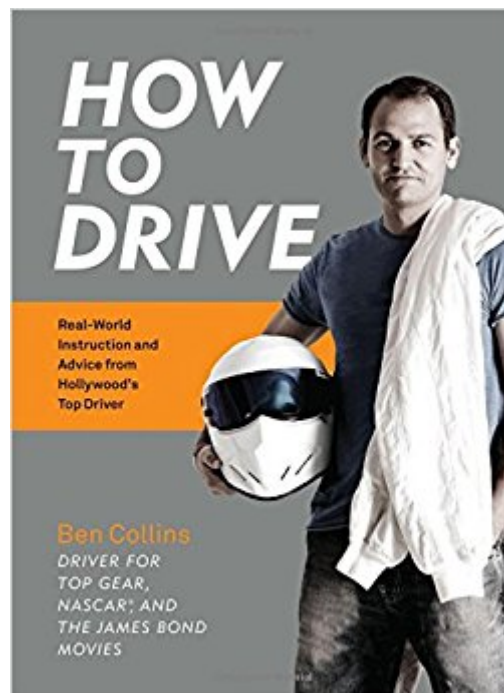




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How To Drive: Real World Instruction And Advice From Hollywood's Top Driver



Synopsis

Here's the ultimate guide to being the best and safest driver possible. And an absolute must for everyone with a learner's permit. Former Top Gear Stig and professional driver Ben Collins shares expert skills culled from a twenty year career as one of the best drivers in the world, famous for racing in the Le Mans series and NASCAR, piloting the Batmobile, and dodging bullets with James Bond. Refined over thousands of hours of elite-level performance in the physics of driving, his philosophy results in greater control and safer, more efficient and fun driving for all skill levels.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Ben Collins helps us correct mistakes that even those of us with years of driving experience have been making. This book is a must read for any car enthusiast." -Jay Leno
"offers smart tips and information on something we take for granted." San Francisco Chronicle
"You know how to drive, but if you really want to find out how to make the most of your time behind the wheel, we'd recommend consulting with former Top Gear Stig Ben Collins and his book, 'How to Drive: Real World Instruction and Advice from Hollywood's Top Driver.' Collins - a twenty year driving pro - has raced in the Le Mans series and on NASCAR tracks. He's also done stunt driving in plenty of films, including the recent James Bond releases. The advice doled out might not get you any of those gigs, but it's sure to make you one of the best - and safest - drivers on the road." -Uncrate
"This book should be a gift to teen drivers getting ready for their learner's permit. And it's an engaging read for anyone who wants to be a better driver - or as a gift from someone who thinks their someone could be a better driver." - The San Diego Union-Tribune
"Learn how to drive better and more safely not

just in a sports car on a track, but in your daily driver with this excellent book from pro stunt and racecar driver Ben Collins, who has driven cars for the James Bond series, The Dark Knight Rises, and portrayed The Stig on Top Gear." -The Awesomer"Driving is a skill, people, not a talent, so we could all do with some 'real-world instruction and advice from Hollywood's top driver'."-The Columbian

Ben Collins has competed in motor racing since 1994, and his company Collins Autosport provides precision and stunt driving for film and television, including Top Gear, the James Bond films Quantum of Solace, Casino Royale, and Skyfall, and Mission Impossible: Rogue Nation. He lives in Bristol, England.

I really enjoyed this book. I've always considered myself a slightly aggressive "but safe and competent driver" and this book validated a lot of stuff I was already working with instinctually. But more importantly, it highlighted a handful of bad habits and misconceptions I need to change after 30 years on the road. Beyond that, it's full of great science and witty anecdotes from the field of high performance driving. Great illustrations as well. Should be recommended reading for anybody wanting to share the road with anybody else.

