



Driver School Car Preparation

BMW's are well-engineered, well-built cars that are designed for enthusiastic driving. New Driver's School participants (and occasionally experienced participants) have asked if there are any modifications that should be made to their cars prior to the driving school. In a word, **NO!** BMW's are quite competent for this type of driving right from the showroom (after appropriate break-in, of course). At some point, if you attend driving schools often, you may want to install multi-point belts/shoulder harnesses, stiffen the suspension, or get some stickier tires; but these are all matters of personal preference and are by no means required for you to have an enjoyable weekend at the track. You are strongly encouraged to participate in your first 3 or 4 schools in an unmodified car. You will learn more than in a car so modified that it masks your lack of skill or experience. Unmodified cars will give the novice driver earlier warning as to what is going on between the driver and the car and the track surface.

What *is* required is that your car be in top condition. BMW's are designed for enthusiastic driving, but it is up to you to see to it that your car is functioning as designed. First, let's discuss what is **Required**.

REQUIRED PREPARATIONS FOR DRIVER SCHOOL

- Prior to the event, your car **MUST** be inspected by a *"qualified individual, who is familiar with the make & model of the vehicle, no more than four (4) weeks before the event."* **This is not a suggestion, this is a REQUIREMENT!** The inspection may be performed by you or someone you are confident is qualified. The individual need not be a professional automotive technician; but either way, the ultimate responsibility for the condition of the car is **YOURS**. Included with this document is an example of a properly completed pre-event Technical Inspection Form. This form **must** be completed, signed by you and the individual performing the inspection, and brought with you to the event. If you do not bring one to registration, you will be required to **properly** fill out another one before you can register. Blank forms can be down-loaded from the chapter website.
- **The brake fluid must be changed and the system bled as close to the event as possible;** but in no case more than six (6) months prior to the event. Brake fluid absorbs water (from the humidity in the air), and this reduces the boiling point of the fluid. When people "lose their brakes" at an event like this, it is more often than not the result of boiling the brake fluid. The brake pads should have at least one-half thickness. If they don't, replace them in time to bed them in adequately before the event.

Note: Occasionally, a student will bring a "Brand-New" car to a school. In this case, the "Build Date" on the B-Pillar VIN sticker will be considered the fluid change date and must be within the 6 month window. If you are beyond that, **Change the Brake Fluid!**

- Tires must have at least 1/16" of tread depth, with no blisters, bald spots, or other imperfections. Also, **tires that have been patched or plugged are not allowed.**
- If your car has removable wheel centers, trim rings, etc., these must be removed to ensure they don't fall off during the event. "Kleen Wheels" are not permitted.

- **All loose objects must be removed** from the **passenger compartment** and **trunk** of your car. This includes the **floor mats**, and all items from the **center console, glove box** and **side pockets**. It is unnerving and potentially dangerous to have loose objects flying around you during hard braking and cornering. **Radar detectors** (if removable) and **garage door openers** often get left on sun visors. Don't forget the spare change in the **ashtray**. Double-check your car before your first session each day.
- After-market window tint is strongly discouraged; however a small amount of tinting is acceptable. The requirement is to be able to see completely through the car from the rear while standing twenty (20) feet away. This is a safety issue to allow you and your instructor to see what is happening ahead of the car you are following. We have all had the occasion of following a vehicle we can't see through or around only to have them brake hard with no warning. Obviously, this is to be avoided at Driver's School. The percentages of tint that after-market applicators quote are only approximations and will vary with application, manufacturer and even the angle of the windows. The only accurate test is to look through the car. The Tech Chairman will gladly check your tint prior to the event, contact Techchair@delvalbmwcca.org to make arrangements for an inspection.

SUGGESTIONS ON PREPARING YOUR CAR

The following items are suggestions and will make your track experience more enjoyable:

- It is recommended that your car have a recent tune-up so that it is running at its best. You'll certainly enjoy it more. Spark plugs, plug wires, rotors, caps, etc. nearing the end of life may decide to give-up halfway through and shorten your day.
- If you have replaced your brake pads, bring the old set with you. They probably have enough life left to allow you to get home without destroying your rotors, should you use-up your good pads on the track. We recommend you always bring an extra set of pads and front rotors just in case.
- Check the light bulbs used in your taillights, the brake lights, and especially the third (high) brake light. Stop at Pep Boys, Auto Zone, etc. and buy a set. If you burn out a brake light, you can't drive; that's a stupid reason to go home early.
- Bring a couple of extra quarts of oil, and a can of brake fluid; even new cars will use some oil on the track and if you boil your brake fluid, you will need to change it there.
- Novice students should start out with street tires, but additional pressure should be added for the track. Generally, for street tires, 36-38 psi is a good starting point. Check the pressure immediately when you come off the track and adjust down to the lowest of the four tires, be careful not to exceed the tire manufacturer's maximum tire pressure. Street tires have softer sidewalls than track tires do and need higher pressure to prevent rolling under in corners.
- If applicable, you should remove sunroof wind deflectors. At high speeds, some of these will vibrate and may make a very disconcerting noise.

