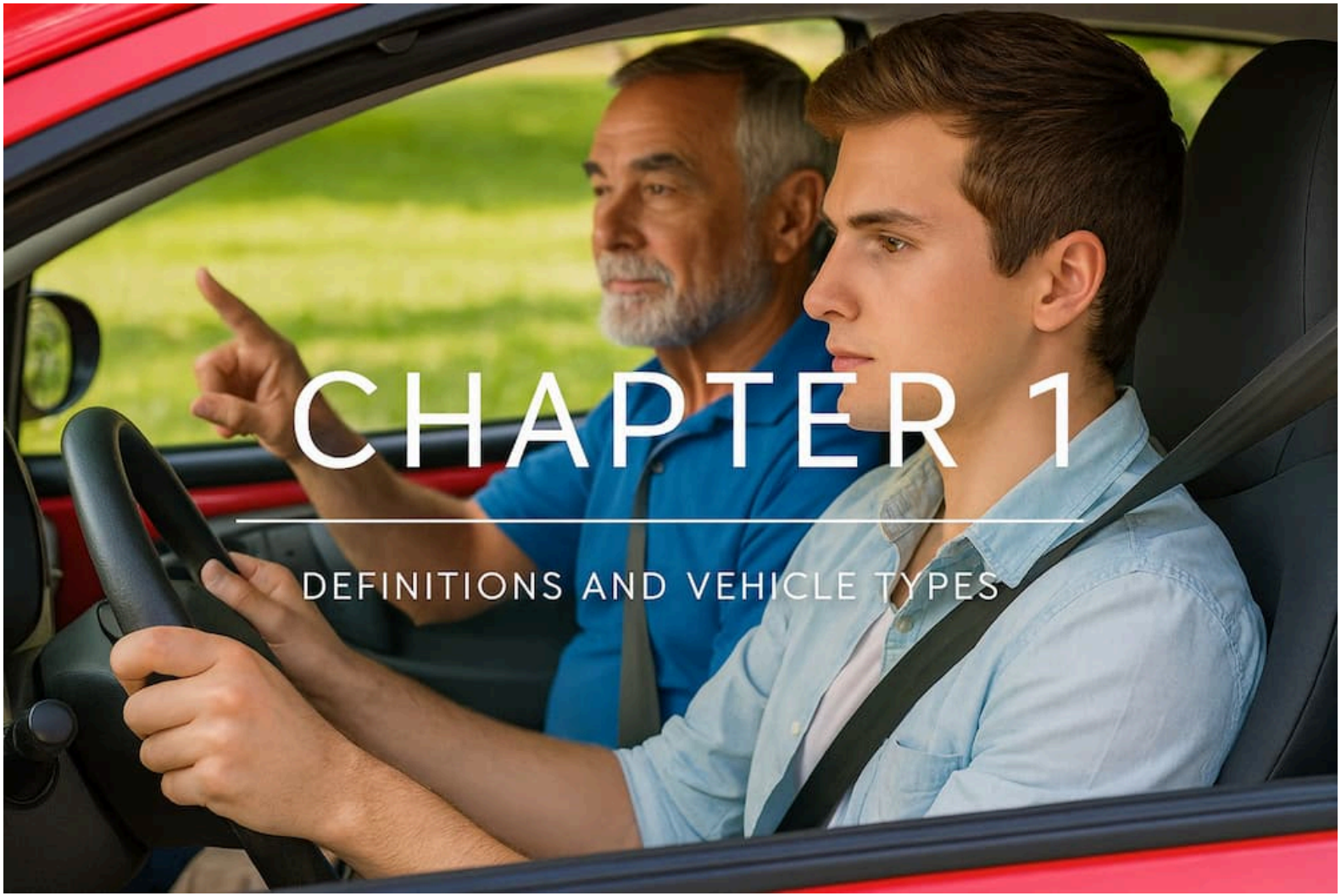
Full Chapter 1: Vehicle Types



1.1 Basic Definitions

1.1.1 Driver

A **person who operates and controls a vehicle on public roads**, or is in charge of animals, following traffic laws and ensuring safety.

