



# Bill Plant Driving School

PR update - Q2

April, May and June 2020

**10YETIS**

**BILL PLANT**  
DRIVING SCHOOL


# | April 2020

## What we sent:

- Competition - Colour Our Car
- NEW - Online Theory Test lessons
- Case Studies - Driving Instructors volunteering in their local communities
- Video - Children cleaning their dad's "office" (learner vehicle)

## Results:

- 146 pieces of coverage
- Reach - 16,888,925



**Bill Plant Driving School launches online theory test lessons with driving instructors**

During the current lockdown, Bill Plant Driving School have launched Online Theory Test Lessons, in partnership with Driving Test Success, to allow pupils plenty of practice to best prepare them for their Theory Test, when they're reinstated.

Published on April 24, 2020 Post Views: 10

# The News

## Driving instructor is revving up to deliver food and provide lifts

**By Hope Mckellar**  
Thursday, 23rd April 2020, 8:47 pm  
Updated: 30 minutes ago

A CITY driving instructor is using her time to help others after having to stop offering her usual services due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Debbie Toms, from Fareham has been supplying patient transport to and from hospital, collecting medical prescriptions and also delivering essential shopping to those unable to get out or struggling to get an online delivery slot with their local supermarkets.

The 49-year-old, who has been working as a driving instructor since November, has been out in her car every other day delivering goods such as prescriptions, food shopping and other goods to vulnerable people in the community, as well as key workers.

She uses the Facebook group, Uplands Watch to appeal to people who may not be able to get out to ask if they need help.



## Fareham driving instructor volunteers to help others with shopping and transport to and from work

A CITY driving instructor is using her time to help others after having to stop offering her usual services due to the coronavirus pandemic.

By Hope Mckellar  
Thursday, 23rd April 2020, 8:47 pm  
Updated: 30 minutes ago

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Debbie Toms, from Portsmouth, is a driving instructor who is volunteering by transporting NHS workers to and from



## Help to design the next learner car!

**Wigan children can enter school during the Covid 19 lockdown by designing the design for the next learner Driver vehicle to hit the road.**

Last year's National Driving School of the Year, Bill Plant Driving School, has launched a Culture Car competition in four age groups.

There will be prizes open to, but for the youngster who creates the winner design, the car will be awarded at their home and they will be driven around their locality where they can share off their creation.

A colouring in pack has been created for children to download, encouraging them to be as creative as possible while helping parents keep them entertained.

This colouring in pack features all four sides of a Volkswagen Golf - the main colour vehicle that Bill Plant Driving School Driving Instructors use on a day-to-day basis to teach British home to drive safely.

There are four age categories for those entering those to five years-old, six to eight



### Get creative for new car

Bill Plant Driving School is hoping to keep children entertained during lockdown by giving them the chance to design the next learner driver vehicle to hit the road.

A colouring in pack has been created for children to download, encouraging them to be as creative as possible whilst helping parents keep them entertained.

There are four age categories for those entering: three to five, six to eight, nine to eleven and 12 to 16. Visit [www.billplant.co.uk/learn](http://www.billplant.co.uk/learn).



## Learning to drive during lockdown - how to keep your skills sharp without lessons

Advice from the experts on how student drivers can improve even while stuck at home

By Matt Allan  
Tuesday, 21st April 2020, 10:01 am  
Updated: 2 hours ago



Among the earliest aspects of life to be affected by the coronavirus outbreak was the UK's driving test system.

Even before the country was put into lockdown, theory and practical driving tests were cancelled and, soon after, driving schools began to cancel lessons.

While learners are understandably keen to keep practising even without professional instruction, the CEO of one of the country's largest driving schools is warning against heading out during lockdown.

Current government instructions are that you should only be driving if it is for essential reasons such as grocery shopping, caring for a vulnerable person or getting to work where working from home is not possible.

