

Road Users' Handbook



This handbook is an interpretation of the law made easy to understand by using plain English. Laws change often so make sure you have the most recent handbook or obtain more information from *Road Rules 2014*. Both publications are available on the Roads and Maritime Services website at rms.nsw.gov.au

This handbook is also available on our website in: Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese.

Other Roads and Maritime publications

- Getting your Driver Licence
- A guide to the Driving Test
- Hazard Perception Handbook
- Driver Qualification Handbook
- A Guide for Older Drivers
- Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook
- Motorcycle Riders' Handbook
- Braking Habits.

Introduction

Whether you are a new or an experienced driver, the *Road Users' Handbook* provides practical information on NSW road rules as well as road safety, low risk driving, vehicle registration and penalties for driving offences. The road rules are a framework for the safe and efficient movement of traffic on NSW roads. This updated handbook is essential reading for anyone learning to drive, or upgrading a licence. It is also a good way for experienced drivers to keep up to date with changes to road rules and is informative for interstate or overseas visitors who want to drive.

It is well known that young drivers are at higher risk of being involved in a crash. In fact, crash data shows that drivers aged 17 to 20 years are twice as likely to be involved in fatal and injury crashes. In response to this issue, Roads and Maritime launched a new licensing scheme called the Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS). It was introduced on 1 July 2000 and is a key component of Road Safety 2010, the NSW Government's framework to reduce the road toll.

The GLS aims to help new drivers gain more experience and become skilled and safer drivers by spreading the learning process over a minimum of three years. For some people, this handbook represents the first step towards gaining a full driver licence. Studying the *Road Users' Handbook* will help you pass the Driver Knowledge Test (DKT) and gain a learner licence. While the handbook tells you all you need to know to pass the test, it also contains some valuable road safety advice and low risk driving techniques that are useful to all drivers.

Remember, safe road use is a responsibility we all share – whether as drivers, motorcyclists, bicycle riders, pedestrians or even passengers.

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How to use this handbook

The *Road Users' Handbook* is a comprehensive information source for the rules and regulations, information and advice that you need to drive safely on NSW roads.

Learners must read it thoroughly to be able to get a learner licence. For other road users the handbook offers a way to check current road rules, or to understand more about road safety and safe driving techniques.

To make it easy to find what you want to know the handbook is divided into sections. At the end of each section is a summary that helps you remember or revise key points. To help test your knowledge there are also sample sets of questions taken from the Driver Knowledge Test. In addition, you will find an overview of penalties for traffic offences.

The back of the handbook contains the answers for each section, an index and glossary of terms.

Other useful Roads and Maritime publications are shown on page 1. Most are available at any registry or service centre or on the website at rms.nsw.gov.au

Section 2: Licences

This section is essential reading for people wanting to obtain a licence to drive or ride on NSW roads. It is also useful for drivers planning to upgrade a licence to drive a different vehicle, such as a truck.

Section 2 explains:

- The licensing system, including the Graduated Licensing Scheme, showing the various steps you must take to obtain a full licence
- The first step in getting a learner licence is taking the Driver Knowledge Test
- Information on eyesight tests and proof of identity
- The different types of licence available, what skills or experience are required to get each licence and the obligations of licence holders
- The various licence classes, which show what kind of vehicle you are allowed to drive
- Information for drivers from interstate and overseas
- Information for disabled drivers, those with medical conditions, and those aged 75 and older
- Information about organ donation.

Section 3: Road safety

To make sure our roads are safe for all road users, it is critically important that you understand how to behave on the road to prevent crashes. Drivers, passengers, motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians all need to be aware of their responsibilities when sharing the road.

Section 3 explains:

- Speeding and its dangers, including facts on fatal crashes, attitudes to speeding and the effect of speeding under different conditions
- Drink driving risks, including the legal limit for alcohol, its effect on driving and how drugs and medications affect driving
- How seatbelts and child restraints save lives, including how to use restraints and the various types of child restraints
- Fatigue, its hazards and tips on how to avoid fatigue
- Pedestrians' rights and responsibilities, as well as safety for motorised wheelchairs
- The importance of being alert to other road users, especially pedestrians, motorcyclists, bicyclists, trucks, buses and horse riders.

Section 4: Safe driving

This section provides key safe driving behaviours which are useful for all drivers.

Section 4 explains:

- Observation, speed management and road positioning
- The importance of crash avoidance space
- The most common crash patterns
- Posture, braking and steering techniques
- EcoDriving.

Section 5: General road rules

Every road user needs a working knowledge of the rules that apply to our roads. This section offers comprehensive coverage of the main rules governing our roads.

Section 5 explains:

- Speed limits and how they apply in different zones
- The rules about drinking and driving
- A driver's responsibility for vehicle occupants to wear restraints
- Rules that govern signalling and traffic lights
- The purpose of road markings, traffic signs and lane markings
- How to overtake and drive on motorways
- The meaning of parking signs and limits in various places at various times of day
- Using lights and horns
- Laws on mobile phones
- The rules for towing.

Section 6: Vehicle registration

All vehicles using NSW roads must be registered and roadworthy. This section provides a brief explanation of vehicle safety requirements.

Section 6 explains:

- Registering your vehicle
- Requirements for displaying number plates
- Tyres (pressure, tread and wear)
- Defect notices on unroadworthy vehicles
- Illegal protrusions on the front of vehicles.

Section 7: Penalties

This section provides an overview of the penalties for traffic offences.

Section 7 explains:

- The penalties for exceeding the speed limit, including demerit points, fines and licence suspension
- The implications of serious, negligent and dangerous driving offences
- How the street and drag racing penalties can result in the loss of a vehicle
- The implications of not settling a traffic fine
- The penalties for drink driving and unlicensed driving.

Licences

Think of your licence as a ‘contract’, or an agreement between you as a driver and the rest of society. Roads and Maritime and the NSW Police administer this contract on behalf of the people of NSW. When you get your licence, look after it. Do not abuse it or allow it to be misused. There is a heavy penalty if you fraudulently alter, use or lend a licence to another person or allow a licence to be used by another person.

Obligations of licence holders

The State provides the roads for drivers to use if they meet certain conditions.

Drivers must:

- Show that they understand the road rules, most of which are written in this handbook in plain English
- Show that they understand society’s concerns to reduce the impact of traffic on the environment and to use the road system efficiently
- Show the skills necessary to drive safely
- Obey the laws and drive responsibly
- Pay a licence fee which goes towards maintaining the system.

The contract can be broken by significant traffic offences which cause inconvenience, costs or suffering to others. These offences carry penalties such as fines, licence cancellation, disqualification or suspension or, in extreme cases, imprisonment.



If you are under 18 and use a false ID to gain entry to licensed premises or to obtain alcohol, Roads and Maritime may extend your provisional licence for a period of six months.

Bribing people is against the law

It is illegal to offer, request or accept gifts, rewards, money or other favours in order to get a licence without passing the required tests. Penalties are severe and include fines and imprisonment. All cases of corruption will be investigated and strong action will be taken against all those involved.

The only licence fees and charges you have to pay are set by Roads and Maritime. Do not pay any more or offer to pay more to get your licence.

If you know or believe that anyone has got or is about to get a NSW licence by offering or responding to a request for a bribe – or if you suspect or know of any other corruption involving a Roads and Maritime employee – telephone Roads and Maritime on 1800 043 642 (free call) or the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) on (02) 8281 5999.

The licensing system

You need the correct licence to drive on public roads in NSW. The NSW licensing system:

- Helps make travel on our roads safe, efficient and environmentally friendly
- Ensures that all drivers have the required knowledge, skills and medical fitness
- Provides penalties for drivers who do not meet their responsibilities as road users.

Having the correct licence

It is very important to have the correct licence when you drive. You must have:

- A current licence which is not expired, cancelled or suspended
- The correct licence class for the type of vehicle you are driving
- A NSW licence if you have been a resident of NSW for more than three months
- An interstate licence if you are a visitor from interstate
- A current licence from another country if you are visiting from overseas.
If your licence is not in English you must also carry an International Driving Permit or an English translation of your overseas licence.

In addition, you must not drive if you are disqualified from driving by a court in NSW or any State or Territory in Australia or overseas. Drivers with licences from another State or Territory or overseas must not drive if their visiting driver privileges have been suspended by Roads and Maritime.

Driving without a licence

Heavy penalties apply for driving without a licence, with an expired, cancelled, suspended or disqualified licence or a licence of the wrong class. See the Penalties section for more information.



There is a penalty for allowing an unlicensed driver to drive your vehicle.

Before you allow someone to drive your vehicle check that they have a valid licence.

When your licence is checked

Police check that you have the correct licence when:

- You are involved in a crash, whether you were at fault or not
- You have been stopped because you committed a traffic offence
- You have been stopped for a random breath test either by a stationary breath testing unit or by a mobile breath testing unit.



Carry your licence when driving

You must carry your licence with you when driving. This helps the Police and Roads and Maritime inspectors to check that you are correctly licensed. Penalties apply for not having your licence with you.

The Graduated Licensing Scheme

Roads and Maritime has a Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) for new drivers. The scheme is based on extensive research in Australia and overseas. It uses sophisticated methods and the latest technology to prepare inexperienced drivers for a lifetime of safe and efficient driving.

How the Scheme works

New drivers are required to pass through three licensing stages before obtaining a full licence.

- Learner licence
- Provisional licence, stage 1 (P1-red)
- Provisional licence, stage 2 (P2-green).

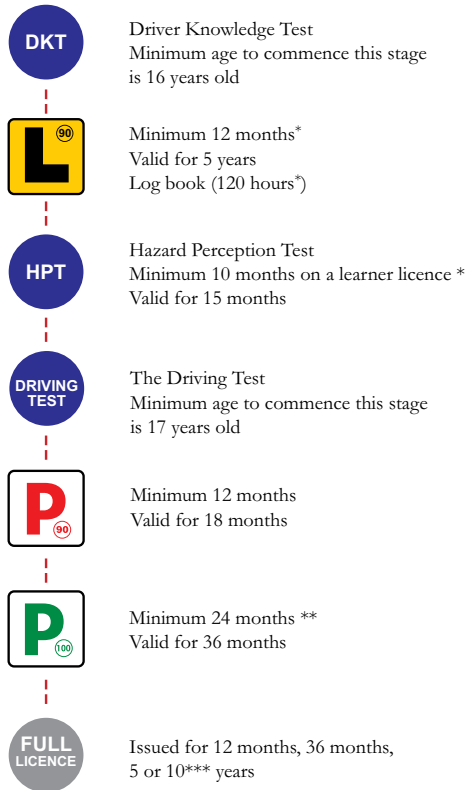
New drivers will have at least 36 months of experience and have passed three tests before finally graduating to a full licence.

The flow chart on the next page shows how a new driver will progress through the licensing scheme.



Passing your driving test in an automatic vehicle

If you passed your driving test in an automatic or clutchless manual transmission vehicle, you can only drive a manual vehicle as a P1 driver when accompanied and supervised by a full licence holder. If you wish to drive a manual vehicle unaccompanied before you're issued with a P2 licence, you must pass the driving test in a manual vehicle with a foot-operated clutch.



*Applies to under 25 year olds only.

**P2 drivers who receive a suspension for unsafe driving behaviour must stay on their licence for an extra six months for every suspension they receive.

*** 10 years applies to full licence holders aged 21 to 44 years.

Three tests towards a full licence

- 1 The computer based Driver Knowledge Test (DKT), which must be passed before obtaining a learner licence
- 2 The computer based Hazard Perception Test (HPT), must be passed before attempting the driving test
- 3 The Driving Test, must be passed before progressing to a P1 licence.

When you are issued a P1 licence, there are no more driving tests to progress to a P2 and unrestricted licence.

For more information about the Graduated Licensing Scheme for new drivers, go to our website or visit a registry or service centre.



Before attempting the driving test, read *A Guide to the Driving Test*.

Driver Knowledge Test (DKT)

As the first step to obtaining a learner licence, you must pass the DKT. The DKT is a touch-screen, computer based test that assesses your knowledge of the road rules.

How to prepare for the DKT

All the information needed for a Class C (Car) test is included in this handbook. You should be able to pass the test by studying the handbook carefully. In addition to the handbook, all DKT questions can be downloaded from our website or you can test your knowledge of the road rules by taking the practice DKT, on the website.

When studying the handbook, be careful not to skip any sections. All the information applies to you. Even if you are going for a car or motorcycle learner licence you may be asked about some of the rules involving heavy vehicles (such as using bus lanes).

For heavy vehicle or motorcycle tests you should study this handbook as well as the *Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook* or the *Motorcycle Riders' Handbook*.

How the DKT works

The DKT is undertaken on a computer and consists of 45 questions, randomly selected from a question bank of approximately 600. Each question is displayed in turn on the screen. To answer the question, you must touch one of three answer options on the screen.

No-one knows which questions will be chosen, but, there will be:

- 15 general driver knowledge questions. You will need to get at least 12 correct
- 30 road safety questions (including 10 traffic signs questions). You will need to get at least 29 correct.



A typical question from the DKT

How close can you park to another vehicle when parked parallel to the kerb?

- You must leave at least one metre front and back.
- You must leave at least two metres from the front only.
- You must leave at least three metres front and back.

The DKT will terminate if you have incorrectly answered four general driver knowledge questions, or two road safety questions.

During the test you are not allowed to:

- Receive any unauthorised assistance
- Use any materials that would help you to pass the test
- Use a mobile phone or other communication device
- Speak or signal to any other person (except the testing officer when necessary)
- Leave the test area.

People caught cheating will immediately fail and will be banned from taking another DKT for six weeks.

How old you should be to take a DKT?

You can attempt the DKT for a car licence when you are at least 16 years of age and you have studied this handbook.



EYESIGHT TESTS FOR ALL LICENCE CUSTOMERS

To apply for a NSW licence you must pass an eyesight test. You can wear your glasses or contact lenses for the eyesight test. When you wear them, your licence will show S for spectacles, which means that you must wear glasses or contact lenses when you drive. Should you fail the eyesight test you will be asked to produce a satisfactory eyesight report issued by a general practitioner, specialist eye doctor or an optometrist, certifying that you meet the required visual standard.

Eyesight tests are required when:

- Applying for a licence for the first time (including learners and people converting from interstate or overseas).
- Renewing an existing licence.
- Upgrading an existing NSW licence.

However, you do not need to have an eyesight test if you are renewing a licence if you are:

- Under 45 years of age and have passed an eyesight test within the last 10 years
- Over 45 years of age and have passed an eyesight test within the last 5 years.

Booking a DKT

You will need to book and pay a fee to take a DKT. When you are ready, make a booking:

- By selecting my Tests at www.myRTA.com
- By calling Roads and Maritime on 13 77 88
- In person at a registry or service centre.

DKT bookings made by phone or online can be paid for by credit card only. Bookings made at a registry or service centre can be paid for by Eftpos, cash, cheque or credit card.

Should you wish to change or cancel your booking, you may do so online at myRTA.com or by calling 13 77 88 or by visiting a registry or service centre. This must be done at least the day prior to the test date or your fee will not be refunded.

Where to go for the DKT

A DKT can be taken at any registry or service centre. In towns without a registry or service centre, you can go to a Roads and Maritime agency

for the test – the Roads and Maritime agency is usually at the council chambers or police station. On the day you go for the DKT, you need to provide a completed Licence Application Form and show acceptable proof of your identity (See the brochure *How to prove who you are*). If your identity documents do not meet Roads and Maritime standards you cannot attempt the DKT.

Failed DKT

If you fail the DKT, another fee is charged to sit the test again. You should only re-attempt the test when you are ready. You need to bring your application form and identity documents.



Proof of identity

You need to provide proof of your identity and have a NSW residential address when you apply for a driver licence.

For more information about proof of identity documents, get the brochure *How to prove who you are* from any registry or service centre or visit our website. There are also special requirements that apply if you have changed your name.

Non-English speakers/applicants with special needs

The DKT is also available in nine community languages (Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Greek, Korean, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish and Vietnamese). The *Road Users' Handbook* is also available in these languages and in Japanese.

Should you wish to undertake the test in a language other than English or in any of the nine community languages above, an interpreter service is available. If you require this service please call 13 77 88.

An audio function is available in English and each of the nine community languages. This allows you to listen to the questions and answer options through a headset. If you wish to use the audio/sound option, please advise the testing officer before starting your test.

Applicants with special needs (or their representatives) should discuss any issues related to their needs or disabilities with the registry or service centre manager before booking the test. This allows time for appropriate arrangements to be made for the applicant on the day of the test. Arrangements can be made by calling 13 77 88.

Licence types

Learner Licence

To get a Class C (car) learner licence you must pass the DKT, sit an eyesight test and pay a fee. You must be aged 16 years or older.

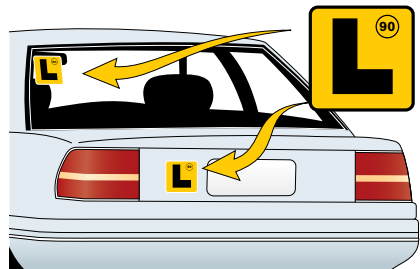
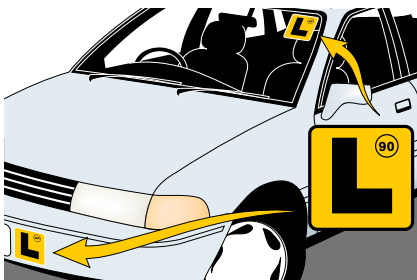
After passing the DKT and paying the fee, you will be issued with a learner licence Class C (car) and be given the option to take home a learner driver log book or to download a digital log book app. In addition, if you are under 25 years of age and held your learner licence for at least 10 months, you must pass a *Hazard Perception Test* (HPT) to prepare yourself for the driving test. Before attempting the driving test, a learner must have completed 120 hours of driving time (including 20 hours of night time driving) and held their learner licence for at least 12 months.

The learner licence is issued for five years.

Learners aged 25 and older do not have any minimum periods for tests and can attempt a test when they are ready.



Digital Learner driver log book apps are now available please visit rms.nsw.gov.au for more details about how the apps work and where to go to download one.



L signs must be clearly displayed on the front and back of the exterior of the vehicle. The letter L must not be hidden. Penalties apply for non or improper display of 'L' signs



When learning to drive it's a good idea to start on quiet streets that you know well. Start off driving only in daylight. Drive at night once you gain experience.

Licence Restrictions for Learners

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Your BAC must be zero. This means you cannot have any alcohol in your system when you drive a vehicle.
Demerit points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur four or more demerit points.
Display of L signs	L signs must be clearly displayed on the front and back of the exterior of the vehicle. See illustration opposite.
Seatbelts	You must ensure all occupants are properly restrained by seatbelts or approved restraints.
Speed limit	You must not drive faster than 90 km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 90 km/h.
Supervision	A person who has an appropriate Australian full licence (not a learner or provisional licence or an overseas licence) must sit next to you.
Towing	You must not tow a trailer or any other vehicle.
Location restrictions	You must not drive in Parramatta Park, Centennial Park or Moore Park when in Sydney.
Mobile phone	You must not use a mobile phone at all when driving.
Licence class	You cannot learn to drive for a higher licence class.



Suspension or cancellation of learner licence

A learner who commits driving offences may have their licence cancelled by a court or suspended or cancelled by Roads and Maritime.

A learner licence can be suspended by Roads and Maritime for offences such as:

- Driving without a supervising driver
- The driver or passengers not being restrained by seatbelts or child restraints, as appropriate
- Driving with any passengers in the boot or on the vehicle.

Provisional P1 licences

A provisional stage 1 (P1) licence is issued once you have held your learner licence for 12 months (if under 25), have passed a *Hazard Perception Test* (HPT) and passed a driving test. You can also get a P1 licence, if you have held a current interstate or overseas licence of a similar type for less than one year.

A P1 licence is issued for 18 months with the conditions shown in the following table.

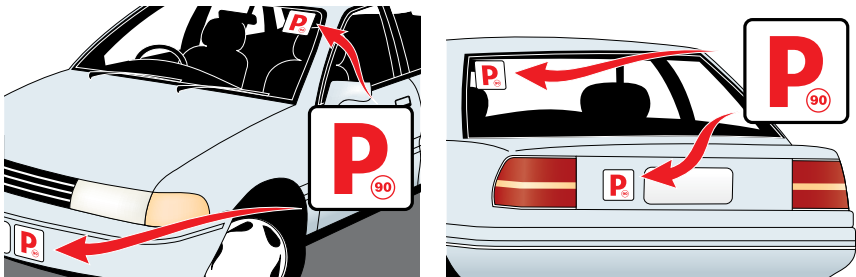
You must hold a P1 licence for a minimum period of 12 months, or periods totalling at least 12 months before progressing to the provisional P2 licence stage. To progress to a P2 licence you must pass an eyesight test and apply for an upgrade to a P2 licence by paying a licence fee.

Suspension or cancellation of P1 licence

If you accumulate four or more demerit points or get a speeding offence, your P1 licence will be suspended for a minimum of three months. When a P1 licence is suspended because of offences, the period of suspension is not counted towards the minimum 12 months needed to progress to a P2 licence.

When a P1 licence is cancelled because of offences, the period the licence was held before the cancellation is not counted.

A one passenger restriction will be applied to a P1 licence if you have had your licence cancelled as a result of being disqualified by a court for a serious driving offence. Please note exemptions may apply.



P signs must be clearly displayed on the front and back of the exterior of the vehicle. The letter P must not be hidden. If towing a trailer, a P sign must be on the back of the trailer. Penalties apply for non or improper display of 'P' signs.

LICENCE RESTRICTIONS FOR P1 LICENCES

Automatic transmission vehicles	You are restricted to driving an automatic vehicle if tested in one.
Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)	Your BAC must be zero. This means you cannot have any alcohol in your system when you drive a vehicle.
Demerit points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur four or more points.
Display of P signs	P signs (red P on a white background) must be clearly displayed on the front and back of the exterior of the vehicle. See illustration opposite.
Licence class	You cannot learn to drive for a higher class licence.
Mobile phone	You must not use a mobile phone at all when driving.
Passengers	P1 drivers under 25 years of age are restricted to carrying one passenger under 21 years of age between 11pm and 5am.
Seatbelts	You must ensure all occupants are properly seated and restrained by seatbelts or approved restraints.
Speed limit	You must not drive faster than 90 km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 90 km/h. Your licence will be suspended for at least three months for any speeding offence.
Supervising a learner	You must not supervise a learner driver.
Towing	You are allowed to tow light trailers up to 250 kilograms unloaded weight.
Vehicles	You must not drive any vehicle with: • Eight or more cylinders (diesel powered engines exempt). • A turbocharged or supercharged engine (diesel powered engines exempt). • Modifications that increase engine performance. • Any other vehicle identified by Roads and Maritime – details available on our website. Please note exemptions may apply.

Provisional P2 licences

A provisional stage 2 (P2) driver licence is issued when you have held a P1 licence for at least 12 months and applied to upgrade to a P2 licence. You can also get a P2 licence if you have held a current interstate or overseas licence of a similar type for more than one year but less than three years.

A P2 licence is issued for 36 months with the conditions shown in the following table.

Upgrading your licence

During the term of the P2 licence, you may upgrade to a higher class of licence, to a maximum of a Heavy Rigid (HR), subject to the licence tenure requirements set out in the *Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook*.

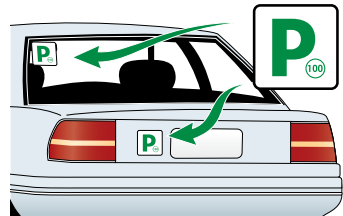
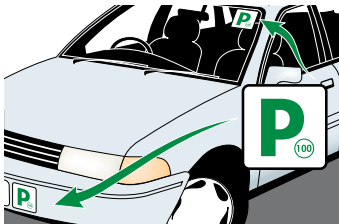
You can progress to a full licence after holding the P2 licence for a minimum period of 24 months (or periods totalling at least 24 months), by passing an eyesight test and paying a licence fee.

Suspension or cancellation of P2 licence

A P2 licence will be suspended for a minimum of three months if you accumulate seven or more demerit points. When a P2 licence is suspended because of offences, the period of suspension is not counted towards the minimum 24 months needed to progress to a full licence. For every unsafe driving suspension a P2 licence holder receives, they will have six months added to their minimum 24 month required time.

When a P2 licence is cancelled, because of offences, the period the licence was held before the cancellation is not counted.

A one passenger restriction will be applied to a P2 licence if you have had your licence cancelled as a result of being disqualified by a court for a serious driving offence. Please note exemptions may apply.



P signs must be clearly displayed on the front and back of the exterior of the vehicle. The letter P must not be hidden. If towing a trailer, a P sign must be on the back of the trailer. Penalties apply for non or improper display of 'P' signs.

Licence restrictions for P2 licences

Blood Alcohol	Your BAC must be zero. This means you cannot have Concentration (BAC) any alcohol in your system when you drive a vehicle.
Demerit points	Your licence will be suspended if you incur seven or more points.
Display of P signs	P signs (green P on a white background) must be clearly displayed on the exterior of the front and back of the vehicle.
Mobile phone	You must not use a mobile phone at all when driving.
Seatbelts	You must ensure all occupants are properly seated and restrained by seatbelts or approved restraints.
Speed limit	You must not drive faster than 100 km/h and must observe the speed limit where it is below 100 km/h. P2 licence holders caught speeding will receive a minimum of four demerit points.
Supervising a learner	You must not supervise a learner driver.
Vehicles	You must not drive any vehicle with: • Eight or more cylinders (diesel powered engines exempt). • A turbocharged or supercharged engine (diesel powered engines exempt). • Modifications that increase engine performance. • Any other vehicle identified by Roads and Maritime – details available on our website. Please note exemptions may apply.

Full (Unrestricted) licence

A full driver licence is issued when you have held your P2 licence for at least 24 months and not received any unsafe driving suspensions.

On a full licence, if you get 13 or more demerit points (or 14 in the case of a professional driver) for traffic offences in three years, your licence will be suspended.

Licence classes

A national driver licence classification system has been introduced in NSW. The licensing system is simpler, reduces the number of licence classes and makes it easier to transfer a licence from one State to another. While the type of licence shows your driving experience, the class of licence shows what kind of vehicles you are allowed to drive.

Special requirements

There are different licence classes because more skill and experience are needed to drive larger, heavier vehicles, or vehicles that carry many passengers. The higher licence classes have special requirements such as:

- Medical assessment
- Eyesight test
- Minimum periods for holding a lower class of licence
- Special knowledge tests
- Either pass a Roads and Maritime driving test or undertake Heavy Vehicle competency based assessment.

Motorcycle rider licence

If you wish to learn to ride a motorcycle you must study this handbook and the *Motorcycle Riders' Handbook* to get a rider learner licence. In most areas of the State you will have to complete a motorcycle pre-learner training course before taking the rider knowledge test.

National Heavy Vehicle Driver licence

A magenta (purple) national licence is issued for HR, HC and MC licence classes. All States and Territories issue these licences, and your home State must issue your licence. Once you qualify for a magenta licence, the fee can be paid for one, three or five years.



If you carry eight or more passengers for hire, reward, business or trade, you may be required to maintain a *National Driver Work Diary*. See *Heavy Vehicles Drivers' Handbook* for more information.



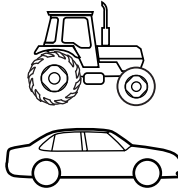
INFORMATION ABOUT MOTORCYCLE AND HEAVY VEHICLE LICENCES

For more information about licence classes other than a C, refer to the *Motorcycle Riders' Handbook* or *Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook*, available from our website, any registry or Service NSW centre. People learning to drive a heavy vehicle must be accompanied by a person who holds a current full driver licence for the type of vehicle being used for tuition. The supervisor must have held the full licence for at least 12 months.

Driver licence classes in new south wales

Car (C)

No more than 4.5t Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM), carry up to 12 adults including driver. Any tractor implement or a car-based motor tricycle.



Rider (R)

Any motorcycle or motor tricycle.



