

# Motorsport UK Licence Application Pack and ARKS Training Syllabus

Congratulations on taking the first step to starting motor racing. Included in the pack are all the details and information you require to start the exciting sport of Kart Racing.

## **The pack includes**

Motorsport UK First Licence Application Form

A USB memory stick containing the "Starting Karting Video" plus those for the other disciplines. The Karting video is also available on [www.arks.co.uk](http://www.arks.co.uk)

Also on the USB: Motorsport UK Yearbook - 'Blue Book'\*

Also on the USB: Karting Yearbook - 'Gold Book' \*

Details of Association of Racing Kart Schools in the brochure

Which is a useful handbook of information about taking your test

Available on the ARKS Website [www.arks.co.uk](http://www.arks.co.uk) -

Guidance Notes for Taking Your ARKS Driving Test.

ARKS Training Syllabus

Checklist for new drivers and a list of the Flags

Your examiner or instructor should give you a copy of our questionnaire about how we performed which we kindly ask you to complete and return with your licence application.

Please contact Motorsport UK if any items are missing from your pack on 01753 765000.

*\*please note these are 'live' documents and you should look for the latest version on [www.motorsportuk.org](http://www.motorsportuk.org)*

## **The Next Step**

Kart racing is an exciting sport which has all the excitement and intricacies of motor racing. It is a challenging but fun sport, requiring skill and often some training.

After watching the Starting Karting video there are four ways to start your karting career. The most logical way is to use one of the Association of Kart Racing Schools (ARKS) to gain professional training on how to drive a racing kart and develop a working knowledge of how to maintain and get the most from a kart before having the expenditure of purchasing karting equipment. It is also possible to go out and buy a racing kart and learn independently how to drive it and look after it. Another method is by approaching a race team (ARKS Schools often have race teams), who will guide a driver through starting karting using a system called race hire. And lastly there is a ladder of starting at an indoor kart circuit, like the Teamsport chain, or with an approved arrive and drive series like Club 100.

These will be the lowest cost starting points.

### **Association of Racing Karts Schools (ARKS)**

The members of the Association of Racing Kart Schools are listed on the enclosed brochure within your Starting Karting Pack. These schools are professional training organisations recognised by Motorsport UK to carry out training for novice drivers to the necessary standard to pass the ARKS Test.

The schools will offer a range of training sessions, taking the novice driver from their first exploratory laps up to a full racing speed. During training the ARKS instructor will show the pupil how to drive a kart, racing lines, throttle and brake control, steering and track procedures. Additionally instruction will be given on kart racing as a sport, covering aspects such as the various officials and their role in the sport, safety rules such as flags, racewear, track discipline, plus general information on buying kart racing equipment and maintaining it.

The schools will supply all the necessary racewear as well as the kart equipment, so that no great expenditure is involved. The equipment, because of the controls set down by ARKS and Motorsport UK, will be reliable and safe.

By attending a driving school, the novice driver will be instructed from the start on how to drive a racing kart correctly, safely and quickly from his/her first lap rather than picking up faults which are at a later stage very difficult to rectify. The information gained at a school will help to prevent costly mistakes in the future.

Most schools offer introductory sessions and tuition to pass an ARKS Test. Call members on the enclosed brochure to find out more details.

### **Buying your own Equipment**

The second way of starting karting is to go straight into buying your own karting equipment. Equipment can be bought either new or second hand. If buying second hand equipment, it is recommended that this is either purchased from a kart trader, somebody still racing, just retiring or from the classified adverts in one of the Karting magazines or on a U.K. karting website. You should ensure that the kart purchased is suitable to race under the latest class rules. Buying a second hand kart from a non karting environment (such as a general motoring magazine or auction based website) will likely result in an old/or unsuitable kart. Before making a decision, always first visit your local kart club to see which classes are popular. Clubs and circuits are listed in the enclosed brochure, and in the Gold Book.

The latest rules for racewear and kart classes will be found in the Motorsport UK Yearbook and the Kart Gold Book. Do not purchase anything until you have consulted these books for the current requirements and visited your local kart circuit to see which classes are most popular in your area.

