Ten Tips on Choosing Your Irish Driving Instructor. by Hiteshbhoi

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First of all letâ€™s examine why you would need a Driving Instructor in order to learn how to drive. Sure everyone needs a teacher, advisor or instructor, donâ€™t they, when facing up to a new challenge? Or do they? Which comes first, the Chicken or the Egg?

Would you go out and Order an expensive Steinway Piano, never having played a note?

Would you go to your local swimming pool and jump in the deep end if you had never been in the water before?

Would you ring up your local light Aircraft Company and order a Cessna for next day delivery and ask them to have it tanked up and ready to go?

How about booking a two week scuba Diving holiday in the Aegean when all your experience to date is a deck chair on the beach at Torremolinos?

All of the above scenarios are about as inconceivable as you can possibly imagine; yet thousands of Irish learner Drivers are doing the equivalent every day of the week. Why so? Well it is a combination of the previously lax laws and now that we do actually have some legislation heading us in roughly the right direction, the inability of the Garda to enforce them .Yes we have had a good deal of changes to our system of Driving Tests and Licensing recently but Mandatory tuition has yet to be enacted. When it is introduced, hopefully we will be on the slow uphill climb to some degree of motoring competence instead of the current Motoring mayhem which we currently enjoy.

Letâ€™s now have a look at the type of Instructor you should be looking for.

1. Look through the Golden Pages and try to make a short list of those Driving Schools with a Web Site. You could of course, do a quick search on Google using various search terms. A School with a web site is one who takes their profession seriously and who will provide quite a lot of free, but invaluable information .Do not regard a web site as purely a smart way of attracting more pupils. Look at it as a way of getting some valuable info, together with an inside peek at who the Instructor might be, and how he or she does business.

2. Look for a school with qualified Instructors. Now in Ireland at present, but not for long, anyone can call themselves a qualified Instructor, never having so much as looked at an advanced Driving Course or taken any Examinations. We have The Driving Instructor Register here which has been examining Driving Tutors on a voluntary basis since 1996 .A good number of Driving Instructors have passed these exams and will be able to impart an advanced level of tuition.

3. Donâ€™t just ring up a Driving School and with your first sentence ask what prices are your lessons. You are perfectly entitled to query prices, which will be very much the same from all established Schools. Schools that have not been established for long or who are desperate for business will be sometimes somewhat cheaper. Any one that is substantially less than the bunch should be avoided since this is not a profession that is cheap to run and today you get what you pay for .Cheap lessons are exactly that!

4. Ask the age of the Instructor and how long they have been driving. European Driving School standards require that an Instructor must have been driving on a full licence for at least three if not four years. Frankly, anyone with less than ten years driving experience will not have the necessary

skills to be a worthwhile choice in my view .We are talking here about teaching pupils skills for life and not a half-hearted few lessons prior to the Driving Test, which sadly seems to be a favourite choice of a good many Irish learner Drivers.

5. Ask what make and model the Driving School car is. There are many models in use by Driving Schools and of course all Instructors tend to have their own particular favourites. Diesel models are extremely economical for the Instructor who lives in the country and who does a lot of mileage. Diesel models are on the increase due to their improved performance over past years and their economy. They also hold their value well and while a little more expensive to maintain they go on for ever if looked after.

6. Ask the Instructor whether or not country road and high speed carriageway Driving are include in the Teaching Syllabus. These form a large part of your every day driving in Ireland and are very important skills to have right from the start. Ask yourself the question...are you going to be spending the bulk of your driving career, driving around your local area or into town and back; or are you going to be visiting the Coast, going on Holiday to the far reaches of the country or even Dublin. Of course you are; after all isnâ€™t this why you are buying a car in the first place? If you are only concerned with transporting yourself within your local area itâ€™s much cheaper, believe me, to hire a Taxi!

7. Ask your proposed Instructor does she or he give Motorway Tuition. While we donâ€™t have the same level of Motorways here in Ireland, as in the U.K or Europe, we do have stretches between major cities and particularly in the Dublin area and of course over the coming years there will be many more miles of Motorway I am sure. These marvels of Engineering require a higher degree of skill and lots of practise in your car before one can safely negotiate Dublin or abroad. This is why Learner Drivers are not permitted on Motorways. We are lucky here in Limerick, in that we have a new ring road carriageway, spanning about 20 miles which is identical in layout and signage to a Motorway apart from the speed limit and the colour of said signs. Perfect for legal high speed Motorway style practise within five minutes or so drive from most parts of the City.

8. Most Driving Schools will usually book lessons at least a week ahead, so donâ€™t expect to ring up and get a lesson that day or even the next. Occasionally if you are lucky, and the School has a vacant slot they will take you but itâ€™s the exception rather than the rule. If the School canâ€™t take you for a week be patient it will be well worth the wait.

9. A good Driving Instructor will ask you for a fair bit of information on the phone in order to gauge your level of skill. He or she will ask questions that may not seem relevant, when all you, as a pupil want to do is to get behind the wheel. Believe me they will be; they will all be designed to build up your driver profile and should not be construed as being nosy!

10. A Professional Instructor will take with a pinch of salt your efforts at explaining just how well you can drive and how you only need a bit of practise here and there at reversing or hill starts. Donâ€™t be defensive, you are about to learn one of the most important life building and life saving skills. A good Instructor will not venture out in your own car, if you already have one, until he or she has seen your capabilities or you have described in great detail your experience. eg. one years driving and getting ready to sit the Driving Test.

This is the first in a series of â€œTen Tipsâ€• to better and safer Driving.

About the Author: - Robin Piggott has spent a lifetime behind the wheel and is passionate about his Profession (and many other pursuits as well).The next generation of Drivers needs to develop a passion for excellence if they are to stay safe and arrive alive! Visit the Astral School of Motoring Web site at: -

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