LIGHT RIGID (LR)

More than 4.5 (GVM) but no more than 8t (GVM). Carry more than 12 adults including driver. Towed trailer of no more than 9t (GVM).



medium RIGID (MR)

Two axles and more than 8t (GVM). Towed trailer of no more than 9t (GVM).



heavy RIGID (HR)

Rigid vehicle, three or more axles, more than 8t (GVM). Towed trailer of no more than 9t (GVM). Articulated buses



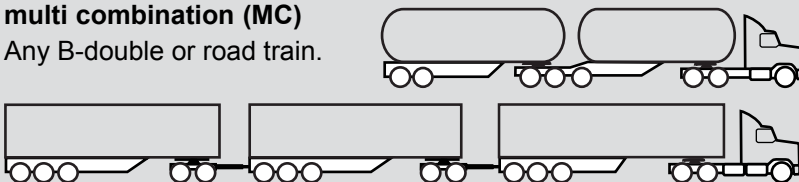
heavy combination (HC)

A prime mover attached to a semi-trailer (plus any unladen converter dolly) or rigid vehicle towing a trailer of more than 9t (GVM).



multi combination (MC)

Any B-double or road train.



Licensing requirements for car based motor tricycles

Holders of full NSW car or rider licences are allowed to ride car-based motor tricycles. This type of motor tricycle must:

- Display compliance plates with the categories LEM, LEP or LEG
- Have rear mounted engines of the kind manufactured for motor cars with direct drive to the rear wheels
- Be constructed or equipped to seat not more than three adult persons including the driver
- Have two or more of the following characteristics:
 - pedal operated clutch or automatic transmission
 - pedal operated fully integrated brake system
 - left hand gear stick not mounted on the handlebars.

Children under the age of 16 years are not permitted to ride on these vehicles unless the operator has a full rider licence. The driver and any passengers must wear approved, properly fitted motorcycle helmets.

Bus and taxi licences

An LR, MR or HR licence from Roads and Maritime means that you have the skill to drive a large bus. To drive public passenger vehicles as an occupation (for example a tourist coach) you will need to get a public passenger vehicle driver authority issued by Transport for NSW (Transport Operations Division). To drive a public passenger bus or taxi, first get a driver licence and then apply to the Transport Operations Division for a passenger or taxi driver authority. For more information telephone one of the following Transport Operations Division regional offices: Parramatta and Western 1800 227 774, NSW Northern 1800 049 983 or NSW Southern 1800 049 961.

Tow truck licences

To drive or operate a tow truck, apply to Tow Truck Licensing and Compliance, Roads and Maritime for either a driver's certificate or an operator's licence. Telephone 1300 131 134 or fax (02) 8849 2075.

Driving instructor licences

To become a commercial driving instructor, you must be aged 21 or over, and have held a driver licence (not learner, P1 or P2) for the vehicles in which you wish to instruct for three out of the past four years. You will also need to take a training course and meet other requirements set by Roads and Maritime and have a current Working With Children Check. To find out more, call Roads and Maritime on 13 77 88 or visit the website.

Drivers from interstate

Learner licences

If you have moved from interstate and hold a current interstate learner licence and wish to continue driving, you must, within three months:

- Pass an eyesight test before you can obtain a NSW learner licence

After having held your learner licence for at least 10 months you can attempt the Hazard Perception Test.

Once you reach 17 years of age you can take the driving test to obtain your P1 licence if :

- You have held your interstate learner licence for at least 12 months
- Passed your HPT
- Passed an eyesight test.



Current interstate licence holders

If you come to live in NSW from another Australian State or Territory and hold a current interstate licence equivalent to a NSW provisional or full licence, or your interstate licence expired less than five years ago, you can get a NSW licence of equivalent class without a driver knowledge test or driving test.

Transferring interstate licences

You must get a NSW licence within three months of making this State your home. The NSW licence will be issued to the expiry date of the interstate licence up to a maximum of five years.

In Australia you are only permitted to hold one driver licence. Roads and Maritime will take your old licence and destroy it, then notify the issuing State or Territory that it should be cancelled.

You will need to:

- Complete an application form
- Take your interstate photo licence to a registry, service centre or agency
- Provide a proof of identity document from the second list in the brochure *How to prove who you are* to Roads and Maritime.
- Provide proof of your NSW residential address
- Pass an eyesight test
- Have your photo taken
- Pay a licence fee if you have an expired interstate licence.



To receive a full licence you will need to prove that you have held your interstate licence for at least 36 months.

Drivers holding an overseas licence

If you have a current overseas licence and a permanent resident visa, you are allowed to drive or ride in NSW on your current overseas licence for a maximum of three months after arriving in Australia.

To drive with your current overseas licence during the three-month period, you must not be disqualified from driving or riding and your licence must not be suspended or cancelled. You must obtain (not just apply for) a NSW licence within this three-month period if you wish to continue to drive or ride.

Please note that if your overseas licence is not in English, you must also carry your International Driving Permit or an English translation with your licence when driving.

Getting a NSW licence

You must be aged 17 years or over to get a NSW driver licence. If you hold an overseas licence to drive or ride (including a learner licence) and want to get a NSW licence, you must go to a registry or service centre and:

- If your licence is in English, present your overseas licence.
- If your overseas licence is not written in English, provide:
 - Your overseas licence and an official translation from the NSW Community Relations Commission or the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)
 - Where extra licence information is required (for example, about the first issue date or the validity period of the licence or where the type of vehicle authorised to be driven or ridden is not shown) a letter from a relevant consulate or diplomatic office
- If you cannot produce your overseas licence, provide:
 - A letter from the overseas licence issuing authority confirming your licence details and status, or,
 - A letter from a relevant consulate or diplomatic office, based on information received from the overseas licence issuing authority, confirming your licence details and status.

Any letter provided to confirm licence details or status should be in English or have an official English translation as described above.

Before you first attend the registry or service centre, you may wish to obtain a letter from the driver licence issuing authority (on its letterhead), or from your relevant consulate or diplomatic office, confirming your licence details, including the first issue date.

You must also:

- Prove your NSW address
- Prove your identity
- Pass an eyesight test
- Pass a knowledge test for each class of licence required
- Pass a driving test for each class of licence required
- Provide documents proving the first issue date of your licence, if it is not displayed on the licence.

If you fail the driving test, your visiting driver privileges will be withdrawn. To continue driving in NSW you must then get a learner licence that will allow you to drive (while supervised by a person who has an Australian full licence) and then go for another driving test.

Recording overseas licences

Under Australian licensing laws only one licence can be used for driving in Australia. Before a NSW licence will be issued, you must present your overseas licence so that the details can be verified and recorded. Your overseas licence will be returned to you unmarked.

Exemptions from tests

You may be exempt from some tests if any of the following apply:

- You have, within the last five years, held an Australian driver licence which can be verified by the issuing authority
- You hold a current New Zealand driver licence
- You are applying for a Class C (car)
- You are applying for a Class R (rider) licence and you hold a current overseas rider licence, or one that expired within the past five years, from a country recognised as having comparable licensing standards to Australia.

Note: Roads and Maritime reserves the right to require a driving or riding test. A licence may not be issued unless Roads and Maritime is satisfied that the overseas licence is valid.

What NSW licence you are eligible for

The length of time you have held an overseas car or rider licence will determine the type of licence that you are eligible to hold.

- If you have held your overseas car or rider licence for less than one year, you will only be eligible for a P1 licence
- If you have held a car or rider licence for more than one year but less than three years, you will only be eligible for a P2 licence
- If you have held a driver or rider licence for more than three years, you will be eligible for a full licence.

To apply for a class of licence other than one you already hold, you must pass the appropriate knowledge test and driving test (taken in a vehicle of that class).

Temporary overseas visiting drivers

Special licensing rules apply to visiting drivers who want to obtain a NSW licence for the first time.

Information for visiting drivers can be found on our website or in the brochure *Guide for international drivers*.

Disabled drivers

When you apply for a licence, you must state whether your disability could affect your driving. Roads and Maritime will assess your disability as having either a minor or serious effect on your driving ability. If a disability is considered serious, a disability driving test has to be taken. Conditions can be placed on your licence, for example 'may only drive vehicle with automatic transmission'.

Drivers with medical conditions

You must advise Roads and Maritime if you have a medical condition that could affect your driving, such as epilepsy. You are required to give details when you complete an application form, or contact Roads and Maritime should you develop a condition while already holding a licence.

For some medical conditions you will need regular medical examinations to make sure you are fit to drive. Your doctor should have received a copy of the national medical guidelines for assessing fitness to drive a motor vehicle. Roads and Maritime will send a medical report form to be completed by a doctor whenever you are due for an examination. The completed report must be returned to Roads and Maritime.

Roads and Maritime may suspend or cancel your licence if information is available that proves you should not be driving. For example, a doctor may report that a patient does not meet the medical standards and is no longer fit to drive.

Driving and dementia

The gradual and permanent loss of mental functions caused by dementia will over time, reduce a driver's ability to drive safely. In the early stages of this condition, doctors, family and friends should discuss alternative methods of transport for drivers showing signs of dementia.

Further information about driving and dementia can be found on our website.

Drivers aged 75 or over

From the age of 75 you need to have a medical examination every year to make sure that you are fit to drive. Each year when your medical examination is due, Roads and Maritime will send you a medical report form to be completed by your doctor.

Drivers who hold a licence other than a class C and/or R licence have to pass a driving test every year once they turn 80. If you have a class C and/or R licence, your practical driving assessment starts at 85 years. To retain an unrestricted licence you are required to pass the driving assessment every second year (age 85, 87, 89 etc). Roads and Maritime will advise you when you are due for an assessment. A medical examination must be passed before the driving assessment.

If you no longer require an unrestricted licence, you can opt for a modified licence without the need for a driving assessment. Talk to your registry or service centre manager for further information.

Information about whether you are driving safely, how to continue driving safely and what your licence options are can be found on our website rms.nsw.gov.au or in the publication, *A guide to older driving licensing*.

ORGAN DONATION



Organ, tissue and blood donations save lives

Please consider becoming a donor. To become a donor or for information about becoming a donor contact:

- The Australian Organ Donor Register contact 1800 777 203 or visit www.donatelife.gov.au or donatelife.gov.au/decide
- The Australian Red Cross Blood Service contact 131 495 or visit www.donateblood.com.au

You can also register at your local Medicare Customer Service Centre.

Summary

What you should know about licences

This section has explained the importance of licensing in New South Wales. After reading this section, you should know:

- Obligations of licence holders
- What conditions must be met before you can get a driver licence
- What special rules apply to learners
- Under what conditions are provisional licences issued
- How much driving experience you need before getting a full licence
- What the rules are for learning and driving automatic and manual vehicles
- The different licence types and the different licence classes
- What you should do if you have a medical condition and want to drive.

Sample test questions

Test your knowledge

Circle the correct answer. Then check to see if you are right at the end of the book.

1. Can a P1 or P2 driver legally instruct a learner driver?
 - a) No
 - b) Yes, provided the provisional driver has held a P2 licence for more than 6 months
 - c) Yes, provided L and P1 or P2 signs are displayed
2. To progress to a P2 licence, a P1 provisional driver must hold a P1 licence for a minimum period of –
 - a) 18 months
 - b) 12 months
 - c) 24 months
3. Are you required to carry your driver licence with you every time you drive?
 - a) No, being licensed is enough
 - b) No, it is only needed on long trips
 - c) Yes

NOTES

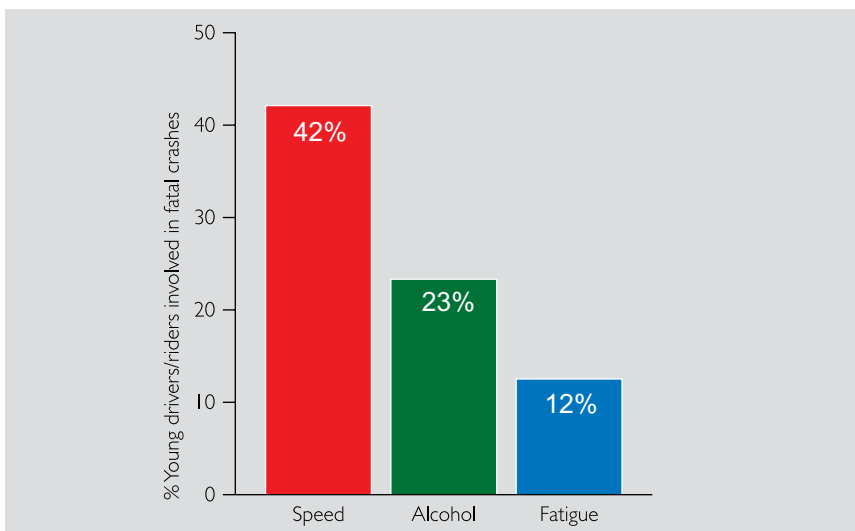
Road safety

Making our roads safer for everyone

**Every year over 400 people are killed on NSW roads.
A further 25,000 are injured.**

The major behavioural factors for deaths on the road are speeding, drink driving, fatigue and not wearing seatbelts.

The graph below shows the major behavioural factors identified for young drivers/riders (aged 17-25) involved in fatal crashes.



The percentage of involvement of speed, alcohol and fatigue for young drivers/riders (17-25 years) involved in fatal crashes in NSW 2005-2009.

Speeding

Speeding is the major cause of death and injury on our roads. It costs the community over \$1,500 million each year.

Speeding is travelling at a speed greater than the speed limit. You can also be speeding if you are travelling too fast for the driving conditions. If road conditions are less than ideal, for example rain, heavy traffic, night time etc, you may be speeding even if you're driving at or below the posted speed limit.

There's no such thing as safe speeding

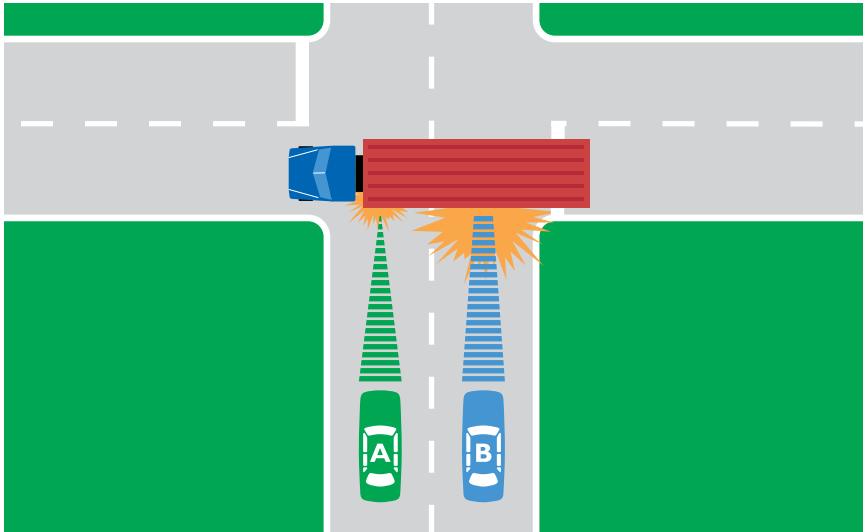
Many people consider that exceeding the speed limit by 5 to 10 km/h is 'acceptable' speeding. This is a dangerous way to think. Research has shown that even a small increase in speed can greatly increase the risk of a crash.



Most drivers underestimate the distance needed to stop their vehicle. When you drive just five kilometres over the speed limit you will need much further to stop even if you brake hard.

5 km/h over the speed limit means 32 km/h on impact

Two cars are travelling, one at 65 km/h and the other 60 km/h. A truck unexpectedly appears across the road about 38 metres ahead and both drivers apply the brakes at the same point. The vehicle travelling at 65 km/h will hit the truck at 32 km/h and suffer extensive damage. The slower vehicle will be travelling at 5 km/h on impact.



Car A was travelling at 60 km/h and hits the truck at 5 km/h. Car B was travelling at 65 km/h and hits the truck at 32 km/h.



While speeding-related crashes involve all age groups, over 50% involve male drivers aged between 17 and 39 years.

Speed limit signs

Speed limit signs state the maximum speed you are allowed to drive in good conditions. Although you must not go faster than the speed limit allows, you can drive slower if you wish.

Slow down in poor conditions

Driving conditions can vary and change quickly, so it is important to slow down when road, weather and light conditions are poor. These conditions also include:

- Road surfaces that are affected by gravel, oil, sand, ice, mud, snow and water
- The time of day, the light, at night and in fog
- Crests or curves and when vision is limited.

On country roads look out for unfenced stock and wildlife.

Driving on unsealed roads

Take extra care when driving on unsealed roads (dirt, gravel). On unsealed roads vehicles take longer to stop and are harder to control. In these conditions all vehicles are at risk of skidding, sliding or rollover. Maintain a low speed as the road condition can change quickly and without warning.

Driving through water

Slow down and proceed with caution when driving through water over a road. Road surfaces under water may not be intact or could be hiding debris, increasing the danger of proceeding. In some cases the water level may still be rising. All vehicles have a limit to the depth of water they may drive through making it difficult to assess how deep and fast the water is moving.

For more information on specific speed limits, see Section 5 **General Road Rules**.

Safe driving during severe weather events

Driving during unpredictable and severe weather events and conditions such as extreme heatwaves, storms, flooding and bushfires should be avoided. When it cannot be avoided, drive with caution and adjust your travel speed in poor visibility and wet conditions. Keep up to date with weather conditions by listening to radio announcements regularly and adjust your route accordingly to avoid driving into danger. Always pack

plenty of water and take regular rest breaks at appropriate locations when driving in extreme weather conditions.

Alcohol, drugs, medicines and driving

It is illegal to drive while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including some over-the-counter and prescription medicines. They significantly affect your driving skills and increase your crash risk. As a driver, you need to be alert and able to concentrate on what you are doing so that you can react to whatever is happening around you on the road. Read the label on drugs and other products to check that they do not contain alcohol (also known as ethanol), or contain a warning about possible effects on your driving ability.



Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC)

BAC is a measure of the amount of alcohol in your blood. The measurement is the number of grams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood. For example a BAC of .05 means .05 grams or 50 milligrams of alcohol in every 100 millilitres of blood.



How to avoid drinking and driving

- Leave your car at home.
- Plan ahead and arrange alternative transport.
- Share a taxi with friends.
- Catch public transport.
- Stay overnight at a friend's place.
- Get a lift with a driver who hasn't been drinking.
- Arrange for a friend or relative to give you a lift.

Effects of alcohol on driving

Alcohol is a depressant and reduces your ability to drive safely because it:

- Slows brain functions so that you can't respond to situations, make decisions or react quickly.
- Reduces your ability to judge how fast you and other vehicles are moving and your distance from other cars, people or objects.
- Gives you false confidence so that you may take greater risks because you think your driving is better than it really is.

- Makes it harder to do more than one thing at a time; while you concentrate on steering you could miss seeing traffic lights or cars entering from side streets.
- Affects your sense of balance and coordination.
- Makes you sleepy.

See Section 5 **General Road Rules** for the legal requirements on alcohol, medicine and drug consumption.



Even if you feel unaffected after drinking be aware that as few as one or two drinks before driving will affect your reaction, judgement, and ability to drive.



Any amount of alcohol increases risk

As a driver's blood alcohol level rises so does the risk of being involved in a crash.

0.05 = double the risk

0.08 = 7 times the risk

0.15 = 25 times the risk

BAC limits

As a learner and provisional driver, your BAC must be zero. This means you must not drive after you have consumed any alcoholic drinks or foods containing alcohol.

Unrestricted licence holders must have a BAC of below 0.05 when driving. Drivers of heavy vehicles, public passenger vehicles and vehicles carrying dangerous goods must stay below 0.02 BAC.

The simplest way to ensure you do not commit a drink driving offence is not to drink at all if you intend to drive.



On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights about 50% of crashes involve alcohol. Crashes involving drink driving are generally more serious.

Factors that contribute to a higher BAC

Even when you know how many drinks you have consumed you will not be able to calculate your BAC because:

- The alcohol concentration of a drink may vary from 2.5% (eg light beer) to over 40% (eg vodka, whisky).

- Alcoholic drinks are served in many different sizes, making it hard to know how much you have actually consumed.

It is impossible to estimate your BAC because:

- There are variations in the size of the glass or bottle used to serve alcohol, for example, wine glasses vary from 100 to 280 mls and beer may be served in pints, schooners or middies.
- 'Topping up' of drinks makes it impossible to know how many drinks you've had.
- Your size and weight influences your body's ability to absorb alcohol. A smaller person will have a higher BAC than someone larger who has drunk the same amount.
- Your gender can affect your body's ability to process alcohol. A woman the same height and weight as a man, drinking the same amount, may have a higher BAC.
- Your general health condition and level of fitness can affect your body's ability to process alcohol. Your BAC can be higher if you are not feeling well, or are tired or stressed.
- Consumption of other drugs affects your body's ability to process alcohol.



GETTING BACK TO ZERO TAKES TIME.

Remember, after a heavy night of drinking it can take more than 18 hours for your BAC to get back to zero. Many people are booked for drink driving the day after.

There is no way you can speed up the rate at which your body gets rid of alcohol. Black coffee, showers or a large meal will not work. The only thing that sobers you up is time.

Breath tests

Random Breath Testing (RBT) is carried out by the Police. All police vehicles are RBT vehicles. A breath test is used to measure your BAC. The Police test your BAC by asking you to speak or blow into an approved breath testing device. There are significant penalties if you are over the legal limit or if you refuse to take a breath test. See Section 7 Penalties, for more information.



If you're planning on drinking, don't drive.
If you're planning on driving, don't drink.

Blood tests

Any driver or supervising driver involved in a crash may be breath tested. Blood tests will also be taken if you are admitted to hospital with injuries from a crash. Refusal to have a blood analysis can result in significant penalties, including fines, loss of licence or imprisonment.

Effects of drugs on driving

Drugs other than alcohol can affect your driving skills and put the safety of passengers or other road users at risk. Drugs can also change your behaviour, causing you to take risks you usually wouldn't consider.

Avoid mixing drugs

A combination of medications or other drugs and alcohol is very dangerous.



Reduce the risks

- Read the labels and information provided with the medication
- Don't drive if you take a medicine that can affect your driving skills
- Never take someone else's prescription medication as you don't know how it might affect you
- Ask the doctor or chemist about driving when using the medication.

Mobile phones and visual display units

Unrestricted licence holders may use a mobile phone for voice calls and audio playing functions only. The phone must either be secured in a mounting or if it is not secured in a mounting, be used without touching any part of the phone, such as via Bluetooth. Touching a phone to use other functions such as text, video calling, internet or email is against the law.



- If the mobile phone is not securely mounted, the driver must not touch the phone in any way, unless the driver is passing it to a passenger
- Visual display units and mobile phones being used as a driver's aid (GPS) must be securely mounted
- All mountings must be commercially manufactured and positioned in the vehicle, so it does not obscure the driver's vision.

Fatigue

Fatigue accounts for about 20% of road deaths in NSW. Driver fatigue is particularly dangerous because it affects everyone, no matter how experienced a driver you are.

What is driver fatigue?

Fatigue is a term used to describe the feeling of being 'sleepy', 'tired' or 'exhausted'. This is your body's way of telling you that you need to stop and rest or sleep. The best way to avoid driver fatigue is to make sure you have plenty of sleep before you set off. The only way to treat driver fatigue once you have already started driving is to stop and rest until you are refreshed.

Facts about fatigue

Fatigue fact 1 Fatigue is associated with the hours when you would normally be asleep. The risk of having a fatal fatigue crash is four times greater between the hours of 10pm and 6am because this is when your body is programmed to sleep. Your temperature falls and your blood pressure drops so that at night and to some extent during the afternoon, your ability to perform tasks can be severely impaired. This includes your ability to drive.

Your circadian rhythms (natural sleep pattern) cause this type of fatigue and there is nothing you can do to stop it. So if you drive at night or early in the morning your risk of driver fatigue is increased.

Fatigue fact 2 The average person needs about eight hours of sleep each night to function normally, teenagers need even more. When you reduce the number of hours you sleep at night you start to accumulate what is called a 'sleep debt'. The only way to treat your sleep debt is by sleeping.

Fatigue fact 3 Fatigue is caused by how long you have been awake. After being awake for 17 hours the risk of driver fatigue is greatly increased.

Fatigue fact 4 You have a high risk of suffering from fatigue immediately after you wake up, when you still feel groggy. This is called 'sleep inertia' and generally lasts between 15 to 30 minutes. Wait until you have overcome sleep inertia before you drive.

All these factors will increase your fatigue.

Fatigue fact 5 The risk of driver fatigue increases with the amount of time you have spent driving. To reduce fatigue you should aim to stop for 15 minutes every two hours. But remember, the only cure for fatigue is a good night's sleep.

Signs of driver fatigue

Driver fatigue severely impairs your concentration and judgement; it slows your reaction time. In fact, some of the effects of fatigue are as dangerous as the effects of alcohol on your driving. As you drive, watch for early warning signs of driver fatigue:

- Yawning.
- Poor concentration.
- Tired or sore eyes.
- Restlessness.
- Drowsiness.
- Slow reactions.
- Boredom.
- Feeling irritable.
- Making fewer and larger steering corrections.
- Missing road signs.
- Having difficulty staying in the lane.

If you feel tired and you notice these signs it is time to STOP. REVIVE. SURVIVE. Regular breaks every two hours will help avoid fatigue.



Tips on avoiding driver fatigue

- Get plenty of sleep before starting off
- Avoid starting a long drive at the end of the day
- Avoid driving between 10pm and 6am or when you would normally be asleep
- Share the driving if you can
- Aim to stop for 15 minutes every two hours
- Pull over and stop when you notice the warning signs of fatigue
- Have light snacks rather than fatty foods
- Avoid too much coffee or sweet soft drinks
- Drink plenty of water – dehydration can cause fatigue
- Stay away from alcohol at all costs
- Stop before you're tired.



A microsleep is a brief and unintended loss of consciousness. It is characterised by head snapping, nodding or closing your eyes for more than a couple of seconds. Microsleeps occur when you try to stay awake to perform a monotonous task such as driving and can last from a few seconds to a few minutes.

During a four second microsleep a car travelling at 100 km/h will travel more than 110 metres while completely out of the driver's control.

Community Driver Reviver

During peak holiday travel periods, such as Christmas, Easter and holiday long weekends, almost 100 Community Driver Reviver sites operate throughout NSW. These are places to take a break during a long journey and have a free cup of tea or coffee and a snack. Local volunteers are on hand to offer advice about road conditions.



Roadside rest areas

Rest areas are places where you can park safely, get out of your car and refresh yourself before continuing your journey. They are available 24 hours a day, all year round and are clearly signposted. Service centres, petrol stations, parks and country towns are other places you can stop and take a break from driving.

The NSW Rest Area maps are available from our website rms.nsw.gov.au found in 'Using NSW roads'.



If you have had a busy weekend and need to catch up on sleep then you are at an increased risk for driver fatigue.

Occupant safety

Each year over 80 people not wearing a seatbelt are killed on the road, and almost 600 are injured. These deaths and injuries could have been prevented if seatbelts had been used correctly.

Seatbelts and child restraints

Seatbelts save lives and reduce injuries in crashes. During a collision, seatbelts prevent you and your passengers from being thrown around in the car or out of the car. Seatbelts also protect passengers from hitting other occupants. In the event of a crash, a seatbelt slows your body down and puts the crash forces on the stronger parts of your body.

You are much more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a crash if you do not wear a seatbelt.



The driver is responsible

Drivers are responsible for all passengers being properly restrained in a seatbelt or approved child restraint. There are fines and demerit points for a driver who is not wearing a seatbelt or who fails to ensure that passengers use seatbelts where available.

Passengers aged 16 years and over who do not use an available seatbelt will also be fined.

Child restraints

There are legal requirements for children aged under 16 years to use an approved seat belt or child restraint. Refer to Section 5 **General Road Rules**.

Child restraints provide excellent protection:

- Always use an approved child restraint exactly as the manufacturer recommends
- Never put the seatbelt around both yourself and a child on your lap. The child could be easily crushed even during heavy braking
- Don't carry your child in your arms. In a crash the child can be crushed, thrown around the vehicle interior, or out of the vehicle
- Children up to the age of 7 years old must be in an approved child restraint or booster seat suitable for their age and size. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions
- Children should be given priority for available seatbelts.

See Section 5 **General Road Rules** for the legal requirements on child restraints.

Children in standard seatbelts

From 1 March 2010, all children under the age of 7 are required to travel in a Standards Australia approved child restraint suitable for their age and size. All children under the age of 7 must travel in the rear seat of a vehicle with 2 or more rows. A child between the ages of 4 to 7 must travel in the rear seat of a vehicle unless all available seating positions have been used by children of a lesser age in a child restraint.

Booster cushions used with a lap only seatbelt must have a child harness. Never use a booster with a lap seatbelt alone.

