Driver education and behind the wheel training are efficient means for new drivers to learn how to drive and develop their driving skills in a controlled and safe environment. Driver education has existed since the automobile was first invented and remains popular today.

Driver education is offered by high schools and commercial organizations (including safety agencies), and in some cases a combination of the two. Driver education courses are not typically offered by governments, but are often developed and regulated by them.

Typically driver education courses in the United States include 30 hours of classroom teaching and 6 hours of on-road training, while Canada has 25 hours of classroom teaching and 10 hours of on-road training; however, this can vary widely depending on the course selected.

Some enrol in driver education for lower insurance rates; to better prepare themselves for a driving test; to practice behind the wheel; and to shorten the graduated driver licensing (GDL) phase of driving. Another popular reason for enrolling is to become a better and safer driver; however, this benefit has not yet been demonstrated by research.

In the 1960s, a major study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) entitled the “DeKalb” project and several subsequent studies in the United States, Canada, and other countries found that, at best, driver education had only small, short-term benefits, and at worst, was not associated with reliable or significant decreases in crash involvement. More recent research in the 1990s and 2000s has also yet to provide definitive findings on the safety benefits of driver education.