

What is HPDE?

High Performance Driver Education (HPDE) refers to driving schools held on dedicated race tracks. The goal of HPDE is to teach drivers proper high-speed driving techniques. Nearby PCA Regions who host HPDE events include Intermountain (IRPCA) (Salt Lake City), Rocky Mountain (RMR) (Denver), Pacific Northwest (PNWR) (Seattle), Inland Northwest (INWR) and Golden Gate (GGR) (Bay Area). In addition, National Auto Sport Association (NASA Utah) sponsors track weekends monthly at UMC. Participants include both students and instructors. Students are grouped according to their ability and experience, with "Novice Group" students being the least experienced, "Intermediate Group" being more experienced and "Advanced Group" drivers being the most experienced. PCA and NASA allow intermediate and advanced students to drive the racetrack without a ride-along instructor. Mandatory classroom briefings and debriefings contributes to the overall learning experience and allows peer-group discussions of on-track performance, incidents and track characteristics.

HPDE events are not racing. Cars on-track operate under strict "rules of engagement" which minimize the likelihood of dangerous encounters with other cars. Occasional off-track excursions into the gravel or grass are normally controlled stops, with track personnel and on-board instructors supervising a safe re-entry onto the track. Passing among participants is allowed only within defined "passing zones", and then only with clear hand signals and instructor confirmation. PCA and NASA increase the number of passing zones or eliminate the requirement for signals in groups with more experienced students to reduce traffic on track.

HPDEs encourage participants to drive within their ability and improve their car-control skills with each event. Instructors and staff evaluate each student's progress throughout the weekend, and make recommendations on the student's advancement through successively higher skilled driver groups. It is extremely important for Novice drivers to learn the basic safety measures of the sport first such as entering the track, flags, corner worker functions and emergency procedures. It is also important to master basic car control skills and the racing line before worrying about how fast you are going. Then, as you drive more laps, you learn to go faster!