What type of child restraint to use

Approved child restraints have the Standards Australia label displayed. Child restraints are available in a range of styles to suit children of

different sizes. Restraints are available for children up to 32 kg and/ or 10 years old. All child restraints should be professionally fitted by an Authorised Safety Restraint Fitting Station in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Passenger safety

The influence of passengers

Passengers can have a positive influence in your vehicle by helping you to identify hazards and risky situations. They can change CDs or act as a navigator when you are travelling somewhere new.

Two or more passengers, however, may have a negative influence and affect your driving. The noise and behaviour of passengers can distract you from the task of driving. Some passengers may encourage you to take risks like speeding or breaking road rules, and try to pressure you into high risk behaviour.

It is your responsibility to drive safely and to obey the road rules. This may mean limiting the number of passengers you carry to ensure you are in control. You may also discuss your expectations with your passengers.

Overcrowding is dangerous

It is dangerous and illegal to have too many people in your car, for example people sitting on the floor or on other people's laps. All passengers should be seated and wearing seatbelts or other restraints. Learner drivers, P1 and P2 licence holders are not allowed to carry anyone who is not wearing a seatbelt or not using a child restraint.



A driver must not drive with a person in the driver's lap.

Keeping inside a vehicle

A person must not travel with any part of their body outside a window or door of the vehicle, unless the person is the driver and is giving a hand signal for changing direction, stopping or slowing.

The driver must not drive with a passenger on the vehicle or with any part of the passenger's body outside the vehicle.

Sharing the road

Everyone who uses NSW roads to drive, ride or walk has a responsibility to share the road with others. By respecting the needs of all road users, you can help make our roads safer for everyone.

Considering others

As road users we need to consider others and understand that we all make mistakes. If somebody does something that startles or annoys you, keep calm and maintain your self-control. You must not respond in a threatening or aggressive manner. This kind of behaviour is often called road rage. Road rage is dangerous and illegal. If somebody is aggressive towards you, remain calm and do nothing to aggravate the situation.

Sharing the road with pedestrians

Pedestrians have a right to share the road. As a driver you are legally required to give way to a pedestrian at crossings and when turning at intersections. However, you should always be prepared to stop for pedestrians.

Particularly vulnerable pedestrians are:

- The elderly
- Children
- Pedestrians affected by alcohol or drugs.

Remember to drive slowly and be prepared to stop when driving near pedestrian areas. This is particularly important:

- At and near pedestrian crossings or traffic lights
- Wherever you see children walking, playing or riding bikes
- Near clubs, hotels and restaurants where there are likely to be pedestrians who have been drinking
- Near shopping centres and other busy places where more people are likely to be crossing the road
- Near schools, particularly when children are arriving or leaving
- Where there are parked cars or stopped buses, especially school buses

- At intersections where pedestrians cross (pedestrians have the right of way on the road into which you are turning)
- Where there are special events being held.

When are pedestrians at risk?

More than half of pedestrian fatalities occur in darkness or dusk. Take extra care to watch out for pedestrians at these times

Remember to drive slowly and be prepared to stop:

- When visibility is poor such as in rain, fog, at night or dawn or dusk as pedestrians are not always aware of how hard it is to see them
- When entering or leaving a driveway you must give way to pedestrians and other vehicles
- When approaching a stationary bus or light rail vehicle and passengers are getting off or crossing the road
- When pedestrians cross the road away from pedestrian crossings.
- When pedestrians gather in large crowds
- When pedestrians gather near and around licensed premises or special events



Pedestrians, particularly children, are at greater risk when drivers are reversing. Take care when reversing and never reverse further than necessary.

Safety tips for pedestrians

Cross the road at pedestrian facilities such as crossings and traffic lights. Before crossing the road think about whether an approaching driver can see you.

- Before crossing the road – stop, look, listen and think
- Never assume that an approaching vehicle will stop for you
- Avoid crossing between parked cars or in front of buses
- Keep to the left side on shared bicycle/pedestrian paths
- Wear light or bright coloured clothing at night or in reduced visibility conditions
- Children up to eight years old should hold an adult's hand on the footpath, in the car park or when crossing the road
- Children up to ten years old should be supervised in the traffic environment and hold an adult's hand when crossing the road
- If you have been drinking alcohol arrange to get a lift
- Do not cause a traffic hazard or unreasonably obstruct the path of a road user or other pedestrian
- Pedestrians must use footpaths and nature strips where they are provided. Where this is impractical pedestrians must keep to the side of the road and walk in the direction that faces oncoming traffic.



Pedestrians affected by alcohol are one of the most common groups involved in road crashes.

Sharing the road with motorised wheelchairs

A person using a motorised wheelchair (three and four wheeled) that cannot travel over 10km/h, as a mobility aid is defined as a pedestrian. When sharing the road with motorised wheelchairs be aware that they have the same rights and responsibilities as pedestrians and must follow the same rules.

Motorised wheelchairs may be difficult to see because they are generally below the height of an average pedestrian. Although they move faster than pedestrians, they are much slower than other motorised vehicles using the road. As a driver, you should allow for these differences and take extra care.

Sharing the road with motorcyclists

Motorcyclists have the same rights as everyone else to use the road. However, motorcyclists are not as well protected as occupants of other vehicles. Motorcyclists do not have the body of a car around them to protect them from the impact of a crash, and they are less stable because they only have two wheels.

Motorcycle riders are 20 times more likely to be killed in a road crash than car occupants.

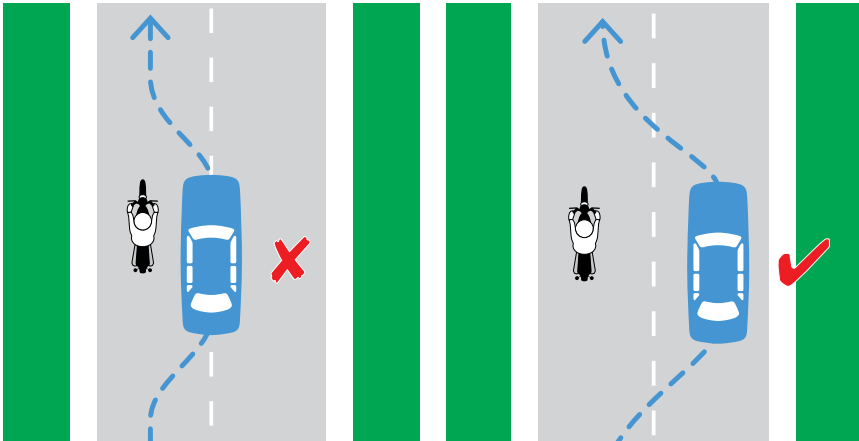


Look out for motorcyclists at intersections as more than half of motorcycle crashes involving other vehicles occur at intersections.

Where are motorcyclists most at risk?

Motorcyclists are most at risk:

- On busy city roads – at intersections and when changing lanes
- On country roads – when riding through bends.



Give motorcyclists plenty of room when overtaking

Safety tips for drivers sharing the road with motor cyclists

- Always be on the look out for motorcycles as they are smaller than cars and harder to see
- Do not drive alongside and in the same lane as a motorcycle. Motorcycles need a full width lane to ride safely
- Allow motorcycles as much space as a car when overtaking them.
- Regularly check your side and rear vision mirrors and the blind spot by looking over your shoulder before merging or changing lanes. Motorcycles can be easily hidden behind a truck or car
- Drive at a safe distance from motorcycles as they may need to avoid hazards such as flying debris, oil slicks and poor road conditions.
- Allow extra time for them to stop
- Look for motorcycles before you turn or proceed at intersections.
- Look out for motorcycles in slow moving traffic as they can manoeuvre faster.

Sharing the road with bicycle riders

Bicycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers and motorcycle riders. When driving, be on the look out for bicycle riders as they are smaller than cars and harder to see.

Drivers who pass a bicycle rider must allow a distance of at least:

- 1 metre when the speed limit is 60km/h or less
- 1.5 metres when the speed limit is more than 60km/h

In order to provide the minimum safe passing distance to a bicycle rider, drivers are exempt from certain road rules. These exemptions allow drivers to drive to the right of the centre of the road, cross or straddle broken and unbroken lines, flat painted islands and flat dividing strips as long as it is safe to do so, and provided the driver has a clear view of approaching traffic.

Safety tips when driving near bicycle riders:

- Bicycle riders are more difficult to see than cars or trucks, especially at night. Take care to check for bicycle riders in blind spots
- Always check for bicycle riders whenever you travel on the road particularly when turning at intersections

- Sometimes a bicycle can travel as fast or faster than a car, particularly in slow-moving traffic. Never underestimate their speed and be sure not to cut them off by moving in front of them. Remember that it takes longer for a bicycle to stop than a car at the same speed
- Check in your rear view and side mirrors to avoid opening your car door into the path of bicycle riders. This can be dangerous and the person exiting a car could be at fault if an accident occurs
- At times bicycle riders may need a full width lane to ride safely due to rough road edges and gravel. Be prepared to slow down and allow the rider to travel away from the kerb
- Children on bikes can be unpredictable – be prepared to slow down and stop
- Bicycle riders are allowed to ride two abreast, (side by side).



It is against the law for bicycle riders to ride on footpaths, unless they are:

- Under 16 years of age
- An adult 18 years or older supervising a child under 16 years old.
- Under 18 years old and riding with an adult who is supervising for a child under 16 years old
- On a footpath that is for shared use by bicycle riders and pedestrians
- On a designated bicycle path.

Further information on bicycle riding can be found on the NSW Government website www.bicycleinfo.nsw.gov.au

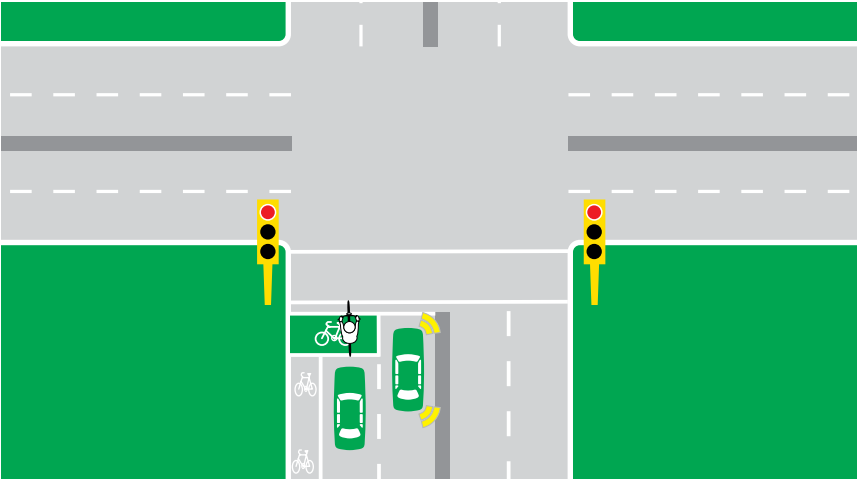
BICYCLE RIDER SAFETY

- You, and any passenger, must wear correctly fitted approved bicycle helmets
- Always obey traffic lights and signs
- You must ride with traffic on the left side of the road
- A hand signal when turning right or merging into the right lane is required by law
- You do not need to give a left or stop signal, or signal when making a hook turn
- Give way to pedestrians and other vehicles when entering a road
- You must not ride in a Bus Only Lane
- Give way to pedestrians crossing the road
- You must not be towed by another vehicle
- When visibility is poor, you must display a white light (steady or flashing) on the front of your bicycle and a red light (steady or flashing) to the rear. These must be visible for at least 200 metres. The bike must also have a red reflector visible for at least 50 metres to the rear.
- Your bike must be fitted with at least one working brake and a functioning warning device such as a bell or horn
- You must use the bike lane where one is available
- Maintain control of your bicycle at all times. It is an offence to ride with both hands off the handlebars or feet off the pedals or to carry any load which prevents you from having control
- When using a footpath or shared pedestrian/bicycle path, keep to the left and give way to pedestrians
- The bicycle must not carry more people than the bicycle is designed to carry. All passengers must sit on a seat designed for them
- Bicycle riders are not allowed to ride on a crossing unless there are bicycle crossing lights.

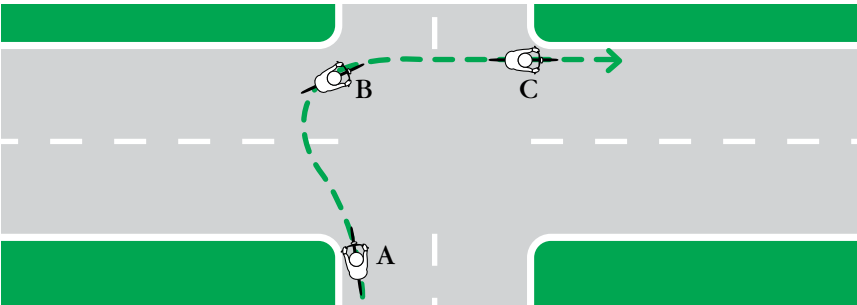


Allow ample room away from parked cars in case a car door is opened. Do not ride between parked vehicles.

Some intersections have painted bicycle storage areas where you should stop if the lights are red. You should only enter bicycle storage areas from a bicycle lane.



When turning right you may make a hook turn. A hook turn is when you use the left hand lane to turn right. The turn is made in stages.



B – wait near the far left side of the intersection; give way to vehicles travelling straight through the intersection and if there are traffic lights wait until the lights on the road you are entering turn to green

Road Users' Handbook

Sharing the road with trucks and buses

Trucks and buses are usually substantially larger than a standard vehicle. They are longer, heavier and more powerful. To drive with them safely, keep the following basic principles in mind.

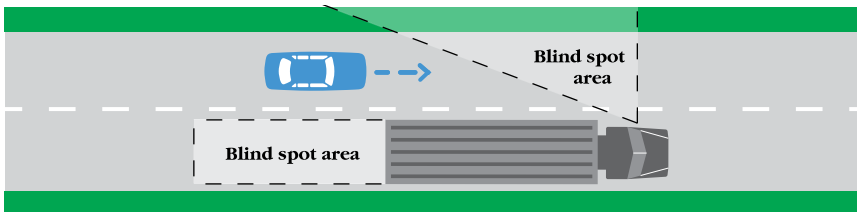
Allow more room for heavy vehicles to stop

Heavy vehicles need a long distance to stop. So if the traffic lights turn red and a truck or bus is approaching don't pull into their lane because this reduces their stopping distance. Likewise, in flowing traffic a heavy vehicle may be trying to keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front, and if you cut in front of the heavy vehicle it may not have enough room to stop safely.



Crashes involving buses and trucks are more likely to cause serious injury or death, so take particular care around these vehicles.

Remember, trucks and buses may not be able to see you or to stop if you try to overtake them when they are turning. Wait until they have completed their turn before you turn or proceed.



Do not drive in the blind spot of heavy vehicles.

Allow more room for trucks and buses to turn

Turning trucks and buses sometimes take up more than one lane at corners or on roundabouts. Make sure you give them enough room to turn; do not assume they can stay totally in their lane.

Sharing the road with horse riders

Horse riders and horse drawn vehicles also have rights to share our roads. Watch out for ridden, driven or led horses. When you come across horse traffic remember:

- Horses can be unpredictable so slow down and give them plenty of room.
- Never sound your horn, rev your engine or pass a horse at high speed
- Slow down or stop if a rider is having difficulty with a horse.

Summary

What you should know about road safety

This section has explained the importance of safety on our roads. After reading this section, you should know:

Speeding

- What speeding is
- The impact when driving five km/h over the speed limit.

Alcohol, drugs, medicine and driving

- How alcohol affects your ability to drive
- Zero BAC (Blood Alcohol Concentration)
- How drugs impair your driving
- How to avoid drink driving.

Fatigue

- What driver fatigue is
- The signs of driver fatigue
- How to avoid driver fatigue.

Seatbelts

- The use of seatbelts and child restraints
- Who is responsible for ensuring that seatbelts are worn
- Passenger safety.

Sharing the road

- How to drive safely near pedestrians
- When pedestrians are most at risk
- How to share the road with motorcyclists, motorised wheelchairs, bicycle riders and horse riders.
- When these road users are most at risk
- How much space to allow for trucks, heavy vehicles or buses to stop and turn
- What to do when approaching or overtaking an oversized vehicle.

Sample test questions

Test your knowledge

Circle the correct answer. Then check to see if you are right at the end of the book.

1. If you get sleepy while driving, is it best to?
 - a) Turn on the radio very loud
 - b) Stop, rest, and change drivers if possible
 - c) Turn on the air conditioning or open the windows
2. Pedestrians who are affected by alcohol are –
 - a) One of the most common groups involved in road crashes
 - b) Unlikely to walk near the road and do not require your attention
 - c) Less dangerous than sober pedestrians because they are more careful after drinking.
3. Speed limit signs tell drivers –
 - a) The maximum speed they are allowed to drive in good conditions
 - b) The minimum speed they are allowed to drive
 - c) The recommended speed they should drive

Safe driving

Low risk driving

Driving is never risk free, but you should aim to drive 'low risk'. A low risk driver has good observation, speed management and road positioning skills.

OBSERVATION

The key to good observation is scanning.

Scanning is keeping your eyes moving, checking in one area for a couple of seconds and then moving your eye to another area.

When scanning look:

- In the distance
- At the road surface
- To your left and right
- Regularly at your mirrors and instruments.

Speed management

Drive at a speed that is within the speed limit and this will allow you to react and completely stop within the distance you can see is clear.

When you see potential hazards, slow down and prepare to stop (referred to as setting up the brakes), for example when pedestrians are close to the road or when other vehicles may turn in front of you. If you cannot see at least five seconds ahead you must slow down.

Slow down on wet, icy or gravel roads where it will take longer for your vehicle to stop.



What is a Hazard?

A hazard is any possible danger that might lead to a crash. Hazards can be seen or unseen, actual or potential, for example.

- A pedestrian waiting to cross
- A blind corner
- A car approaching a stop sign on an adjacent street
- Poor driving conditions.

Road positioning

Position your vehicle to maximise the distance from hazards (referred to as buffering). For example, moving to the left at the crest of a hill to create space from oncoming vehicles, or moving away from parked cars to avoid pedestrians and doors opening.



Check your mirrors before making any change to your speed or position.

Crash avoidance space

A safe low risk driver maintains a crash avoidance space completely around the vehicle. The crash avoidance space is managed by adjusting the vehicle's speed and road position.

To determine the crash avoidance space to the front of the vehicle you need to take into account two key factors – reaction time and response time.

Reaction time is the time the driver needs to:

- See the information
- Perceive what it means
- Decide on a response
- Instigate that response.

A driver who is fit, concentrating, alert and not affected by alcohol, drugs, fatigue or a distraction, will still require about one and a half seconds to react to a hazard.

Response time is the time required to take action. Generally a minimum of one and a half seconds is needed to respond. In many situations braking may be the only possible response. Swerving is rarely appropriate and can result in a more severe crash, for example a head-on collision.

A total of three seconds crash avoidance space is needed to react and respond to a situation in front of you. You may need even longer in poor conditions such as in rain or darkness.

The three-second gap, explained on the next page, can be used when following another vehicle or if there is potential for something to move into your crash avoidance space.

Following another vehicle

To calculate a three-second crash avoidance space when following another vehicle use this basic technique. As the rear of the vehicle in front of you passes an object at the side of the road such as a power pole, tree or sign, start a three-second count 'one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three'.



If your car passes the object you picked before you finish the three-second count, you are following too closely. Your crash avoidance space is not large enough. Slow down, and repeat the count again until the three-second crash avoidance space is achieved.

In poor driving conditions, such as rain, night and gravel roads, it may be necessary to increase your crash avoidance space to four or more seconds.

To reduce the risk of driving into the rear of a vehicle, the three-second crash avoidance space is essential, as the vehicle in front has the potential to stop very quickly if it collides with another vehicle or stationary object.



Maintain a minimum following distance of three seconds.

The three second gap will change depending on your speed.

The following table shows the crash avoidance space needed for these speeds

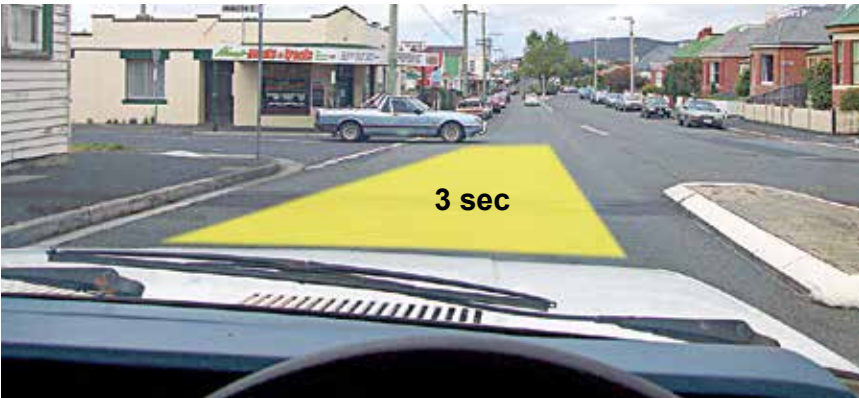
Speed	Crash avoidance space
60 km/h	50 metres
80 km/h	67 metres
100 km/h	84 metres
110 km/h	92 metres

Potential for something to move into the crash avoidance space

The three-second gap can also be used for situations where there is potential for something to move into your crash avoidance space; for example a car in an adjacent street could fail to give way and pull out in front of you.

Safe low risk drivers experienced in maintaining a three-second following distance are able to mentally judge a three-second crash avoidance space in front of their vehicle. If there is potential for a hazard to enter this crash avoidance space, reduce your speed to create a buffer. It is necessary to maintain the crash avoidance space for all potentially hazardous situations, including blind corners and crests.

Many of the crashes that occur each day in NSW could be avoided if drivers actively maintained their crash avoidance space.



Slow down if something has the potential to enter your three-second crash avoidance space.



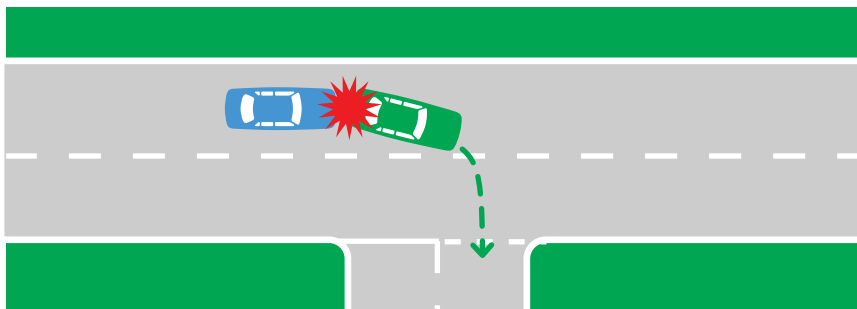
Be careful of intersections where trees or buildings block your vision..

NSW crash patterns

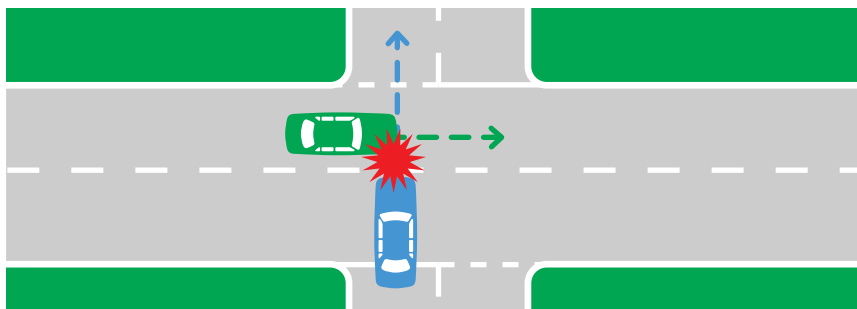
Crash patterns for provisional and newly licensed drivers are different from those of experienced drivers. However, almost 90% of all NSW crashes fall within only five crash types.

Many of these crashes could have been prevented if the driver managed their crash avoidance space and speed.

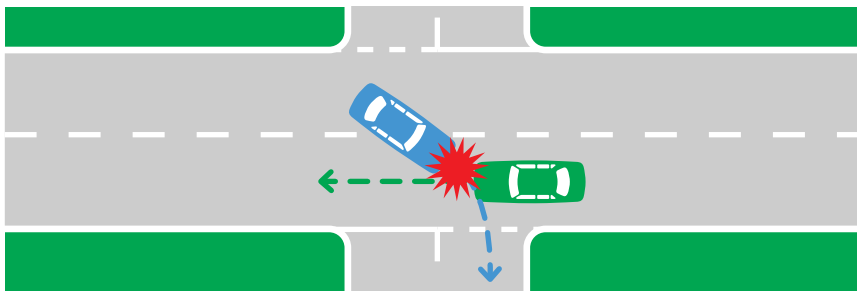
The five most common crashes in order of prevalence



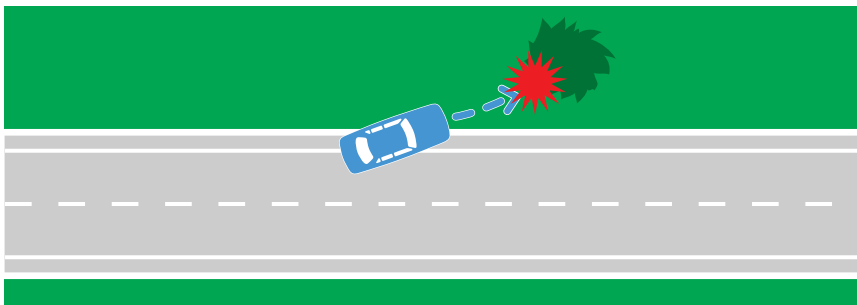
1. Colliding with the rear of another vehicle.



2. Colliding with another vehicle from an adjacent direction (from the side).



3. Colliding with another vehicle from the opposite direction.



4. Running off the road on a straight section and hitting an object or parked vehicle.



5. Running off the road on a curve or bend and hitting an object or parked vehicle.

For all drivers, rear end collisions are the most common form of crash. However, over 30% of crashes involving provisional drivers are single vehicle crashes in which they run off the road.

For more information on crash patterns, read the *Hazard Perception and Driver Qualification Handbooks* online or purchase them from any registry or service centre.

Comparison of crashes based on driver experience

	Provisional drivers	Full licence holders in their first year	Experienced full licence holders
1. Colliding with the rear of another vehicle	33%	34%	40%
2. Colliding from adjacent direction	17%	17%	19%
3. Colliding from opposite direction	15%	16%	17%
4. Run off road on a straight section	9%	11%	6%
5. Run off road on a curved section	8%	10%	6%
All other crash types	18%	12%	12%

Basic driving techniques

The key to good driving technique is smoothness, and the secret to smoothness is good preparation.

Driving posture

When you first get a car take the time to adjust the seat and controls to suit your height and build. Correct driving posture reduces fatigue, improves your control and allows the safety features of the vehicle to operate effectively.

Seatbelts

For seatbelts to work effectively they should be adjusted 'low, flat and firm'.

- Low – placed below your hips to fully secure your body weight
- Flat – no twists, turns or folds
- Firm – about every 15 minutes when you drive pull the belt firm to remove any slack.

Airbags

Airbags are a supplementary restraining system (SRS) designed to be used in conjunction with seatbelts. To get the most benefit from the driver's airbag the steering wheel should be adjusted low, facing the driver's chest rather than the face.

Braking technique

Correct braking is done in two stages, first put light pressure on the brake pedal and pause (set up the brakes), then progressively apply the necessary braking pressure (squeeze).

Two-stage braking (set up and squeeze) improves braking effectiveness, reduces the likelihood of skidding and provides better control.

Harsh or excessive braking pressure may cause skidding and a loss of control, particularly on wet or gravel roads.

Steering technique

There are two main steering techniques, 'push/pull' and 'hand over hand'. Regardless of which method is used some general rules apply:

- Steering must be smooth and progressive.
- Reduce speed before steering and wait until the vehicle begins to straighten before accelerating.
- When steering keep both hands on the outside of the steering wheel and thumbs along the rim.

Electronic driver assist systems

Antilock Braking systems (ABS)

Antilock braking systems control braking force to prevent the tyres from skidding under heavy braking or when braking in slippery conditions. Some ABS systems cause the brake pedal to pulse or shudder when activated and although this may feel disconcerting, braking effort must be maintained if the situation requires a quick stop.

