

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE · CAMBRIDGE

How to Get a Driver's License in Cambridge: Turkish-Language Exam and 2026 Guide

The learner's permit exam is offered in Turkish, but there is no RMV office in Cambridge. Documents, the Haymarket and Watertown offices, REAL ID, fees and what happens to a Turkish license.

SHORT ANSWER

Two things to know at once. The good news: the state learner's permit exam is offered in **Turkish**, and 18 correct answers out of 25 pass. The practical news: **there is no RMV office in Cambridge**. You go to the Haymarket Service Center in Boston (136 Blackstone St., no parking) or to Watertown (550 Arsenal St., with its own lot); road tests are given only in Watertown. License, permit and ID transactions are by appointment. Immigration status does not block a license, but a Turkish license cannot be exchanged. The RMV contact center is 857-368-8000.

What to know before you start

- **The written exam comes in Turkish.** Twenty-five multiple-choice questions, 18 correct to pass, 25 minutes, and the test is offered in 37 languages. Take it at a Service Center or online; the online version needs a camera and cannot be taken on a phone or tablet.
- **The road test is not in Turkish** and it is not given in Cambridge. It happens at the Watertown Service Center, weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by appointment.
- **Status does not block a license.** Under the Work and Family Mobility Act, in force since July 1, 2023, a standard Class D license is issued regardless of immigration status and no proof of lawful presence is asked for. A valid foreign passport that needs no visa, or a consular ID, plus one second document is enough. If you have never had an SSN you sign an Affidavit of No SSN.
- **REAL ID is different.** The card with the star in the top corner requires proof of lawful presence. Someone without status can hold a standard license but not a REAL ID.
- **A Turkish license is not exchanged.** The RMV waives the tests for only seven places: Canada, Mexico, U.S. territories, South Korea, Germany, France and Taiwan. Keep your Turkish license anyway: it counts as the second identity document.
- **There is no published grace period.** Neither the statute nor the RMV gives a number of days you may keep driving on a foreign license once you are a Massachusetts resident. The safe move is to book the permit appointment as soon as you move.
- **Where the rules live.** The two guide pages for the Act on mass.gov were unpublished. Work from the RMV [identification requirements page](#).

How to apply, step by step

- 1 Apply online, then book.** You file the learner's permit application through the [RMV Online Service Center](#) and then book a Service Center appointment. When no slot is open you register and get an email with a personal link that expires within 24 hours.
- 2 Gather the documents.** The RMV takes originals only, nothing laminated, and a non-English document needs a certified translation. You also need one proof of Cambridge residency dated within the last 60 days.
- 3 Take the written exam.** Choose Turkish on the exam screen.
- 4 Book the road test separately (\$35).** The fee is not refunded if you fail, arrive late or cancel less than 72 hours ahead.
- 5 Bring a sponsor and a car.** The sponsor must be 21 or older with a valid U.S. state license and at least one year of driving experience. **A person with a foreign license cannot sponsor you.** You bring the car as well.
- 6 Get the license.** A Class D license is \$50 for five years. If your lawful stay is shorter, the license is issued for a shorter term.

Which documents count?

WHAT IS ASKED FOR	WHAT WORKS FOR SOMEONE ARRIVING FROM TÜRKIYE
Identity, Option A (one document)	A U.S. passport, a green card, an employment authorization document (EAD), or a foreign passport together with a U.S. visa and an I-94
Identity, Option B (two documents)	A valid foreign passport that needs no visa, or a consular ID, plus one of: a U.S. state driver license, a foreign birth certificate, a foreign national ID card, a Turkish driver license , or a U.S. marriage or divorce certificate
Social Security	Your SSN; or, if you have never had one, the Affidavit of No SSN (Option B only)
Cambridge residency	A lease, an electricity or gas bill, a bank statement or a school letter, dated within the last 60 days

YOUR WATER BILL WILL NOT WORK HERE

Cambridge bills water **quarterly**, so most of the time the bill does not satisfy the "dated within the last 60 days" rule. The parking permit asks for a document dated within 30 days. So build your Cambridge proof-of-residency file around the electricity or gas bill from Eversource and your lease; the same bill also works as the 30-day proof of occupancy for school registration. Putting the electricity in your own name on day one is therefore a paperwork decision, not only a heating decision.

