

# The **LDC** Highway Code

**Plus**



**Make your first test your last**



## Introduction

This Highway Code applies to England, Scotland and Wales. *The Highway Code* is essential reading for everyone.

The most vulnerable road users are pedestrians, particularly children, older or disabled people, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. It is important that all road users are aware of the Code and are considerate towards each other. This applies to pedestrians as much as to drivers and riders.

Many of the rules in the Code are legal requirements, and if you disobey these rules you are committing a criminal offence. You may be fined, given penalty points on your licence or be disqualified from driving. In the most serious cases you may be sent to prison. Such rules are identified by the use of the words '**MUST/MUST NOT**'. In addition, the rule includes an abbreviated reference to the legislation which creates the offence. An explanation of the abbreviations can be found in, 'The road user and the law'.

Although failure to comply with the other rules of the Code will not, in itself, cause a person to be prosecuted, *The Highway Code* may be used in evidence in any court proceedings under the Traffic Acts ( see 'The road user and the law' ) to establish liability. This includes rules which use advisory wording such as 'should/should not' or 'do/do not'.

Knowing and applying the rules contained in *The Highway Code* could significantly reduce road casualties. Cutting the number of deaths and injuries that occur on our roads every day is a responsibility we all share. *The Highway Code* can help us discharge that responsibility. Further information on driving/riding techniques can be found in *The Official DSA Guide to Driving - the essential skills* and *The Official DSA Guide to Riding - the essential skills*.

### Copyright message

The Highway Code Plus is reproduced under the terms of Crown Copyright Policy Guidance issued by HMSO and the Queen's Printer in Scotland. Crown Copyright material is reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO under licence number C02W2221233. All rights reserved. No part of these web pages may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means: electric, electrostatic, internet, magnetic tape, mechanical, photocopy, recording, www. or otherwise without the permission in writing from HMSO's copyright unit.

## Contents:

Rules for pedestrians	5
Rules for users of powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters	11
Rules about animals	13
Rules for cyclists	15
Rules for motorcyclists	19
Rules for drivers and motorcyclists	21
General rules, techniques and advice for all drivers and riders	25
Using the road	35
Road users requiring extra care	43
Driving in adverse weather conditions	47
Waiting and parking	49
Motorways	53
Breakdowns and incidents	57
Road works	61
Level crossings	63
Tramways	65
Light signals controlling traffic	67
Signals to other road users	68
Signals by authorised persons	69
Traffic signs	71
Road markings	79
Vehicle markings	82
Annexes	83
1. You and your bicycle	
2. Motorcycle licence requirements	
3. Motor vehicle documentation and learner driver requirements	
4. The road user and the law	
5. Penalties	
6. Vehicle maintenance, safety and security	
7. First aid on the road	
8. Safety code for new drivers	
Supplementary Notes	93



## General guidance

1. **Pavements** (including any path along the side of a road) should be used if provided. Where possible, avoid being next to the kerb with your back to the traffic. If you have to step into the road, look both ways first. Always show due care and consideration for others.
2. **If there is no pavement**, keep to the right-hand side of the road so that you can see oncoming traffic. You should take extra care and
  - be prepared to walk in single file, especially on narrow roads or in poor light
  - keep close to the side of the road.

It may be safer to cross the road well before a sharp right-hand bend so that oncoming traffic has a better chance of seeing you. Cross back after the bend.

3. **Help other road users to see you.** Wear or carry something light-coloured, bright or fluorescent in poor daylight conditions. When it is dark, use reflective materials (e.g. armbands, sashes, waistcoats, jackets, footwear), which can be seen by drivers using headlights up to three times as far away as non-reflective materials.



4. **Young children** should not be out alone on the pavement or road (see Rule 7). When taking children out, keep between them and the traffic and hold their hands firmly. Strap very young children into push-chairs or use reins. When pushing a young child in a buggy, do not push the buggy into the road when checking to see if it is clear to cross, particularly from between parked vehicles.

5. **Organised walks.** Large groups of people walking together should use a pavement if available; if one is not, they should keep to the left. Look-outs should be positioned at the front and back of the group, and they should wear fluorescent clothes in daylight and reflective clothes in the dark. At night, the look-out in front should show a white light and the one at the back a red light. People on the outside of large groups should also carry lights and wear reflective clothing.
6. **Motorways.** Pedestrians **MUST NOT** be on motorways or slip roads except in an emergency (see Rules 271 and 275).  
Laws RTRA sect 17, MT(E&W)R 1982 as amended, reg 15(1)(b) & MT(S)R reg 13

## Crossing the road

7. **The Green Cross Code.** The advice given below on crossing the road is for all pedestrians. Children should be taught the Code and should not be allowed out alone until they can understand and use it properly. The age when they can do this is different for each child. Many children cannot judge how fast vehicles are going or how far away they are. Children learn by example, so parents and carers should always use the Code in full when out with their children. They are responsible for deciding at what age children can use it safely by themselves.

- A. **First find a safe place to cross** and where there is space to reach the pavement on the other side. Where there is a crossing nearby, use it. It is safer to cross using a subway, a footbridge, an island, a zebra, pelican, toucan or puffin crossing, or where there is a crossing point controlled by a police officer, a school crossing patrol or a traffic warden.

Otherwise choose a place where you can see clearly in all directions. Try to avoid crossing between parked cars (see Rule 14), on a blind bend, or close to the brow of a hill. Move to a space where drivers and riders can see you clearly. Do not cross the road diagonally.