Pros:1. A good instructional book for what I will call, "Applied driving," which is to say that the book focuses on steering, shifting, turning, etc. and is not bogged down with what road signs mean, etc.2. Provides some interesting historical factoids about the evolution of driving and the rules of the road such as which side of the road to drive on.3. Quite a few interesting stories from Mr. Collins driving career and some of the people he interacted with.Cons:1. Many chapters begin with a story about a particular driving episode in Mr. Collins career; sometimes they relate to the material of the chapter, sometimes they don't.2. Several stories, as written, were difficult to visualize at times and required me to re-read the story several times before I felt like I had a good handle on what was being described.As stated above, Mr. Collins has written the applied driving manual and assumes that the reader already knows how to pass the written and the practical driving test. What is more subtle is the perspective that Mr. Collins approaches driving. When I was in drivers education, the focus was on defensive driving or accident avoidance. In short, the instruction wasn't proactive. Mr. Collins, in contrast, instructs his readers to be proactive in their driving by teaching the reader to make planned driving decision through a series of actions that balance the risks inherent to driving a vehicle, with the capabilities of the vehicle to safely arrive at the destination.To that end, Mr. Collins dedicates

quite a bit of discussion to the physics of tires. If I were to distill Mr. Collins book to a single sentence describing its content it would be: This book explains how to manipulate the interface between the tire and the road to maximize control in most driving conditions. For example, when entering a turn, Mr. Collins advocates jabbing the brakes and then releasing the pressure so that down force on the front tires is increased for steering. If you watch reruns of Top Gear, you will see this a lot in the "Star in a Reasonably Priced Car" segment before the driver enters, "The Hammerhead." The nose of the car will suddenly drop down. All of the obvious subjects are covered such as shifting, turning, driving in snow, ice or rain. The final chapter on stunt driving was interesting for me as an academic exercise as I don't believe that I will have occasion to power slide my car into a parking place. However, it was interesting to read about the steps in planning such a stunt. It is clear that the focus of the book is for drivers with manual transmission vehicles. In fact, very little is written with respect to automatic transmission vehicles. This was a big disappointment as it rendered several large sections of the book as thought exercises and not something that can be practiced. Also, many of Mr. Collins descriptions of his own driving experience were difficult to follow. I was able to overcome some of the disconnect by watching the movie or TV show he was referring to, or playing a driving game on my daughter's game console. I also would have liked Mr. Collins to provide some recommendations for driving practice exercises. Before anyone says, "Go driving!," what I mean is that simply reading a book is not going to help me drive around a curve better. I need repetition to develop muscle memory. Driving badly around the same curve over and over only reinforces bad habits. Final thoughts... If you're looking for a story book about Mr. Collins time as the Stig, prepare for disappointment. He has a few anecdotes, but does not dish gossip or make what I would consider disparaging comments about any of the Top Gear hosts or the guests. The general impression that I get is that there was a friendly and sometimes frustrating rivalry on the show but that overall, it was very professional. I would make this book required reading for any new driver, i.e. less than 5-years of driving experience, and as suggested reading for experienced drivers. The experienced driver will likely read the book saying, "I knew that. I knew that. That's interesting... I knew that, etc." There is plenty to learn or relearn to make it worth the purchase.

This is a great book and an easy read. It has something to offer just about every skill level, especially those who "Know it all" simply because they've been driving 10 or 20+ years. With so many inexperienced drivers and distracted drivers on the road today I think this is a must read.

Lots of useful info on how to drive, particularly in tricky situations/conditions -- far more than these

types of books typically provide. Somewhat macho/condescending toward women here and there, though also self-effacing elsewhere. Plenty of anecdotes re his various jobs, which I found interesting and sometimes even exciting -- i.e. informative, & not particularly braggadocio. Last chapter(s) explain sort of how some driving stunts are done, but since it takes lots of practice to do those, and I'm not headed in that career direction, they were of only marginal interest to me.

Very humorous and a good read for novice drivers. Experienced drivers will find most of the points to be common knowledge except for some of the more skilled maneuvers like performing a Rockford. The majority of topics covering driving in inclement weather conditions and dealing with rush hour crazies should impart valuable knowledge to the less experienced drivers of all ages.

Should be required reading for every teenager/new driver. He explains why only the Brits drive on the correct side of the road. I'm not buying it though.

Great book. Loved reading it. If you are remotely interested in stunt driving, racing and the men and women behind the wheel, it's a great read. There is plenty in there that doesn't have to do with racing as well but it will appeal to those that appreciate motorsports more than someone who doesn't. Definitely worth a shot.

A bit too complex for the average teenager and yet the best of info for your child, you need to read it along or to them.

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