

What is Mountain Road Driving?

Worksheet

Mountain road driving occurs on steep, winding terrain with reduced traction, sharp curves, and long descents. Safe technique requires engine braking, controlled speed, and awareness of overheating brakes.

Questions

1. Engine braking on mountain descents primarily helps by:

- A) cooling the engine
- B) reducing brake temperature and wear
- C) speeding up the descent
- D) improving fuel efficiency

2. The safest gear for a long mountain descent is:

- A) Neutral (N) for fuel saving
- B) Highest gear (5th or 6th)
- C) 2nd or 3rd gear, selected before descent
- D) Alternating gears as needed

3. Brake temperature warning light comes on. Next step:

- A) press the accelerator to heat brakes faster
- B) stop and allow cooling without braking
- C) speed up to the next town
- D) switch to higher gear

4. Brake fade is most likely to occur:

- A) during uphill driving
- B) after repeated hard braking on a descent
- C) on flat highways
- D) in cold weather

5. You are descending a steep mountain road in 3rd gear. The brake temperature warning lights up. What should you do?

6. On a 5 km downhill stretch, how many times should you downshift to engine-brake?

7. Your brakes fade halfway down a mountain. You feel the pedal going to the floor. What is the emergency procedure?

8. Define: What is engine braking?

9. Define: Why do brakes overheat on mountain roads?

10. Define: What gear should you use for mountain descent?

Answer Key

1. B) reducing brake temperature and wear — Engine resistance slows the vehicle without using friction brakes, keeping brake temperature low.
2. C) 2nd or 3rd gear, selected before descent — Low gears provide steady engine resistance. Neutral removes all braking; high gears reduce resistance.
3. B) stop and allow cooling without braking — Overheating brakes can fail. Stop immediately and cool—do not brake during cooling.
4. B) after repeated hard braking on a descent — Heat buildup from repeated braking reduces friction. Steep descents with continuous braking cause rapid fade.
5. Stop immediately at a safe location (pull-over, rest area). Allow brakes to cool without using them (do not apply brakes while cooling). Check brake fluid level and condition. Do not continue descent if overheating happens; brake failure risk is high.
6. Select the lowest gear (2nd or 3rd) BEFORE the descent starts. Maintain that gear throughout the descent. Use light brake pressure only (20–30% force) to supplement engine braking. Downshift 2–3 times is excessive; stay in one low gear for stability.
7. Downshift immediately to lowest gear for maximum engine resistance. Find a runaway truck ramp or steep side road to climb if available. If no ramp: steer toward bushes or terrain to slow the vehicle naturally. NEVER pump the brakes in a panic; steer for safety first.
8. Using a low gear to let engine resistance slow the vehicle, reducing brake wear and overheating.
9. Long, continuous braking on steep descents generates heat faster than it can be dissipated.
10. 2nd or 3rd gear, selected BEFORE the descent to provide engine resistance throughout.

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