- B. Stop just before you get to the kerb,** where you can see if anything is coming. Do not get too close to the traffic. If there's no pavement, keep back from the edge of the road but make sure you can still see approaching traffic.
- C. Look all around for traffic and listen.** Traffic could come from any direction. Listen as well, because you can sometimes hear traffic before you see it.
- D. If traffic is coming, let it pass.** Look all around again and listen. Do not cross until there is a safe gap in the traffic and you are certain that there is plenty of time. Remember, even if traffic is a long way off, it may be approaching very quickly.
- E. When it is safe, go straight across the road - do not run.** Keep looking and listening for traffic while you cross, in case there is any traffic you did not see, or in case other traffic appears suddenly. Look out for cyclists and motorcyclists travelling between lanes of traffic. Do not walk diagonally across the road.
- 8. At a junction.** When crossing the road, look out for traffic turning into the road, especially from behind you. If you have started crossing and traffic wants to turn into the road, you have priority and they should give way (see Rule 170).
- 9. Pedestrian Safety Barriers.** Where there are barriers, cross the road only at the gaps provided for pedestrians. Do not climb over the barriers or walk between them and the road.
- 10. Tactile paving.** Raised surfaces that can be felt underfoot provide warning and guidance to blind or partially sighted people. The most common surfaces are a series of raised studs, which are used at crossing points with a dropped kerb, or a series of rounded raised bars which are used at level crossings, at the top and bottom of steps and at some other hazards.
- 11. One-way streets.** Check which way the traffic is moving. Do not cross until it is safe to do so without stopping. Bus and cycle lanes may operate in the opposite direction to the rest of the traffic.
- 12. Bus and cycle lanes.** Take care when crossing these lanes as traffic may be moving faster than in the other lanes, or against the flow of traffic.
- 13. Routes shared with cyclists.** Some cycle tracks run alongside footpaths or pavements, using a segregating feature to separate cyclists from people on foot. Segregated routes may also incorporate short lengths of tactile paving to help visually impaired people stay on the correct side. On the pedestrian side this will comprise a series of flat-topped bars running across the direction of travel (ladder pattern). On the cyclist side the same bars are orientated in the direction of travel (tramline pattern). Not all routes which are shared with cyclists are segregated. Take extra care where this is so (see Rule 62).
- 14. Parked vehicles.** If you have to cross between parked vehicles, use the outside edges of the vehicles as if they were the kerb. Stop there and make sure you can see all around and that the traffic can see you. Make sure there is a gap between any parked vehicles on the other side, so you can reach the pavement. Never cross the road in front of, or behind, any vehicle with its engine running, especially a large vehicle, as the driver may not be able to see you.
- 15. Reversing vehicles.** Never cross behind a vehicle which is reversing, showing white reversing lights or sounding a warning.
- 16. Moving vehicles.** You **MUST NOT** get onto or hold onto a moving vehicle.  
Law RTA 1988 sect 26

**17. At night.** Wear something reflective to make it easier for others to see you (see Rule 3). If there is no pedestrian crossing nearby, cross the road near a street light so that traffic can see you more easily.

### Crossings

**18. At all crossings.** When using any type of crossing you should

- always check that the traffic has stopped before you start to cross or push a pram onto a crossing
- always cross between the studs or over the zebra markings. Do not cross at the side of the crossing or on the zig-zag lines, as it can be dangerous.

You **MUST NOT** loiter on any type of crossing.

Laws ZPPPCRGD reg 19 & RTRA sect 25(5)

**19. Zebra crossings.** Give traffic plenty of time to see you and to stop before you start to cross. Vehicles will need more time when the road is slippery. Wait until traffic has stopped from both directions or the road is clear before crossing. Remember that traffic does not have to stop until someone has moved onto the crossing. Keep looking both ways, and listening, in case a driver or rider has not seen you and attempts to overtake a vehicle that has stopped.



**20.** Where there is an island in the middle of a zebra crossing, wait on the island and follow Rule 19 before you cross the second half of the road - it is a separate crossing.



**21. At traffic lights.** There may be special signals for pedestrians. You should only start to cross the road when the green figure shows. If you have started to cross the road and the green figure goes out, you should still have time to reach the other side, but do not delay. If no pedestrian signals have been provided, watch carefully and do not cross until the traffic lights are red and the traffic has stopped. Keep looking and check for traffic that may be turning the corner. Remember that traffic lights may let traffic move in some lanes while traffic in other lanes has stopped.



**22. Pelican crossings.** These are signal-controlled crossings operated by pedestrians. Push the control button to activate the traffic signals. When the red figure shows, do not cross. When a steady green figure shows, check the traffic has stopped then cross with care. When the green figure begins to flash you should not start to cross. If you have already started you should have time to finish crossing safely.

- 23. Puffin crossings** differ from pelican crossings as the red and green figures are above the control box on your side of the road and there is no flashing green figure phase. Press the button and wait for the green figure to show.
- 24.** When the road is congested, traffic on your side of the road may be forced to stop even though their lights are green. Traffic may still be moving on the other side of the road, so press the button and wait for the signal to cross.
- 25. Toucan crossings** are light-controlled crossings which allow cyclists and pedestrians to share crossing space and cross at the same time. They are push-button operated. Pedestrians and cyclists will see the green signal together. Cyclists are permitted to ride across.



- 26.** At some crossings there is a bleeping sound or voice signal to indicate to blind or partially sighted people when the steady green figure is showing, and there may be a tactile signal to help deafblind people.
- 27. Equestrian crossings** are for horse riders. They have pavement barriers, wider crossing spaces, horse and rider figures in the light panels and either two sets of controls (one higher), or just one higher control panel.



- 28. 'Staggered' pelican or puffin crossings.** When the crossings on each side of the central refuge are not in line they are two separate crossings. On reaching the central island, press the button again and wait for a steady green figure.



- 29. Crossings controlled by an authorised person.** Do not cross the road unless you are signalled to do so by a police officer, traffic warden or school crossing patrol. Always cross in front of them.
- 30.** Where there are no controlled crossing points available it is advisable to cross where there is an island in the middle of the road. Use the Green Cross Code (see Rule 7) to cross to the island and then stop and use it again to cross the second half of the road.

### Situations needing extra care

- 31. Emergency vehicles.** If an ambulance, fire engine, police or other emergency vehicle approaches using flashing blue lights, headlights and/or sirens, keep off the road.
- 32. Buses.** Get on or off a bus only when it has stopped to allow you to do so. Watch out for cyclists when you are getting off. Never cross the road directly behind or in front of a bus. Wait until it has moved off and you can see clearly in both directions.
- 33. Tramways.** These may run through pedestrian areas. Their path will be marked out by shallow kerbs, changes in the paving or other road surface, white lines or yellow dots. Cross at designated crossings where provided. Elsewhere treat trams as you would other road vehicles and look both ways along the track before crossing. Do not walk along the track as trams may come up behind

you. Trams move quietly and cannot steer to avoid you.

- 34. Railway level crossings.** You **MUST NOT** cross or pass a stop line when the red lights show, (including a red pedestrian figure). Also do not cross if an alarm is sounding or the barriers are being lowered. The tone of the alarm may change if another train is approaching. If there are no lights, alarms or barriers, stop, look both ways and listen before crossing. A tactile surface comprising rounded bars running across the direction of pedestrian travel may be installed on the footpath approaching a level crossing to warn visually impaired people of its presence. The tactile surface should extend across the full width of the footway and should be located at an appropriate distance from the barrier or projected line of the barrier.