Fees (2026)

TRANSACTION	FEE
Learner permit application (2 years)	\$30
License application and road test	\$35
Class D license (5 years)	\$50 (prorated at \$10 per year if shorter)
Massachusetts ID card (Mass ID, 5 years)	\$25
REAL ID upgrade	\$50 at renewal, \$25 otherwise

Which office does a Cambridge resident use?

OFFICE	ADDRESS AND HOURS · WHAT HAPPENS THERE
Boston (Haymarket) Service Center	136 Blackstone St., Boston MA 02109 · weekdays 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. · no parking , so the subway is easier · license, permit and ID work by appointment; registration and title transactions take walk-ins
Watertown Service Center	550 Arsenal St., Watertown MA 02472 (Watertown Mall) · weekdays 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. · has its own lot · the same transactions, plus road tests weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by appointment
Cambridge Traffic, Parking and Transportation	344 Broadway · 617-349-4700 · does no license or registration work ; it issues the city parking permit only
RMV contact center	857-368-8000 · senior and disability appointment line 857-368-8005 · oral exam and interpreter requests rtinterpreters@dot.state.ma.us , 857-368-8105

You can reach Watertown without a car: MBTA route 70 runs between University Park in Cambridge and Waltham and passes along Arsenal Street in Watertown. We could not confirm which stop is closest to 550 Arsenal St., so check the [route 70 stop list](#) before your appointment. Never pay anyone for an RMV appointment: the RMV says payments happen only on its own site or at its own locations.

THE VOTER REGISTRATION TRAP

In a license, permit or ID transaction, anyone who answers **yes** to the citizenship question has their details sent daily to the Secretary of the Commonwealth and is registered to vote automatically. The VOTES Act removed the opt-out from the application on January 1, 2023, so there is no way back at the counter; you can only ask the city election office to remove the registration afterward. If you are not a citizen, answer the citizenship question truthfully: no. The standard license issued under the Work and Family Mobility Act carries no right to vote and does not show your status. Knowingly registering or voting as a noncitizen carries a fine of up to \$10,000 or up to five years in prison.

REAL ID AND FLYING

A standard Massachusetts license grants no status and does not print your status on the card, but it is not a federal ID either. Carry your passport, green card or employment authorization document for domestic flights and federal buildings. A REAL ID needs one lawful-presence document, one document showing your full SSN and two proofs of Massachusetts residency. If you are not a citizen and your lawful stay is at least 12 months, you get a limited-term REAL ID that cannot be renewed online.

Do you actually need a license in Cambridge?

For most newcomers, no, and Cambridge is one of the few places in this series where we can write that. The Red Line has five stations in the city (Alewife, Porter, Harvard, Central, Kendall/MIT) and scheduled times to Park Street are 4 minutes from Kendall/MIT, 6 from Central, 10 from Harvard, 13 from Porter and 17 from Alewife. The subway is \$2.40, a local bus \$1.70 and a monthly LinkPass \$90; since September 1, 2026 transfers are unlimited within two hours as long as you tap the same payment method. If you are thinking about a car, read the parking permit section first: the city's own words are that most residential streets are permit-only.

Common mistakes

- Preparing in English without knowing the exam is offered in Turkish.
- Forgetting that both appointments are outside the city: the permit at Haymarket or Watertown, the road test only in Watertown.
- Driving to Haymarket and looking for a space; that office has no parking.
- Bringing a friend with a foreign license as the road test sponsor.
- Taking the water bill as proof of residency; it arrives quarterly and is usually out of date.
- Showing up with photocopies or laminated documents; only originals are accepted.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN CAMBRIDGE

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Cambridge and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English.

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