



Safe + Simple: How to parallel park



By Carmel C. Tse

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Parallel parking has always been perceived as one of the most difficult tasks at road tests. In fact, when many approached us for help to prepare for their road tests, they would say they already knew how to drive, but just didn't know how to park.

Truth of the matter is parking is not the most important element in the road test. Hardly anybody gets killed or injured in a bad parking. However, bad turns and bad lane changes will definitely qualify drivers as dangerous. Had parking been the "only thing" at the road test, the examination would have been called ParkingTest instead of DriveTest centres in Ontario.

If you can do a mediocre job in parking, and do flawless turns and lane changes, you will most likely pass the road test. However, if you can manage to do a perfect park, but make bad turns and dangerous lane changes, you will definitely fail the road test.

The one thing is if you climb or hit the curb at parallel parking, you will definitely fail the test. How to avoid climbing the curb? Go buy a stick-on convex mirror and stick it on your right side mirror. Use what I call the "cheating mirror" instead of other other cars as your guide.

They also expect you to complete the whole parking exercise in 12-15 seconds. So if it is taking you more time to complete the task, you better practise more using the diagrams on the right as guidelines.

