

Whilst learning to drive you will be climbing into the driving seat that someone else has been sitting in. As we all vary in size and height, it will be necessary to adjust the seat and mirrors in order to drive safely and comfortably.

There is a memorable sequence that you can remember in order to perform the cockpit drill.

**DSSSM** - Doors, seat, steering, seat belt and mirrors.

### Doors

Ensure all doors are shut. If in any doubt, get out and look.

### Seat

Your seat needs to be positioned so that the foot controls can be reached easily. Start by pushing the clutch (the pedal on the left) as far down as it can go. If you can't push it far enough, then the seat needs to go forward. For the correct setup, you need a straight leg with a slight bend at the knee. This way you can push the clutch all the way down and remain comfortable.

### Steering

You will need to be able to move your hands around the steering wheel freely. The wheel is angled, the top being the furthest away from you. Place your hands at the top of the wheel. There should be a slight bend in your elbows. If you are too close or need to stretch, the back of the seat can be moved at different angles to enable the correct position.

The head restraint should now be checked. If positioned correctly, it can minimize the risk of whiplash in an accident. The top of the head restraint should be approximately in line with the top of your ears.

### Seat belt

It is a legal requirement to wear a seat belt. You are also legally responsible for passengers under the age of 14 to wear their seat belts.

### Mirrors

You should have three mirrors on your car. The interior mirror, your left wing mirror and your right wing mirror. Your interior mirror needs to be adjusted so that you can see as little of the car interior as possible and as much of the back windscreen, enabling you to see as much of the road behind you as possible.

When adjusting the wing mirrors, you should see as much of the road as possible and only a slight amount of the side of the car. This will give you the best view of the road behind.



### Blind Spot

Your mirrors only cover a certain amount of what you can see behind you. In the diagram to the left, the lightest orange indicates the best view covered by the mirrors. The driver in the blue car can see the green car in his mirrors but cannot see the red car. This blind spot is on each side of the car.

It is important before driving off from a stationary position to check the blind spots by turning your head and checking. Also for instance before changing lanes in a busy town a blind spot check may be necessary. Motor bikes and cyclists can be particularly difficult to see in your mirrors.