Law TSRGD, reg 52

- 35. Street and pavement repairs.** A pavement may be closed temporarily because it is not safe to use. Take extra care if you are directed to walk in or to cross the road.



# Rules for users of powered wheelchairs and powered mobility scooters



(Called Invalid Carriages in law)

36. There is one class of manual wheelchair (called a Class 1 invalid carriage) and two classes of powered wheelchairs and powered mobility scooters. Manual wheelchairs and Class 2 vehicles are those with an upper speed limit of 4 mph (6 km/h) and are designed to be used on pavements. Class 3 vehicles are those with an upper speed limit of 8 mph (12 km/h) and are equipped to be used on the road as well as the pavement.
37. When you are on the road you should obey the guidance and rules for other vehicles; when on the pavement you should follow the guidance and rules for pedestrians.

## On pavements

38. Pavements are safer than roads and should be used when available. You should give pedestrians priority and show consideration for other pavement users, particularly those with a hearing or visual impairment who may not be aware that you are there.
39. Powered wheelchairs and scooters **MUST NOT** travel faster than 4 mph (6 km/h) on pavements or in pedestrian areas. You may need to reduce your speed to adjust to other pavement users who may not be able to move out of your way quickly enough or where the pavement is too narrow.  
Law UICHR 1988 reg 4
40. When moving off the pavement onto the road, you should take special care. Before moving off, always look round and make sure it's safe to join the traffic. Always try to use dropped kerbs when moving off the pavement, even if this means travelling further to locate one. If you have to climb or descend a kerb, always approach it at right angles and don't try to negotiate a kerb higher than the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations.

## On the road

41. You should take care when travelling on the road as you may be travelling more

slowly than other traffic (your machine is restricted to 8 mph (12 km/h) and may be less visible).

42. When on the road, Class 3 vehicles should travel in the direction of the traffic. Class 2 users should always use the pavement when it is available. When there is no pavement, you should use caution when on the road. Class 2 users should, where possible, travel in the direction of the traffic. If you are travelling at night when lights **MUST** be used, you should travel in the direction of the traffic to avoid confusing other road users.

Law UICHR 1988 reg 9

43. You **MUST** follow the same rules about using lights, indicators and horns as for other road vehicles, if your vehicle is fitted with them. At night, lights **MUST** be used. Be aware that other road users may not see you and you should make yourself more visible - even in the daytime and also at dusk - by, for instance, wearing a reflective jacket or reflective strips on the back of the vehicle.

Law UICHR 1988 reg 9

44. Take extra care at road junctions. When going straight ahead, check to make sure there are no vehicles about to cross your path from the left, the right, or overtaking you and turning left. There are several options for dealing with right turns, especially turning from a major road. If moving into the middle of the road is difficult or dangerous, you can

- stop on the left-hand side of the road and wait for a safe gap in the traffic
- negotiate the turn as a pedestrian, i.e. travel along the pavement and cross the road between pavements where it is safe to do so. Class 3 users should switch the vehicle to the lower speed limit when on pavements.

If the junction is too hazardous, it may be worth considering an alternative route. Similarly, when negotiating major roundabouts (i.e. with two or more lanes) it may be safer for you to use the pavement or find a route which avoids the roundabout altogether.



45. All normal parking restrictions should be observed. Your vehicle should not be left unattended if it causes an obstruction to other pedestrians - especially those in wheelchairs. Parking concessions provided under the Blue Badge scheme will apply to those vehicles displaying a valid badge.
46. These vehicles **MUST NOT** be used on motorways (See Rule 253). They should not be used on unrestricted dual carriageways where the speed limit exceeds 50 mph (80 km/h) but if they are used on these dual carriageways, they **MUST** have a flashing amber beacon. A flashing amber beacon should be used on all other dual carriageways (see Rule 220).

Laws RTRA sect 17(2) & (3), & RVLR reg 17(1) & 26

## Horse-drawn vehicles

47. Horse-drawn vehicles used on the highway should be operated and maintained in accordance with standards set out in the Department for Transport's Code of Practice for Horse-Drawn Vehicles. This Code lays down the requirements for a road driving assessment and includes a comprehensive list of safety checks to ensure that a carriage and its fittings are safe and in good working order. The standards set out in the Road Driving Assessment may be required to be met by a Local Authority if an operator wishes to obtain a local authority licence to operate a passenger-carrying service.

48. **Safety equipment and clothing.** All horse-drawn vehicles should have two red rear reflectors. It is safer not to drive at night but if you do, a light showing white to the front and red to the rear **MUST** be fitted.

Law RVLRL 1989 reg 4

## Horse riders

49. **Safety equipment.** Children under the age of 14 **MUST** wear a helmet which complies with the Regulations. It **MUST** be fastened securely. Other riders should also follow these requirements. These requirements do not apply to a child who is a follower of the Sikh religion while wearing a turban.

Laws H(PHYR) Act 1990, sect 1 & H(PHYR) Regulations 1992, reg 3

50. **Other clothing.** You should wear

- boots or shoes with hard soles and heels
- light-coloured or fluorescent clothing in daylight
- reflective clothing if you have to ride at night or in poor visibility.



51. **At night.** It is safer not to ride on the road at night or in poor visibility, but if you do, make sure you wear reflective clothing and your horse has reflective bands above the fetlock joints. A light which shows white to the front and red to the rear should be fitted, with a band, to the rider's right arm and/or leg/riding boot. If you are leading a horse at night, carry a light in your right hand, showing white to the front and red to the rear, and wear reflective clothing on both you and your horse. It is strongly recommended that a fluorescent/reflective tail guard is also worn by your horse.

## Riding

52. Before you take a horse on to a road, you should

- ensure all tack fits well and is in good condition
- make sure you can control the horse.

Always ride with other, less nervous horses if you think that your horse will be nervous of traffic. Never ride a horse without both a saddle and bridle.

53. Before riding off or turning, look behind you to make sure it is safe, then give a clear arm signal.

When riding on the road you should

- keep to the left
- keep both hands on the reins unless you are signalling
- keep both feet in the stirrups
- not carry another person
- not carry anything which might affect your balance or get tangled up with the reins
- keep a horse you are leading to your left
- move in the direction of the traffic flow in a one-way street
- never ride more than two abreast, and ride in single file on narrow or busy roads and when riding round bends.

