

How to get your Chinese driver's licence in Beijing

(when you already hold a foreign licence)

It is possible to get a Chinese driver's licence (驾照) as a foreigner. If you hold a valid foreign licence, you will only have to pass a written test (unless you are the lucky citizen of an exempted country), which is available in English and a number of other foreign languages. The process has four steps. Gathering your documents, going to the office of the department of motor vehicles (DMV) to register and schedule your exam date, returning to write your exam, and finally returning to collect your licence (or having it mailed to you).

This guide aims to explain this process.

Caveat lector: The information herein was current as of July 2017. Procedures can change quickly, so ask around before spending time and money following these instructions. Enforcement of various rules is reportedly variable, so don't complain to me if you're not successful. You can contact the DMV directly with questions about the process, by calling them at 68397905.

Required Documents

Your journey begins by gathering all of the needed documents. If you're lucky, you'll already have most of these, and the rest are straightforward to obtain with the help of a Chinese friend, if you don't speak Chinese.

You will need the following original documents in order to apply for your driver's licence:

- ☐ Passport
- ☐ Foreign driver's licence
- ☐ Accommodation Registration Form*
- ☐ Valid visa with a 90-day minimum entry*
- ☐ Translation of your foreign driver's licence*
- ☐ Medical examination certificate*
- ☐ Photos (one inch / “yi cun”)*
- ☐ Photocopies** of:
 - ☐ Passport main page
 - ☐ Visa
 - ☐ Last entry stamp
 - ☐ Foreign driver's licence

* see details below

** I did not need these photocopies, but other people reported needing them, so bring them in case.

Visa

Your visa can be of any class (including tourist), but you must be on a 90-day entry. That means that from the time you entered China, you are allowed to stay a minimum of 90 days on this current entry. It doesn't matter how much time is left on your entry, and it doesn't matter how many entries you have on your visa.

Translation of your foreign driver's licence

You do NOT need a certified translation. You must use the DMV form, provided in annex. You can prepare ahead of time, or they can provide you with the form when you go to the DMV -- at least, they had some printed copies when I went. Rely on this at your own risk. You can provide your own janky translation if you can write basic Chinese. The DMV personnel might help you to translate, but they appeared to be specifically prohibited from writing the characters for you. By the way, if the allowed vehicle classes are listed on your foreign licence, you shouldn't try adding new classes to your translation. They have a database of images of foreign licences along with the meanings of the various vehicle classes. I was asked whether my licence covered three-wheeled motorcycles as well (it did).

Accommodation Registration Form

This is the small-format white paper you got when you registered your place of temporary residence at your local police station. Its Chinese name is 住宿登记表. I assume it must be from Beijing, since you are applying for a Beijing driver's licence.

Medical Examination

The Chinese name for this is 机动车驾驶人身体条件证明. It's done at many government hospitals, and costs about 20RMB. It's only a vision and colourblindness test. I was asked what class of vehicle licence I was applying for, but the nurse insisted she could only put one class on the report, even though I was applying for a C1D-class licence (cars, bikes, trikes and sidecars). I got her to make two examination reports, one for C1 and one for D, and paid for both, but at the DMV they simply took the C1 examination report and amended it manually to read "C1D". When the nurse gives you the opportunity to review the examination report, do so. Mine had mistakes in it, which would have required another trip to the hospital for a new examination. I got mine done at the Peking University Third Hospital (北京大学第三医院) in Wudaokou, but other hospitals offer the same service. I've included a (perhaps dated) list of accepted hospitals in annex. Ask around for current information.

Note: You will need to pick a Chinese name for your medical examination and your driver's licence.

Photos

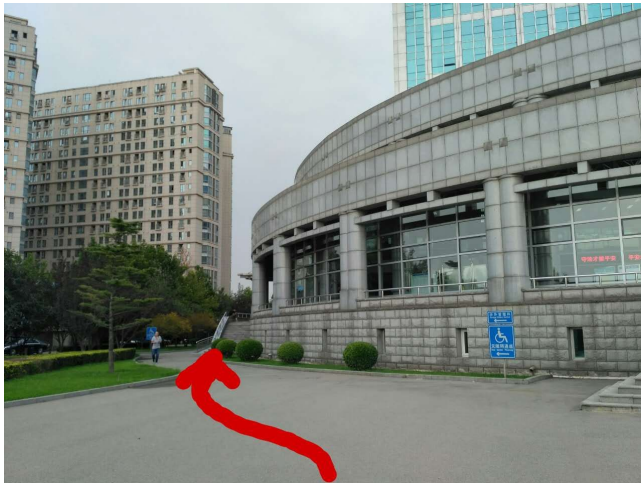
These are 1 inch (yi cun, 一寸) colour photos on a white background. I believe I needed six for the whole process, but don't be a cheapskate and just get a few more made, in case. Ask for "jia zhao de" (驾照的).