1.1.2 Pedestrian

Person who walks on the sidewalk or along the road.

Pedestrians also include persons who:

- Pull or push a baby carriage, a wheelchair, or any small vehicle without a motor.
- Walk while pushing or holding a bicycle or a two-wheeled moped.
- Use a wheelchair.

1.1.3Vehicle Owner

Person whose name appears as the **registered owner of the vehicle in the official register**.

This person must always keep in the vehicle the documents proving ownership and present them to the authorities when requested.

The vehicle owner is responsible for ensuring that **no one without a valid driving license drives the vehicle**.

1.1.4 Main Driver

Person who usually drives a vehicle, even if they are not the owner.The main driver must hold the appropriate driving license to operate that vehicle.

The vehicle owner is the one who authorizes this person to be the main driver.

1.2 Basic Definitions

1.2.1 Introduction to Vehicle Types

Understanding the different types of vehicles is fundamental not only for passing the driving theory exam but also for becoming a safe, responsible, and knowledgeable driver.

Vehicles vary widely in design, purpose, size, and legal requirements for circulation.

As you prepare for your driving licence, you must be familiar with the classifications and characteristics of each type of vehicle you will encounter on the roads.

1.2.2 Vehicle

A vehicle is any apparatus **capable of moving on public or private roads**. Vehicles may transport people, animals, goods, or equipment, and they can be motorized or non-motorized.

1.2.3 Motor Vehicle

A motor vehicle is a vehicle **powered by an engine, designed for use on roads**. However, this excludes mopeds, trams, and vehicles intended for people with reduced mobility.

1.2.4 Automobile

An automobile is a specific **type of motor vehicle used to transport people, goods, or both**. It also includes vehicles designed for towing others but excludes special purpose vehicles.

1.2.5 Special Vehicle

Special vehicles are designed for specific functions such as **construction, agricultural work**, or public service operations. They can be either self-propelled or towed.

1.3. Classification of Vehicles

Vehicles are categorized according to their **propulsion, construction, and intended use**.

1.3.1 Vehicle Categories According to Their Use

Cathegory	Use
M	Motor vehicles designed to transport people and their luggage.For example, cars and buses.

Cathegory	Use
N	Motor vehicles designed to transport goods. For example, vans and trucks.
O	Trailers designed to transport people or goods.

1.3.2 Non-Motor Vehicles

- **Cycle**: A manually powered vehicle with at least two wheels, moved by pedals or cranks.
- **Bicycle**: The most common type of cycle, with two wheels.
- **Animal traction vehicle**: Carts or carriages pulled by one or more animals, such as horses or oxen.
- **Trailer**: A vehicle designed to be pulled by a motor vehicle, used for transporting goods.
- **Semi-trailer**: A trailer that supports part of its own weight on the towing vehicle.
- **Caravan**: Built to provide living accommodation while stationary.

Special Category: Mopeds

Mopeds are **lightweight motorized vehicles** with:

- An engine capacity of no more than 50cc.
- A maximum design speed of 45 km/h.
- Versions with four wheels are called light quadricycles, commonly seen in small urban transport.

1.3.3 Vehicles for Reduced Mobility

These are specially designed vehicles that facilitate safe and comfortable **transport for people with disabilities or reduced mobility.**

1.3.4 Trams

Trams are rail vehicles that operate along tracks embedded in city streets, serving as a form of public transportation.

1.4. Motor Vehicles - Automobiles

Motor vehicles are primarily distinguished by their intended **function and physical characteristics**.

1.4.1 Two-Wheeled Motorcycles

- Engine size greater than 50cc.
- Capable of speeds over 45 km/h.
- Typically used for individual transport and leisure.

