



Duck Tour Operators

Driving an Original Wisconsin Duck

In addition to the scenic splendor of a Duck tour, Original Wisconsin Ducks drivers themselves make the excursion a unique experience. More than 100 applicants are considered each year to work as tour guides for the Original Wisconsin Ducks, but only 60 make the cut. It is one of the most sought-after summer jobs in Wisconsin Dells. Most tour operators work their way up through the ranks with many candidates working a year in the maintenance shop before deciding to put in for a driver's position. Applicants must be at least 18 years old.

Original Wisconsin Ducks conducts rigorous training of drivers as part of an overall standard of excellence that sets it apart from other amphibious tours. The training involves extensive written and practical testing, both internally and with outside agencies such as the Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources and the American Red Cross.

Duck driver applicants must truly be dedicated to endure the intensive six-week training. Tour operators must learn to operate the large lumbering vehicles, of which about half in the fleet are still outfitted with original double-clutch transmissions. After mastering basic Duck operation in an empty parking lot, they proceed to the woods where the driver learns to maneuver the Duck along 8½ miles of winding Duck Trails surrounding the Dells and the Wisconsin River. Only after recruits have perfected the narrow trails are they teamed with a senior, experienced driver to complete their first week of tours through the spectacular sights of Wisconsin Dells.

Other than the obvious requirements of age and excellent driving skill, a Duck driver must possess a charming wit, an outgoing personality and must enjoy interacting with the thousands of visitors who ride the Original Wisconsin Ducks each season.