### Further instruction

**This article ran on 140x websites!!**

# May 2020

## What we sent:

- Tips - How to ensure your car is roadworthy
- Competition - Colour Our Car updated closing date

## Results:

- 25 pieces of coverage
- Reach - 19,095,925

## UK Children Invited To Design New Vehicle Signage For The National Driving School Of The Year

Bill Plant Driving School



**When:** Wed 13th May 2020 to Mon 1st Jun 2020  
**Where:** Online (see website)  
**Times:** 24 hours  
**Admission:** Free

### About the event

The team at Bill Plant Driving School are looking for one school-age child in the UK (below the age of 16) to design the signage for their next Learner Driver vehicle.

A colouring-in pack has been created for children to download, encouraging them to be as creative as possible whilst helping parents keep them entertained. This colouring-in pack features all four sides of a Volkswagen Golf - the main tuition vehicle that Bill Plant Driving School Driving Instructors use on a day-to-day basis to teach Britons how to drive safely.

There are four age categories for those entering: 3 to 5 years old, 6 to 8 years old, 9 to 11 years old and 12 to 16 years old. Adults can take part and enter their designs for fun, but will not be able to enter the competition.

The winning child will have their design brought to life on one of the Driving School's Learner Driver vehicles, courtesy of FastSigns Manchester. The winner will have the car arrive at their house for the official unveiling, and will then be driven around their home town/city for them to show off their design to the local community.



There's Driving Instructor Debbie Toms again!



ABOVE: Debbie Toms from Bill Plant Driving School in Portsmouth who is supplying patient transport to and from hospital, collecting medical prescriptions and delivering essential shopping to those in need

### BEHIND THE WHEEL

Lockdown has left many driving instructors unable to work, but one Portsmouth tutor is providing a volunteer medical transport service during her forced downtime.

Debbie Toms, who is part of Bill Plant Driving School, has been providing patient transport to and from hospital, as well as collecting medical prescriptions and delivering essential shopping to those unable to get out.

"It's truly fantastic to see so many driving instructors helping where it's really needed right now," said Peter Brabin, head of training at Bill Plant, [billplant.co.uk](http://billplant.co.uk)



## Britons keen to restart driving lessons



DRIVER TRAINING

May 28, 2020 No Comments

In the past seven days, there's been an increase in online searches to find out when driving lessons can restart, according to new research from Bill Plant Driving School.



This article ran on 22x websites!!

## Essential checklist for drivers before getting behind the wheel once coronavirus lockdown is lifted

It's important to ensure a vehicle is roadworthy before travel curbs are lifted and drivers eventually hit the road

SHARE    By Brett Gibbons  
19:42, 4 MAY 2020

Many motorists will have gone from driving their car seven days a week to only occasionally getting behind the wheel during the coronavirus lockdown.

So it's important to ensure a vehicle is roadworthy before travel curbs are lifted and drivers eventually hit the road.

Experts at [www.billplant.co.uk](http://www.billplant.co.uk) have compiled a checklist of essential guidelines to check if a vehicle is ready for the road.

Here are the top tips.

### Avoid a flat battery

It's not necessary to go for a long drive to prevent a flat battery.



 Image: Getty Images/ChrisPonzo

Just start the car every few days, no less than once a week, and leave it on for a few minutes. If you can, drive it around the block or to the local store when you're doing your essential shopping.

### Check your tyres

As well as checking the amount of tread left on tyres (no less than the legal limit of 1.6mm across the central three quarters of the tyre), you also want to check the air pressure.

A quick way to check the tyre tread depth is to get a 20p coin and insert it into the grooves on your tyres. Your tyres are of legal limit if you can't see the outer band of the coin.

You will need access to a tyre pressure gauge to check the air pressure, but under and over inflated tyres can both have negative consequences.

Under inflated tyres will wear out quicker and reduce fuel efficiency, while over inflated tyres will provide less traction on the road and offer poorer braking distances.

