

# PRODUCT REVIEW

## PASS YOUR DRIVING TEST - SAFELY STEP BY STEP

BY ABSOLUTE ENTERTAINMENT

**F**ocus Multimedia have dominated the Learner Driving Test CD-ROM market with their Driving Test Success series since its launch a few years ago, and rightly so. But could they have finally met their match with Absolute Entertainment's 'Pass your Driving Test - Safely Step By Step'?

Absolute Entertainment has produced this CD-ROM in partnership with Ford, and so it features the new model Fiesta throughout, a good business move for both concerned. It boasts '5 products in 1' on the two discs: Unique 3D Animated Driving Lessons, FREE Official Highway Code, FREE Official DSA Theory Test Question Bank for Cars and Motorcycles, FREE Official DSA Hazard Perception Practice Video Clips and FREE Car Maintenance Video (guidelines as per new Sept '03 legislation).

CD 1 contains the 3D Animated Driving Lessons that were tackled recently by Focus in their 'Driving Test Success Practical' (so not so unique). This is by far the most impressive feature of this product. The 3D animated clips are simply stunning, and most give you the option to view the car from up to four different camera angles. As well as the 3D animated clips, there are also video clips showing a young lad setting up the car and carrying out the various car maintenance checks as required in the 'Show Me, Tell Me' part of the driving test. The clips are accessed through the 'Tutorials' menu bar, where you are presented with 18 main topic areas, with a further 105 sub-headings that branch into a staggering 139 sub-categories. Not all of these contain clips, and a number of clips are repeated but, for the most part, they are clear and informative. An additional feature of the disc is a set of accompanying printable notes (in PDF format) for each section. In total this provides an impressive 128 pages, and printable references to the Highway Code where appropriate. Further information on the disc includes: Buying a car, Financing your car, Insurance, Breakdown cover and links to various websites deemed useful to new drivers.

CD 2 features the complete Highway Code, the Theory Test, The Hazard Perception Test and a Car Maintenance section.

The Highway Code is presented in PDF format, with copy and print functions disabled, but it saves the learner buying a copy.

The Theory Test section, as with most CD-ROMs of this sort, contains the full Official DSA Question Bank, and you are given the choice of either 'Practice' or 'Mock Test' mode. In 'Practice' mode you can choose from 'questions by topic' and 'random' settings, which is useful if you want a pupil to concentrate on a particular area of driving. The topics are the same 14 listed on the 'Driver's Record', and can be answered in multiples of ten, up to fifty, or the total number of questions for the topic area. Mock Test mode gives you the set 35 questions with flag, review, last and next buttons to navigate your way through. There is also a bar timer to remind you how much of your 40 minutes remains. Results are tallied at the end of the test, but you then have to scroll through them in order to find out which ones you have got wrong. This part also falls short of the competition by failing to provide explanations for any of the answers, or log facility and record of a pupil's overall performance when re-taking tests - this can prove a very useful feature if you are using it with groups of learners.

The Hazard Perception Test section contains 8 Official DSA Hazard Perception practice clips. Once you have gone through the clips, your score appears. It is here that you find out if you have been clicking too many times or 'rhythmically'. As is the case in the actual test, it would be good if you were made aware of this at the time, so allowing you to change your technique.

The Car Maintenance section contains video clips and images, as well as a full printable version of the 'Show Me, Tell Me' questions that are now part of the Driving Test. The key points are covered well and in a simple, non-technical fashion that learners should find easy to follow.

### SUMMARY

As with most of these products, there are a few minor errors such as the 'Cockpit Drill' (or 'Driving Position' as it is referred to) not being presented in the correct order - the pupil adjusts his mirrors and then his seat. In the 'Reversing' section, the driving position is covered again, but uses the same video clip, not covering the reverse seating position at all. However, I'm pleased to say that these errors are few and far between, and the information is well presented. Out of the five products included in this package, the only one not stated as being 'FREE' is the



'Unique 3D Animated Driving Lessons'. This is without doubt the most impressive feature of the product; however, with a retail price of £29.99, I'm not sure I would be so keen to purchase it for this single feature. Fortunately it does have the other features backing it up and, although the HPT section only has the 8 standard practice clips, the others make up for the lack.

### DIA APPROVED INSTRUCTORS OFFER

If you are a DIA approved driving instructor and would like to boost your success rate as well as your profits, Absolute Entertainment can offer you a special trade rate when you purchase a minimum of 5 copies.

Email [info@drivethiscar.net](mailto:info@drivethiscar.net) or call 01204 669599 for more information on this offer or to buy the product in bulk, **adi**

### COMPETITION TIME

Absolute Entertainment have kindly donated one copy to give away as a prize if you can correctly answer the following question:

**Q. What was the 'Percentage Pass Rate' for 'Reversing' - Preset Test no.4 (Phase I), shown in Lynne Barrie's article 'What is research?'**

**a) 71.3 b)45.9 c)59.1**

The first correct answers to be drawn out of the hat on 25th April, win!! Please send your answers by post or e-mail to the address on page 3.