This is the basic stuff; if you continue with the sport, you will develop your own list adding things that you find make the experience more enjoyable. After all, enjoyment and education is what this is all about. See you at the track!



Delaware Valley Chapter
BMW CCA

Pre-Event Technical Inspection Form

PLEASE LEGIBLY PRINT, IN INK, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Participant #1: Robert L. Driver
Participant #2: Rosemary B. Driver
Driver License #: 15672796
Driver License #: D1347-23734-10376
Vehicle Make & Model: BMW M3
Year: 1999
Mileage: 87254
VIN #: WBAAK9312MEE73952
Date of Last Brake Fluid Change: 5/21/08

The Pre-Event Safety Inspection includes, but is not limited to, the following items. The vehicle must be inspected by a qualified individual, who is familiar with the make & model of the vehicle, no more than four (4) weeks before the event. Indicate with an "X" the items deemed acceptable (Do not use ditto marks, etc):

- 1. LIGHTING: Functional including hazard lights. ALL BRAKE LIGHTS FUNCTION.
2. WINDSHIELD WIPERS: Functional and in sound condition.
3. WINDOWS: Secure and in sound condition. No extended cracks. Aftermarket tinting of front or back windshield must be pre-approved.
4. MIRRORS: Securely mounted. Must have inside rear-view mirror and a passenger-door mirror for instructor use.
5. PEDALS: Securely mounted. No binding. Good pads. No excessive brake pedal travel.
6. SEATBELTS: Securely mounted. Sound condition. Metal-to-metal buckles. Three-point minimum.
7. BRAKE FLUID: Adequate level. We require that the brake fluid be less than six (6) months old.
8. BATTERY: Securely mounted. No fluid leaks.
9. DRIVE BELTS: Sound condition. Properly tensioned & locknuts tight.
10. THROTTLE LINKAGE: Free return. No binding throughout full travel range.
11. SEATS: Securely mounted. Sound condition. Front passenger seat is required for all student vehicles.
12. DRIVE AND HALF SHAFTS: No loose joints or cracked boots. Center bearing in sound condition.
13. ENGINE, TRANS & DIFF MOUNTS: Good condition. No excessive motion permitted.
14. STEERING: No looseness, excessive play, or binding. Steering box securely mounted. No deteriorated mount bushings.
15. SUSPENSION: Mounting points secure and in sound condition. No excessive side-to-side height variation. Adequate damping.
16. BRAKES: Sufficient lining thickness. >50% recommended. No cracks, abrasions, or corrosion on hoses and lines. Rotors and drums within mfg. wear and runout tolerances. No master cyl. bleed-down exhibited. Equalization OK per road test.
17. WHEEL BEARINGS: Properly adjusted. No excessive looseness. No lube leakage.
18. WHEELS: Proper offset. No cracked or bent rims. Lug nuts/bolts properly torqued.
19. TIRES: No cracks, blisters, or cord evident. Same size on each axle. Adequate tread for wet track. No Snow Tires!
20. LEAKS: No coolant, brake fluid, steering fluid leaks. No excessive oil leaks.
21. FUEL AND COOLANT HOSES: Good condition. No cracks, swelling, abrasion, or other deterioration.
22. EXHAUST: Muffled, securely mounted, good condition. No cracked or deteriorated hangars.

DATE OF INSPECTION: 5/21/08 Joe Technician
(Signature of person performing the inspection)

I, the undersigned, acknowledge and agree that the condition and operation of my vehicle is totally my responsibility. I further acknowledge and agree that the Pre-event Spot Check performed by DelVal Technical Inspection personnel in no way guarantees the road-worthiness of the vehicle for street driving or for driving on any closed driving circuit. My vehicle has been inspected by a qualified individual and meets or exceeds the standards required. I further certify that I am at least eighteen (18) years of age and possess a valid automobile driver's license.

PARTICIPANT SIGNATURE (S): Robert L. Driver Rosemary B. Driver

(DO NOT WRITE BELOW LINE - FOR DELVAL CHAPTER USE ONLY)

VEHICLE SPOT-CHECK (PERFORMED AT DISCRETION OF THE EVENT TECH OFFICIALS) AND APPROVAL OF INSPECTION REPORT

PRE-CHECK #1: Form Complete, VIN OK, Helmet(s) Snell 2000 or later, signature(s) OK
PRE-CHECK #2: Equal Belts, Stop Lamps OK, Pass-Side Mirror OK, Window Tinting Pre-Approved
ACCEPTANCE OF PRE-EVENT SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT BY DEL VAL CHAPTER, BMW CCA, INC.