Traction Control Systems (TCS)

Traction control systems stop the driving wheels spinning by reducing engine power or temporarily applying the brakes. This allows the car to accelerate smoothly, even on slippery surfaces.

Electronic Stability Control (ESC)

Electronic stability control detects if a vehicle is not responding correctly to driver steering input. The system selectively applies the brakes to individual wheels or changing engine power, ESC helps the driver to maintain their intended direction.

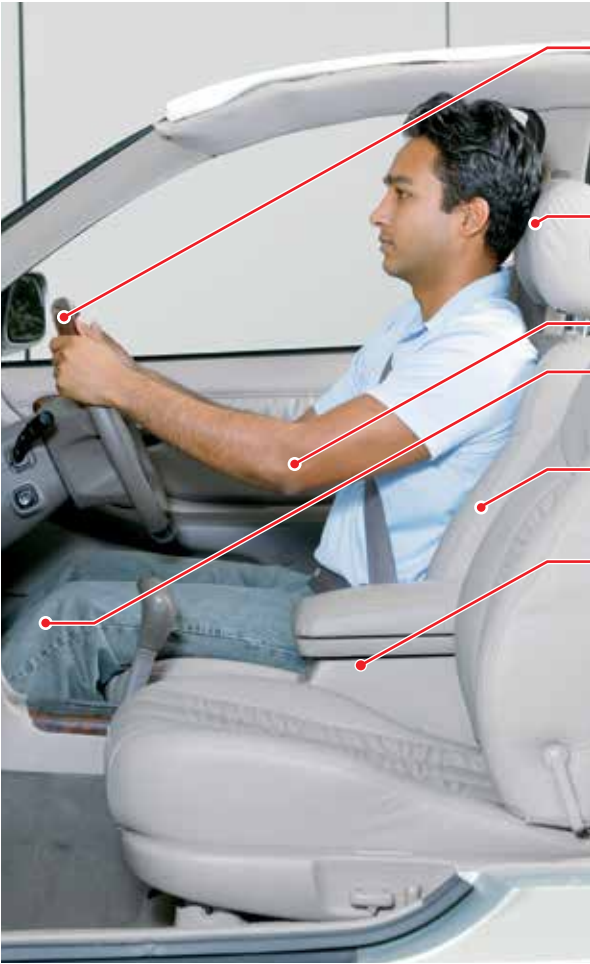
Emergency Brake Assist (EBA)

Emergency brake assist detects an emergency brake application. It provides emergency braking assistance and automatically increases the force being applied to the brakes to minimise the stopping distance. It is also known as "Brake Assist System" (BAS).



Electronic driver assist systems will not prevent a loss of control or crash if the physical limits of the vehicle are exceeded.

DRIVING POSTURE



The steering wheel should be adjusted low, facing the driver's chest rather than the face.

Adjust the head restraint for your height. See owner's manual.

Keep your arms bent; thumbs should be on the rim of the steering wheel.

Keep your knees slightly bent.

Have the seat fairly upright to fully support your back and shoulders.

Sit deep in the seat.

Brace your body using your left foot.



EcoDriving

What is EcoDriving

EcoDriving is a driving style aimed at helping the environment by reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. EcoDriving can also save you money.

Research has also shown that EcoDriving can help to reduce crash involvement by up to 40 per cent.

EcoDriving Tips

- Only fill your petrol tank to the first click. This will allow for expansion of the fuel and reduce emissions.
- Only use air conditioning when necessary. Air conditioning is most efficient when you are travelling above 60km/hr.
- Check the tyre pressure frequently. Under inflated tyres increase rolling resistance and fuel consumption.
- Turn the engine off when you are stopped for lengthy periods.
- Avoid carrying unnecessary weight in the vehicle. Remove objects such as roof racks and bike racks when not in use and don't leave heavy items such as golf clubs permanently in your vehicle.
- Don't speed. Stick to the speed limit as higher speeds increase fuel consumption.
- Don't warm up the engine before starting off. Today's vehicles do not require warming up, except in cold climates and after long periods of non-use. Gentle driving is enough to warm up the engine.
- Maintain your vehicle. Ensure your vehicle is regularly serviced and has the correct amount of engine oil and coolant.
- When driving a manual car, change gears at a lower engine speed (revs) – avoid labouring the engine.
- When driving an automatic car use the correct pressure on accelerator to avoid over-revving on take off.
- Maintain a steady speed. Smooth acceleration and deceleration will decrease fuel consumption.

Summary

What you should know about safe driving

This section has explained the importance of safe driving. After reading the section you should know:

- How to adjust your driving posture.
- The two stages of braking.
- How to calculate a three-second crash avoidance space.

NOTES

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Sample test questions

Test your knowledge

Circle the correct answer. Then check to see if you are right at the end of the book.

1. Under good conditions, when driving behind any vehicle, at any speed, you should –
 - a) Drive as close to the vehicle in front as possible
 - b) Stay at least three seconds behind the vehicle in front of you
 - c) Stay one second behind the vehicle in front of you
2. At night you should –
 - a) Drive closer to the vehicle in front so they can see you better
 - b) Leave a longer gap behind the vehicle in front
 - c) Use your hazard warning lights when overtaking another vehicle.
3. It is night time and you are driving home. You are travelling in a line of vehicles. What size gap should you leave between your vehicle and the vehicles in front of you?
 - a) A gap of about four seconds as it is easy to misjudge distances at night.
 - b) A gap of about two seconds so you can watch the vehicles in front closely and see when they are stopping.
 - c) The same three-second gap you would leave during the day

General road rules

Speed limits

Speed limit signs tell you the maximum speed you are allowed to drive in good conditions.

Default speed limits

Where there is no posted speed limit sign, default speed limits apply.

In NSW there are two default speed limits, default urban speed limit for roads in built-up areas (ie where there are buildings next to the road or where there is street lighting) and a default speed limit for all other roads.

- Default urban speed limit is 50 km/h
- Default speed limit for all other roads is 100 km/h

Speed limit signs

There are two types of speed limit signs – regulatory and advisory speed signs.



Regulatory speed limit signs have a white background with the speed limit shown inside a red circle. It is illegal to drive faster than the posted speed limit.



Advisory speed signs have a yellow background. These signs indicate the recommended maximum speed in good driving conditions for the average car.

Advisory speed signs are generally placed before curves, bends and crests.

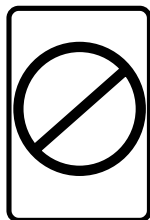
Advisory speed sign.

Areas without speed signs

Some roads do not have speed signs, such as unsealed roads and roads in remote areas. On these roads an end speed limit or speed de-restriction sign indicates you are entering an area without speed signs. In these areas the default speed limits apply and you must drive to the conditions.



End speed limit sign



Speed de-restricted sign

**STATE LIMIT 100 APPLIES
DRIVE TO CONDITIONS**

State limit 100 applies, drive to conditions



It is against the law to have a radar detector or jammer in your car.

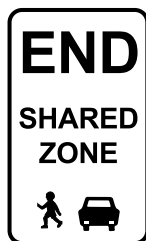


Local Traffic Areas

A local traffic area is an area of local streets that have a speed limit of 40 km/h.

The lower speed limit means greater safety for all road users and more peace and quiet for people living in the area.

Look out for bicycle riders, pedestrians and children.



Shared traffic zone

A shared traffic zone is usually a street where pedestrians, bicycle riders and other vehicles can share the road safely. These zones have a speed limit of 10 km/h.

Be sure to keep to the speed limit for the safety of all road users.

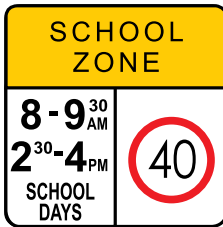
A driver in a shared traffic zone must give way to all pedestrians.



WORK SITE

Where a road work speed limit sign is displayed, the speed limit is enforceable and must be obeyed. When approaching roadworks pay attention to all signs and obey reduced speed signs.

40 km/h speed limit for road work.



School zone

A school zone is the area around a school with a speed limit of 40 km/h. Between the 'SCHOOL ZONE' and 'END SCHOOL ZONE' signs you must obey the school zone speed limit. The school zone limit only applies on gazetted school days and during the times shown on the sign.



School bus stop zone

School bus stop zone signs tell you to drive at 40 km/h because you are near a busy school bus stop.

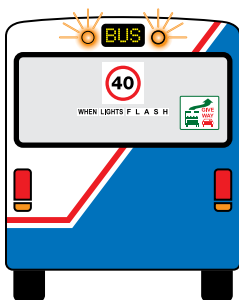
Between the SCHOOL BUS STOP ZONE and END SCHOOL BUS STOP ZONE signs, do not drive faster than 40 km/h. This special speed limit only applies when a bus, with flashing rear orange lights (wigwag), is driving between the signs.



Be careful near bus stops where drivers are waiting to pick up passengers, particularly in rural areas.

School buses

Be particularly careful when passing stationary buses from 7am–9.30am and 2.30–5pm. This is when children are travelling to and from school.



School bus lights

Buses use signs and orange flashing wigwag lights to warn you that they are picking up or setting down school children. The lights begin to flash when the bus stops and the doors are opened. They keep flashing for about 30 seconds after the doors close and continue even after the bus moves off. You must not drive past the bus in the same direction at more than 40 km/h while the lights are flashing as there may be children crossing or about to cross the road.

School bus headlights

When buses are dropping off or picking up school children their headlights will also flash. Be careful when approaching a bus with flashing headlights as there may be children crossing or about to cross the road.



Variable speed limit signs

These signs are placed in tunnels, on motorways and bridges. The changes in speed limits are enforceable and must be obeyed.

Speed cameras

Speed camera support enforcement conducted by NSW Police. They are proven to change driver behaviour and reduce road trauma.

There are four types of speed cameras used in NSW to encourage drivers to comply with the speed limit - mobile, red-light speed, fixed and point-to-point. All speed cameras are regularly tested to ensure they are measuring speeds accurately and fine revenue raised from speed cameras goes directly towards improving road safety.

Mobile speed cameras

Mobile speed cameras are moved around the road network and are used state-wide, on all types of roads, at all times of day. Like police enforcement, the exact location of mobile speed camera enforcement is unpredictable.

Red-light speed (safety) cameras

Red light speed cameras are capable of detecting both red light and speeding offences and are used at high risk intersections. They improve safety by reducing crashes caused by red-light running and speeding

Fixed speed cameras

Fixed speed cameras are used at locations with a crash history or that are identified as high risk - including blackspots, school zones, tunnels and motorways.

Point-to-point cameras

Point-to-point speed cameras work by calculating a driver's average speed between two points. If the average speed is higher than the posted limit, a speeding infringement may be issued.

Alcohol limits

The laws in NSW limit the amount of alcohol you can consume if you are driving a vehicle.

Legal limits

Your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) must be under the limit as shown in the table. Heavy penalties apply for driving with a BAC on or over the limit.

For more information see Section 3, **Road safety**.



Some foods and medications may contain alcohol which can register in a breath test, for example chocolates, cough lollies and mouthwashes. Always read the ingredients first.

BAC limits

As a learner and provisional driver, you must not drive after you have consumed any alcoholic drinks or foods containing alcohol.

The table on the right shows the BAC limits for all licence classes. You must stay below these limits.

BAC Limit

Licence class	ZERO	UNDER 0.02	UNDER 0.05
Learner (L)	✓		
Provisional (P1, P2)	✓		
Full licence (car or rider)			✓
Public passenger vehicle drivers – bus, taxi etc		✓	
Coach or heavy vehicle (over 13.9 tonnes GVM or GCM) driver		✓	
Dangerous goods vehicle driver		✓	
Fully licensed drivers from interstate and overseas			✓

Drugs, legal and illegal

It is illegal to drive, attempt to drive or instruct a learner while affected by drugs.

Drug testing

It is an offence to drive with illegal drugs present in your system. Police can carry out roadside drug testing of any driver, rider and supervising driver in NSW.

It is also an offence to drive if you are under the influence of a drug, including illegal drugs or legal drugs such as medicines.

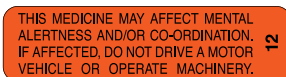
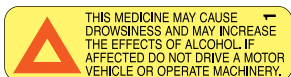
If you're caught with illegal drugs in your system for the first time you could be fined and lose your licence for three months or more. Second and subsequent offences must be dealt with by a court and carry higher possible fines and longer periods of licence disqualification.

If you're caught driving under the influence of illegal or prescription drugs, you could lose your licence for three years or more and could be fined over \$3,000. You could also be sentenced to up to 18 months in prison. This is if it's a first offence. Higher penalties may apply for second or subsequent offences.

Medicines and over-the-counter drugs

Many prescription and some over-the-counter medicines may make you unfit to drive. They can affect your concentration, mood, coordination and reactions as a driver.

Do not drive while taking medicines with a warning label that tells you not to drive.



Medicines that affect driving

- Some pain killers.
- Medicines for blood pressure, nausea, allergies, inflammations and fungal infections.
- Tranquillisers, sedatives and sleeping pills.
- Some diet pills.
- Some cold and flu medicines.

Seatbelts and child restraints

Seatbelts

Everyone in a vehicle must wear a seatbelt

Everyone in a vehicle, the driver and all passengers, must wear a correctly fitted and adjusted seatbelt when they are available.

A passenger must move to a seat with a seatbelt rather than sit in one without a seatbelt. If the vehicle does not have seatbelts fitted, passengers must sit in the back if a seat is available. It is illegal for a learner or provisional licence holder to drive when not wearing a seatbelt or carry passengers who are not wearing a seatbelt or using a child restraint. Learner or provisional licence holders cannot carry passengers if there are not enough seatbelts.



It is illegal to drive with people in the boot or on the vehicle.

Child restraints

There are legal requirements for children aged under 16 years to use a seat belt or an approved child restraint. Drivers must ensure children are restrained in child restraints suitable for their age and size. Children up to the age of 6 months must be secured in an approved rearward facing child restraint. From 6 months up to 4 years a child may be in either an approved rearward or forward facing child restraint.

Children under 4 years must not be in the front row of a vehicle with 2 or more rows of seats.

Passengers between the age of 4 and 7 may travel in the front seat provided all the back seats are occupied by children under 7 years old in approved child restraints, and they occupy either an approved forward facing child restraint or an approved booster seat and the seat has a dedicated anchorage point if required.

Approved child restraints must be properly fastened, adjusted and anchored. All child restraints should be fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Look in your car manual for the location of anchorage points for child restraints.

What type of child restraint to use

Child restraints are available in a range of styles to suit children of different sizes. Restraints are available for children up to 138cm tall and/or 10 years old. It is recommended that all child restraints be professionally fitted by an Authorised Safety Restraint Fitting Station, in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. When purchasing a child restraint look for the sticker certifying the child restraint meets Australian/New Zealand Standard AS1754. When a booster seat is used, it must be used with either an approved lap and sash seatbelt or an approved child safety harness.

Seatbelts and child restraints in taxis

Taxi drivers can be fined and given demerit points for every unrestrained passenger they carry under 16 years of age. Unrestrained passengers aged 16 years and over travelling in a taxi also receive a fine.

When travelling in taxis, a child under 12 months of age must use a suitable approved child restraint. Taxis have anchorage points for your child restraint and some taxi companies supply a child restraint if you request one when booking a taxi by phone. Approved restraints have a label from a child restraint certifier certifying the child restraint meets Australian/New Zealand Standard AS1754.

Exemptions

Taxis: Taxi drivers must wear a seatbelt: there is no seatbelt exemption for taxi drivers.

Medical conditions: In rare circumstances an adult or child may obtain a doctor's certificate to say they cannot wear a seatbelt because of a medical condition or body shape. This certificate must

- be dated and issued on the practitioner's letterhead
- state the reason for which the exemption is requested
- state the date on which the exemption expires, an exemption should not exceed one year from the date of the certificate issued.

This certificate must be carried at all times while travelling unrestrained in a vehicle, otherwise both driver and passenger will be fined and the driver will get demerit points.

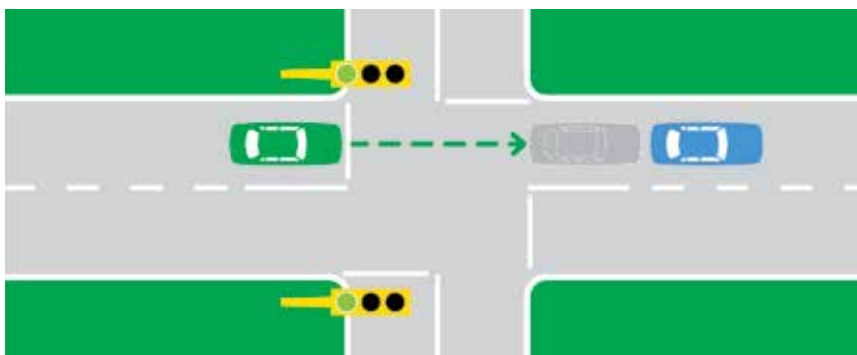
Reversing: A driver reversing a vehicle does not have to wear a seatbelt.

Tow Trucks: When an appropriate child restraint is not available for use in a tow truck, a child under 1 year old is allowed to sit on the lap of another passenger who is not in the front row of seats (if the tow truck has two or more rows of seats).

Intersections, give way and turning

Approximately half the road crashes in NSW happen at intersections. It is very important that you approach an intersection at a speed that lets you give way to any vehicles in or approaching the intersection.

It is an offence to get caught in the middle of the intersection when the lights change. You must stay on the approach side of the intersection until you see a space in your lane on the other side of the intersection that is big enough for your vehicle.



Keep intersections clear at all times.



The basic rule of the road in NSW is to keep to the left.

Give way rules where there are no signs

Some crossroads have no traffic lights or signs. Generally if you're turning across another vehicle's path, you must give way.

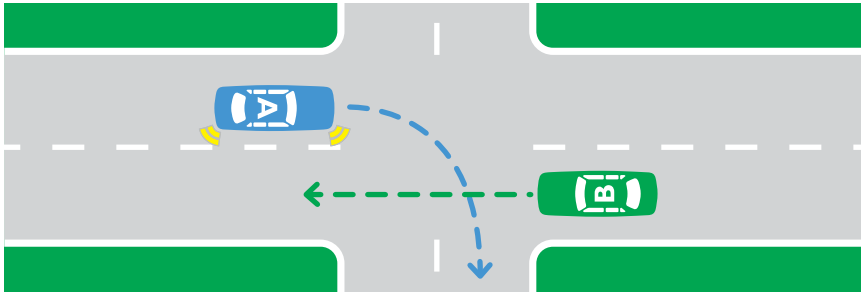
When turning at an intersection, you (car A in following diagrams) must give way to:

- Oncoming vehicles going straight ahead (diagram 1 below)
- Oncoming vehicles turning left (diagram 2 below)
- Any vehicle on your right (diagram 3 over the page).

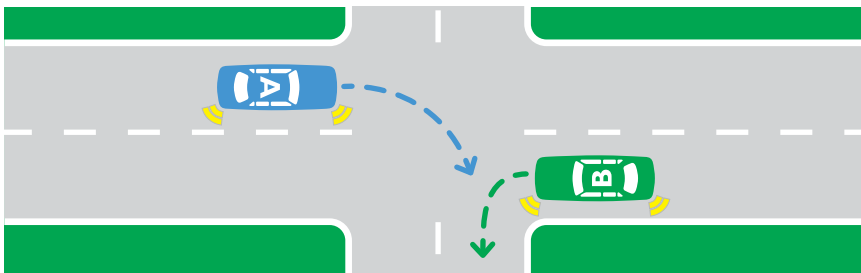
If you and an oncoming vehicle are turning right at an intersection both cars should pass in front of each other (diagram 4, over the page).

If other drivers do not give way to you, do not force them or yourself into a dangerous situation.

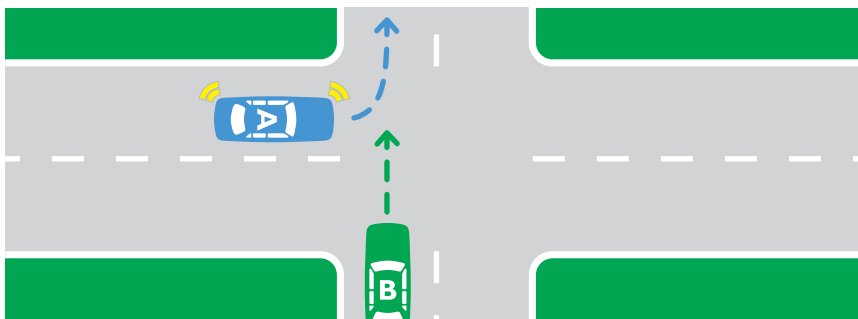
You must also give way to any pedestrians at or near the intersection on the road you are entering.



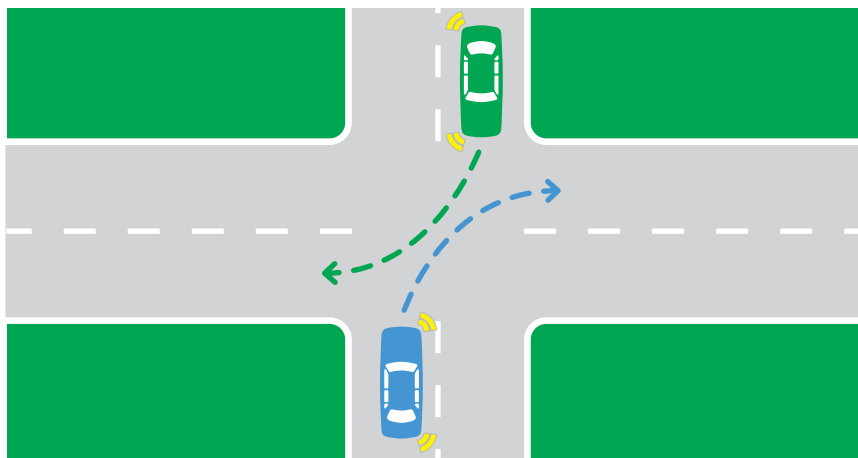
1. Car A must give way to car B.



2. Car A must give way to car B.



3. Car A must give way to car B.



4. Turning vehicles pass in front of each other.

Stop signs and stop lines

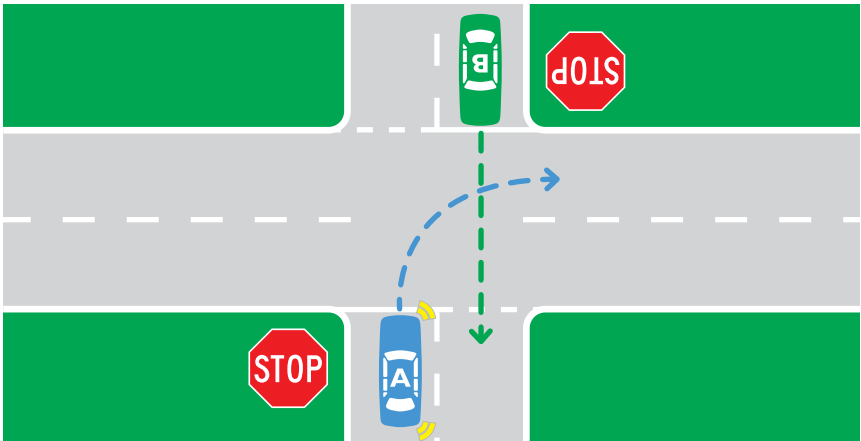
'STOP' signs and 'STOP' lines (continuous line) are used at intersections to control traffic.

When you come to a STOP sign you must stop completely before reaching the STOP line, and as close as possible to the line. Where there is no STOP line, stop before reaching, and as close as possible, to the intersection.



A STOP sign or a STOP line means you must give way to all vehicles travelling in, entering or approaching the intersection, whether vehicles are turning left or right, or going straight ahead. You must give way to any pedestrians crossing the road into which you are turning.

Giving way at a STOP sign means the driver must remain stationary until it is safe for the driver to proceed.



Car A must give way to car B.

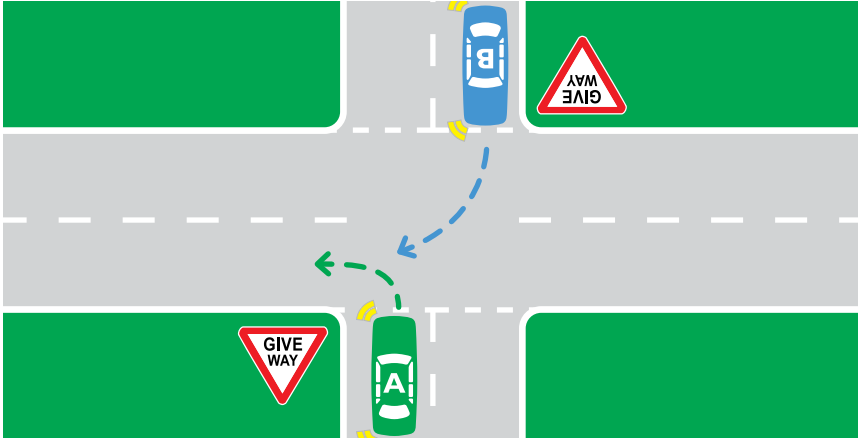
Give way signs and give way lines

'GIVE WAY' signs and 'GIVE WAY' lines (broken line) are used at intersections to control traffic. When you come to a GIVE WAY sign you must slow down and prepare to stop if necessary.

A GIVE WAY sign or line means you must give way to all vehicles travelling in, entering or approaching the intersection, whether vehicles are turning left or right, or going straight ahead. You must give way to any pedestrians crossing the road into which you are turning.



Giving way at a GIVE WAY sign means the driver must slow down and, if necessary, stop to avoid a collision.



Car B must give way to car A.

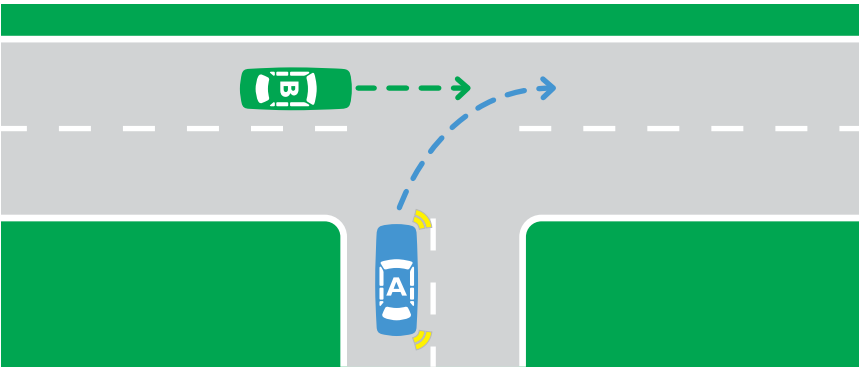


Where a STOP or GIVE WAY sign has been removed, the line marked across the road has the same meaning as the sign. You must stop or give way.

T intersections

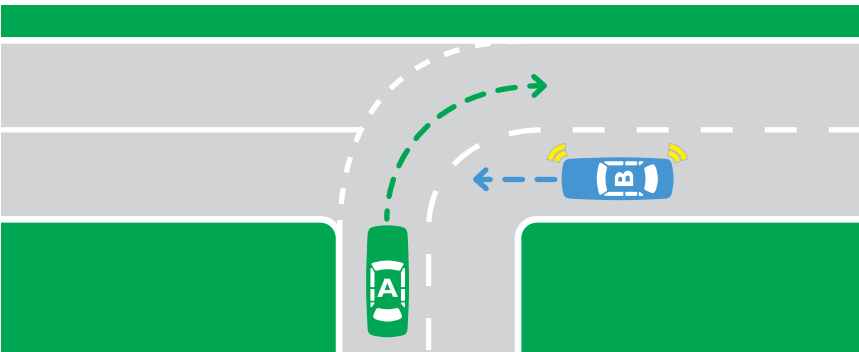


At T intersections the vehicle travelling on the road that ends must give way to any pedestrians crossing or vehicles travelling on the road that continues unless otherwise signposted.



Car A must give way to Car B.

This diagram shows a T intersection where the continuing road (which is marked with broken white lines) goes around a corner. Car B must signal to leave the continuing road and enter the terminating road.

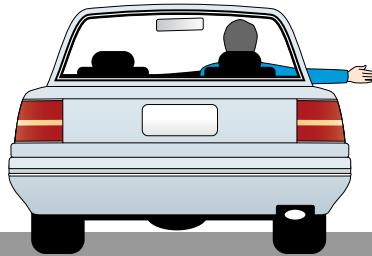


Car B must give way to Car A.