Once the karting equipment has been purchased, it will be necessary to practice driving techniques and maintenance of the kart by visiting a local kart track on test

days. These are listed in the Gold Book and on [www.abkc.org.uk](http://www.abkc.org.uk) .

### **Race Hire**

The final way of starting karting is by using an established race team (or ARKS School) to look after all your racing activities. Any experienced team will be able to coach you on how to drive a racing kart and then look after all the racing arrangements and equipment.

Although potentially an expensive way of kart racing, it is probably the most straightforward, with all your needs catered for and although it might cost you more initially, in the long term it may well save money by helping you avoid common novice mistakes. Look in the karting media for teams offering this facility or consult the ARKS members, as a number of the schools also offer this service.

### **The ARKS Test**

Before any driver can start kart racing they must hold an Motorsport UK kart competition licence. You may however practice/test on many kart circuits without a licence; a licence is required only when the decision to start racing has been made. Some clubs may offer Kart Tyro/Clubman racing, Junior for age 11 -16 (karts up to 10 horsepower) and Senior for age 16 upwards (karts up to 18 horsepower) where a Kart Clubman licence can be obtained in advance or on the day of the race without taking the ARKS test but under strict observation. Otherwise the first licence for novice drivers is called a Kart Interclub (Novice) Licence. Included in the Start Karting pack is an application form for this licence.

The application form is easily completed with standard items such as name, date of birth and address details. Most drivers require no medical, but a medical declaration must be completed and if any of the questions indicate an issue Motorsport UK may ask for a full medical, and the driver cannot be licenced immediately. Drivers planning to race long circuit (the big motor racing circuits) that are aged over 60 do need a medical, and all need an eye test. The final part of the application form is a school signature from an ARKS member or a signature from an Motorsport UK Club Examiner; this is achieved on an ARKS Test.

ARKS Tests are run by ARKS member Schools, who are listed on [www.arks.co.uk](http://www.arks.co.uk) and Club Examiners, listed in Appendix 9 of the Gold Book. When the novice driver is getting close to being ready for an ARKS Test, they should contact an ARKS School or one of the Club Examiners to find out when they are running their next test day. These are usually run once or twice a month by schools and kart clubs (whom the examiners represent). The minimum age for taking the ARKS test is 5 years and 9 months (for the Bambino class). Tests can not be administered by close relatives.

The ARKS test was devised by the ARKS members in conjunction with Motorsport UK. It typically lasts a couple of hours, often spread over a test day, and tests the knowledge and driving ability of a novice kart driver. To pass the test, a novice driver must be able to drive safely and to a racing standard and have a thorough knowledge of the sport of karting. Complete knowledge is

required of the safety rules, such as the flag signals used, the role of the officials and how to respond to their instruction, and the general rules of the sport.

The ARKS Test starts by watching the "Starting Karting" video, covering all aspects of participating in the sport of karting and driving racing karts. Alongside this is a briefing, discussing safety, kart driving and track discipline and it all takes about half an hour. The licence applicant will then have the driving assessment and oral/written assessment which can be taken in either order.

The driving assessment starts with the kart being introduced to the novice driver to ensure that they are fully familiar with its controls and danger areas. Typically a familiarisation session will follow, with the driver becoming used to the kart and circuit being used. Then after feedback, a driving assessment follows, where the driver must demonstrate to the ARKS Instructor or Club Examiner that they can drive a racing kart competently and in a safe manner at a level appropriate for racing. During the assessment, the instructor or examiner will complete a driving assessment form which picks out elements of driving performance. The Instructor or Examiner will set a target laptime based on a 'mid-grid' time typical for that class of kart and the relevant track conditions. The best time by the novice must be within 10% of this target to pass the test. This is judged so that a novice should not normally be lapped in a heat at a race meeting. If 13 out of 18 areas of the general section (plus 3 out of 4 for gearbox karts) and all of the Overall Section are passed, the instructor will pass the novice driver on this part of the test.