Registering for the Exam

Once you have gathered all of the documents, you have to go to the DMV to hand them all in and register for the written exam. Bring your Chinese friend, because no one there speaks English. The office's Chinese name is 北京市公安局公安交通管理局车辆管理所 and it is located on the southeast fourth ring road, number 18 (南四环东路18号).



After going through the security check at the gate, you will find yourself in front of an imposing building. Go around to the stairs on the left side to find the foreigners' area.

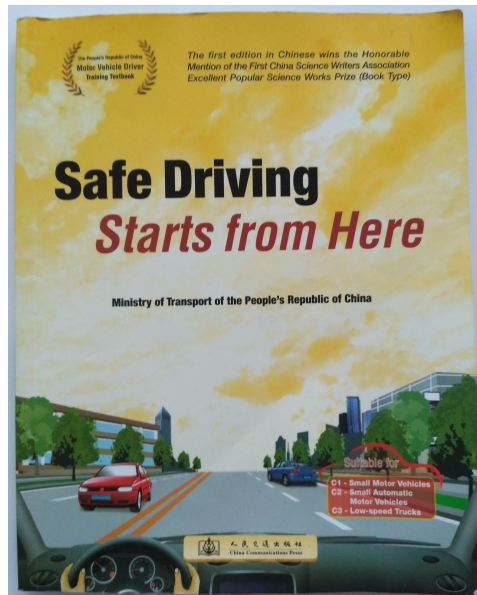


Get a number at the entrance if it's busy. The desk on the right side at the entrance is where you can get a copy of the translation form, if you don't have one already. If there are no other customers around, an officer will call you. He will process all of your documents and offer you exam dates. If you are early enough in the week, you should get an exam date for the next week. You'll pay a 50RMB fee and get a slip of paper back, which you will need on your exam day.

The Exam

You'll need to study for this. Your first resource is chinesedrivingtest.com, a site that offers realistic practice exams. Some people just do the exam over and over again until they are confident they can pass. As on the website, you need a minimum score of 90/100 to pass.

I also studied using a book called "Safe Driving Starts From Here", and found it very helpful. This book can be ordered by calling 63767890. There is also a PDF version floating around Wechat, so ask in the groups.



The relevant section is "Stage 1, Road Safety Laws, Regulations and Relevant Knowledge". You'll want to read the section through at least once, and pay particular attention to:

- ☐ Road signs
- ☐ Points system and penalties for different offences (only those of 6 and 12 points appear in the exam)
- ☐ Controls and dashboard indicators
- ☐ Jail time and other penalties for offences
- ☐ Road surface markings
- ☐ Hand signals
- ☐ Minimum and maximum speeds in various situations

If you're consistently passing the practice exam by at least a few points, you should be OK.

Exam Day

On the day of your exam, you'll go back to the same place where you registered during the last step. Bring the paper they gave you. You don't need your Chinese friend this time. When you arrive, you don't need to talk to anyone, just sit down and wait for the exam session to be announced. You'll go to the second floor and pick a computer. You'll be asked to use the keypad to enter the number underneath the bar code on your slip of paper. You pick your language and the exam starts.

If you pass, you go to the front of the class, where the attendant will shuffle a few papers, ask you to sign something, write your score on the same slip of paper you brought with you, and send you on your way. If you fail your exam on the first try, you can immediately take it again, right on the spot, without going back downstairs to the registration office. If you fail this second try, you are done for the day, and must go downstairs to register for another exam day the following week, paying the 50RMB fee again.

At this point, you can go to a counter downstairs to pay to have your new licence mailed to you. I am told the fee is 10RMB. I did not go through this process, so I have no additional information.

Picking Up Your Licence

You can pick up your licence on the third business day following your test, from 8:30am. For example, I passed on Tuesday and picked up my licence on Friday.

Picking up the licence is simple and fast. You go back to the DMV, give them the slip of paper from the exam, pay a small fee (20RMB, I believe) and walk out with your licence. I suggest bringing your documents and spare photos, just in case, but nothing more than the exam slip was required of me when I went.

You did it, champ!

Acknowledgements:

Thanks to everyone who helped me on the OMG and Moto Sloths wechat groups, with special thanks to Alex (Russlothski) and Sam of Moto Sloths, and Nico and David of OMG.

