









Signs you must recognize

Shape and color tell you what to do before you read the text.

Sign color decoder

 Red Stop, yield, or do not enter	 Yellow Warning of hazard ahead	 Orange Work zone, construction, or detour	 Green Permitted movement or directions
 Blue Driver services, hospitals, rest areas	 Brown Recreation, parks, scenic areas	 White Regulatory — must obey the posted rule	 Yellow-green Pedestrian, school, or bike crossing

Alabama signs you will see on the test

 Stop Full stop at line. Check all directions before going.	 Yield Give right-of-way to traffic on the road you wish to enter or cross.	 Do not pass White regulatory: do not pass other vehicles, for any reason.	 No-pass pennant Yellow pennant on LEFT side marks START of no-passing zone.	 Railroad crossbuck Look, listen, and prepare to stop at the crossing if necessary.	 Railroad crossing Round sign with X+RR: active railroad crossing ahead. Stop if lights flash.
 Railroad advance warning Slow down, look both ways, listen for trains, and be prepared to stop.	 Construction zone Orange background: roadwork ahead. Workers present; slow down.	 Flagger ahead A construction flagger is directing traffic ahead. Obey their signals.	 School zone Pentagon shape: approaching a school. Watch for children.	 Steep hill Steep grade ahead. Use lower gear; do not ride the brakes downhill.	 Winding road Road curves right then left ahead. Slow before entering the curves.
 Low clearance Distance from road surface to bridge or overpass above. Know your vehicle height.	 Slow vehicle Orange triangle with red border on rear: vehicle travels at 25 mph or slower.	 Cyclist LEFT signal Bicyclist arm straight out = left turn. Expect the cyclist to move left.			

Sign shape shortcuts

Octagon — Always means STOP. The only 8-sided sign.

Downward triangle — Always means YIELD. Red and white edges.

Diamond — Warning of a road condition or hazard ahead.

Vertical rectangle — Regulatory — speed limits, turn restrictions, lane use.

Horizontal rectangle — Guidance — route markers, exit info, distance signs.

Pennant — Sideways triangle on LEFT side = START of no-passing zone.

Round — Yellow circle with X+R-R = railroad crossing ahead.

Pentagon — School zone or school crossing — children present.

Rules of the road

Right of way

4-way stop — tie — First to arrive goes first. Ties yield to driver on the right.

Uncontrolled intersection — Yield to vehicle on your right.

Left turn — Yield to ALL oncoming traffic before turning.

Pedestrian — Yield at all times, even if pedestrian is not obeying traffic laws.

Blind pedestrian (white cane) — Must yield at all times.

Emergency vehicle — Pull to right edge and stop. Never block intersections.

Stopped school bus — Stop both directions unless a physical median divides the lanes.

Merging onto interstate — Check for a gap in traffic, match speed, then merge carefully.

Inoperable signal — Treat as a 4-way stop: full stop, yield before entering.

Yield sign — Yield to cross traffic close enough to cause conflict.

Flashing red light — Stop completely, yield, then proceed when safe.

Police officer directing traffic — Follow officer's signals even if they conflict with lights.

Alabama speed limits

Urban district	30 mph
Country paved road	45 mph
Interstate highway	70 mph
Maximum posted speed	Under ideal conditions only

Hydroplaning risk begins at	35 mph
Turn signal distance	At least 100 ft before turn
Motorcycle following distance	3 to 4 seconds
Bad weather / slippery roads	Increase following distance

Lane markings and changes

Solid yellow — No passing on your side of the line.

Broken yellow — Passing permitted from either direction when safe.

Double solid yellow — No passing in either direction.

Solid yellow + broken yellow — Only the side next to the broken line may pass.

Solid white — Lane change discouraged; marks shoulder or edge.

Broken white — Lane change permitted when safe.

Passing back into lane — Return to lane only when you can see both headlights of the passed vehicle in your rearview mirror.

Traffic moving 50–55 mph — Stay within that speed range to minimize accident risk.

Turning and signaling

Signal distance — Signal at least 100 ft before any turn or lane change.

Signal continuously — Keep signaling through the turn so others know your intentions.

Hand signal — left — Arm straight out the driver window.

Hand signal — right — Arm bent up at the elbow.

Hand signal — slow / stop — Arm bent down at the elbow.