The oral/written test is a series of multiple choice questions about the sport of kart racing. Each question is followed by 5 answers, only one of which is correct. These can either be read out to the novice driver or left for them to read for themselves. The novice driver passes this section with 100% correct answers on flag signals plus 80% on Safety and General topics. There may be an option to take the written test online (TBA).

The instructor or examiner will conclude with a de-briefing session, explaining how the novice driver has performed in the test and areas to work on. They will also discuss how a kart race meeting is run. If the applicant has been successful the application form is stamped with the ARKS member school's name and signed by the licenced instructor, or signed by the Club Examiner. It is now ready to be returned to Motorsport UK who will issue a Kart Interclub (Novice) Licence and the driver is then ready to go racing. If only one part of the test is passed, a pass slip will be issued to record this and a re-test of the failed part can be taken later. The fee for the first licence(s) is included in the price of the Start Karting pack.

In most cases, it will be possible to compete in the immediate days after a successful assessment. Assuming all the medical self-assessment questions on the licence application form have been completed satisfactorily, the novice can take the licence application form to their first race meeting in lieu of the licence, and hand it over to the Competition Secretary with the licence fee payable (if any).

The Motorsport UK Steward has the final decision on whether the novice can race, and the club will send the application to Motorsport UK at the first opportunity. This can only be done once. The novice should fix a photograph to the white Upgrade Card (obtainable from the website), sign it, and hand this in at the same time for their first signature. The MSA will recognise the ARKS Test as one of the signatures, this is not to be marked on the Upgrade Card. Motorsport UK may also allow printed results sheets to be used in lieu of the Record Card for upgrade signatures.

## **The ARKS Test Syllabus**

### **General**

The Guidance Notes should be read as a first starting point and the video "Starting Karting" watched. Two areas are assessed in the ARKS test: The Driving Analysis Test and The Written/Oral Test.

### **Driving Analysis**

The Driving Analysis is a driving test session which will examine the driver's capabilities to ensure that they are ready to start racing. It is expected that to pass the test the driver must have had practice and/or tuition in racing karts (not solely four-stroke indoor karts). The driver will be tested on racing lines, braking, throttle control, steering, general co-ordination and confidence in a racing kart to produce lap times appropriate for a novice driver.

### **Written/Oral Test**

This is a series of twenty multiple choice questions which test the driver's knowledge of the sport. To pass the test it is expected that the driver has watched the "Starting Karting" video in the Starting Karting Pack and has a working knowledge of the parts of the Blue Book applicable to kart racing, and the Kart 'Gold Book' supplied in the Starting Karting Pack.

The driver should have particular knowledge of Yearbook sections G2.1 – 5.3, 7.1 – 7.8, 10.1 – 11.3.3 Officials, H38 Insurance, J3.1 Scrutineering, K10 - 11 Crash Helmets, Q15.1 Flag Signals, U Karting and the appropriate sections of the 'Gold Book' (MSA Kart Race Yearbook, class information plus Appendices)

### **Kart Racing**

Kart racing as a sport was first introduced to this country by a group of US airmen driving home-made karts fitted with lawn mower engines. It has developed from these early basic machines into an international motor sport discipline which, as well as being the breeding ground for future Formula One stars, is a hugely competitive sport entertaining many thousands of drivers throughout the world every weekend of the year.

In the United Kingdom, the sport is governed by The Motorsports UK. The rules for the sport are contained in the Blue Book which is published annually and kept

updated on the [www.motorsportuk.org](http://www.motorsportuk.org) website. These rules are controlled by the Motorsport UK Kart Committee which meets throughout each year to consider improvements to the regulations of the sport.

Kart clubs run race meetings each weekend of the year throughout the country. Each club generally has a race meeting on a particular Sunday each month. The Motorsport UK and the Association of British Kart Clubs (ABKC) have developed the Karting 'Gold Book' containing rules specific to karting, in particular the class rules. It is to the Blue Book and Kart Gold Book that all kart race meetings are run. There may be additional smaller kart classes approved which will have their approved regulations available on the Motorsport UK website. The ABKC is the Regional Association for kart clubs to join.