### Check oil level

It's important that the oil level is sufficient, to keep critical parts of your engine lubricated, clean, cool and protected, and prevent it from seizing up.

### Fill up the screen wash

It's important to have a good amount of screen wash to ensure that you always have a good level of visibility of the road, and need to clear any dirt or debris off the windscreen.

# June 2020

## What we sent:

- Survey - Britons are keen to get back behind the wheel
- NEW - Queue Jump
- NEW - Parkathon app launch
- Tips - How to drive safely in a heatwave
- Comment - Isle of Wight lessons back up and running
- Comment - DVSA update 15<sup>th</sup> June
- Comment - Driving lessons restarting 4<sup>th</sup> July
- Comment - Driving tests to resume

## Results:

- 439 pieces of coverage
- Reach: 662,676,280



### DVSA puts handbrake on learners: Government extends suspension of driving lessons and tests with no set date for a return during pandemic

- DVSA says driving lessons and tests will remain on hold with no return date set
- Training can restart once the safety of learners and instructors can be assured
- It won't allow lessons to resume until there are adequate levels of PPE available, guidelines are published for cleaning vehicles and test centres are prepared
- Critical workers can still have driving lessons and sit theory and practical tests

By ROB HULL FOR THISISMONEY.CO.UK  
PUBLISHED: 12:08, 16 June 2020 | UPDATED: 12:12, 16 June 2020



Learners will have to continue to wait to take lessons and sit their driving test, according to the latest update from the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency.

In an open letter to instructors from chief executive Gareth Llewellyn, he said driving lessons and tests will 'only restart when the Government is confident that the assessment of risk warrants it'.

Driving instructors have targeted 6 July as a return date for lessons to restart, though until further notice will only be allowed to provide emergency training for those deemed to be critical workers.



Handbrake on for learners: The DVSA has confirmed this week that driving lessons and tests will remain suspended with no return date

### When driving lessons and tests can restart and why you'll have to rebook your test

By Matt Allen  
Thursday, 11th June 2020, 8:45 am  
Updated: 12 June 2020



Learner drivers around the country have been in limbo since the start of lockdown, with lessons and driving tests put on hold.

Since March, *driving tests have been suspended* for all but key workers and social contact restrictions have meant professional driving lessons have been out of the question.

Now, following an announcement by House of Commons leader Jacob Rees-Mogg, lessons and tests are set to restart in some parts of the UK. Here's everything we know about when lessons and tests could resume as well as why all candidates will have to rebook their test and what changes to expect on lessons and at test centres.

#### When can driving lessons resume?

Following Mr Rees-Mogg's announcement, driving instructors will be allowed to resume lessons from July 4 in England.

Making the announcement, he said that he wanted to help instructors 'return to life that is as close to normal as quickly and fairly as possible'.

However, the changes will only apply in England, with no details yet on when lessons will be allowed to resume in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Previously, Gareth Llewellyn, chief executive of the DVSA, had told instructors: "Driving instruction and tests will only restart when the government is confident that the assessment of risk warrants it."

Mr Rees-Mogg said that the DVSA would be writing to

instructors and driving schools detailing the plans to restore lessons and driving tests.

Many driving schools had already been working towards resuming lessons in early July.

This article ran on 9x websites!!



### Driving lessons in England to resume from July 4

Jack Evans, 26, Marketing Reporter  
24 Minute Reading | 21 Jun 2020



Driving lessons will be allowed to resume in England from July 4. It has been announced today by House of Commons leader Jacob Rees-Mogg.

The Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) will, according to Rees-Mogg, be writing to all approved driving instructors today (June 23) to set out plans on how to recommence driver testing and to help them return to a life that is as close to normal as possible.

"From 4 July, I am happy to say that people will be able to take driving lessons on a motorcycle, or in a car, lorry or bus," said Mogg. "And there will be a phased approach to resuming practical testing, so learners have the opportunity to practice before taking a test."