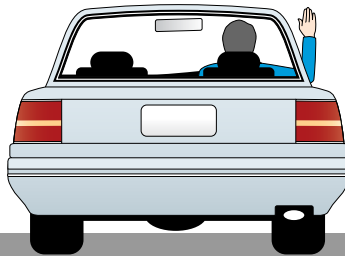
Signalling

You must indicate to let others know what you plan to do. Give plenty of warning by signalling before you turn left or right, or change lanes.

Make sure your indicator is turned off after each turn or lane change. If your indicators are not working, not clearly visible or your vehicle does not have indicator lights then you must give a hand signal when turning right or stopping.



You are turning right.



You are stopping or slowing down.

Turning

Plan your turns early so that you are in the correct part of the road and have enough time to signal where you want to turn.

Left turns

You must make a left turn from the left side of the road. When turning:

- Signal left.
- Move close to the left side of the road
- Keep to the left side of the road you are entering
- Use a slip lane where one is provided.

When driving on a multi-lane road, you must turn left from the left lane, or from a lane with a pavement arrow pointing left.

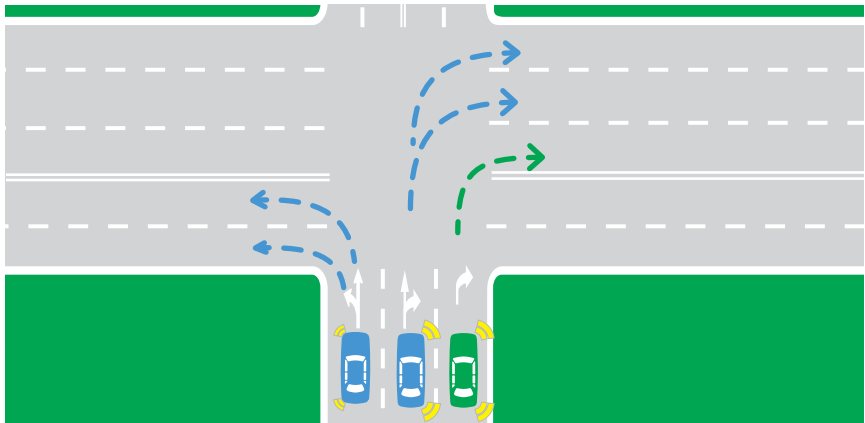


When turning left or right you must give way to any pedestrians crossing the road into which you are turning.

Right turns

When turning right:

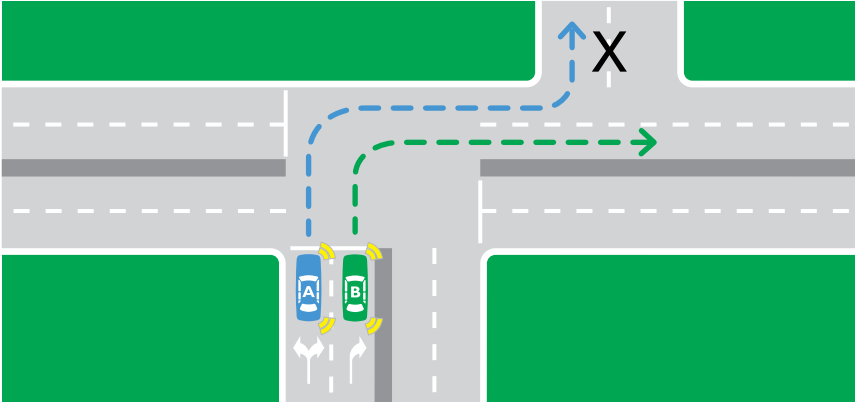
- Signal right
- Move as close to the centre line as possible
- When turning on a multi-lane road, turn right from the right lane or a lane with an arrow pointing right. Turn right when it is safe
- In marked lanes, you must stay in the same lane as you go from one road to another
- You must give way to pedestrians crossing the road into which you are turning.



Plan ahead

You need to think ahead in order to stay in the same lane as you drive from one road to another. The diagram shows a situation that calls for planning ahead.

Car A needs to turn left into the road marked X. It is best to turn right from the left lane to make it easy to turn left into road X.



Follow the instruction of any road markings that indicate how the turn must be made. If there are no road markings, you must make a right turn by passing as near as possible to the right of the centre of the intersection.

Median strips

When making a right turn through a divided road with a median strip, you must:

- Wait for a suitable gap in the oncoming traffic
- Drive as far as you can into the central dividing part of the road and stop until it is safe to continue
- Make sure you obey all GIVE WAY or STOP signs or traffic lights.



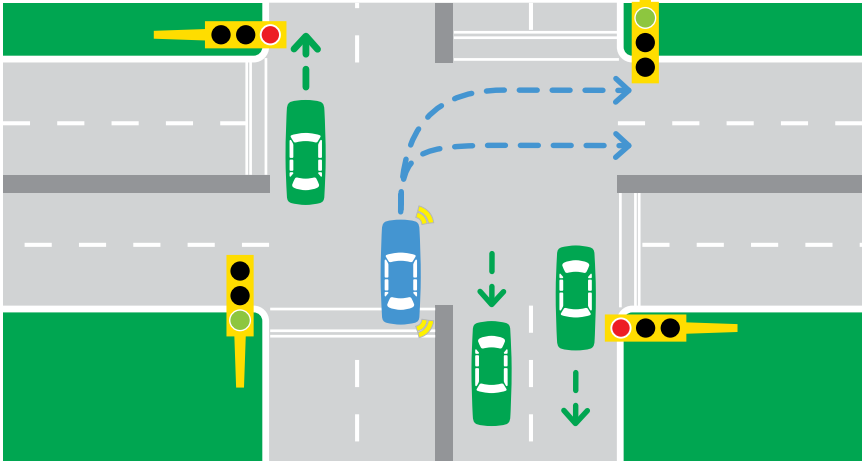
Before moving from a stationary position at the side of the road or a median strip parking area, you must signal for at least five seconds, checking mirrors and blind spots.

Traffic lights

When turning right at traffic lights:

- Enter the intersection as shown in the diagram, unless a sign indicates otherwise or there is a red right turn arrow displayed
- Wait until oncoming traffic clears or breaks and then turn safely.

If the lights change to yellow or red while you are in the middle of the intersection, you are allowed to turn right. You must turn as soon as it is safe to do so. Be sure your front wheels and car are straight and not blocking the oncoming traffic.

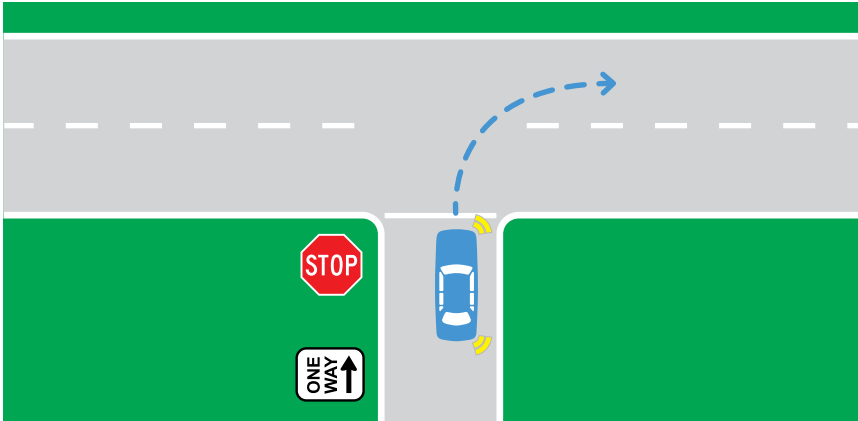


Car A enters the intersection.

One-way streets

When turning right **into** a one-way street you must turn as close as possible to the right side of the road you are entering.

When turning right **from** a one-way street you must turn from as close as possible to the right side of the road.



Turning from a one-way street.

U-Turns

Take extra care when making U-turns as they can be dangerous. U-turns cannot be made:

- Where there is a NO U-TURN sign
- On motorways
- At traffic lights unless you see a U-TURN PERMITTED sign at the intersection
- Across an unbroken (continuous) lines, double centre unbroken (continuous) lines, unless the line closest to you is broken.

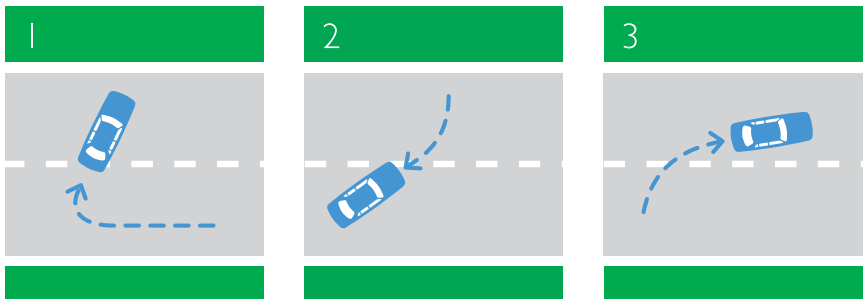
You must start your U-turn from the marked lane nearest to the centre of the road or, if there are no lane markings, the left of the centre of the road.

Before starting the U-turn you must make sure it is safe: check mirrors and blind spots and that you have a clear view of any approaching traffic.

You must not begin your U-turn unless you can make the turn without unreasonably obstructing traffic. Give way to all vehicles and pedestrians and signal before you start to turn.

Three-point turn

Three-point turns are used when a road is not wide enough to do a U-turn.



However, because it takes longer to do a three-point turn, in heavy traffic or on busy roads it is often safer to turn around by driving around the block instead.

Before commencing a three-point or U-turn, signal, check mirrors and blind spots.

After completing the turn, signal and check mirrors and blind spots, before rejoining the traffic.

Roundabouts

Many intersections have a central roundabout. Roundabouts manage the traffic flow in roads with either a single lane or multiple lanes.

Signs identifying Roundabouts

These are the signs that are associated with roundabouts.



There is a roundabout ahead



Give way to vehicles on the roundabout.



Do not drive on the central island of a roundabout unless the size of your vehicle means that you cannot avoid the wheels crossing the central kerb.

Making turns and giving way at roundabouts

Please refer to the roundabout diagram on the following page.

Approaching a roundabout: Vehicles entering a roundabout must give way to any vehicle already in the roundabout.

Giving way at a roundabout: means the driver must slow down and if necessary, stop to avoid a collision.

Turning left: On your approach to a roundabout you must select the left lane, signal left, stay in the left lane to exit.

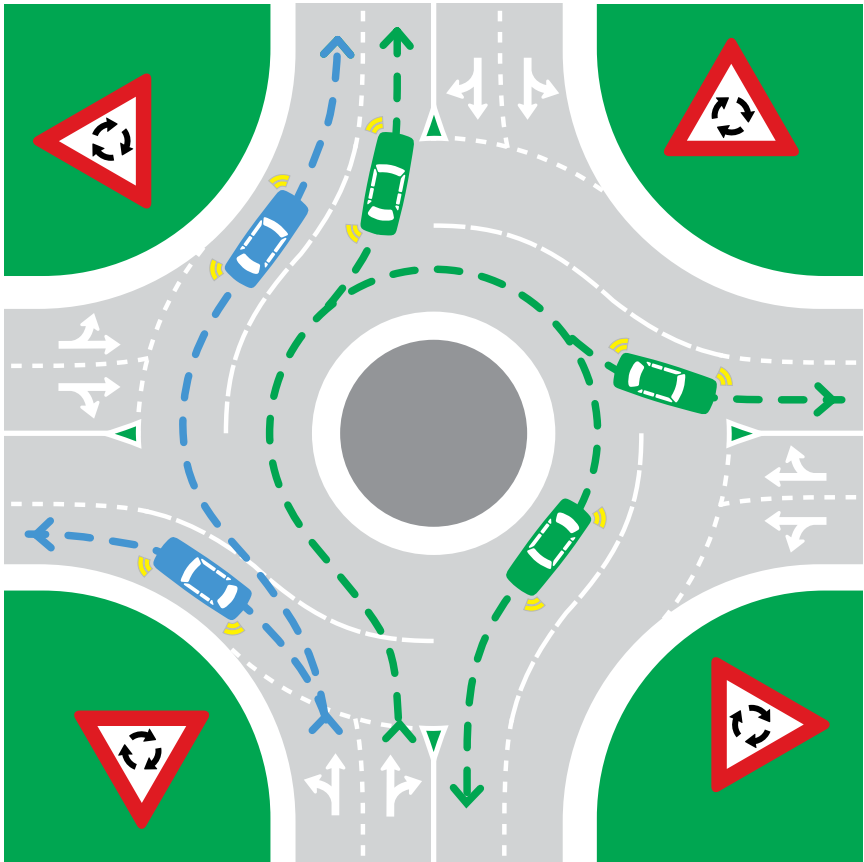
Going straight ahead: Do not signal when approaching the roundabout but always signal left before exiting a roundabout.

You may approach the roundabout from either left or right lanes (unless there are road markings with other instructions), drive in the same lane through the roundabout and exit in the same lane.

Turning right: On your approach, to a roundabout you must select the right lane, signal right, stay in the right lane and signal left before exiting into the right lane.

Making a U-turn: When you use the roundabout to make a U-turn on your approach signal right from the right lane, stay in the right lane, but signal left before exiting into the right lane.

Exiting a roundabout: If practical, you must always signal left when exiting a roundabout.



Roundabouts and Bicycle Riders

Bicycle riders are allowed to turn right from the left hand lane. When passing each exit, the rider must give way to any vehicle leaving the roundabout from that exit.



The rules for slowing down, giving way and signalling when approaching and exiting at roundabouts are the same for single lane and multi-lane roundabouts.



Roundabouts: Risks to watch for

- Take extra care whenever you drive in a roundabout.
- Keep an eye out for cars that are leaving the roundabout.
- Be careful if changing lanes in a roundabout, particularly when leaving.
- Look out for vehicles that are making a full turn.
- Watch for bicycles, long vehicles and motorcycles.

Police directions

Prepare to be stopped if you see:

- the police
- a police vehicle
- red/blue flashing lights
- the police using signs

Police often give hand signal directions at intersections and attend many incidents on the road, you must always obey any direction you are given from the police.

Police and emergency vehicles

When you hear a siren or see the flashing blue or red lights of an emergency vehicle (eg Police, Fire Brigade or Ambulance vehicle) you must give way. This means get out of the way, so the emergency vehicle has a clear passage through traffic. Generally, if you hear a siren or see the flashing lights, pull over to the left until the emergency vehicle passes.

You will be liable for an on-the-spot fine if you do not give way to emergency vehicles. In the event you are pursued by a police vehicle you must immediately pull over and stop.

Funeral processions or authorised processions

When driving you must not negligently or wilfully interfere with, or interrupt, the free passage along the road of any funeral cortege or authorised procession. You must not interfere with any vehicle or person apparently forming part of the funeral or procession. It is an offence and you will be fined.

Traffic lights



Red means stop. Wait behind the stop line.
Do not go through the intersection.



Yellow (amber) means stop. You can enter the intersection if you are so close that sudden braking might cause a crash.



Green means proceed through the intersection carefully.

Turning arrows at traffic lights

Some traffic lights have arrows to control traffic turning right or left.
A green arrow means you can only turn in that direction.

A red arrow means traffic waiting to turn must wait behind the STOP line until the arrow turns green or disappears, even if there is no traffic on the road.



You must not go straight ahead or turn left.
You may turn right.



You must not turn right but you can go straight ahead or turn left if the way is clear.



When the yellow (amber) arrow is flashing, you may proceed but you must give way to any pedestrian who is crossing the road into which you are turning.



Some intersections that have traffic lights contain bicycle storage areas. These painted areas on the road allow cyclist to stop in safety. When traffic lights or arrows are red, drivers must not allow any part of the vehicle to enter the bicycle storage area

Signs at traffic lights



A STOP sign with three black dots is only seen at traffic lights. It means that if the lights are not working or are flashing yellow and you are approaching this sign, you must stop and give way to traffic as though you are at an intersection with stop signs.



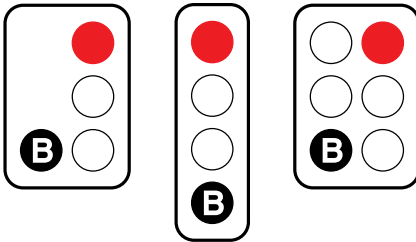
The sign at left allows you to turn left on a red light after stopping. When turning left you must give way to all traffic approaching from the right.

Left turn on red light is only permitted at intersections where the sign has been placed.

B signals

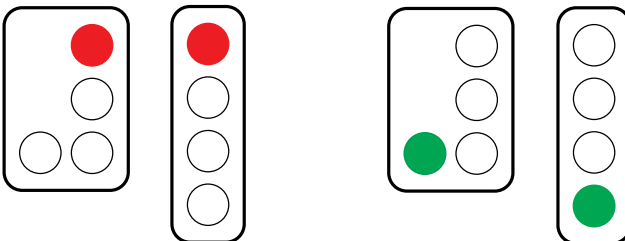
B signals separate buses and other vehicles at some intersections with traffic lights for a safer, smoother traffic flow. To ensure B signals work properly never drive in the lanes marked BUSES ONLY.

B signals are attached to the usual traffic lights. They show a white B on a black background (some traffic lights have a red, yellow and white B signal attached to them). Shortly before the usual traffic signals change to green, the B signal lights up white. All other vehicles stay while the buses may go. Buses may proceed in any direction unless signs or markings indicate otherwise. When the lights turn green other vehicles may move off.



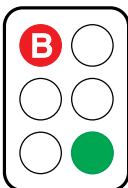
White B means buses only go.

The red and yellow B signals (or the usual red and yellow traffic lights) tell bus drivers when to stop at the intersection.



Red only means all vehicles stop.

Green only means all vehicles go.



Red B means buses stay. Green means other vehicles go.

Bicycle riders

Where the traffic at an intersection is controlled by traffic lights, cyclists may have signals that show them when to cross. Cyclists must follow these red, yellow or green bicycle symbols and proceed with care.



T signals

T signals are special signals for light rail vehicles. These traffic lights display the letter T. Red or yellow T signals tell the drivers of light rail vehicles when to stop or prepare to stop. A white T signal means that the driver of a light rail vehicle can go.

Red light speed (safety) cameras

Red light cameras are used to photograph vehicles that go through a red light. A penalty notice is then sent to the owner of the vehicle, who has the option to:

- Pay the fine
- Advise the State Debt Recovery Office on a statutory declaration the name and address of the person driving at the time of the offence
- Advise the State Debt Recovery Office you want to have the case heard by a court.

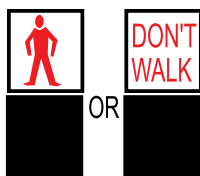
If you are crossing the intersection as the light turns yellow (amber) and it is not safe to stop, do not panic. Continue driving through the intersection. The camera only takes a photograph if you cross over the stop line 0.3 seconds after the light has turned red. Traffic already in the intersection or entering on a yellow (amber) light will not activate the red light camera.

Red light speed (safety) cameras use digital technology that is capable of detecting both red-light and speeding offences.

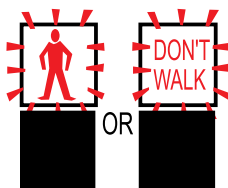
Pedestrian signals

When making a turn at an intersection you must give way to pedestrians on the road into which you are turning.

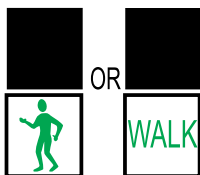
Where the traffic at the intersection is controlled by traffic lights, there may be signals for pedestrians that show them when to cross. Pedestrians must follow these signals.



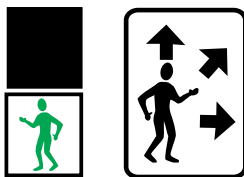
Pedestrians must not start to cross.



Pedestrians must not start to cross but may finish crossing.



Pedestrians may start to cross.

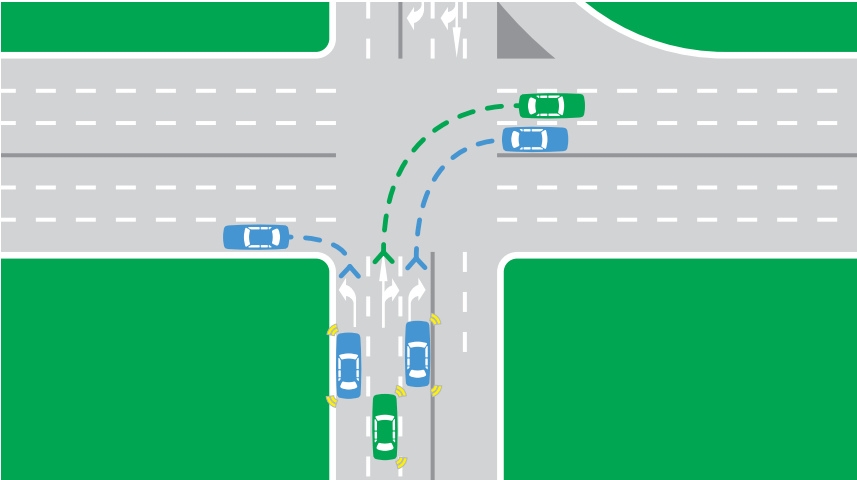


Pedestrians may walk in any direction when the green walk signal is accompanied by this sign.

Road markings

Painted arrows

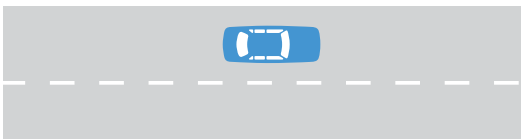
Arrows are painted on the road to tell you which direction must be taken by traffic in each lane. When more than one direction is shown, you may go in the direction of either arrow.



You must signal that you are going to turn even if the lane you are in turns only in one direction. When you turn, stay in the same lane as you move from one road to the other.

Dividing lines

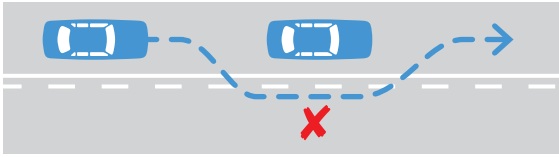
Unless a sign tells you otherwise, you can cross any type of dividing line when turning right at an intersection. You can also turn to the right across a dividing line to enter or leave a property (eg home or shops) by the shortest route.



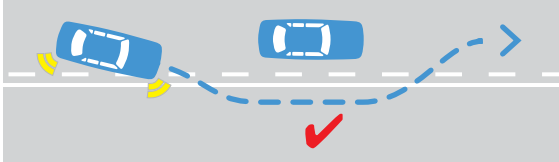
Broken white dividing lines – may be crossed to overtake if the road ahead is clear.



Double white unbroken (continuous) lines – you cannot overtake across these lines.

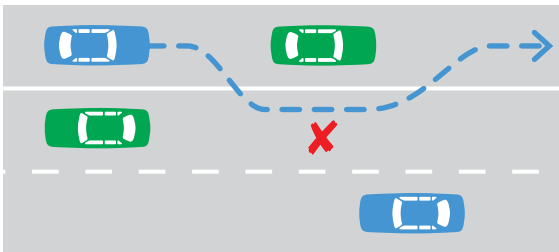


Double white lines with an unbroken (continuous) line closer to you – you cannot overtake across these lines.



Double white lines with a broken line closer to you – you may cross the lines to overtake if the road ahead is clear.

Do not make a U-turn across an unbroken (continuous) line or double centre unbroken (continuous) lines, unless the line closest to you is broken or where another rule prohibits performing the U-turn.

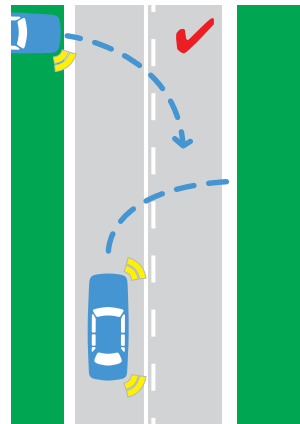
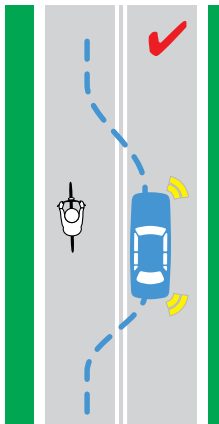
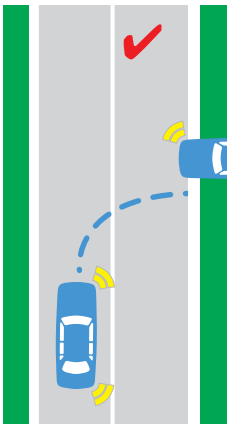


Do not overtake across a single unbroken (continuous) line.

Do not overtake across a single unbroken (continuous) line.

Exceptions to keeping to the left of a dividing line

Drivers are permitted to cross a single dividing line to enter or leave a road. Drivers are permitted to cross or straddle broken and unbroken lines to safely pass a bicycle rider. See examples below.

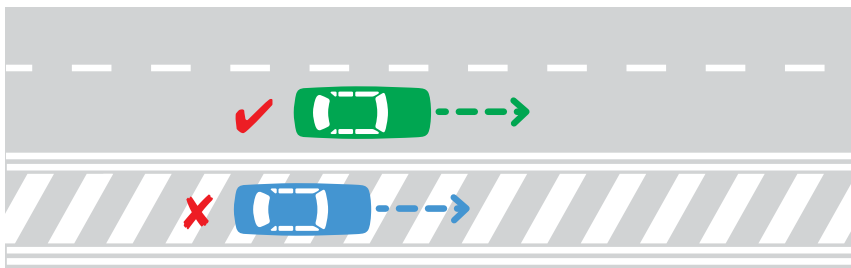




You must drive to the left of white dividing line markings, whether they are single or double, broken or unbroken.

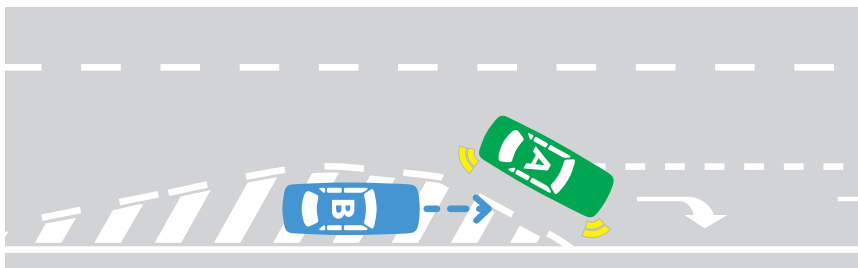
Painted islands

You must not drive on a section of painted road that is surrounded by double lines. You may drive on a painted island surrounded by single continuous or broken lines to enter or leave the road, or to enter a turning lane that begins immediately after the painted island for up to 50 metres.



You must not drive on areas surrounded by double lines.

When you enter a turning lane from a painted island you must give way to any vehicle already in the turning lane or entering the turning lane from another marked lane. You must not stop on a painted island. In some instances, such as giving way to emergency vehicles or when avoiding an obstruction, you may drive on a painted island regardless of the type of lines around the island.



Car B must give way to car A..

Keep Clear pavement marking



Keep Clear pavement markings are located in places such as outside ambulance and fire station exits to ensure their vehicles are not obstructed when leaving on an emergency call. You must not stop between the lines marked across the road. These markings may also be used at some T intersections to prevent queuing across the intersection.

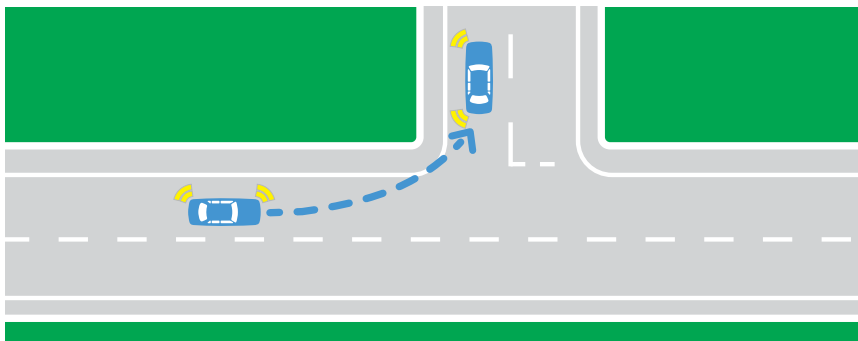
Edge lines

These lines can be broken or unbroken (continuous) and are marked to keep traffic off soft road edges and breakdown lanes. They also help you see where you are going.