54. You **MUST NOT** take a horse onto a footpath or pavement, and you should not take a horse onto a cycle track. Use a bridleway where possible. Equestrian crossings may be provided for horse riders to cross the road and you should

use these where available (See Rule 27). You should dismount at level crossings where a 'Horse Rider Dismount' sign is displayed.

Laws HA 1835 sect 72, R(S)A 1984, sect 129(5)

55. Avoid roundabouts wherever possible. If you use them you should
- keep to the left and watch out for vehicles crossing your path to leave or join the roundabout
  - signal right when riding across exits to show you are not leaving
  - signal left just before you leave the roundabout.

### Other animals

56. **Dogs.** Do not let a dog out on the road on its own. Keep it on a short lead when walking on the pavement, road or path shared with cyclists or horse riders.
57. When in a vehicle make sure dogs or other animals are suitably restrained so they cannot distract you while you are driving or injure you, or themselves, if you stop quickly. A seat belt harness, pet carrier, dog cage or dog guard are ways of restraining animals in cars.
58. **Animals being herded.** These should be kept under control at all times. You should, if possible, send another person along the road in front to warn other road users, especially at a bend or the brow of a hill. It is safer not to move animals after dark, but if you do, then wear reflective clothing and ensure that lights are carried (white at the front and red at the rear of the herd).

# Rules for cyclists



These rules are in addition to those in the following sections, which apply to all vehicles (except the motorway section). See also Annexe 1, You and your bicycle.

## 59. Clothing. You should wear

- a cycle helmet which conforms to current regulations, is the correct size and securely fastened
- appropriate clothes for cycling. Avoid clothes which may get tangled in the chain, or in a wheel or may obscure your lights
- light-coloured or fluorescent clothing which helps other road users to see you in daylight and poor light
- reflective clothing and/or accessories (belt, arm or ankle bands) in the dark.



60. **At night** your cycle **MUST** have white front and red rear lights lit. It **MUST** also be fitted with a red rear reflector (and amber pedal reflectors, if manufactured after 1/10/85). White front reflectors and spoke reflectors will also help you to be seen. Flashing lights are permitted but it is recommended that cyclists who are riding in areas without street lighting use a steady front lamp.

[Law RVLRL regs 13, 18 & 24](#)

61. **Cycle Routes and Other Facilities.** Use cycle routes, advanced stop lines, cycle boxes and toucan crossings unless at the time it is unsafe to do so. Use of these facilities is not compulsory and will depend on your experience and skills, but they can make your journey safer.

62. **Cycle Tracks.** These are normally located away from the road, but may occasionally be found alongside footpaths or pavements. Cyclists and pedestrians may be segregated or they may share the same space

(unsegregated). When using segregated tracks you **MUST** keep to the side intended for cyclists as the pedestrian side remains a pavement or footpath. Take care when passing pedestrians, especially children, older or disabled people, and allow them plenty of room. Always be prepared to slow down and stop if necessary. Take care near road junctions as you may have difficulty seeing other road users, who might not notice you.

[Law HA 1835 sect 72](#)

63. **Cycle Lanes.** These are marked by a white line (which may be broken) along the carriageway (see Rule 140 ). Keep within the lane when practicable. When leaving a cycle lane check before pulling out that it is safe to do so and signal your intention clearly to other road users. Use of cycle lanes is not compulsory and will depend on your experience and skills, but they can make your journey safer.

64. You **MUST NOT** cycle on a pavement.

[Laws HA 1835 sect 72 & R\(S\)A 1984, sect 129](#)

65. **Bus Lanes.** Most bus lanes may be used by cyclists as indicated on signs. Watch out for people getting on or off a bus. Be very careful when overtaking a bus or leaving a bus lane as you will be entering a busier traffic flow. Do not pass between the kerb and a bus when it is at a stop.

66. You should

- keep both hands on the handlebars except when signalling or changing gear
- keep both feet on the pedals
- never ride more than two abreast, and ride in single file on narrow or busy roads and when riding round bends
- not ride close behind another vehicle
- not carry anything which will affect your balance or may get tangled up with your wheels or chain
- be considerate of other road users, particularly blind and partially sighted pedestrians. Let them know you are there when necessary, for example, by ringing your bell if you have one. It is recommended that a bell be fitted.

### 67. You should

- look all around before moving away from the kerb, turning or manoeuvring, to make sure it is safe to do so. Give a clear signal to show other road users what you intend to do (see 'Signals to other road users')
- look well ahead for obstructions in the road, such as drains, pot-holes and parked vehicles so that you do not have to swerve suddenly to avoid them. Leave plenty of room when passing parked vehicles and watch out for doors being opened or pedestrians stepping into your path
- be aware of traffic coming up behind you
- take extra care near road humps, narrowing's and other traffic calming features
- take care when overtaking (see Rules 162-169).

### 68. You **MUST NOT**

- carry a passenger unless your cycle has been built or adapted to carry one
- hold onto a moving vehicle or trailer
- ride in a dangerous, careless or inconsiderate manner
- ride when under the influence of drink or drugs, including medicine.

Law RTA 1988 sects 24, 26, 28, 29 & 30 as amended by RTA 1991

### 69. You **MUST** obey all traffic signs and traffic light signals.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD reg 10(1)

### 70. When parking your cycle

- find a conspicuous location where it can be seen by passers-by
- use cycle stands or other cycle parking facilities wherever possible
- do not leave it where it would cause an obstruction or hazard to other road users
- secure it well so that it will not fall over and become an obstruction or hazard.

### 71. You **MUST NOT** cross the stop line when the traffic lights are red. Some junctions have an advanced stop line to enable you to wait and position yourself ahead of other traffic (see Rule 178).

## Road junctions

**72. On the left.** When approaching a junction on the left, watch out for vehicles turning in front of you, out of or into the side road. Just before you turn, check for undertaking cyclists or motorcyclists. Do not ride on the inside of vehicles signalling or slowing down to turn left.

**73.** Pay particular attention to long vehicles which need a lot of room to manoeuvre at corners. Be aware that drivers may not see you. They may have to move over to the right before turning left. Wait until they have completed the manoeuvre because the rear wheels come very close to the kerb while turning. Do not be tempted to ride in the space between them and the kerb.

**74. On the right.** If you are turning right, check the traffic to ensure it is safe, then signal and move to the centre of the road. Wait until there is a safe gap in the oncoming traffic and give a final look before completing the turn. It may be safer to wait on the left until there is a safe gap or to dismount and push your cycle across the road.