### **A Typical Kart Meeting**

To participate in a kart race meeting, once a driver has received an Motorsport UK Licence, they must be a member of an affiliated Motorsport UK Kart Club. It is usual to join the club which will be raced at most by the driver which normally includes being entered into the club championship. Keep your membership card with your licence.

A list of kart race meetings held in a year is contained on individual club websites. A driver chooses a meeting to enter and sends in an entry form, which can be obtained from the kart club (website), with personal details and the details of their karting equipment and racing class but now almost always via an online system using a link from the club's website. To begin with you will tick the 'Novice' box, and ensure your kart has black number plates with numbers between 11 and 99. Your member club will normally issue you with a competition number that no one else is using, but at other clubs you may have to change. The entry form needs to be sent with payment for the entry fee (typically £60 to £80) to the Kart Club's competition secretary at least two weeks before the meeting, and usually all payments are on line. Most clubs will email the acceptance. There is usually a test day the day before the race day. Remember to sign on and pay before going on track, attend or read any briefings and fully familiarise yourself with the track rules. Find the supplementary regulations for the event (usually online) and read them thoroughly.

On the day of the meeting, after arrival at about 8am, the driver should first report to the Kart Club race control and sign on, unless this has been done online. This involves signing an indemnity and the novice driver will also hand over his/her licence record card for upgrading signature purposes. (During COVID restrictions results sheets are used in lieu of a signed record card). The record card is sent to you with your licence, and the driver must put his or her photograph on before handing in for a signature. If the driver is under 18 years of age, and the parent or guardian is not present, they must have given written permission to the responsible guardian, and the letter of consent must be handed in at signing-on or emailed to the Competition Secretary. The parent or guardian must accompany the minor to all briefings or investigations by the Clerk of the Course or Stewards.

The driver will also be handed a scrutineering card on which to record the serial numbers of his/her karting equipment and may include putting down the bar codes on the tyres being used for the race. It is very important to get these correct before handing it in. Timing is done by transponder, and you will have to buy one (or possibly hire from the club) for the race meetings. Sometimes all the information on your equipment can be entered online.

Scrutineering is then attended where the driver's kart and race equipment will be checked for safety, unless during COVID this is certified by the entrant online. A driver's briefing will be given by the Clerk of the Course (motor sports' referee). The Clerk of the Course will explain what is expected of the drivers during the day and particular safety items relevant to that circuit. All of this will normally have been completed by 9.30 am, when a minimum of three laps of practice in class order will follow. The race programme will indicate these timings, the order of practice and racing. Each driver will then compete in heats where, in most cases, starting positions will be pre-determined but all novice drivers start at the back. Some clubs may have a timed qualifying session, followed by one or more heats, and one or more finals and in this case the grid positions for all drivers, including novices, are set by the qualifying session time.

The finishing positions in the heats will determine starting positions for the Finals, the main races of the day and for which trophies are presented. The finals take place after the heats and a short break of about 30 minutes, during which the officials have a break and the grid positions are calculated.

At any time during the day, scrutineering may check for legality, usually involving a weight check after races and possibly an equipment inspection. The day ends with the trophy presentation to the most successful drivers. Club championship points may be given just for the position in the final, or it may include points from the heats. The club's Championship Regulations, which you should always read in conjunction with the SRs (Supplementary Regulations), will explain the system.

### **Useful Reference Books and karting publications**

"Karting Explained", available from Amazon and other suppliers. Other titles available.

### **Magazines**

Vroom [www.vroom.it](http://www.vroom.it)

'Motorsport News' and 'Autosport' published by the Motorsport Network.

### **Associations**

ABkC Association of British Kart Clubs [www.abkc.org.uk](http://www.abkc.org.uk) Tel 01926 812177  
ARKS Association of Racing Kart Schools [www.arks.co.uk](http://www.arks.co.uk) Tel 01926 812177  
MSUK Motor Sports Association [www.msauk.org](http://www.msauk.org) Tel 01753 765000