Final note:

There is a template Google Doc of this guide available at the following address:

<https://goo.gl/76hjTg>

This is to allow anyone to make a copy and publish an updated version in the future. If you make a new version, please change the dates in the title and the opening paragraphs.

Good luck.

Annexes:

- **List of Approved Hospitals for Driver Physical Examination**
- **Translation of foreign driver's licence (form)**

遵守《道路交通安全法》

是您的责任，也是您的义务！

机动车驾驶证业务手续须知

13

符合出具《机动车驾驶人身体条件证明》的医院名称

Hospitals for Driver Physical Examination

北京协和医院	北京医院
北京同仁医院	首都医科大学附属北京中医医院
北京中医药大学东直门医院	北京市鼓楼中医医院
北京市隆福医院	北京市和平里医院
北京市第六医院	北京市体检中心
北京大学第一医	北京大学人民医院
北京积水潭医院	首都医科大学附属复兴医院
北京市第二医院	北京中医药大学附属护国寺中医医院
北京市肛肠医院	北京市西城区展览路医院
北京市丰盛中医骨伤专科医院	北京市西城区平安医院
首都医科大学附属北京天坛医院	北京市普仁医院
北京市崇文区第一人民医院	首都医科大学宣武医院
首都医科大学附属北京友谊医院	中国中医研究院广安门医院
北京市宣武区中医医院	回民医院
广外医院	健宫医院
北京市监狱管理局中心医院	北京市监狱管理局清河分局医院
中日友好医院	首都医科大学附属北京朝阳医院
首都医科大学附属北京安贞医院	北京华信医院
煤炭总医院	中国中医科学院望京医院
民航总医院	朝阳区第二医院
朝阳区中医医院	北京市垂杨柳医院
北京首都国际机场医院	航空工业中心医院
北京大学第三医院	北京世纪坛医院
航天中心医院	中国中医研究院西苑医院
北京市海淀医院	北京市中关村医院
北京市中西医结合医院	北京市海淀区青龙桥医院
北京市海淀区妇幼保健院	北京市社会福利医院
北京水利医院	北京市化工医院
北京电力医院	北京航天总医院
航天科工集团七三一医院	北京市丰台区医院

遵守《道路交通安全法》

是您的责任，也是您的义务！

机动车驾驶证业务手续须知

13

北京市丰台区铁营医院	北京市丰台区南苑医院
北京市丰台区长辛店医院	北京大学首钢医院
清华大学玉泉医院	首钢矿山医院
北京市石景山医院	北京市工人疗养院
北京燕化医院	北京市房山区第一医院
北京市房山区良乡医院	北京市房山区中医医院
中国核工业北京四〇一医院	北京京煤集团总医院
门头沟区医院	大兴区人民医院
大兴区妇幼保健院	大兴区中医医院
仁和医院	大兴区红星医院
通州区潞河医院	通州区中医医院
通州区妇幼保健院	通州区老年病医院
顺义区医院	顺义区中医院
顺义区妇幼保健院	顺义区空港医院
顺义潮白河骨伤科医院	平谷区医院
平谷区中医院	平谷区第二医院
怀柔区第一医院	怀柔区第二医院
怀柔区中医医院	怀柔区妇幼保健院
北京小汤山医院	昌平区医院
昌平区中医医院	昌平区红十字会北郊医院
昌平区南口医院	昌平区沙河医院
北京北郊肿瘤医院	密云县中医医院
密云县医院	密云县第二医院
延庆县医院	延庆县第二医院
延庆县中医院	北京中医药大学第三附属医院
北京市顺义区法医院	北京博爱医院
北京中医药大学东方医院	北京老年医院
北京铁路局羊坊店铁路医院	北京市公安医院
中国藏学研究中心北京藏医院	通州区新华医院
密云县妇幼保健院	北京市通州区中西医结合骨伤医院

《机动车驾驶人身体条件证明》可从 www.bjtgl.gov.cn 网页下载。请粘贴一张 1 寸彩色白底照片。《Driver's Physical Exam Form》can be download form www.bjtgl.gov.cn . Please affix one 1-inch color picture with white background on it .

外国驾驶执照中文翻译

Chinese translation of foreign driver license

中文姓名:

Name in Chinese

性别:

Sex

出生日期:

Date of birth

驾照号码:

Driver license No.

准驾车型:

License class(type of vehicle can operate)

备注/限制条件:

Endorsement/Restriction

签发日期:

Date of issuance

有效期限:

Date of expiry

驾照签发国家:

Country of issuance

翻译人签字:

Signature of translator

201 年 月 日

Date of translation Y/M/D

请使用黑色或蓝色墨水笔工整书写, 涂改无效。

Please write clearly in BLACK or BLUE INK, don't alter.