You may drive on, across or outside edge lines for up to 100 metres only if you are:

- Stopping
- Overtaking on the inside of vehicles turning right or, in a one way street, overtaking vehicles turning left
- Turning off or onto the road by the shortest route
- Turning left or right at intersections
- Driving a slow moving vehicle.



Audible lines

Audible edge lines are lines composed of a series of raised pieces of material that create a noise or vibration if driven on by a motor vehicle. These lines are used to warn drivers who veer over the line.

Kerb lines

Yellow lines painted near the edge of the road show that there are stopping restrictions and tell you what rules apply to that particular section of road.

Broken yellow kerb line

A broken yellow kerb line is a CLEARWAY line. You must not stop at the edge of the road between the hours shown on the sign except in a medical or similar emergency. Buses, taxis and hire cars may only stop to pick up or set down passengers.

Unbroken (continuous) yellow kerb line

An unbroken yellow kerb line is a NO STOPPING line. You must not stop for any reason except a medical or similar emergency.

Dragon's Teeth



Dragon's Teeth are a painted series of triangular road markings placed in pairs on each side of a lane or road.

Dragon's Teeth further increase the visibility of school zones for motorists and provide a constant reinforcement to slow down to 40 km/h around schools.

Pedestrian crossings and refuges

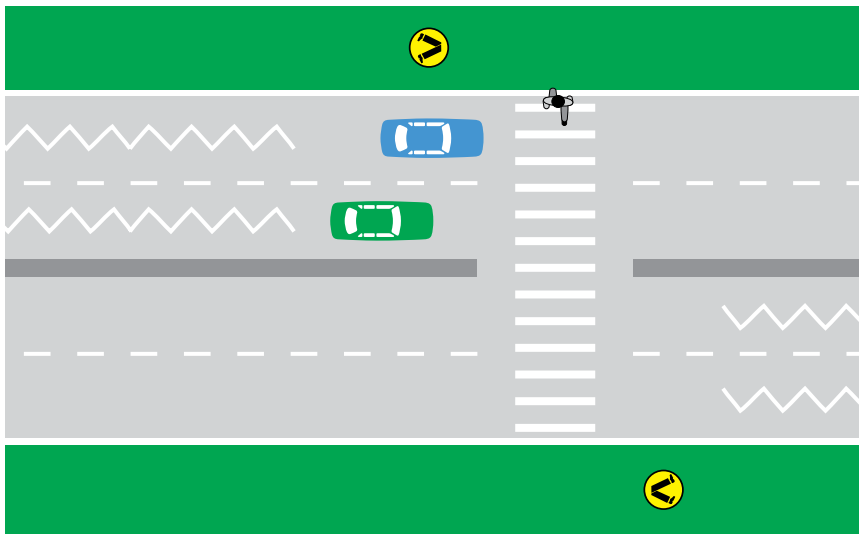
You must share the road with pedestrians. Special markings on the road show where pedestrians have special rights.

You must give way to pedestrians crossing the road into which you are turning. You must also give way to pedestrians – even if there is no marked pedestrian crossing – if there is any danger of colliding with them.

Pedestrian crossings

Pedestrian crossings allow people to cross the road safely. These crossings are usually marked by white stripes on the road and are also known as zebra crossings.

Some pedestrian crossings have zig zag lines marked on the road before the crossing. Take extra care when you see a zig zag line on the road as this means you are approaching a crossing which you may not be able to see because of a curve, crest or dip in the road.



Do not overtake any vehicle that is stopping or has stopped at a crossing.

Pedestrian refuges

A pedestrian refuge is an island in the middle of the road. The island allows pedestrians to cross the road in two stages. Approaches to pedestrian refuges are signposted. When you are approaching a pedestrian refuge you should look out for pedestrians.

Pelican crossings

A pelican crossing is a special kind of pedestrian crossing controlled by traffic lights.

The traffic lights for drivers have a different colour sequence to other situations. After the red light, the traffic lights start to flash yellow. At the same time the pedestrians see a flashing red DON'T WALK sign. When the flashing yellow signal starts you may drive carefully through the crossing if there is no risk of hitting a pedestrian.

Childrens' crossings

These are part-time crossings which operate just before and after school hours, as well as other times such as school excursions and lunch times. They are highlighted by red flags with the words CHILDREN CROSSING on them.

When the flags are displayed you must slow down and stop before the stop line if a pedestrian is on or entering the crossing. You must not proceed until all pedestrians have left the crossing.

You must not stop on or within 20 metres before or 10 metres after, a children's crossing.



If the road beyond a childrens' crossing or a pedestrian crossing is blocked you should not drive onto the crossing.

Level crossings

At a level crossing a pedestrian must not start to cross when a red light is displayed.

If warning lights commence flashing or warning bells begin ringing and a pedestrian has **already started crossing** the railway line or tram track, they must finish crossing without delay.



Combined Childrens' and Pedestrian Crossing

Some pedestrian crossings are used as childrens' crossings at some times during the day. The display of CHILDREN CROSSING flags means that the childrens' crossing is operating. When the flags are not displayed the crossing operates as a normal pedestrian crossing.

School Crossing Supervisors

As you approach a pedestrian crossing or childrens' crossing where a School Crossing Supervisor is displaying a 'STOP Children Crossing' sign, you must slow down and stop. You may proceed when the School Crossing Supervisor no longer displays the sign in your direction or has indicated it is safe for you to proceed.



Stop signs may be placed at an intersection immediately after a pedestrian crossing. You must stop at the stop sign even if you have already stopped at the pedestrian crossing.

Traffic signs

Traffic signs warn you of possible dangers and provide information. They tell you what the rules are and what the road conditions are like.



Regulatory signs

Regulatory signs tell you about laws that must be obeyed.

Except for STOP, GIVE WAY and ROUNDABOUT signs, most regulatory signs are rectangles. They are usually black on a white background. Sometimes they also have a colour such as red. Some parking signs are green on white.

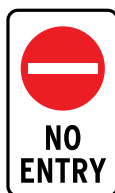
Some of the most common regulatory signs are shown in this handbook.



Keep to the left of this sign.



Only travel in the direction shown by the arrow.



Do not drive beyond this sign.



No bicycles permitted beyond this sign.



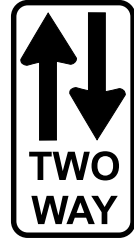
You must not turn right or make a U turn.



You must not turn left.



You must not make a U turn.



This street now has lanes travelling in opposite directions.



You must not turn right or make a U turn.



You must not turn left.



You must not make a U turn.



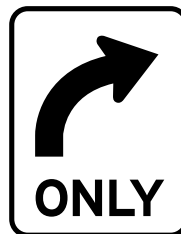
You must keep to the right of the sign.



All traffic in the right lane must turn right.



All traffic in the left lane must turn left.



You must turn right.



You must turn left.

Warning Signs

Warning signs tell you that there may be dangers ahead. They are usually black on a yellow background and are mostly diamond shaped.

Pictures, diagrams and symbols are used to alert you to danger. Some of the more common signs are shown here.



Crossroads ahead.



The road you are travelling on ends, you must give way to all traffic.



Road conditions will change ahead to two lanes of oncoming traffic.



A side road meets the road you are travelling on.



The road ahead curves to the right.



There is a sharp right turn in the road ahead.



Sharp bend to the left ahead.



Winding road ahead.



Road divides ahead.



Divided road ends ahead.



Road narrows ahead.



Give way sign ahead.



Stop sign ahead.



Pedestrian crossing ahead.



Pedestrians may be crossing ahead.



Children may be crossing ahead.



Hospital ahead.
Drive carefully.



Look out for
bicycle riders.



Road is slippery
when wet.



Steep descent
ahead.



Beware of slow
moving vehicles
entering traffic.



This sign is used
where a temporary
emergency situation
such as an oil spill,
fallen tree, snow,
landslip exists on
the road ahead.



Narrow bridge ahead,
slow down and be
prepared to give way
or stop.



Narrow bridge.



The road ahead dips
(a dip is a sudden
slope down then up).



There is a hump
in the road ahead
(a hump is a sudden
slope up and then
down).



Look out for
kangaroos.



As you approach the
hill ahead, you will not
be able to see a safe
distance in front of
you. Drive carefully.



The road ahead
is under water (a
stream for example).



Grid ahead. A grid
is a row of metal
lengths across the
road.



Water may cover the
causeway ahead
(a causeway is a
raised road that has
been built across a
low or wet place or a
body of water).



This sign is used to advise drivers that the
road ahead may be covered by floodwaters.



This sign shows the depth of floodwaters across the
road.



Advisory signs

Advisory speed signs are sometimes used together with other signs. They show the maximum speed that is safe in good conditions.

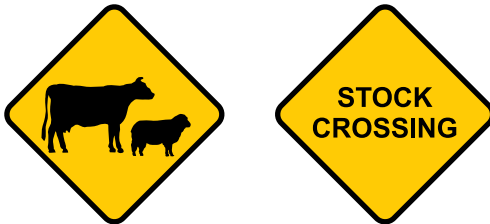
Sometimes other signs are used together with warning signs to advise on how long you should look out for a particular hazard.

Road bends to right. 55 km/h maximum speed in good conditions.

Stock signs

When you see any of the following signs you may be approaching animals on or near the road.

You must slow down or stop to avoid crashing with them. Fines apply if you do not obey these signs.



Stock may be crossing ahead.



Warning triangles for crashes and breakdowns

Vehicles with a GVM over 12 tonnes must place a minimum of three warning triangles in breakdown situations. See *Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook* for details.



If you hit a domestic animal, contact the owner, Police or RSPCA. Injured domestic animals should be taken to the nearest vet or animal shelter.

Should you injure or kill a native or wild animal, try to remove it from the road but take care as some animals carry young in their pouches. Hurt animals can be cared for by the Wildlife and Information Rescue Service (WIRES).

Variable Message Signs

Variable Message Signs are large electronic signs placed on the side of some roads. They display messages to warn motorists of changes in normal traffic conditions on the road ahead, such as fog, crashes, road works, congestion and road closures. These early warnings help provide a safe and efficient traffic flow.



Variable message sign.

Motorway signs

Motorway signs give information about the start and end of a motorway and the exits from a motorway.



These signs indicate the start of a motorway.

These signs indicate the end of a motorway.



Exit from motorway
in 2km.



Exit from motorway now.

Alpha-numeric markings have been introduced to identify our motorways and roads, making it easier for motorists to plan their trips and navigate road networks. The alpha-numeric numbering links the road guidance system to national and interstate routes. 'M' designates motorways of national significance, 'A' designates routes of national significance and 'B' is for routes with state significance. For example The Sydney to Newcastle Freeway previously known as the 'F3' is now joined with the Pacific Highway between Brunswick Heads and the Queensland border and now known as the M1 Pacific Motorway.

Priority for buses



In a built-up area a bus that has a GIVE WAY sign displayed and signals its intention to pull out from its stopping place, has priority over other traffic, travelling in the left lane or left line of traffic.

Temporary roadwork signs

These signs are used at roadworks. Slow down, look out for any hazards and be prepared to stop. You must obey any signal from a traffic controller and give way to any worker.



Traffic Controller ahead,
be prepared to stop.
(Night)



Traffic Controller ahead,
be prepared to stop.



Workers ahead. (Day)



Approaching roadworks, slow
down and be prepared to stop.



End road work.



Stop and Slow.
These signs are held by traffic controllers.
You must obey them.



Slow down and prepare to stop..



Road hazard ahead. Merge lanes.



Temporary traffic lights in place.
Stop here on red signal.



No lines marked on the road.
Take care if overtaking.



Closed lane ahead.



Watch for loose stones.



40 km/h speed limit for
road work.



Speed limit signs at work zones are enforceable and must be obeyed.

Lanes

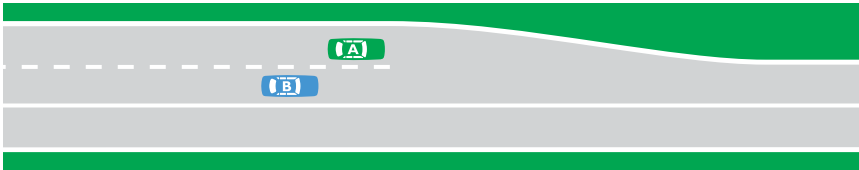
You should keep in the middle of the lane in which you are driving. If there are no lanes marked on the road, drive near the left side of the road.

Before changing lane, signal in plenty of time and check for other vehicles by looking in your mirrors and your blind spot (look over your shoulder).

You must give way to vehicles in the lane you are moving into.

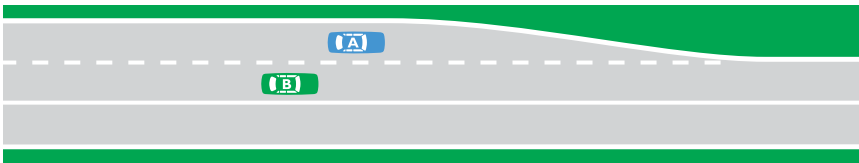
Merging lanes

Sometimes the lane line ends before the lanes merge, as shown below. When merging, the trailing vehicle gives way to the vehicle ahead. Use caution when merging.



Car B gives way to car A.

Where the lane you are driving in ends and you have to cross lane lines to merge with the traffic in another lane, give way to traffic in the other lane.

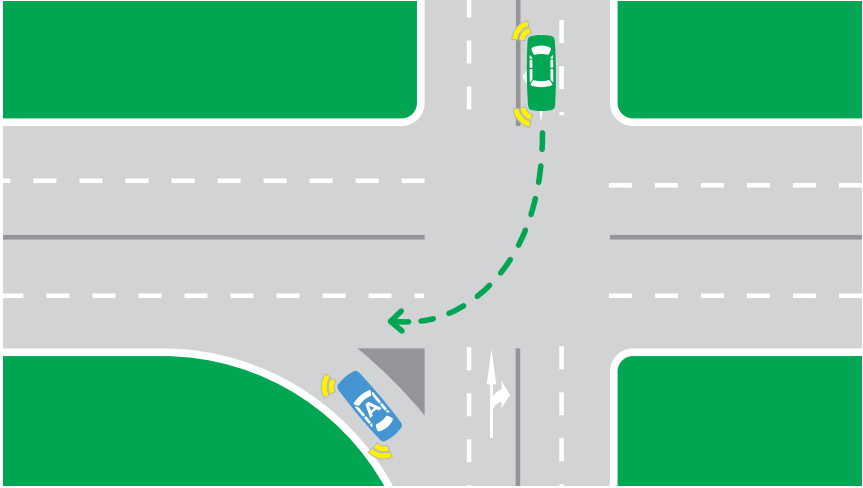


Car A gives way to car B.

Slip lanes

These lanes are used to improve safety and traffic flow for vehicles turning left. Unless there are signs to indicate parking, you should not stop in a Slip Lane.

Slip Lanes can be marked by a painted island or traffic island. You must use a Slip Lane where one is provided.



Car A must give way to the vehicle turning right at the intersection.

Breakdown safety and breakdown lanes

To reduce the risk of a breakdown, it is always best to plan ahead and check you have enough fuel before your trip. Also, keep your vehicle serviced and maintained.

It is important to ensure your own safety and that of other road users in the event of a breakdown or flat tyre.

Only stop if you absolutely have to and if possible, find a safe spot to pull off the road, such as an emergency breakdown area.

Park your vehicle as far to the left as possible and if it is not safe to exit the vehicle, remain in your seat with your seatbelt on and call roadside assistance.

Always activate your hazard lights in the event of a breakdown, even if you have removed your car from the roadway.

Assess the road and surrounds for hazards and risks, when you have broken down and are deciding what to do. Remember it is difficult for large vehicles and vehicles travelling at high speed to stop or slow down quickly.

If it is safe to do so, you can exit your car – preferably from the passenger side – and stand well clear of the road, behind a safety barrier if one is present and the area behind the barrier is safe.

If you break down in poor light conditions, also activate your parking lights.

It is recommended you carry a high-visibility vest and safety markers inside your vehicle, so you can easily and safely access them if you break down.

Transit lanes

These may be used by vehicles containing a certain number of people. These lanes may also be used by buses, taxis, hire cars, motorcycles, bicycles and emergency vehicles regardless of the number of people in them.

The two types of transit lanes are:



Transit (T2) lane:

You can drive in this lane when there are two or more people in your vehicle including the driver.



Transit (T3) lane:

You can drive in this lane when there are three or more people in your vehicle including the driver.

Without the required number of passengers you can only enter a Transit T2 or Transit T3 lane for a maximum of 100 metres when entering or leaving the road at a driveway or intersection. Penalties apply for driving in transit lanes illegally.

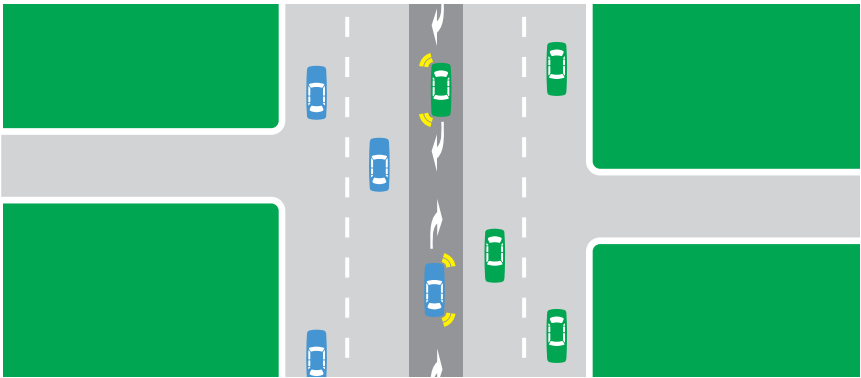
Special purpose lanes

Some roads have lanes set aside for special vehicles such as trucks, buses and bicycles. Signs at the start and end of these lanes indicate their purpose. Drivers are permitted to drive in a part-time special purpose lane, when the lane is not operating.

Median turning lanes



Vehicles travelling in either direction may use this lane to enter or leave the road at a driveway, property access or intersection. These lanes have signposts or markings on the road and are a shared part of the road. Vehicles using median turning lanes must give way to all other vehicles.



Truck lanes



These lanes must not be used by vehicles other than trucks over 4.5 tonnes GVM.

Truck use left lane



Where a TRUCKS USE LEFT LANE sign appears, trucks must use the left lane until a sign indicates otherwise. All other vehicles may also use this lane. (This also applies if the sign refers to BUSES or TRUCKS & BUSES).

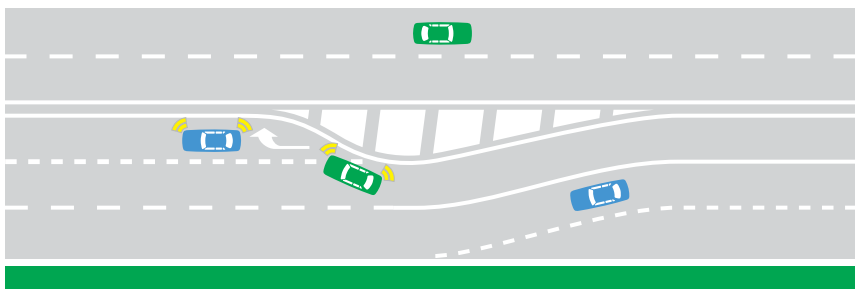
Bicycle lanes



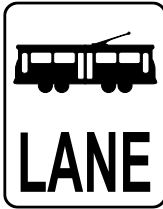
When a bicycle lane is marked on the road, cyclists must use it. These lanes may only be used by bicycles, but you may drive in these lanes for not more than 50 metres to enter or leave the road at a driveway or intersection.

S lanes

S lanes make a right turn lane at intersections by merging the kerb-side lane and making the other lanes follow an S shape. A single unbroken (continuous) white line separates the S shaped lanes. You must not cross this line.



Light rail lanes



Only light rail vehicles are allowed to travel in lanes marked with these signs. Be careful not to obstruct the path of a light rail vehicle. At an intersection where a light rail vehicle is already inside, or about to enter the intersection, you should wait until it is clear before proceeding.

Bus lanes



These lanes are for buses, but also can be used by:

- Taxis
- Hire cars
- Vehicles operated by or under direction of Roads and Maritime
- Bicycles and motorcycles.

Other vehicles may only drive in bus lanes for a maximum of 100 metres to enter or leave the road at a driveway or intersection. The only vehicles allowed to stop in a bus lane are buses at a bus stop or taxis and hire cars when picking up or setting down passengers.

Buses only lanes



When the words BUSES ONLY appear on the BUS LANE sign, or lane markings indicate a BUS ONLY Lane, only buses are allowed to drive in these lanes.

T-Way lanes



These are special lanes which can only be used by authorised buses and service vehicles.

Toll roads

Some motorways require that you pay a toll to use them. Advance directional signage will alert you to whether you are required to pay a toll.



The toll can be paid by electronic tag, electronic pass or by cash.



The toll can be paid by electronic tag or electronic pass **only**.

There is a range of electronic tag and pass products available through different providers. Electronic tags are small transponders that attach to the inside of your windscreen. An electronic pass is an arrangement where your number plate is temporarily recorded in the tolling system. You can purchase a pass up to 48 hours after you travel on a tollroad.

If you are paying by cash, you need to slow down and take care when approaching the toll booth and make sure you drive in the correct lane. Cash booths are generally located on the left hand side of toll plazas. So keep to the left hand lane if you want to pay with cash. Lanes that accept payment by tag or pass are marked with the E and e symbols.

The payment of tolls is required by law. For more information see Section 7 Penalties.

You can learn more about which tollroads are fully electronic and how to plan your trip by visiting the Sydney Motorways website at www.sydneymotorways.com.au

Overtaking

Overtaking other vehicles can be dangerous. The difficulty with overtaking is judging the space required to complete the manoeuvre safely.

Both single lane and multi-lane overtaking manoeuvres involve risk and require extreme care. If you have any doubts it is best not to overtake and to wait until it is safer.

You must overtake on the right unless a vehicle is waiting to turn right, is stationary, or if you and the other vehicle are travelling in marked lanes. In these instances you may overtake on the left side if it is safe.

When overtaking you must:

- Not go over the speed limit
- Make sure the road ahead is clear and that there is sufficient space for you to complete the manoeuvre (check side streets and other lanes to ensure nothing will enter this space while you are overtaking)
- Check mirrors
- Signal each change in position long enough to give sufficient warning to others
- Check blind spots for motorcycles and other vehicles before changing your lane position
- Pass the vehicle with sufficient space to avoid a collision (you should be able to see the vehicle you have overtaken in your rear vision mirror before you move in front of it)
- Give way to traffic already in the lane you are moving to.

You must not overtake:

- Unless you have a clear view of any approaching traffic and you can complete the manoeuvre safely (do not commence an overtaking manoeuvre when approaching a crest, curve or any limited vision situation)
- Another vehicle that is stopping or has stopped at a pedestrian crossing, intersection or railway crossing
- Across an unbroken (continuous) line, unless the line closest to you is broken
- Where a road narrows.

On roads with a speed limit of more than 80 km/h, or a KEEP LEFT UNLESS OVERTAKING sign, you must drive in the left lane unless you want to overtake or turn right. When being overtaken you must:

- Not increase your speed
- Keep left and allow reasonable space for the overtaking vehicle to pass and move back into the lane
- Keep within your lane.



You must not overtake or pass other vehicles on pedestrian or school crossings.

Oversize vehicles

Oversize vehicles are becoming more common on the road network because of the growing freight task. Often they are slower moving, occupy more of the road (sometimes more than one lane) and take longer to stop.

LONG VEHICLE

If you see this sign, the vehicle ahead is longer than normal vehicles.

OVERSIZE

If you see this sign, the vehicle ahead is wider/longer/higher than normal vehicles.

Some oversize vehicles may be accompanied by pilot vehicles; these vehicles have yellow flashing lights displaying an 'Oversize Load Ahead' warning sign. Pilot vehicles provide other drivers advance warning of an oversize vehicle ahead. In some cases police may accompany pilot vehicles or will escort unusually large oversize vehicles, as well as direct traffic if required supporting safe road travel for all drivers.

When approaching an on-coming oversize vehicle you should:

- Be careful and reduce speed
- Keep to the left of the centre line
- Be prepared to move to the left side of the road if necessary.

You should use extreme care when overtaking an oversize vehicle.

Oversize vehicles may sometimes travel down the centre of a bridge and can occupy more than one lane on the bridge. This may not allow enough room for another vehicle to fit on the bridge at same time. In these cases be prepared to stop and wait for the oversize vehicle to exit the bridge. Do not attempt to cross a bridge occupied by an oversize vehicle as these vehicles are unable to reverse back.

If you see portable warning triangles placed on the road this can indicate a heavy vehicle has broken down. Slow down and drive carefully when you see triangles on the road.

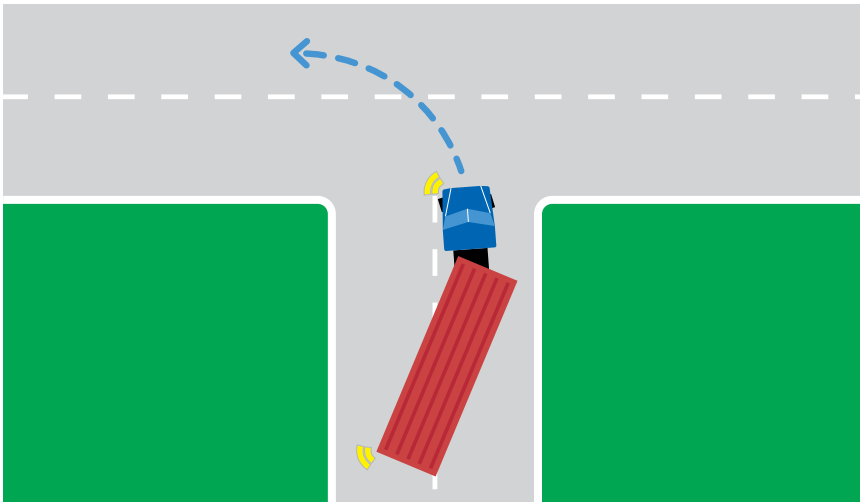
Large, heavy turning vehicles

Be careful of large, heavy vehicles displaying a DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE sign as they may use more than one lane when turning left or right.

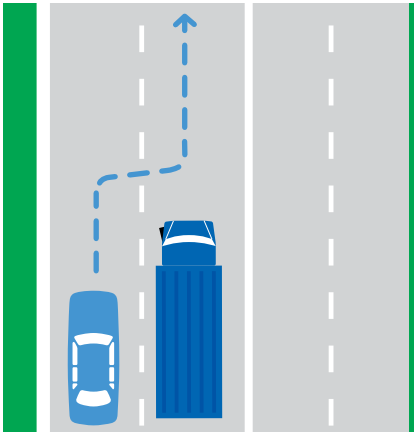


DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE

In a one-way street, a long vehicle may also use two lanes to turn left or right if it displays a DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE sign.

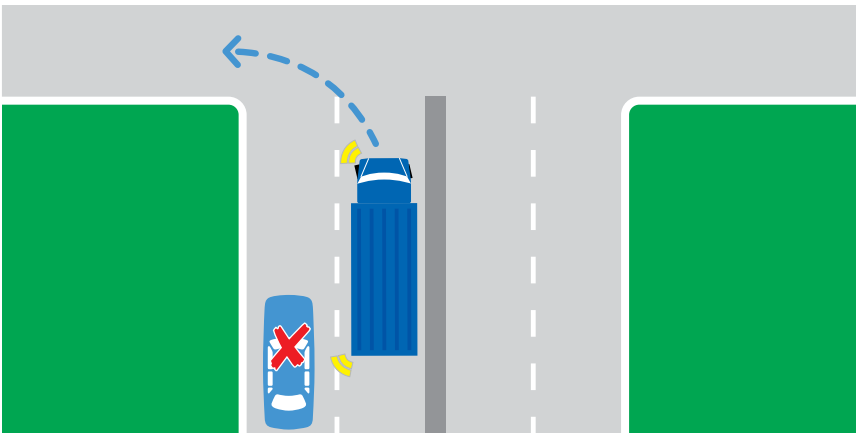


When a long vehicle is turning and displays a sign DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE you must not pass on the right if it is turning right.



A driver may overtake to the left of a vehicle displaying a 'do not overtake turning vehicle' sign, only if it is safe to do so.

