

Towing Training / B+E test

If you passed your practical driving test on or after 1st January 1997 and wish to tow a trailer that exceeds 750kg and the combined weight of the towing vehicle and trailer exceeds 3.5 tonnes you will need to pass a practical B+E (car+trailer) test. You will also need this category if the laden weight of the trailer exceeds the unladen weight of the towing vehicle.

Your vehicle handbook will advise you on the maximum gross vehicle weight and the maximum weight of a trailer suitable for that vehicle. The trailer manufacturer will advise you of the unladen weight of the trailer. However, you must consider the laden weight of the trailer (i.e. the trailer plus the load).

This means in most cases towing a medium to large caravan or horse/boat/catering trailer with a family size vehicle suitable for carrying this weight will need the B+E category.

However, towing a small trailer or a trailer lighter than the towing vehicle will still be permissible on a category B (car) licence.

The Government website [direct.gov](http://www.direct.gov) has more details about this that you may find useful. http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/DriverLicensing/CaravansTrailersCommercialVehicles/DG_10013073

If you passed your test in or before 1996, it is still advisable to have some training before towing for the first time. Reversing with a trailer requires skill and practice and many drivers may have difficulty with their technique even if they feel competent on the road, and would benefit from manoeuvring training.

To pass the B+E test you must be able to drive at a consistently high level as with passing the L test and be continually aware of the additional length of your unit and the difference this will make to your decisions when crossing and meeting other traffic. In addition you need to be able to uncouple and recouple the car and trailer, carry out a braking and reversing exercise in an off road area and be able to carry out specific safety checks on the car and trailer.

Freeway offers bespoke training to prepare drivers for this test. We use a Land rover Discovery 3 and horse trailer as the towing unit. Sessions are usually 3 hours long to include the various elements and reflect the longer testing time.

