

Scaling

Scaling will help you to identify the areas of skill and knowledge that you need to work on as you complete your course. Repeat the following exercise as many times as necessary, considering your 'performance' generally, or any specific subject area in which you want to improve your performance.

Some students ask "How can I assess myself – don't I need an expert to assess me?"

The answer to this is that, as far as driving goes, you will get an expert assessment during any practical training that you complete – however, you have already learned a lot about driving standards in your study so far. When qualified part of your job will be the assessment of your customer's driving standard, the best place to start learning this assessment is on yourself – you can then compare your self-assessment to your trainer's assessment.

The standards required are set out in Driving – Essential Skills, in this course and in DriverActive. Simply compare your own driving to those criteria.

In reality, we assess ourselves all the time in all aspects of our lives – it's just that we don't do it formally.

Step 1

First, think about something you would like to improve. This could be a practical aspect of your driving (for example, observation when parking) knowledge of a specific driving subject (for example 'the difference between drum and disc brakes') or anything else driving or non-driving related. The only proviso is that it is something that you will be able to practise/study in around 30 minutes, with this in mind don't choose any complex task, just a single aspect of a task will be sufficient.

This exercise is about scaling, not perfecting your chosen topic! The idea is to score yourself before and after and note any difference'.

Step 2

Take a moment to consider your chosen topic, how much do you already know and what skills do you already have.

On a scale of zero to ten (with zero being poor and ten being excellent), where do you rate yourself with this topic currently? (Fill in subject and the figure below)

When I consider _____ I estimate my ability on a scale of zero to ten to be _____

Before moving on, take a moment to re-consider, checking that you are being honest with yourself and that you have considered all relevant factors. If there are any changes, amend the figure above.

Tip: Your first 'gut feeling' score is almost always accurate.

Step 3

Think about the score identified in Step 1 and ask yourself the following question.

"What do I need to know, or to do, in order to improve my score and how much do I realistically think I can improve with study/practice?"

Our recommendation is that you consider what is required to improve by just one or two points. If you scored yourself as a 5, what would it take to improve to a 6 or 7? Setting your target too high can lead to a sense of disappointment, even if you make an improvement. You are best placed to determine the 'improvement level' – but keep it realistic!

Think about the 'improvement question' carefully, taking as long as necessary. You might know the answer instantly; alternatively, you might want to leave it for now and think about it overnight or during your working day. Formulate your answer specifically, and write it out in the space below.

Note that if you were working on all aspects of a complex skill you might need to repeat steps 1 & 2, two, three or even more, times to cover any areas that may have been of concern to you or which you want to improve generally, before starting to practise. For this exercise just 'go with what you've got'.

What do I need to do in order to improve my target score?

Step 4

Do some practise or study for about 30 minutes and then revisit the steps above.

Thinking about the topic:

1. How much (if at all) has your initial score changed?
2. What has improved?
3. What do I need to do to improve further?