**75. Dual carriageways.** Remember that traffic on most dual carriageways moves quickly. When crossing wait for a safe gap and cross each carriageway in turn. Take extra care when crossing slip roads.

## Roundabouts

**76.** Full details about the correct procedure at roundabouts are contained in Rules 184-190. Roundabouts can be hazardous and should be approached with care.

**77.** You may feel safer walking your cycle round on the pavement or verge. If you decide to ride round keeping to the left-hand lane you should

- be aware that drivers may not easily see you
- take extra care when cycling across exits. You may need to signal right to show you are not leaving the roundabout

- watch out for vehicles crossing your path to leave or join the roundabout.
- 78.** Give plenty of room to long vehicles on the roundabout as they need more space to manoeuvre. Do not ride in the space they need to get round the roundabout. It may be safer to wait until they have cleared the roundabout.

### Crossing the road

- 79.** Do not ride across equestrian crossings, as they are for horse riders only. Do not ride across a pelican, puffin or zebra crossing. Dismount and wheel your cycle across.
- 80. Toucan crossings.** These are light-controlled crossings which allow cyclists and pedestrians to share crossing space and cross at the same time. They are push-button operated. Pedestrians and cyclists will see the green signal together. Cyclists are permitted to ride across.
- 81. Cycle-only crossings.** Cycle tracks on opposite sides of the road may be linked by signalled crossings. You may ride across but you **MUST NOT** cross until the green cycle symbol is showing.  
Law TSRGD regs 33(2) & 36(1)
- 82. Level crossings/Tramways.** Take extra care when crossing the tracks (See Rule 306). You should dismount at level crossings where a 'Cyclist Dismount' sign is displayed.



# Rules for motorcyclists



These Rules are in addition to those in the following sections which apply to all vehicles. For motorcycle licence requirements.

## General

On all journeys, the rider and pillion passenger on a motorcycle, scooter or moped **MUST** wear a protective helmet. This does not apply to a follower of the Sikh religion while wearing a turban. Helmets **MUST** comply with the Regulations and they **MUST** be fastened securely. Riders and passengers of motor tricycles and quadricycles, also called quadbikes, should also wear a protective helmet. Before each journey check that your helmet visor is clean and in good condition.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 16 & 17 & MC(PH)R as amended reg 4

84. It is also advisable to wear eye protectors, which **MUST** comply with the Regulations. Scratched or poorly fitting eye protectors can limit your view when riding, particularly in bright sunshine and the hours of darkness. Consider wearing ear protection. Strong boots, gloves and suitable clothing may help to protect you if you are involved in a collision.

RTA sect 18 & MC(EP)R as amended reg 4

85. You **MUST NOT** carry more than one pillion passenger who **MUST** sit astride the machine on a proper seat. They should face forward with both feet on the footrests. You **MUST NOT** carry a pillion passenger unless your motor cycle is designed to do so. Provisional licence holders **MUST NOT** carry a pillion passenger.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 23, MV(DL)R 1999 reg 16(6) & CUR 1986 reg 102

86. **Daylight riding.** Make yourself as visible as possible from the side as well as the front and rear. You could wear a light or brightly coloured helmet and fluorescent clothing or strips. Dipped headlights, even in good daylight, may also make you more conspicuous. However, be aware that other vehicle drivers may still not have seen you, or judged your distance or speed correctly, especially at junctions.



87. **Riding in the dark.** Wear reflective clothing or strips to improve your visibility in the dark. These reflect light from the headlamps of other vehicles, making you visible from a longer distance. See Rules 113-116 for lighting requirements.

88. **Manoeuvring.** You should be aware of what is behind and to the sides before manoeuvring. Look behind you; use mirrors if they are fitted. When in traffic queues look out for pedestrians crossing between vehicles and vehicles emerging from junctions or changing lanes. Position yourself so that drivers can see you in their mirrors. Additionally, when filtering in slow-moving traffic, take care and keep your speed low.

**Remember:**  
**Observation - Signal - Manoeuvre**



**89. Vehicle condition.** You **MUST** ensure your vehicle and trailer comply with the full requirements of the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations and Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations (see 'The road user and the law').

## Fitness to drive

**90.** Make sure that you are fit to drive. You **MUST** report to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) any health condition likely to affect your driving.

Law RTA 1988 sect 94

**91.** Driving when you are tired greatly increases your risk of collision. To minimise this risk

- make sure you are fit to drive. Do not begin a journey if you are tired. Get a good night's sleep before embarking on a long journey
- avoid undertaking long journeys between midnight and 6 am, when natural alertness is at a minimum
- plan your journey to take sufficient breaks. A minimum break of at least 15 minutes after every two hours of driving is recommended
- if you feel at all sleepy, stop in a safe place. Do not stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway
- the most effective ways to counter sleepiness are to drink, for example, two cups of caffeinated coffee and to take a short nap (at least 15 minutes).

**92. Vision.** You **MUST** be able to read a vehicle number plate, in good daylight, from a distance of 20 metres (or 20.5 metres where the old style number plate is used). If you need to wear glasses (or contact lenses) to do this, you **MUST** wear them at all times while driving. The police have the power to require a driver to undertake an eyesight test.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 96 & MV(DL)R reg 40 & sch 8

**93.** Slow down, and if necessary stop, if you are dazzled by bright sunlight.

**94.** At night or in poor visibility, do not use tinted glasses, lenses or visors if they restrict your vision.

## Alcohol and drugs

**95. Do not drink and drive** as it will seriously affect your judgement and abilities. You **MUST NOT** drive with a breath alcohol level higher than 35 microgrammes/100 millilitres of breath or a blood alcohol level of more than 80 milligrammes/100 millilitres of blood. Alcohol will

- give a false sense of confidence
- reduce co-ordination and slow down reactions
- affect judgement of speed, distance and risk
- reduce your driving ability, even if you're below the legal limit
- take time to leave your body; you may be unfit to drive in the evening after drinking at lunchtime, or in the morning after drinking the previous evening.
- The best solution is not to drink at all when planning to drive because any amount of alcohol affects your ability to drive safely. If you are going to drink, arrange another means of transport.

Law RTA 1988 sects 4, 5 & 11(2)

**96.** You **MUST NOT** drive under the influence of drugs or medicine. Check the instructions or ask your doctor or pharmacist. Using illegal drugs is highly dangerous. Never take them if you intend to drive; the effects are unpredictable, but can be even more severe than alcohol and may result in fatal or serious road crashes.

