owner and contact the police. If a person is injured or killed, you must call the police to the scene. It is a crime to leave the scene of an accident.

If Stopped by Police: If you are pulled over by the police, stay in your car with your hands on the steering wheel. Make eye contact with the Officer and answer the questions directly. Be prepared to show your license, and the vehicles registration and insurance.

Traffic or Parking Tickets: The back of the ticket generally contains information on how to respond to the ticket. You must respond to all tickets, no matter where they are issued, in order to prevent large fines and having your license revoked.

Non-driver ID Card

If you do not want a license, but would like official identification, then you can apply for a Non-driver ID card at the DMV. You will need to bring the 6 points of ID and Social Security Administration information listed on the other side of this form. You will need to complete form MV-44 and pay a fee. You will not need to take any tests.