Yellow arrow (solid) — Prepare to stop and yield right-of-way to oncoming traffic.

Red arrow — Remain stopped while red arrow is active.

Starting from curb — Wait for a gap large enough to reach traffic speed before pulling out.

Following distance and sharing the road

Motorcycle following — Allow 3–4 seconds — motorcycles can stop much faster than cars.

Slippery roads — Increase following distance beyond normal; hydroplaning starts at 35 mph.

Motorcyclist lane — Never drive alongside a motorcycle in the same lane.

Truck blind spots — If you can't see the driver's mirror, they can't see you.

Passing parked cars — Watch for a person or vehicle unexpectedly entering your lane.

Emergency vehicle (siren + lights) — Drive to right edge of road and stop; never block an intersection.

Hit a parked vehicle — Leave a note with your name and address on the parked vehicle.

Railroad — after one train — Look for a second train before proceeding. Never drive around a lowered gate.

School bus rules

Red lights flashing + stop arm out — Stop regardless of your direction of travel.

Exception — divided road — If a physical median or barrier separates lanes, only same-direction traffic must stop.

Driving around a bus — Never legal. Stop and wait every time.

Safety, DUI, parking and test-day

Alabama DUI quick-facts

Adult BAC limit (21+)	0.08 %	Only way to reduce BAC	Time — nothing else works
Under-21 zero tolerance	Any amount = suspension	First thing alcohol affects	Judgment and coordination
Under-21 BAC $\geq 0.02\%$ first offense	90-day suspension	Prescription drugs + alcohol	Can make you unfit to drive
BAC 0.02 % effect	Doubles crash chance	Even 1 drink affects	Driving ability

Hazardous conditions

DO

- + Slow down before curves and intersections on slippery surfaces
- + Increase following distance in rain, fog, or any poor visibility
- + Steer in the direction of the skid; ease off the gas
- + Hold steering wheel tightly and brake lightly on a tire blowout
- + Pull off road and use hazard lights if you have a mechanical problem
- + Stop to rest or change drivers when tired — drowsiness impairs judgment like alcohol
- + Gradually re-enter roadway when wheels drop off the pavement edge

DON'T

- Apply brakes hard when hydroplaning — slow down gradually instead
- Brake hard in a skid — stay off the brakes and steer into the skid
- Use high beams in fog — light reflects back and cuts visibility
- Assume you can see far enough at night — visibility is always reduced
- Drive with a bad suspension — causes loss of vehicle control
- Drive around or under a lowered railroad crossing gate — it is never legal
- Stop on the freeway unless it is a genuine emergency

Parking rules

Downhill — any road	Turn wheels toward right edge (toward curb if one exists)	Pulling from curb	Signal and yield to all moving traffic
Uphill with curb	Turn wheels AWAY from curb	Hit unattended vehicle	Leave note with name + address, or locate owner
Uphill without curb	Turn wheels toward edge of road	Near parked vehicles	Watch for people or vehicles entering your lane unexpectedly
All hill parking	Set parking brake + leave in "Park"		

Railroad crossings

Lowered gates + flashing lights — Stop completely well behind the gates. Wait for tracks to fully clear.

After first train passes — Look for a second train before proceeding — trains can come from either direction.

Never legal to — Drive around or under a lowered crossing gate. Ever.

No signals present (crossbuck only) — Slow down, look both ways, listen, and be ready to stop.

Stop before crossing when — There isn't room on the other side for your vehicle to completely clear the tracks.

Alabama test-day cheat box

Exam length (all ages)	30 questions	Driver education	NOT required by state law
Passing score	24 correct (80 %)	Supervised driving hours	50 total (10 at night)
Exam fee	\$5 (cash only)	Permit hold before Stage II	Minimum 6 months
License purchase fee (15+)	\$36.25	Agency	ALEA Driver License Division

Last-minute test-taking tips

Read every option before you pick — ALEA often includes a partially-correct choice to trip you up. When two options seem right, pick the more cautious one ('slow and yield' usually beats 'speed up' or 'honk and proceed'). Alabama's bank is heavy on traffic laws (64 %) — if you drill right-of-way, school bus rules, and lane markings, you've covered the majority. Unanswered questions count as wrong, so guess if you blank — eliminate the obvious wrong answers first, then commit.