Law RTA 1988 sect 4

**97. Before setting off.** You should ensure that

- you have planned your route and allowed sufficient time
- clothing and footwear do not prevent you using the controls in the correct manner
- you know where all the controls are and how to use them before you need them. Not all vehicles are the same; do not wait until it is too late to find out
- your mirrors and seat are adjusted correctly to ensure comfort, full control and maximum vision
- head restraints are properly adjusted to reduce the risk of neck and spine injuries in the event of a collision

- you have sufficient fuel before commencing your journey, especially if it includes motorway driving. It can be dangerous to lose power when driving in traffic
- ensure your vehicle is legal and roadworthy
- switch off your mobile phone.



## 98. Vehicle towing and loading. As a driver

- you **MUST NOT** tow more than your licence permits. If you passed a car test after 1 Jan 1997 you are restricted on the weight of trailer you can tow
- you **MUST NOT** overload your vehicle or trailer. You should not tow a weight greater than that recommended by the manufacturer of your vehicle
- you **MUST** secure your load and it **MUST NOT** stick out dangerously. Make sure any heavy or sharp objects and any animals are secured safely. If there is a collision, they might hit someone inside the vehicle and cause serious injury
- you should properly distribute the weight in your caravan or trailer with heavy items mainly over the axle(s) and ensure a downward load on the tow ball. Manufacturer's recommended weight and tow ball load should not be exceeded. This should avoid the possibility of swerving or snaking and going out of control. If this does happen, ease off the accelerator and reduce speed gently to regain control
- carrying a load or pulling a trailer may require you to adjust the headlights.
- In the event of a breakdown, be aware that towing a vehicle on a tow rope is potentially dangerous. You should consider professional recovery.

Laws CUR reg 100 & MV(DL)R reg 43

## Seat belts and child restraints

99. You **MUST** wear a seat belt in cars, vans and other goods vehicles if one is fitted (see table below). Adults, and children aged 14 years and over, **MUST** use a seat belt or child restraint, where fitted, when seated in minibuses, buses and coaches. Exemptions are allowed for the holders of medical exemption certificates and those making deliveries or collections in goods vehicles when travelling less than 50 metres (approx 162 feet).

Laws RTA 1988 sects 14 & 15, MV(WSB)R, MV(WSB)R & MV(WSB)R(A)R

**Seat belt requirements.** This table summarises the main legal requirements for wearing seat belts in cars, vans and other goods vehicles.

1. **DRIVER - MUST** be worn if fitted.  
Responsibility: **DRIVER**
2. **CHILD** under 3 years of age -  
**Front seat:** Correct child restraint **MUST** be used.  
**Back seat:** Correct child restraint **MUST** be used. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained.  
Responsibility: **DRIVER**
3. **CHILD** from 3rd birthday up to 1.35 metres in height (or 12 birthday whichever they reach first) -  
**Front seat:** Correct child restraint **MUST** be used.  
**Back seat:** Correct child restraint **MUST** be used where seat belts fitted. **MUST** use adult belt if correct child restraint is not available in a licensed taxi or private hire vehicle, or for reasons of unexpected necessity over a short distance, or if two occupied restraints prevent fitment of a third.  
Responsibility: **DRIVER**
4. **CHILD** over 1.35 metres (approx 4ft 5 ins) in height or 12 or 13 years -  
**Front and back seat:** Seat belt **MUST** be worn if available.  
Responsibility: **DRIVER**
5. **ADULT** passengers aged 14 and over-  
**Front and back seat:** Seat belt **MUST** be worn if available.  
Responsibility: **PASSENGER**

100. The driver **MUST** ensure that all children under 14 years of age in cars, vans and other goods vehicles wear seat belts or sit in an approved child restraint where required (see table Rule 99). If a child is under 1.35 metres (approx 4 feet 5 inches) tall, a baby seat, child seat, booster seat or booster cushion **MUST** be used suitable for the child's weight and fitted to the manufacturer's instructions.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 14 & 15, MV (WSB)R, MV(WSBCFS)R & MV(WSB)(A)R



101. A rear-facing baby seat **MUST NOT** be fitted into a seat protected by an active frontal airbag, as in a crash it can cause serious injury or death to the child.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 14 & 15, MV (WSB)R, MV(WSBCFS)R & MV(WSB)(A)R

### 102. Children in cars, vans and other goods vehicles.

- Drivers who are carrying children in cars, vans and other goods vehicles should also ensure that
- children should get into the vehicle through the door nearest the kerb
- child restraints are properly fitted to manufacturer's instructions
- children do not sit behind the rear seats in an estate car or hatchback, unless a special child seat has been fitted
- the child safety door locks, where fitted, are used when children are in the vehicle
- children are kept under control.



This section should be read by all drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists and horse riders. The rules in *The Highway Code* do not give you the right of way in any circumstance, but they advise you when you should give way to others. Always give way if it can help to avoid an incident.

## Signals

**103.** Signals warn and inform other road users, including pedestrians (see 'Signals to other road users'), of your intended actions. You should always

- give clear signals in plenty of time, having checked it is not misleading to signal at that time
- use them to advise other road users before changing course or direction, stopping or moving off
- cancel them after use
- make sure your signals will not confuse others. If, for instance, you want to stop after a side road, do not signal until you are passing the road. If you signal earlier it may give the impression that you intend to turn into the road. Your brake lights will warn traffic behind you that you are slowing down
- use an arm signal to emphasise or reinforce your signal if necessary. Remember that signalling does not give you priority.

**104.** You should also

- watch out for signals given by other road users and proceed only when you are satisfied that it is safe
- be aware that an indicator on another vehicle may not have been cancelled.

**105.** You **MUST** obey signals given by police officers, traffic officers, traffic wardens and signs used by school crossing patrols. ( see 'Signals by authorised persons')

Laws RTRA sect 28, RTA 1988 sect 35, TMA 2004 sect 6, & FTWO art 3

**106. Police stopping procedures.** If the police want to stop your vehicle they will, where possible, attract your attention by

- flashing blue lights, headlights or sounding their siren or horn, usually from behind

- directing you to pull over to the side by pointing and/or using the left indicator.

You **MUST** then pull over and stop as soon as it is safe to do so. Then switch off your engine.