Rees-Mogg also stated that lessons would recommence as quickly and as fairly as possible, in a way that avoids a second peak in infections' as he spoke during Business Questions in the Commons today.

The move was welcomed by driving instructors, with Peter Drabin, head of training at Bill Plant Driving School, saying: "This is fantastic news for the industry. Not only have many Britons been unable to start or complete their driving lessons and take their tests, thousands of driving instructors have been left without an income for the past three months, with the industry coming to a halt - except for key workers who have been able to continue."



"Bill Plant Driving School will be recommencing driving lessons as of Monday 6th July with regional differences expected but to be announced. Ahead of this, given the expected increase in demand, we as a national driving school have also launched the Queue Jump initiative for Britons to get access to lessons ahead of others for just £15 - which is to be rebilled against their first driving lesson in July."

"All driving instructors have been given guidance on how to go about resuming lessons in terms of health and safety and risk assessments, and this will be published on [www.billplant.co.uk](http://www.billplant.co.uk) shortly."

### When can driving lessons restart? Date instructors go back to work and test centres open - and why you have to rebook your driving test

The latest information on lessons and tests for learner drivers

By Matt Allen  
Thursday, 11th June 2020, 8:45 am  
Updated: Thursday, 11th June 2020, 8:43 am



Driving lessons have been on hold since March

As the country begins to emerge from lockdown many learner drivers are anxious to get back behind the wheel.

Since lockdown began, professional driving lessons and testing have been put on hold because of the risk of transmission of the coronavirus in vehicles is higher than in other settings.

The situation has left many learners in limbo, unable to continue learning or to sit their test, and self-employed instructors wondering when they can return to work. But as restrictions on many areas of life are eased there is hope that driving instruction could resume soon.



Driving tests were initially suspended, but candidates will now have to rebook

Here's what we know so far about when lessons and tests



This article ran on 130x websites!!



### National driving school launches 'Queue Jump' for learners keen to get behind the wheel when allowed

The motoring experts at Bill Plant Driving School have recently discovered that Britons are keen to get back behind the wheel and finish learning how to drive, in order to gain their licence and be free on the road.

Published on June 11, 2020



Off the back of this, the 2020 National Driving School of the Year has launched 'Queue Jump' - a scheme that will allow eligible Britons to be first in the queue when driving lessons can restart in the UK.

The Queue Jump member costs just £15 and is fully refundable against the cost of their driving lesson. What's more, the member can be rebilled against all driving lessons offered - including theory lessons. It is only available to purchase for new and ex-UK drivers. Book now. Book now. Monday 6th July is the provisional return date that Bill Plant Driving School has set. Our aim is to be rebooked by the Government.

Cancelled or rescheduled test slots: The company outlined their first booking within an hour 'but will still be open to rebook' throughout the first six weeks, with 80% of the new year fee waivered back during their driving lesson Queue Jump.

More information: £150 and £200 member fees at <https://www.billplant.co.uk/queuejump>  
More information on the research & findings in relation to Britons being keen to get back behind the wheel can be found at <https://www.billplant.co.uk/queue-jump-no-one-should-be-left-behind-the-wheel>



This article ran on 130x websites!!

### Driving tests and lessons could resume by this date but pupils will need extra lessons

DRIVING lessons could be allowed to resume in weeks with those in the industry targeting the July date for when lessons can resume.

By Luke Chalkley  
Published 25 Jun 10, 2020 (Updated 27 Jun 10, 2020)

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Driving lessons were suspended by the Driving Vehicle and Standards Agency (DVSA) at the start of the coronavirus outbreak but restrictions could soon be lifted. Experts at Bill Plant Driving School advise driving lessons remain suspended for the time being but restricted restrictions could be eased by July 6.

This is the date "many in the industry" are aiming for as a potential resumption date for students to return to the roads. However pupils who were ready to take their driving test will need "at least a couple of weeks" of extra tuition before taking their exam.

