

Do Want To Become A Truck Driver?

A truck-driving career is one unlike any other. The working conditions can be rigorous and because of the very nature of the job, one of the primary requirements of the profession is a fierce sense of independence and absolute self-reliance. As a truck driver, there will be many times during your career, when you are miles away from home and your base station that you will come across instances when you will have to deal with things yourself, with nobody else to help or support you. If you can handle that, great! Welcome to the world of truck driving.

Age Factor

Age is the primary factor in truck driving. You can start at 18 if you are planning on trucking only within your own state but if you intend to drive cross-country across state lines you must be over 21 years of age. Remember however that severe age restrictions amongst insurance companies mean that most carriers prefer hiring individuals who are over 23 years of age.

CDL Training is Only the Beginning

If you've set your heart on becoming a truck driver, the first thing you need to do is obtain a CDL or Commercial Driving License, which qualifies you to drive 18-wheeler vehicles.

Obtaining a CDL entails first sitting for written exams held by the concerned authority of that particular state. This written exam covers a whole range of tests including an Air Brakes test, the Combination Vehicle test and a General Knowledge test.

Taking the optional endorsement tests for Tankers, Double and Triple Trailers ("Doubles/Triples") and Hazardous Materials certifies you for operating those particular vehicles and carrying those particular materials. The endorsement is stamped onto your permit.

Even after a permit is issued, a student driver is allowed to drive a tractor-trailer only when accompanied by a CDL-licensed driver in the passenger's seat. This permit is usually valid for six months and only allows you to learn how to drive a truck, for which you will need to attend a truck driving school.

Truck Driving School

The primary objective of a truck driving school is to ensure that you can successfully maneuver an 18-wheeler and clear the driving skills exam.

There are several different types of truck driving schools. Given that the classroom instruction is the basis upon which your career will be built, it is important to locate a school that offers solid basic CDL preparatory classes. Certified truck driving schools are most widely recognized and accepted. In the truck driving school industry, certification implies that the school is 'certified' to meet the training standard of the trucking industry.

Truck Driving Skills Exam

When you have completed the necessary tenure in the driving school you will have to undergo a driving skills exam where you will be required to demonstrate your knowledge on how to conduct an inspection of the vehicle prior to operating it and how to carry out an air brake test. Then you will need to demonstrate your driving skills, which includes reversing and basic parking. This driving skills test is conducted first on a secluded, private driving range and then on the public roads.

About the Author

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