Law RTA 1988 sect 163

## Other stopping procedures

**107. Vehicle & Operator Services Agency Officers** have powers to stop vehicles on all roads, including motorways and trunk roads, in England and Wales. They will attract your attention by flashing amber lights

- either from the front requesting you to follow them to a safe place to stop
- or from behind directing you to pull over to the side by pointing and/or using the left indicator.

It is an offence not to comply with their directions. You **MUST** obey any signals given (see 'Signals by authorised persons').

Laws RTA 1988, sect 67, & PRA 2002, sect 41 & sched 5(8)

**108. Highways Agency Traffic Officers** have powers to stop vehicles on most motorways and some 'A' class roads, in England only. If HA traffic officers in uniform want to stop your vehicle on safety grounds (e.g. an insecure load) they will, where possible, attract your attention by

- flashing amber lights, usually from behind
- directing you to pull over to the side by pointing and/or using the left indicator.

You **MUST** then pull over and stop as soon as it is safe to do so. Then switch off your engine. It is an offence not to comply with their directions. (see 'Signals by authorised persons').

Law RTA 1988, sects 35 & 163 as amended by TMA 2004, sect 6

**109. Traffic light signals and traffic signs.**

You **MUST** obey all traffic light signals (see 'Light signals controlling traffic') and traffic signs giving orders, including temporary signals and signs signals (see 'Signs giving orders', 'Warning

signs', 'Direction signs'). Make sure you know, understand and act on all other traffic and information signs and road markings (see 'Signs giving orders', 'Warning signs', 'Direction signs', 'Information signs', 'Road markings' and 'Vehicle markings').

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10, 15, 16, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 36, 38 & 40

**110. Flashing headlights.** Only flash your headlights to let other road users know that you are there. Do not flash your headlights to convey any other message or intimidate other road users.

**111.** Never assume that flashing headlights is a signal inviting you to proceed. Use your own judgement and proceed carefully.

**112. The horn.** Use only while your vehicle is moving and you need to warn other road users of your presence. Never sound your horn aggressively. You **MUST NOT** use your horn

- while stationary on the road
- when driving in a built-up area between the hours of 11.30 pm and 7.00 am **except** when another road user poses a danger.

Law CUR reg 99

### Lighting requirements

**113.** You **MUST**

- ensure all sidelights and rear registration plate lights are lit between sunset and sunrise
- use headlights at night, except on a road which has lit street lighting. These roads are generally restricted to a speed limit of 30 mph (48 km/h) unless otherwise specified
- use headlights when visibility is seriously reduced (see Rule 226).

Night (the hours of darkness) is defined as the period between half an hour after sunset and half an hour before sunrise.

Laws RVLR regs 3, 24, & 25 (In Scotland - RTRA 1984 sect 82 (as amended by NRSWA, para 59 of sched 8))

**114.** You **MUST NOT**

- use any lights in a way which would dazzle or cause discomfort to other road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders
- use front or rear fog lights unless visibility is seriously reduced. You **MUST** switch them off when visibility improves to avoid dazzling other road users (see Rule 226).
- In stationary queues of traffic, drivers should apply the parking brake and, once the following traffic has stopped, take their foot off the footbrake to deactivate the vehicle brake lights. This will minimise glare to road users behind until the traffic moves again.

Law RVLR reg 27

**115.** You should also

- use dipped headlights, or dim-dip if fitted, at night in built-up areas and in dull daytime weather, to ensure that you can be seen
- keep your headlights dipped when overtaking until you are level with the other vehicle and then change to main beam if necessary, unless this would dazzle oncoming road users
- slow down, and if necessary stop, if you are dazzled by oncoming headlights.

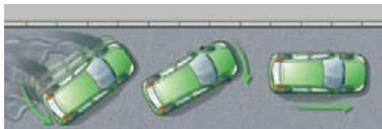
**116. Hazard warning lights.** These may be used when your vehicle is stationary, to warn that it is temporarily obstructing traffic. Never use them as an excuse for dangerous or illegal parking. You **MUST NOT** use hazard warning lights while driving or being towed unless you are on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriageway and you need to warn drivers behind you of a hazard or obstruction ahead. Only use them for long enough to ensure that your warning has been observed.

Law RVLR reg 27

## Control of the vehicle

### Braking

- 117. In normal circumstances.** The safest way to brake is to do so early and lightly. Brake more firmly as you begin to stop. Ease the pressure off just before the vehicle comes to rest to avoid a jerky stop.
- 118. In an emergency.** Brake immediately. Try to avoid braking so harshly that you lock your wheels. Locked wheels can lead to loss of control.
- 119. Skids.** Skidding is usually caused by the driver braking, accelerating or steering too harshly or driving too fast for the road conditions. If skidding occurs, remove the cause by releasing the brake pedal fully or easing off the accelerator. Turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid. For example, if the rear of the vehicle skids to the right, steer immediately to the right to recover.



- 120. ABS.** If your vehicle is fitted with anti-lock brakes, you should follow the advice given in the vehicle handbook. However, in the case of an emergency, apply the footbrake firmly; do not release the pressure until the vehicle has slowed to the desired speed. The ABS should ensure that steering control will be retained, but do not assume that a vehicle with ABS will stop in a shorter distance.
- 121. Brakes affected by water.** If you have driven through deep water your brakes may be less effective. Test them at the first safe opportunity by pushing gently on the brake pedal to make sure that they work. If they are not fully effective, gently apply light pressure while driving slowly. This will help to dry them out.

**122. Coasting.** This term describes a vehicle travelling in neutral or with the clutch pressed down. It can reduce driver control because

- engine braking is eliminated
- vehicle speed downhill will increase quickly
- increased use of the footbrake can reduce its effectiveness
- steering response will be affected, particularly on bends and corners
- it may be more difficult to select the appropriate gear when needed.

**123. The Driver and the Environment.** You **MUST NOT** leave a parked vehicle unattended with the engine running or leave a vehicle engine running unnecessarily while that vehicle is stationary on a public road. Generally, if the vehicle is stationary and is likely to remain so for more than a couple of minutes, you should apply the parking brake and switch off the engine to reduce emissions and noise pollution. However it is permissible to leave the engine running if the vehicle is stationary in traffic or for diagnosing faults.