You need to be careful of all large, heavy vehicles that are turning. If you put your vehicle in the path of a turning vehicle you may be crushed.



Light rail vehicles

When a light rail vehicle is coming towards you, keep to the left unless there is a barrier between you and the light rail vehicle. Only overtake on the left to pass a light rail vehicle travelling in the centre or on the right hand side of the road. You should overtake on the right when the light rail vehicle is on the left hand side of the road.

You must not overtake a light rail vehicle on the left if it is turning or signalling to turn left. If it is turning or signalling to turn right, you must not overtake it on the right.

Bridges

Approach bridges with care as they are often narrow. If you think two vehicles cannot fit on a narrow bridge, give way to the other driver who is on or approaching the bridge.

When you come to a bridge which is wide enough for only two vehicles, slow down and drive carefully. Sometimes you are not allowed to overtake a vehicle going in the same direction or to pass a vehicle coming towards you.

The following signs tell you what to do:



You must give way to any vehicle travelling in the opposite direction on the bridge.



You must give way to any vehicle travelling in the opposite direction on the bridge. You must not overtake any vehicle travelling in the same direction.

Motorways

You should be especially alert when driving on a motorway because traffic travels at high speed.

Please note: where motorways are mentioned this also refers to freeways.

Make sure your vehicle has enough fuel, oil and water for the journey and that the tyre pressures are correct. Bicycle riders are allowed to travel on motorways unless prohibited by signs.

Joining the motorway

The approach to a motorway is usually from a road on the left. Watch for a gap then increase your speed to safely merge with the traffic.

Driving on the motorway

**KEEP LEFT
UNLESS
OVERTAKING**

Once on the motorway, stay in the left lane unless overtaking.

If there are three lanes and the left lane has many vehicles travelling at a slower speed than you, stay in the middle lane. After you have passed them, you should return to the left lane. The right lane is generally reserved for overtaking so move out of it as soon as it is safe to do so.

When driving on a motorway you must:

**EMERGENCY
STOPPING
LANE
ONLY**



- Not stop except in an emergency (if you have to stop, move to the emergency lane, break-down lane or shoulder)
- Not make a U-turn or reverse.

If you miss your exit, continue travelling on the motorway until you reach the next one.

Leaving the motorway

Make sure you:

- Move to the lane closest to the exit in plenty of time
- Give a signal and reduce your speed
- Check your speed to ensure you are not going too fast to make a safe exit.

Parking

Parking rules are designed to stop vehicles from parking where it would be dangerous or inconvenient for others.

Checks for parking

Before getting out of your vehicle you must check your mirrors and blind spots for pedestrians, bicycles or other vehicles.

Before leaving your parked vehicle you must ensure that:

- The parking brake is on.
- The gears are engaged either in first gear for downhill, reverse for uphill. Automatic vehicles should be left in PARK

If you are more than three metres away from your vehicle you must:

- Remove the key out of the ignition
- Lock all doors and windows if there is no one in the vehicle.



Before moving from a stationary position at the side of the road or a median strip parking area, you must signal for at least five seconds, check mirrors and blind spots.

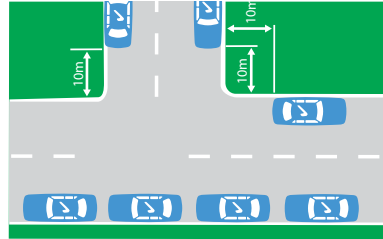
General parking rules

You must not stop your vehicle (that is, bring it to a stop and either stay with the vehicle or leave it parked) in the following circumstances:

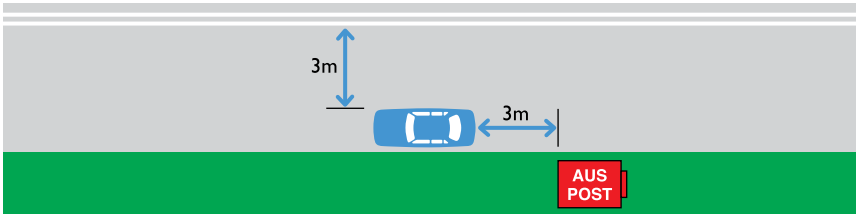
- Double parked (that is in the road alongside a car that is parked).
- Across a driveway or footpath
- On a median strip or traffic island
- On motorways
- In a clearway
- On footpaths and nature strips
- Between BUS STOP, BUS ZONE, TAXI STAND or TAXI ZONE signs
- In a safety zone or within 10 metres before or after a safety zone
- Within an intersection
- In a slip lane
- Within 20 metres of an intersecting road at an intersection with traffic lights unless a sign allows you to park there
- Within 1 metre of another vehicle parked in front or behind (does not apply when angle parking)

- Within 10 metres of an intersecting road at an intersection without traffic lights unless:

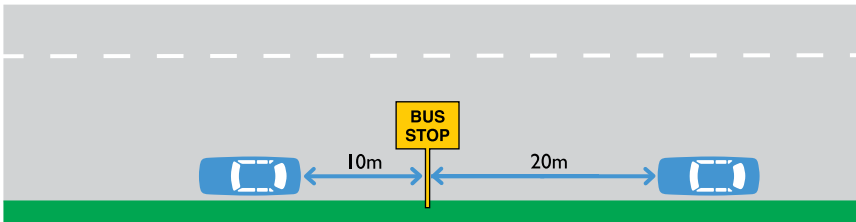
- A sign allows you to park there
- OR
- The intersection is a T-intersection without traffic lights, where you are permitted to stop along the continuous side of the continuing road



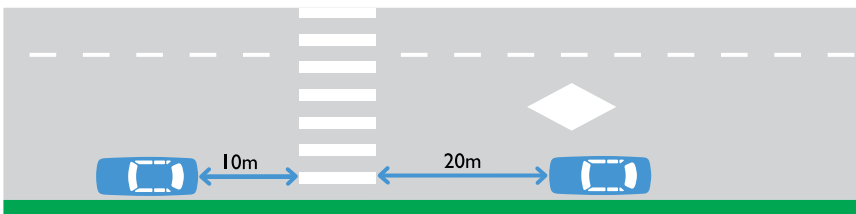
- Within three metres of any double centre lines
- Within three metres of an Australia Post letter box unless dropping off or picking up passengers or mail (see below)



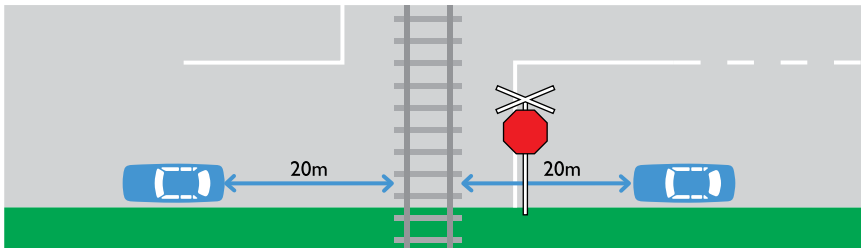
- Within 20 metres before and 10 metres after a bus stop (see below)



- On or within 20 metres before and 10 metres after a children's crossing or pedestrian crossing (see below)



- Within 10 metres before and three metres after a marked foot crossing with traffic signals
- Within one metre of a fire hydrant, fire hydrant indicator or fire plug indicator
- On a railway level crossing
- Within 20 metres before and after a railway level crossing (see below).



When you are parking on a hill or a curve outside a built up area, make sure that someone coming over the hill or around the bend can see your car from at least 100 metres away.



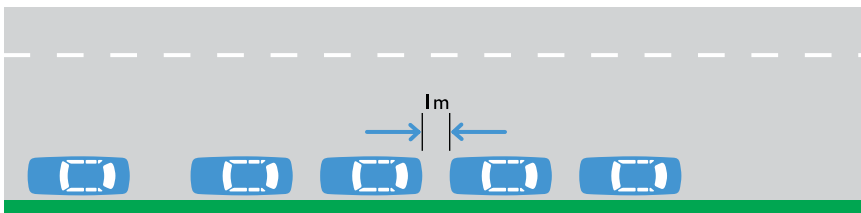
Before opening your door check your mirrors and blind spots for pedestrians, bicycles or other vehicles.

Parallel parking

This is the usual way to park unless signs tell you otherwise.

You must park in the same direction as the adjacent traffic and parallel and as close as possible to the kerb.

You should be entirely within any marking lines and at least one metre from any other parked vehicle.





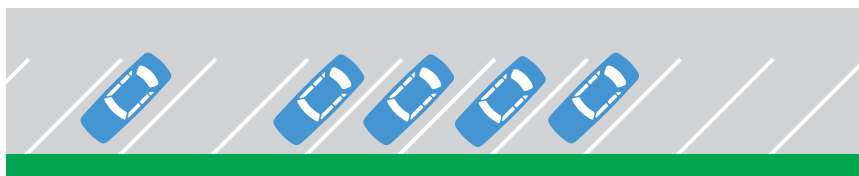
On a one-way street, you may also park on the right hand side of the road.

Angle parking

Always park at the kerb if indicated by signs or marking lines.

Always park at an angle of 45 degrees unless a sign or road marking indicates differently.

Always park your vehicle in the same direction as shown on the sign. When a sign does not give a direction you must park front to kerb.



NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN IN A PARKED VEHICLE

You must not leave children alone in a vehicle. A baby left in a hot car will suffer from dehydration and may even die.

A toddler can release the handbrake or set fire to things with the lighter. Do not leave your pet animals in a closed car because they can suffer or die just as a child can.

Motorcycle parking



You must not park your vehicle between these signs unless it is a motorcycle. However, you may stop to drop off or pick up passengers.



Motorcycles may angle park anywhere it is legal to park, even if a sign shows parallel parking. Make sure, however, that your motorcycle does not stick out further than any parallel parked vehicle.

Parking restrictions

If you park in places such as clearways or no parking zones, you may restrict traffic flow and create danger for other road users and residents. You must obey all parking signs.

Accessible parking



Only vehicles transporting a current Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS) permit holder can park in areas displaying this sign. The MPS permit must be displayed in the parked vehicle. MPS permit holders must comply with the conditions of use of the MPS permit.

Where these signs appear within a Taxi or loading zone MPS permit holders may be exempt.

Hourly parking



These signs mean that in certain areas you may park at the kerb for the time shown on the sign between certain hours and on particular days.

No parking



You must not stop for more than two minutes in a No Parking area. You must remain in or within three metres of the vehicle.

Hours of operations may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only.

Mobility Parking Permit holders are allowed to park for up to five minutes.



Fines apply for parking illegally and in some situations, demerit points also apply.

No stopping/no standing



These signs mean that in the area in the direction of the arrow you must not stop your vehicle at any point on the road or kerb, unless there is a medical or other emergency.

Sometimes a no stopping area is indicated by a solid yellow edge line.

Hours of operation may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only.

Arrester bed and safety ramp



Safety ramp and arrester bed areas are used by heavy vehicles in cases of emergency such as brake failure. They are usually located where there are steep gradients. Drivers must not drive on these areas unless necessary for safety.

Pay parking

Parking signs may indicate METER, TICKET or COUPON parking. You may park at the kerb for the length of time shown on the sign provided that you pay the required charge. You cannot park for longer than the length of time shown on the sign.

Resident parking

If you are parking in a particular area and have a valid Parking Permit for that area displayed on your vehicle and the sign indicates that you are exempt, you may park at the kerb without time restrictions or paying any charge.

Restricted parking areas



Restricted parking areas are used in large public areas that usually have a limited number of entry and exit points, such as Darling Harbour and Homebush Bay.

You must not stop or park your vehicle, between the signs RESTRICTED PARKING AREA and END RESTRICTED PARKING AREA, except in a parking station or in a marked parking bay according to the directions on the bay or on the signs.

Clearway and special event clearway

A clearway is used to improve traffic flow and safety during peak periods.



You must not stop your vehicle at the kerb between these signs during the times shown unless there is a medical emergency. Buses, taxis and hire cars may stop at the kerb to pick up or set down passengers.



Special Event Clearways can operate any day of the week and carry exactly the same parking fine and towing fee as if you were parked in a clearway.

A broken yellow line is also used to indicate a clearway.

Special Event Parking



Special event parking areas are used near major sporting or entertainment venues during special events. You must not stand or park your vehicle within the hours of operation unless you have a parking permit exemption.

Taxi zone



This sign means that in the direction of the arrow or arrows you are not allowed to stop your vehicle unless it is a taxi. Some taxi zones have times shown on the sign. You are allowed to stop your vehicle in these taxi stands at times other than those shown on the sign.



When you hail a taxi, make sure you are not in a NO STOPPING or a BUS ZONE as taxis must not stop in these places.

Bus Zone



This sign means that in the direction of the arrow or arrows you are not allowed to stop your vehicle unless you are driving a bus.

Hours of operation may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only.

Loading zone



Only drivers of vehicles principally constructed for carrying goods may park their vehicle in a loading zone. These vehicles may stop for up to 30 minutes if they are being loaded or unloaded. A station wagon or a three-wheeled goods vehicle may stop for up to 15 minutes.

If you are driving any other sort of vehicle you may only stop to pick up or set down passengers at the kerb.

Hours of operation may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only.

Works zone



This sign means that a driver must not stop in a works zone unless the driver's vehicle is actually engaged in construction work in or near the zone. Any vehicle may stop to pick up or set down passengers.

Hours of operation may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only.

Truck zone



You must not park or stop at the kerb during the hours shown on the sign unless driving a truck over 4.5 tonnes GVM that is dropping off or picking up goods. Any type of vehicle may stop to set down or pick up passengers at the kerb.

Hours of operation may apply to some signs. This means restrictions apply for those times only.



Before opening a vehicle door on a roadway, you must ensure that you don't endanger road users or impede traffic.

Lights and horns

About a third of car crashes occur at night. Pedestrians, bicycle riders and motorcyclists are harder to see than during the day.

Lights and warning devices

At night or when driving in hazardous weather conditions with reduced visibility, your vehicle must have clearly visible:

- Headlights.
- Tail lights.
- Number plate lights.
- Clearance lights and side marker lights if these are fitted to your vehicle.

Headlights

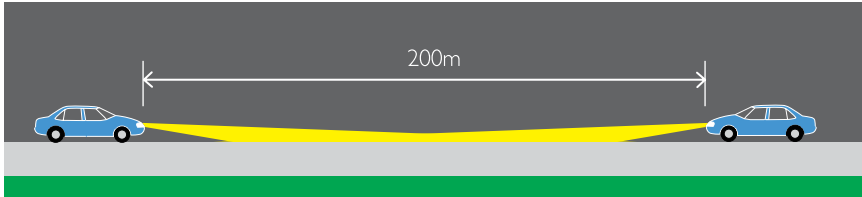
In many daytime situations driving with your vehicle's headlights on can improve the likelihood of being seen by other road users. This applies to both country and city driving situations. Your headlights must be on when:

- Driving between sunset and sunrise.
- At any other time when there is not enough daylight to be able to see a person wearing dark clothing at a distance of 100 metres.

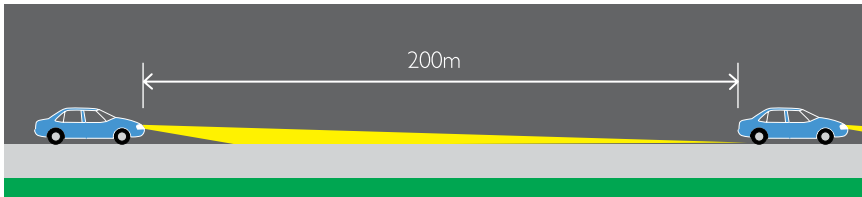
High beam

To see further ahead use your headlights on high beam on any road even if there are street lights. You must dip your headlights to low beam:

- When a vehicle coming toward you is within 200 metres (see below).



- When driving 200 metres or less behind another vehicle (see below).



When you overtake another vehicle, you may briefly flash high beam immediately before starting the overtaking manoeuvre.

Avoid lights that may dazzle

Do not use or allow any light fitted to your vehicle to dazzle another road user.

Avoid looking at the headlights of oncoming vehicles. If you are dazzled by glaring or high beam lights, look to the left side of the road and drive to the left of your lane, slow down or pull over until your eyes recover.

Parking lights

Make sure that other road users can see your parked vehicle. Leave your parking or hazard lights on if necessary.

Fog lights

Front and rear fog lights must only be used in fog or rain, or when conditions such as smoke and dust limit your vision. It is a legal requirement that once conditions improve and you can see more clearly, the front and rear fog lights are switched off.

If your vehicle is not fitted with fog lights you may use your headlights during the day in these adverse conditions.

Hazard warning lights

Your vehicle's hazard warning lights must not be used unless the vehicle is:

- Stopped and obstructing the path of other vehicles or pedestrians.
- Slow-moving and obstructing other road users
- Stopped in an emergency stopping lane
- Stopped to sell a product such as food and refreshment.
- Driving in hazardous weather conditions
- Fitted with hazard lights as part of an anti-theft or alcohol interlock device.

Horns and other warning devices

You must not use the horn or any other warning device unless:

- You need to warn other road users that your vehicle is approaching
- You need to warn animals to get off the road
- The horn is being used as part of an anti-theft or alcohol interlock device fitted to your vehicle.

Emergency vehicles

Give way when you hear a siren or see the flashing blue or red lights of an emergency vehicle such as Police, Fire Brigade or Ambulance. The siren means to get out of the way so the emergency vehicle has a clear passage through traffic. Generally, traffic pulls over to the left until the vehicle passes.

Railway level crossings

Level crossings can be dangerous especially when there are no gates, booms or flashing lights. When approaching a crossing, look and listen for trains. Slow down to a speed which allows you to stop quickly.



Railway crossing with traffic lights ahead..



Railway crossing signs.



Railway crossing sign.

Gates, booms or lights

At gates, booms, or flashing lights, start to cross only when signals have stopped flashing, and when the gates or booms are fully open.

Stop signals

Stop signals at railway crossings should be obeyed because trains are fast and heavy and cannot stop quickly. Check for trains even if the lights are not flashing.

When the traffic ahead is stopped, remain behind the STOP line unless there is room for you to get all the way across safely.



Stop before crossing.



Stop if the red lights are flashing.



Give way at the crossing, be prepared to stop.

Crossings without signals

Take extra care where there are no gates, booms or flashing lights, particularly in the country.

Slow down, look and listen for trains in both directions. There are usually warning signs placed ahead of the crossings.

Check for other trains

If you have stopped for a train, always check that another one is not approaching the crossing before you move off. You must not drive onto a level crossing while a train is approaching.

You must stop at a crossing if:

- There is a stop sign
- There is a gate or boom across the road
- Red lights are flashing
- A railway employee signals you to do so
- You are carrying flammable, explosive or dangerous goods. You must stop between three and 15 metres before the crossing.



You must not drive onto a level crossing while a train is approaching.

Driving distractions and crash risk

Distractions that divert attention from driving increase your risk of crashing. Recent research suggests that at least 14 per cent of all crashes involve the driver being distracted by something inside or outside the vehicle. As many as one in ten fatalities have been directly attributed to driver distraction. Yet even though surveys have indicated that 98 per cent of people believe that using a mobile phone while driving, for example, is very dangerous, 28 per cent of people admit to doing it themselves.

Sources of distractions that lead to crashes

Distractions from outside the vehicle account for about 30 per cent of the distractions that lead to crashes. And distractions from within vehicles account for up to about 36 per cent (the remaining 34 per cent is unknown).

Typically, the two biggest distractions inside the vehicle are other passengers and adjusting the sound system. Research has also shown that drivers using mobile phones and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) while driving are also much more likely to be involved in crashes. Text entry into a GPS unit while driving can be extremely dangerous. Sending and receiving text messages on a mobile phone while driving is also extremely dangerous, and is also illegal.

Passengers and crash risk

Other passengers can have quite an influence on your driving. Young drivers have a higher crash risk when travelling with passengers of much the same age than when travelling alone. For parents, distractions can come from trying to attend to young children in the back seat of the car when driving. However, regardless of the driver's age, the fact remains that any distraction that takes away your attention to the driving task significantly increases your chances of becoming involved in a crash. When you are distracted or your attention is divided, you are more likely to make mistakes. This means that you should avoid or minimise distractions when you drive, particularly when you are engaged in complex driving actions.

Reducing distractions means reducing crash risk

While you can't do much about distractions from outside your vehicle when you are driving, you can reduce sources of distraction inside your vehicle. This will help reduce your crash risk. Unfortunately, while modern cars have many new active and passive safety devices, they are also increasingly becoming the source of significant internal distractions. However, doing simple things like:

- Fitting your car with a hands-free mobile phone car kit. This can help if you must take calls while driving. However, it would be much better to find a safe place to stop and take a call so that you are not distracted in any way when driving. Research has shown that using a hands-free mobile phone can also be a dangerous distraction, particularly in complex traffic situations.

Note: Learner, P1 and P2 drivers and provisional riders are banned from using phones in any way, including using hands-free. You must not use any function of a mobile phone while driving or riding. This includes phones in the hands-free mode or with the loudspeaker operating, or sending text messages.

- Ensure mobile devices including GPS units are properly mounted in a cradle
- Only enter text into a device, ie GPS, mobile phone etc, when you are stopped in a safe location
- Turning off the radio or stereo, particularly in new or challenging traffic situations
- Collecting loose items inside the vehicle and putting them in a bag or box or in the boot
- Telling passengers to avoid distracting you.

Note: P1 drivers under the age of 25 must not drive between the hours of 11pm and 5am with more than one passenger under the age of 21. P1 riders are prohibited from carrying a pillion passenger.

Roads and Maritime can grant an exemption from peer passenger restrictions if exceptional circumstances are demonstrated. Further information on how to apply for a passenger restriction exemption is available on the Application for Exemption: Peer-Passenger, One-Passenger or Prohibited Vehicle Condition available online, at a registry or service centre. An application fee will apply.

- Only adjust the radio, digital music devices or load CDs when stopped, if you cannot get help while driving from a front seat passenger.



In addition to demerit points, a heavy fine applies for drivers caught using or answering a hand-held phone while driving.

Towing

Towing a trailer can be dangerous and difficult, requiring more knowledge and skill than normal driving.

Learner and provisional licences

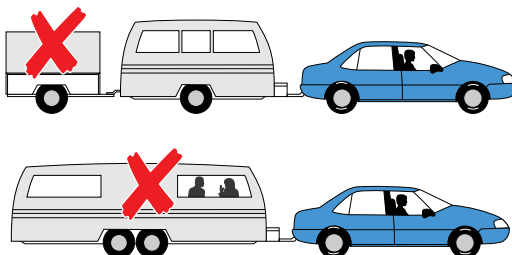
Learner drivers and learner and provisional motorcycle riders are not allowed to tow any vehicle or trailer. If you have a P1 car licence, you can tow small trailers up to 250kg unloaded weight.

Rules for towing

For rules and information, see the brochure *Towing Trailers, things you should know about towing*. This brochure is available on our website.

Important towing rules

- You must not tow more than one trailer or one other vehicle
- No one is allowed to ride in a trailer or caravan while it is being towed
- You must ensure your load is secure
- When towing a caravan and driving on a road without street lights, you must drive at least 60 metres behind heavy vehicles or other vehicles towing caravans, unless overtaking.



What to do after a crash

If you are involved in a crash you must stop immediately and give as much help as possible to anyone else involved in the crash. If anyone is injured or killed, you should call the Police and Ambulance – dial 000.

You should protect the area to make sure that another crash does not occur. You must remove anything that falls or escapes from crashed vehicles that is likely to endanger the safety of others (for example, debris or broken glass). However, if you need to clear debris from the road, it is important that you ensure your personal safety at all times. Following a crash:

- Switch off the ignition of the immobilised vehicle to reduce the risk of fire
- Switch on hazard warning lights
- Relocate anyone involved in the crash to safety away from the road.

The Police may attend and investigate crashes where:

- A person is trapped, killed or injured
- A bus or truck needs to be towed away
- They are needed to direct traffic or deal with hazards
- A person fails to stop or exchange information
- Any driver is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

If police do not attend the crash scene, you must report the crash as soon as possible after leaving the crash site to the Police Assistance Line on **131 444** where:

- You are in a crash and either your vehicle or another vehicle needs to be towed away
- There is damage to property or injured animals
- You are unable to provide particulars to the owner.

You must always provide Police attending the crash scene with details of the crash, vehicles involved, your name, address and, if known, information about any witnesses or the drivers of other vehicles involved. You must always show Police your driver licence.

Police do not need to be notified of a crash when there are no injuries and the vehicles involved do not require towing. However, if someone is later treated for an injury (related to the crash), then call the Police Assistance Line on **131 444**.

Regardless of damage, if you are asked to, you must provide the owner or driver of any other vehicle involved in the crash with the following information:

- Your name, address and licence details
- Your vehicle registration number
- If you are not the owner of the vehicle, the name and address of the owner.

You can ask the other driver(s) for similar information.

FIRST AID

First Aid is a skill which everyone should learn. For details on first aid courses contact St John Ambulance Association on 1300 360 455, the Red Cross on 9229 4111 or the National Safety Council of Australia on 1800 424 012.



If your vehicle is involved in a crash, it is recommended you place a warning triangle 50 to 150 metres behind your vehicle to warn other road users and wear a reflective vest if you have one.



If you are involved in a crash with a truck carrying a dangerous load:

- Call the Police or Fire Brigade on 000.
- Avoid touching spilled chemicals or breathing the fumes or dust
- Warn people away from the crash

An Emergency Procedures Guide will be in a holder attached to the truck driver's door. Follow these procedures if it is safe to do so.

NEEDING A TOW TRUCK

If you need the assistance of a tow truck after being involved in an accident, you have the right to:

- Decide where your vehicle will be towed
- Decide who will tow your vehicle
- Contact anyone prior to signing the authorisation form (for assistance on the right place to tow your vehicle)
- Receive a copy of the towing authorisation form.

As the owner/driver your main responsibility is to report the accident to police immediately and authorise the tow truck driver to tow your vehicle by signing a Towing Authorisation Form. If you are unable to make such authorisation, a police officer or authorised officer will be able to organise the towing of your vehicle.

As the owner/driver, it is your responsibility to check and ensure that the tow truck driver has in their possession an accredited driver certificate.

A NSW based tow truck should have a number plate with four numbers and ending in 'TT'. If the tow truck driver cannot produce an accredited driver certificate or they do not have an authorised tow vehicle, do not allow them to tow your vehicle.

1234-TT



If your vehicle is covered by a comprehensive insurance policy, the towing fee may be covered. Check with your insurance provider.

Animals and vehicles

There are things you should know about travelling with animals in vehicles and what to do following an incident with an animal.

Animal welfare

Every year many crashes involving animals occur on country roads. If you see an animal on the road (alive or dead), do not swerve violently to avoid the animal as this can cause you to lose control of your vehicle or to hit oncoming traffic. You should stop if you can do so safely or slow down and steer around the animal in a controlled manner.

If you can't avoid the animal safely you may have to hit it to avoid injury or death to yourself and others.

If the animal has been killed, remove it from the road if it is safe to do so. Be careful with native animals as they may have babies in their pouches.

If a native animal has been hurt you should contact the Wildlife and Information Rescue Service (WIRES).

If the animal is a domestic pet, you must contact the owner, Police or the RSPCA. If the animal is injured you should take it immediately to the nearest animal shelter or vet.

RULES AROUND ANIMALS

A driver, motorcycle rider, bicycle rider or passenger must not lead an animal, including by tethering, while the vehicle is moving. Animals should be seated or housed in appropriate areas.



A driver must not drive with an animal in the driver's lap.



A motor cycle rider must not ride with an animal between the handlebars and the rider.

Summary

What you should know about general road rules

This section has explained the importance of road rules in NSW. After reading this section you should know, among other things:

- The speed limits
- The alcohol limits for drivers
- The seatbelt and child restraint requirements
- When to give way to other vehicles or pedestrians
- Signalling when exiting a roundabout
- Where your vehicle should be in the road when you are turning either left or right
- What traffic lights and B signals indicate
- The difference between regulatory signs and warning signs
- The various kinds of road markings and dividing lines
- The parking rules
- What to do after a crash.

NOTES

Sample test questions

Test your knowledge

Circle the correct answer. Then check to see if you are right at the end of the book.