1.4.2 Motorcycles with Sidecar

- Feature an additional wheel attached via a sidecar.
- Offer extra passenger or cargo space, while maintaining motorcycle-like controls.

1.4.3 Three-Wheeled Vehicles

- Symmetrical layout with three wheels.
- Combine the stability of cars with the handling of motorcycles.

1.4.4 Motor Quadricycles

- Four wheels.
- Maximum unladen weight of 450 kg for passenger versions and 600 kg for goods versions.
- Often used in urban and industrial settings.

1.4.5 Passenger Cars ("Turismo")

- Primary vehicle for private passenger transport.
- Designed to carry up to nine people including the driver.
- Encompasses a broad range of models, from compact cars to luxury sedans.

1.4.6 Derived from Passenger Cars

- Modified for goods transport.
- Only one row of seats with additional cargo space.
- Preserves the body of a tourism.

1.4.7 Buses and Coaches

- Carry more than nine passengers.
- Buses operate within cities, while coaches are for long-distance travel.

1.4.8 Mixed-use Vehicles

- Adaptable for carrying either passengers or goods.
- Practical for small businesses and family travel.

1.4.9 Trucks

- Built specifically to transport goods.
- Feature a distinct separation between the driver's cab and the cargo area.

1.4.10 Vans and Panel Vans

- Designed for commercial use.
- Integrate the driver’s cabin with the cargo area.

1.4.11 Tractor Units

- Specialized for hauling semi-trailers.
- Essential in freight and logistics industries.

1.5. Vehicle Combinations

Some vehicles operate in combination with others:

- **Road Trains**: A motor vehicle connected to one or more trailers.
- **Articulated Vehicles**: A motor vehicle pulling a semi-trailer, allowing better maneuverability.

Operating such combinations requires additional driving skills, especially concerning stability and braking distances.

1.6. Special Motor Vehicles

1.6.1 Agricultural Tractors

- Used primarily in farming.
- Capable of towing heavy agricultural machinery and trailers.

1.6.2 Self-Propelled Service Machines

- Include street sweepers, snow plows, and other public service vehicles.
- Purpose-built to perform specific maintenance or operational tasks.

1.6.3 Self-propelled construction machine

Motorized vehicle with two or more axles, **intended to perform construction** tasks or heavy work.

1.6.4 Quad - ATV

Equipped with a **traction system suitable for its purpose, four or more wheels**, and a handlebar.

Its maximum speed may be limited according to its technical features or intended use.

1.6.5 Construction backhoe

A **motorized vehicle with at least two axles**, created to move, tow, or push work equipment, machinery, or construction vehicles.

1.6.6 Tourist train

Tractor unit with trailers, built to carry passengers for sightseeing or leisure purposes, with a limited top speed and subject to specific traffic restrictions.

1.7. Vehicle Mass and Weight Terms

Understanding vehicle weight is essential for safe operation:

- **Tare Weight (Unladen Mass)**: Weight of the vehicle with essential fluids but no passengers or cargo.
- **Tare Weight in motion**: Tare weight plus weight of driver.
- **Gross Vehicle Weight**: Total weight of the vehicle fully loaded.
- **Maximum Authorized Mass (MAM)**: Legal limit for total mass while in use.

- **Maximum Authorized mass of the combination**: The highest total weight that a loaded vehicle is allowed to have when traveling on public roads.
- **Axle Load**: Weight supported by a single axle.
- **Weight per axle:**The amount of weight that a single axle transmits to the ground through its wheels.

Respecting these limits ensures road safety and vehicle longevity.

1.8. Final Notes for New Drivers

Knowing the **different types of vehicles** is more than exam preparation — it is vital for:

- Choosing the correct category for your driving licence.
- Understanding vehicle behavior under different conditions.
- Enhancing road awareness and defensive driving techniques.

As you continue your learning journey, remember: knowledge builds confidence, and confidence builds safe drivers.

In the next chapters, we will explore road regulations, signage, and the techniques necessary for a lifetime of safe driving.