This could see demand for lessons shoot up and leave many pupils who have already paid to sit an exam with the extra financial burden of more classes.

Tom Hoan, Head of instructor support at Bill Plant Driving School, said driving tests looked to be before the pandemic would be reinstated.



Driving schools are working towards a July restart, image: iStock



Some test centre pupils will need extra tuition, image: iStock

He also confirmed any new bookings would be "on hold" for the time being as schools dealt with a key backlog of students.

# THE SUNDAY TIMES DRIVING



Published 25 June 2020  
By Kieran Abuja

## THOSE WHO PASS DRIVING TEST FIRST TIME ARE SAFEST DRIVERS

### And women are less likely to have an accident than men

SHARE ARTICLE  
f | | |

NEW RESEARCH claims to have settled the debate about whether or not the best drivers pass their test first time.

A survey of 2,000 drivers by MoneySuperMarket has found that more than a third (36%) of those who pass their practical driving test on the first attempt have never had an accident, compared with 27% of drivers who passed on their second go.

At the other extreme, those who took their test six times or more have been involved in seven accidents, on average, suggesting a correlation between the number of times it takes to pass and driver safety.

More than half of first-time passers (53%) did not have a collision within three years of passing their tests. They also recorded the fewest accidents over their driving lifetimes, reporting an average of 1.6 incidents.

Those who passed their test second time also posted respectable stats, with over a quarter (27%) avoiding a single crash since their test, and over half (51%) having no collisions in their first three years of driving.

However, more than four fifths (82%) of those who took five attempts to pass their test had been involved in an accident, with just over a third (34%) racking up five accidents within their first three years on the road. The average number of crashes for someone who

### Driving during a heatwave - top tips for staying cool behind the wheel

It is so important to make sure that vehicle - and driver - are well prepared for the soaring temperatures



A heatwave is here with some parts of the country expected to be warmer than some of Spain's holiday hotspots.

While there are many benefits from the warm weather it can be very uncomfortable for anyone stuck in a car.

It is so important to make sure that vehicle - and driver - are well prepared for the soaring temperatures, with experts at Bill Plant Driving School offering this essential advice.

#### Check your car over



Hot weather is known to apply additional demand on every component of the engine, so it's important that

Home / iOS / Software (Apple)

### Test your skills. Park it!

Leigh-Coary | June 10, 2020

I passed my driving test many years ago, but the Bill Plant Driving School still sticks in my memory and I see their cars going round on a regular basis.



Available only on iOS right now, they've launched "Parkathon", an app where you need to navigate various obstacles to park your car. You can get up to 3 stars per level and enjoy a worry-free driving competition in your household or social bubble.

There's 10 levels with each one getting steadily harder and with more obstacles added. Crashing or poor parking will reduce your score.



Peter Brabin, Head of Training at Bill Plant Driving School, told us.

"We're excited to finally be able to unveil Parkathon. It's been in the works for a little while now and we thought it would be a fun for those unable to carry out their driving lessons as it enables them to get behind the wheel to practise their parking skills - albeit digitally."

Head to the link above to the Bill Plant website to get the link or, if you've got an iPhone, jump straight into the App Store. We've asked the PR guys when the Android version will be available.

This article ran on 27x websites!!



# Q2 Results

**610 pieces of coverage**

**194 links** to the following web pages:

- [www.billplant.co.uk](http://www.billplant.co.uk)
- [www.billplant.co.uk/driving-lessons-queue-jump](http://www.billplant.co.uk/driving-lessons-queue-jump)
- [www.billplant.co.uk/blog/revealed-britons-are-keen-to-get-back-behind-the-wheel-and-learn-to-drive](http://www.billplant.co.uk/blog/revealed-britons-are-keen-to-get-back-behind-the-wheel-and-learn-to-drive)
- [www.billplant.co.uk/parkathon](http://www.billplant.co.uk/parkathon)

**Total combined reach of 698,661,130 worldwide**