1. Are you permitted to make a U-turn at traffic lights?
 - a) Yes, at all times
 - b) No, unless there is a U-TURN Permitted sign at the intersection
 - c) Yes, if there is no danger of colliding with another vehicle
2. The first thing you should do before overtaking is –
 - a) Sound your horn
 - b) Make sure it is safe and the way is clear of oncoming traffic
 - c) Increase your speed
3. Driving faster than the maximum speed limit is –
 - a) Permitted only when passing another vehicle
 - b) Only permitted when other vehicles are going faster than the speed limit
 - c) Never legally permitted.

Vehicle registration

Before driving you will need to do some basic checks. Your vehicle's roadworthiness should be checked at regular intervals, and in most cases you will need an annual safety inspection report for vehicle registration.

Your vehicle must be registered. It must have Roads and Maritime issued number plates – on the front and back for cars, trucks and public vehicles (buses, taxis, etc.) and on the back only for motorcycles and trailers. The number plates must be the ones that are recorded on the vehicle's registration papers and issued by Roads and Maritime.

It is an offence to stand or drive a motor vehicle on a road or road-related area if it is not registered.

It is also an offence to cause or permit another person to stand or drive an unregistered motor vehicle on a road or road-related area. There could be significant financial implications for the driver and registered operator of the vehicle because compulsory third party insurance is not valid when a vehicle is unregistered. This means you could be held personally liable for compensation to any person injured as a result of a crash. There are severe penalties for driving an unregistered or uninsured vehicle



To reduce this risk and to make our roads safer for everyone, vehicles detected by Roads and Maritime Services enforcement cameras can also be checked for valid registration and CTP insurance.

If your vehicle's registration renewal notice is endorsed with the words INSPECTION REQUIRED, the vehicle will have to pass an inspection before registration can be renewed. Once it passes the inspection you will get an inspection report to show that it has passed. If it fails the inspection you will get a copy of the inspection report listing the faults that must be fixed. You will not be able to renew the registration until it passes..

To sell a vehicle privately you must have it inspected, and you must give an inspection report less than one month old to the buyer. This does not apply to a vehicle that has been registered in NSW within one month, or if its current Certificate of Registration is endorsed with the words INSPECTION NOT REQUIRED.

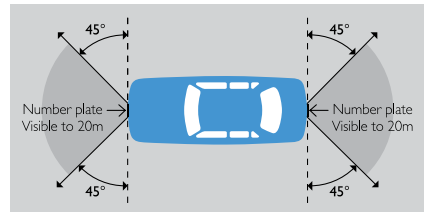
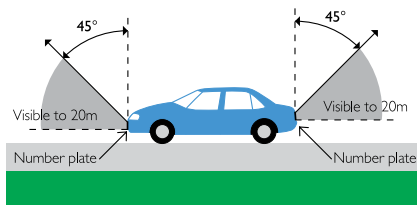
Number plates

Number plates on the vehicle you drive or own must be:

- The number plate must be issued by Roads and Maritime and permanently fixed to the vehicle
- Able to be seen and read clearly from anywhere within a 45 degree arc of the vehicle's centreline, at a distance of at least 20 metres (see diagrams on the right). That means they cannot be hidden by anything (such as a tow bar or anything being carried). If you carry bicycles on a bike rack which hides the rear number plate on your car in any way, you must either move the rear number plate to a position where it can be clearly seen or buy an auxiliary number plate to attach to the bike rack. An auxiliary number plate has the same number as your car's number plates and can be ordered in person at a registry or service centre, online at www.myplates.com.au or call 13 77 88.
- Clearly readable – not dirty, worn or damaged
- Given back to Roads and Maritime after the registration has expired.

The rear number plate must have a light so it is clearly visible at night and

auxiliary plates being used at night must also have a light.



It is an offence to:

- Alter number plates in any way.
- Attach a number plate to a vehicle other than what is recorded with Roads and Maritime.
- Use a number plate cover that is not flat, clear and untinted (number plate covers which have lines across them are not considered to be clear).



More information on vehicle registration and number plates is available on the Roads and Maritime website at www.rms.nsw.gov.au



Don't obscure any part of your number plate as heavy penalties apply. Take special care with tow balls and bike racks..

Before you drive you need to make sure that your vehicle is roadworthy. A roadworthy vehicle is one that is safe to drive and meets the standards required by law.

Some of the most important rules about vehicles are described here. If you have any doubt about the rules that apply to your vehicle, contact Roads and Maritime on 13 77 88.

Tyres

Your vehicle's tyres must be in good condition and have a tread at least 1.5 mm deep across the tread surface. Cars (including station wagons, utilities, panel vans) and motorcycles must not have regrooved tyres, unless the tyre was manufactured to be regrooved.

Keep the tyres inflated to the pressure recommended by the manufacturer or they may overheat and fail. The sidewalls of the tyres should not have any cracks or bumps. If your tyres wear unevenly there may be a problem with the steering or suspension.

Checking your vehicle

Check your:

- Lights – headlights, brake lights, indicators
- Brakes
- Steering
- Windscreen, wipers and washers
- Horn
- Tyres
- Seatbelts.

Adjust the driver's seat so that it is right for you. You should have a clear view of the road and be able to reach the controls easily without being cramped.

Make sure that your lights all work and can be clearly seen. Make sure that your lights, windows and mirrors are clean. Adjust the mirrors so that you have a good view to the rear and sides.

You must not drive at night if your lights are not working.

Defect Notices

Police can stop and inspect your vehicle and give you a Defect Notice if the vehicle does not meet the roadworthiness standard required under the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulations. For example, if your car is too noisy, drips oil, or blows too much smoke it will be given a defect notice. If your vehicle gets a defect notice, it must be repaired and officially cleared (sometimes you are not allowed to drive the vehicle until it is repaired and the defect notice cleared). It is an offence to drive a defective vehicle, even if you are not responsible for having it repaired. Infringement notices may also be issued for seriously defective or missing equipment when Defect Notices are issued. The police can impound a dangerous vehicle, or ban its use on NSW roads.

Protrusions on the front of vehicles

Some vehicles are fitted with badly designed bull bars with pointed corners and sharp edges, and some are fitted with accessories which protrude beyond the bumper bar or bull bar. A defect notice can be issued to a vehicle if its accessories or bull bar do not comply with the requirements of the Australian Design Rules and Regulations. For further information, obtain the brochure *Protrusions on the Front of Vehicles* from any registry or service centre or see our website.



Fishing rod holders, spotlight mounts and winches are illegal protrusions on the front of your vehicle if not fitted correctly.

Modifications

Vehicle manufacturers spend a lot of money developing and optimising vehicles to suit Australian conditions. Despite what you may have heard, it is unusual for a vehicle to need to be modified and few will genuinely be improved. Modifications may affect your registration, insurance and manufacturer's warranty cover. Some modifications such as to the suspension, can make the vehicle less stable and adversely affect its performance and handling. Certain modifications may result in the vehicle no longer complying with the Regulations

Summary

What you should know about registration

This section has provided an outline of roadworthiness and registration requirements for your vehicle. After reading this section you should know.

- The registration requirements for your vehicle.
- How to check your vehicle and ensure it's roadworthy.
- About defect notices on unroadworthy vehicles.
- About illegal protrusions on the front of a vehicle.
- The requirements for number plates.

NOTES

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Sample test questions

Test your knowledge

Circle the correct answer. Then check to see if you are right at the end of the book.

1. Is it an offence to obstruct clear vision of your number plates?
 - a) Yes, at any time
 - b) Yes, but it is legal for a towbar or bicycle rack to cover the rear number plate
 - c) No, you are allowed to cover your number plates if you want to.
2. You put a bike rack on the back of your car and see that it hides your number plate. What should you do?
 - a) Drive with the rack on as it is
 - b) Move your rear number plate to a position where it can be clearly seen when the bike rack is fitted
 - c) Make a number plate out of suitable material, making sure it is clearly visible and easy to read.
3. You buy a car and find that the spare tyre is smooth; the tread is only just visible. If you get a puncture will it be legal to drive the car with a smooth spare tyre?
 - a) Yes, if the tyre is correctly inflated and the side walls of the tyre are in good condition
 - b) Yes, but you must get the puncture fixed within 24 hours
 - c) No, it's illegal to drive a car with a smooth tyre even if it is the spare.

Penalties

Under NSW laws, you can be penalised for traffic offences that cause inconvenience, costs or suffering to others.

Traffic offences

Penalties for traffic offences include fines, disqualification from holding or applying for a licence, licence cancellation, refusal or suspension, passenger restrictions and in extreme cases, imprisonment.

Demerit points for traffic offences

If you break the traffic laws, you can be fined and for certain traffic offences, you will have demerit points recorded against your licence. There is a limit to the number of points you can build up before your licence is suspended. There are different limits for the different types of licences. Make sure you understand the points limit for your licence.

Some driving offences attract double demerit points during holiday periods. These offences are speeding, not wearing a seatbelt, not wearing a motorcycle helmet and illegal use of mobile phones.

Demerit points are added to your licence record even if you receive a court disqualification. However, if the court dismisses the case under Section 10(1) of the *Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999*, demerit points will not apply.

For more information about the points scheme, see our website or get the brochure *Demerit Points, Encouraging Safe Driving* from any registry or service centre.

Speeding offences

Penalties for exceeding the speed limit include demerit points, fines and licence suspension. Penalties increase depending on how many kilometres over the speed limit you are going.

The minimum penalty for speeding is one demerit points.

Over the speed limit by 30 km/h and 45 km/h

If you go over the speed limit by:

- More than 30 km/h but less than 45 km/h you will get a minimum of five demerit points, a large fine and your licence will be suspended for at least three months
- More than 45 km/h you will get a minimum of six demerit points, a larger fine and your licence will be suspended for at least six months.

If your licence is suspended for speeding, Roads and Maritime will advise you when the suspension starts. This will happen even if your demerit points are under the relevant limit.

Your licence will be suspended for a longer period should the demerit points for a speeding offence bring your total points to or over the relevant limit.

Other serious driving offences

If you are convicted of more serious driving offences you may be disqualified from driving by a court. The court decides how long you should be disqualified and you may even be sent to prison. These offences include:

- Driving or attempting to drive under the influence of alcohol or any other drugs
- Driving or attempting to drive when your alcohol level is over the limit for your licence
- Refusing to take a breath test
- Not stopping after a crash in which someone was injured or killed.
- Driving at a dangerous speed
- Driving in a dangerous manner.



Speed measuring devices, such as radar detectors, are not permitted in vehicles or trailers. Large fines and demerit points apply.

Negligent or dangerous driving causing injury or death

The law provides for serious charges to be laid against people driving a vehicle in a negligent or dangerous manner which causes injury or death.

As the driver of a vehicle involved in a crash where somebody is injured because of your negligent driving, you could be imprisoned, face a heavy fine and a period of disqualification. If somebody is killed in such a crash you could be imprisoned and face a higher fine.

If you are driving a vehicle at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public, and you are involved in a crash which results in injury or death, the penalties can be very severe.

Should somebody be injured as a result of your dangerous driving, you could be imprisoned for up to seven years. If somebody is killed in such a crash, you could be imprisoned for up to 10 years.

The maximum penalties for these offences increase by up to an additional four years if 'aggravating circumstances' are proved to exist. These circumstances are:

- Driving more than 45 km/h over the maximum speed limit that applies on that section of road
- Having a blood alcohol level of 0.15 or more
- Driving a vehicle to escape Police.

Street or drag racing

The penalties for street or drag racing are very severe. If the police suspect you have been involved in street or drag racing, they may take possession of your vehicle on-the-spot. Police may also suspend and confiscate your driver licence at the same time. If convicted in a court, you will get a large fine and your vehicle can be impounded for up to three months. You will also have to pay for storage fees when you get your vehicle back. A second conviction for this offence can mean your vehicle may be forfeited and sold. This means that your vehicle may be taken from you and sold. Under the demerit point scheme, three demerit points apply to the offence of 'burnout'.

Drink driving

The drink driving penalties are increased according to the level of alcohol detected in the blood. Penalties are severe and may include:

- Large fines that increase if a second offence is committed
- Immediate licence suspension
- Prison terms that increase when a second offence is committed
- A period of disqualification from driving, up to lifetime disqualification.

Driving without a licence

Heavy penalties apply for driving without a licence. You can receive an on-the-spot fine for driving:

- With a licence that has expired
- With the wrong class of licence for the vehicle you are driving
- With an interstate or overseas licence more than three months after becoming a permanent resident of NSW.

Stiffer penalties apply if you are convicted of driving while serving a non-driving period for being disqualified from holding or obtaining a driver licence, or when your licence has been cancelled, refused or suspended. These types of offences are heard in front of a magistrate at a local court and penalties include a large fine, a prison term of up to 12 months and disqualification from driving. Heavier penalties apply for second or subsequent offences within a five year period. For more information on penalties, check our website.



Penalties apply for allowing an unlicensed person to drive your vehicle.

Police Action penalties

Police may remove and keep number plates or retain and impound a vehicle for a period up to 6 months, when a driver commits an offence while driving unlicensed or disqualified.

Fine defaults

If you do not settle a fine within the time allowed, the matter will be referred to Revenue NSW.

When the outstanding amount is not paid to the Revenue NSW, Roads and Maritime will be advised to suspend your licence and/or cancel your vehicle registration and refuse to do certain business with you until all fines have been paid.

If your licence has been suspended for a fine default, and you pay the fine to Revenue NSW, Roads and Maritime will be advised to lift the suspension. Roads and Maritime will then send a letter advising that the suspension has been lifted and you may resume driving. Alternatively, some fines may be paid at a registry or service centre and the licence suspension will then be lifted immediately.

Payment not made after six months of licence suspension can lead to Revenue NSW directing Roads and Maritime to cancel your licence. This means that when all outstanding fines are paid, you will need to go to a registry or service centre and apply for a new licence. Any demerit points you had prior to the suspension or cancellation are carried over when the suspension is lifted or when you get your new licence.

For more information about an unpaid fine to be collected by Revenue NSW, phone Revenue NSW on 1300 138 118 for penalty notices and 1300 655 805 for overdue fines. To pay by credit card call 1300 130 112.

Toll notices

The payment of tolls is required by law. If you do not pay a toll you will be sent a Toll Notice requesting payment of the toll plus an administration fee.

If you do not pay the Toll Notice, a Final Toll Notice may be sent to you requesting payment of the toll plus an additional administration fee.

If you do not pay the Toll Notice, you may be issued with a Penalty Notice. Fines apply to the non-payment of a toll notice.

Littering from vehicles

A vehicle owner is deemed liable for littering unless they provide a statutory declaration stating the details of the person in charge of the vehicle at the time.

Heavy fines may apply when litter is thrown or lost from a vehicle irrespective of the litter deposited.

Please take care of our environment and don't litter.

Summary

What you should know about traffic penalties

This section has provided an outline of the penalties for traffic offences. After reading this section you should know:

- Broadly how the demerit points scheme operates.
- What licence suspension periods apply to certain speeding offences
- The implications of serious, negligent and dangerous driving offences
- How the street and drag racing penalties can result in the loss of a vehicle
- What happens if a traffic fine is not settled
- The implications of drink driving and unlicensed driving.

NOTES

Sample test questions

Test your knowledge

Circle the correct answer. Then check to see if you are right at the end of the book.

1. If the police suspect you may have been involved in street or drag racing, they may take immediate action. Which one of the following is correct? The police may –
 - a) Take your vehicle to the local police station and keep it until the following morning
 - b) Take your vehicle from you and keep it stored for up to three months
 - c) Take your vehicle away and sell it at an auction.
2. If you are convicted of dangerous driving –
 - a) You could lose your licence and may be sent to prison
 - b) You could only be fined and given demerit points
 - c) You could be given demerit points only.
3. If you are convicted of driving with a blood alcohol level that is over the limit for your licence, you could lose your driver licence. You may also –
 - a) Have a personal speed limit imposed on you
 - b) Be sent to prison
 - c) Be restricted to driving an automatic vehicle.

Answers to sample questions

These are the answers to the knowledge questions at the end of each section. For more sample questions visit www.rms.nsw.gov.au

Section 2 Licences

1. Can a P1 or P2 driver legally instruct a learner driver?
a) No
2. To progress to a P2 licence, a P1 driver must hold a P1 licence for a minimum period of –
b) 12 months
3. Are you required to carry your driver licence with you every time you drive?
c) Yes

Section 3 Road safety

1. If you get sleepy while driving, is it best to –
b) Stop, rest, and change drivers if possible
2. Pedestrians who are affected by alcohol, are –
a) One of the most common groups involved in road crashes.
3. Speed limit signs tell drivers –
a) The maximum speed they are allowed to drive in good conditions.

Section 4 Safe driving

1. Under good conditions, when driving behind any vehicle, at any speed, you should –
b) Stay at least three seconds behind the vehicle in front of you.
2. At night you should –
b) Leave a longer gap behind the vehicle in front.
3. It is night time and you are driving home from the movies. You are travelling in a line of vehicles. What size gap should you leave between your vehicle and the vehicles in front of you?
a) A gap of about four seconds as it is easy to misjudge distances at night.

Section 5 General road rules

1. Are you permitted to make a U-Turn at traffic lights?
 - b) No unless there is a U-TURN Permitted sign at the intersection.
2. The first thing you should do before overtaking is –
 - b) Make sure it is safe and the way is clear of oncoming traffic.
3. Driving faster than the maximum speed limit is –
 - c) Never legally permitted.

Section 6 Vehicle registration

1. Is it an offence to obstruct clear vision of your number plates?
 - a) Yes, at any time.
2. You put a bike rack on the back of your car and see that it hides your number plate. What should you do?
 - b) Move your rear number plate to a position where it can be clearly seen when the bike rack is fitted.
3. You buy a car and find that the spare tyre is smooth; the tread is only just visible. If you get a puncture will it be legal to drive the car with a smooth spare tyre?
 - c) No, it's illegal to drive a car with a smooth tyre even if it is the spare.

Section 7 Penalties

1. If the police suspect you may have been involved in street or drag racing, they may take immediate action. Which one of the following is correct? The police may –
 - b) Take your vehicle from you and keep it stored for up to three months.
2. If you are convicted of dangerous driving –
 - a) You could lose your licence and may be sent to prison.
3. If you are convicted of driving with a blood alcohol level that is over the limit for your licence, you could lose your driver's licence. You may also –
 - b) Be sent to prison.

Glossary

Adjacent direction – coming from
Adjacent direction – coming from the left or right, across your path.

Amber – the yellow colour used for traffic lights.

Approaching – getting closer to, from any direction.

Arterial road – a main road that carries a lot of traffic between suburbs or within cities or towns.

Axle – bar on which wheels rotate.

BAC – blood alcohol concentration given as grams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood.

Beam (lights) – angle and brightness of lights – (low or high).

Blind spots (see also head check) – area that is not seen in mirrors.

Blockouts – central vision and/or where your vision is blocked.

Black spot/black length – a place or length of road with a high rate of crashes.

Boom – long pole used to block the road as at a railway crossing.

Buffering – positioning your vehicle to create maximum space around you, away from hazards.

Built up area – in relation to a length of road, means an area in which there are buildings on land next to the road, or there is street lighting, at intervals not over 100 metres for a distance of at least 500 metres or, if the road is shorter than 500 metres, for the whole road.

Bystander – person present but not involved in an event.

Car based motor tricycles – a three-wheeled vehicle primarily constructed from car components.

Cancelled (licence) – you can no longer use your licence; that is, you can no longer drive.

Child restraint – specific seatbelts, seats or capsules that children under a certain age are required to use/wear (eg baby restraints, child seats, child safety harnesses).

Colliding – crashing into.

Crash avoidance space – the space a driver needs to manage, in order to prevent a potential crash.

Compliance plate – the plate that identifies a vehicle as being manufactured to safety standards applicable to the time of manufacture.

Compulsory – necessary, required, must do.

Corrosive (chemical) – chemical that eats away, like acid, for example.

Covering the brake – where your right foot is off the accelerator and over the brake pedal without activating the brake, see also 'setting up the brake'.

Default speed limit – the speed limit where there are no speed limit signs. The urban limit is 50 km/h.

Defined – explained.

Demerit (points) – there are different points limits for different types of licences (learner, provisional etc). Demerit points are recorded against your licence for a range of traffic offences (eg speeding). If you get too many demerit points your licence may be cancelled or suspended.

Device – a piece of equipment.

Diabetes – disease which affects the body's use of sugar.

Disability (driving) – physical condition that may affect your driving.

Disqualified (licence) – you are not allowed to hold or obtain a licence in NSW. You can no longer drive.

Dragons teeth – a series of triangular road markings to increase school zone visibility.

Driving instructor – a person who instructs learners or provisionals (for money or reward) how to drive.

Driver Qualification Test (DQT) – a combination of an advanced Hazard Perception Test, a further test of the road rules and safe driving practice. The test must be passed to progress from P2 stage to full licence status.

Eco Driving – a style of driving to reduce fuel consumption and help the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Edge line – line marked along the road at or near the far left or right.

Endorsed – a statement placed on a document (eg a licence or registration papers).

Engine capacity – engine size usually stated in litres or cubic centimetres (cc) 1 Litre = 1000 cc.

Epilepsy – disease that can cause fits.

E-Toll – Electronic toll lanes.

Exceed – go beyond – as with speed, to exceed the speed limit is to go faster than the speed limit.

Exempt – if you are exempt, a particular requirement does not apply to you (eg tests or fees).

Expired (licence) – the date on the licence is no longer current

and the licence is therefore no longer valid.

Explosive – something that is dangerous as it may blow up.

Expressway – see motorway.

Fatal – something that results in death.

Fatigue – the experience of feeling ‘sleepy’, ‘tired’ or ‘exhausted’. Fatigue affects both your body and your ability to drive safely.

Field of vision – what you can see without moving your eyes or head.

Flammable – easily set on fire.

Flash high beam – to switch the headlights from low beam to high beam and back.

Following distance – the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle travelling ahead of you in the same direction. Following distance is also called ‘headway’.

Footcrossing – pedestrian crossing.

Forklift – vehicle designed to lift and move loads. Usually used to load trucks.

Freeway – see motorway.

Full Licence – a licence other than a L, P1, P2 or restricted.

Graduated licensing scheme – the three licence stages required in order to gain a full licence.

Gross Combination Mass (GCM)

– the maximum laden mass of a motor vehicle plus the laden weight of any trailer(s).

Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) – the maximum laden mass of the vehicle.

Hazard – any possible danger that might lead to a crash.

Hazard lights – flashing orange warning lights found on most vehicles.

Hazard Perception Test (HPT) – a touch-screen computer test which measures your ability to recognise and respond to potentially dangerous situations and react appropriately when driving. Provisional drivers must pass this test to progress from the P1 to P2 licence stage.

Head check – looking over your shoulder to the left or right to make sure that there’s nothing in your blind spot. Also known as ‘shoulder check’.

Heavy Vehicle Drivers’ Handbook

– Roads and Maritime publication that explains road rules that apply to heavy vehicles (buses and trucks).

ICAC – Independent Commission Against Corruption.

Intersection – where two or more roads meet or join.

Interstate (travel) – travel between States, NSW to WA for example.

International Driving Permit – a permit issued in accordance with the United Nations Convention on Road Traffic, Geneva 1949, for use in conjunction with a current driver licence.

Interpreter (knowledge test) – a person who understands more than one language and reads the English test questions and then asks the applicant the same questions in another language.

Kerb – concrete edge of a road.

Knowledge test – the Driver Knowledge Test.

Lane – an area of road marked by continuous or broken lines, designed for use by a signal line of vehicles.

Law – rules set out by the government that must be followed.

Level crossing – point where a road crosses a railway track.

Licence class – there are different licences required for driving different vehicles of different sizes (eg motorcycle, car etc).

Licence condition – things that affect a licence (eg must wear spectacles).

Licence type – kind of licence, such as learner, provisional, full.

Load – items carried on a vehicle from one place to another.

Microsleep – brief, unintended

periods of loss of attention that may occur when a person is fatigued but trying to stay awake.

Median strip – a section that divides lanes in a two way street.

Minimum – least, smallest.

Motorcycle Rider's Handbook – Roads and Maritime publication that explains road rules that apply to motorcycles and riders.

Motorcycle pre-learner training course – a training course undertaken in order to obtain a learner rider licence.

Motorcycle pre-provisional training course – a training course undertaken in order to obtain a provisional rider licence.

Motorised wheelchairs – a three or four wheeled mobility aid that cannot travel faster than 10 km/hour. A user is defined as a pedestrian.

Motorway – large road (usually more than 2 lanes in each direction) designed to move a lot of traffic quickly. Usually with a 100 or 110km/h speed limit.

Multi-laned road – a road with more than one lane in each direction. These roads sometimes have a median strip dividing traffic travelling in each direction.

Must – a mandatory requirement.

Oncoming (vehicle) – a vehicle approaching you from the front.

Organ donor – person who wishes to donate their organs (liver, kidney, lungs etc) for transplant after they have died.

Overcrowding – having more occupants in a vehicle than available seats.

Overloaded (vehicle) – a vehicle carrying a load that is too big or heavy for the vehicle to carry it safely or legally.

Overseas – outside Australia.

Overtake – to pass a vehicle travelling in the same direction as you.

P1 Licence – the first stage provisional licence. Red in colour.

P2 Licence – the second stage provisional licence. Green in colour.

Parallel parking – parking with the whole length of the vehicle next to the kerb.

Pedestrian – a person who travels by foot (walker, runner for example). Also includes people in motorised and non-motorised wheelchairs and people using wheeled recreational devices or toys.

Penalised – (penalty) punished by way of demerit points, fines, prison, vehicle confiscation etc for breaking a law.

Photo licence – Roads and Maritime issued driver licence.

Points – see demerit points.

Professional Driver - A professional driver is a motor vehicle driver whose primary work is to transport goods or, a bus, taxi or hire car driver who is accredited under the Passenger Transport Act 1990. Drivers will not qualify if the driving of a motor vehicle is incidental to their primary work (eg a sales person or a tow truck driver).

Regulations – laws (see law).

Renew (licence) – to replace a licence that is no longer current.

Rev – to increase engine speed.

Revs – engine speed (measured in revolutions per minute, RPM).

Road – an area used by the public for the purpose of driving or riding motor vehicles.

Road related area – includes an area that divides a road, a footpath, nature strip, cycleway and parking areas.

Road rage – a range of anti-social or aggressive behaviour by road users.

Route – way from one place to another.

Roads and Maritime inspectors – Roads and Maritime personnel authorised to conduct vehicle inspections.

Safety chains (trailer) – chains that catch a trailer in an emergency, if the tow connection breaks for example.

Safe gap – a gap in traffic that enables you to turn, overtake or cross an intersection without being involved in a collision or endangering other road users. This means that no other road users should need to take evasive action to avoid your vehicle.

Scanning – constantly moving your eyes when driving so that you can detect hazards that may arise ahead, to the sides and behind your vehicle.

Service centre - a 'one-stop shop' providing access to various government services and a single point of contact

Setting up the brake – where your right foot is off the accelerator and applying light pressure to the brake pedal.

Should – a recommendation, advice.

Shoulder – strip of land that runs down the side on an unkerbed road.

Shoulder check – see head check.

Single laned – a road with one lane running in each direction.

Slip lane – a separate lane for a vehicle turning left.

Spectacles – eye glasses or contact lenses.

Speeding – excessive or inappropriate speed, including not adjusting your speed to suit the conditions or speed limit.

Speed limit – the legal speed for any particular stretch of road, licence or vehicle.

Stationary – not moving.

Supervising driver – a person who holds a full Australian licence for the appropriate class of the vehicle and sits beside the learner driver.

Suspended (licence) – you can no longer use your licence; that is, you can no longer drive.

Tow truck – a vehicle that is designed to tow another vehicle.

Towing – attaching and then pulling a trailer or vehicle behind a vehicle.

Traffic offences – actions that break the traffic law (see law).

Trailers – vehicles that do not have an engine and that are towed behind motor vehicles.

Translator – a person who understands more than one language and who rewrites a written document such as a driver's licence in English from another language (see interpreter).

Unattended (child) – a child left with no immediate, supervising, responsible adult.

Unladen – not loaded (see load).

U-turn – a complete change of direction, approximately an 180° turn.

Vehicle combination – vehicles

joined together. An articulated vehicle can be a vehicle combination of a car and caravan for example.

Wigwag light – flashing orange lights on the rear of buses.

Work site – an area of road, bridge or road reserve that includes the work area(s) and any additional length of road or bridge required for traffic control such as signs and barriers.

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Roads and Maritime Services

The information in this handbook is intended as a guide only and is subject to change at any time without notice. It does not replace the legislation.

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