Law CUR regs 98 & 107

1. Cars and motorcycles (including car derived vans up to 2 tonnes maximum laden weight) -
  - Built up area: **30mph (48km/h)**
  - Single carriageways: **60 (96km/h)**
  - Dual carriageways: **70 (112km/h)**
  - Motorways: **70 (112km/h)**
2. Cars towing caravans or trailers (including car derived vans and motorcycles)
  - Built up area: **30 (48km/h)**
  - Single carriageways: **50 (80km/h)**
  - Dual carriageways: **60 (96km/h)**
  - Motorways: **60 (96km/h)**
3. Buses and coaches (not exceeding 12 metres in overall length)
  - Built up area: **30 (48km/h)**
  - Single carriageways: **50 (80km/h)**
  - Dual carriageways: **60 (96km/h)**
  - Motorways: **70 (112km/h)**

4. Goods vehicles (not exceeding 7.5 tonnes maximum laden weight)

Built up area: **30 (48km/h)**  
 Single carriageways: **50 (80km/h)**  
 Dual carriageways: **60 (96km/h)**  
 Motorways: **70 (112km/h)**  
**(60 if articulated or towing a trailer)**

5. Goods vehicles (exceeding 7.5 tonnes maximum laden weight)

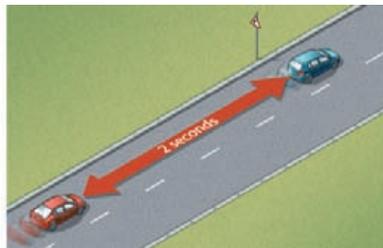
Built up area: **30 (48km/h)**  
 Single carriageways: **40 (64km/h)**  
 Dual carriageways: **50 (80km/h)**  
 Motorways: **60 (96km/h)**

## Speed limits

124. You **MUST NOT** exceed the maximum speed limits for the road and for your vehicle (see the table in Rule 123). The presence of street lights generally means that there is a 30 mph (48 km/h) speed limit unless otherwise specified.  
 Law RTRA sects 81, 86, 89 & sch 6

125. The speed limit is the absolute maximum and does not mean it is safe to drive at that speed irrespective of conditions. Driving at speeds too fast for the road and traffic conditions is dangerous. You should always reduce your speed when

- the road layout or condition presents hazards, such as bends
- sharing the road with pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, particularly children, and motorcyclists
- weather conditions make it safer to do so
- driving at night as it is more difficult to see other road users.



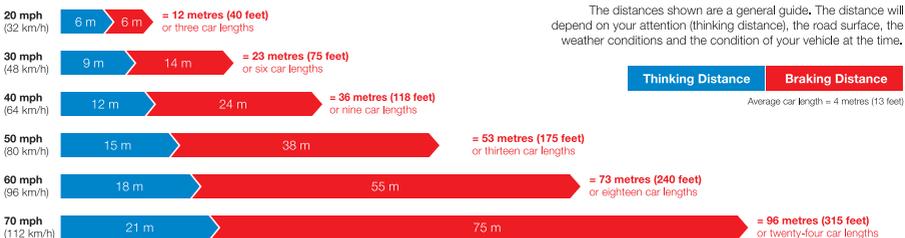
126. **Stopping distances.** Drive at a speed that will allow you to stop well within the distance you can see to be clear.

You should

- leave enough space between you and the vehicle in front so that you can pull up safely if it suddenly slows down or stops. The safe rule is never to get closer than the overall stopping distance (see Typical Stopping Distances diagram, shown above)
- allow at least a two-second gap between you and the vehicle in front on roads carrying faster-moving traffic and in tunnels where visibility is reduced. The gap should be at least doubled on wet roads and increased still further on icy roads
- remember, large vehicles and motorcycles need a greater distance to stop. If driving a large vehicle in a tunnel, you should allow a four-second gap between you and the vehicle in front.

If you have to stop in a tunnel, leave at least a 5-metre gap between you and the vehicle in front.

## Typical Stopping Distances



### Lines and lane markings on the road

Diagrams of all lines are shown in the Road markings section.

**127. A broken white line.** This marks the centre of the road. When this line lengthens and the gaps shorten, it means that there is a hazard ahead. Do not cross it unless you can see the road is clear and wish to overtake or turn off.

**128. Double white lines where the line nearest to you is broken.** This means you may cross the lines to overtake if it is safe, provided you can complete the manoeuvre before reaching a solid white line on your side. White direction arrows on the road indicate that you need to get back onto your side of the road.

**129. Double white lines where the line nearest you is solid.** This means you **MUST NOT** cross or straddle it unless it is safe and you need to enter adjoining premises or a side road. You may cross the line if necessary, provided the road is clear, to pass a stationary vehicle, or overtake a pedal cycle, horse or road maintenance vehicle, if they are travelling at 10 mph (16 km/h) or less.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 26

**130. Areas of white diagonal stripes or chevrons painted on the road.** These are to separate traffic lanes or to protect traffic turning right.

- If the area is bordered by a broken white line, you should not enter the area unless it is necessary and you can see that it is safe to do so.
- If the area is marked with chevrons and bordered by solid white lines you **MUST NOT** enter it except in an emergency.

Laws MT(E&W)R regs 5, 9, 10 & 16, MT(S)R regs 4, 8, 9 & 14, RTA sect 36 & TSRGD 10(1)

**131. Lane dividers.** These are short, broken white lines which are used on wide carriageways to divide them into lanes. You should keep between them.



**132. Reflective road studs** may be used with white lines.

- White studs mark the lanes or the middle of the road.
- Red studs mark the left edge of the road.
- Amber studs mark the central reservation of a dual carriageway or motorway.
- Green studs mark the edge of the main carriageway at lay-bys and slip roads.
- Green/yellow studs indicate temporary adjustments to lane layouts, e.g. where road works are taking place.

### Multi-lane carriageways

#### Lane discipline

**133.** If you need to change lane, first use your mirrors and if necessary take a quick sideways glance to make sure you will not force another road user to change course or speed. When it is safe to do so, signal to indicate your intentions to other road users and when clear, move over.

**134.** You should follow the signs and road markings and get into the lane as directed. In congested road conditions do not change lanes unnecessarily. Merging in turn is recommended but only if safe and appropriate when vehicles are travelling at a very low speed, e.g. when approaching road works or a road traffic incident. It is not recommended at high speed.



## Single carriageway

135. Where a single carriageway has three lanes and the road markings or signs do not give priority to traffic in either direction
- use the middle lane only for overtaking or turning right. Remember, you have no more right to use the middle lane than a driver coming from the opposite direction
  - do not use the right-hand lane.
136. Where a single carriageway has four or more lanes, use only the lanes that signs or markings indicate.

## Dual carriageways

A dual carriageway is a road which has a central reservation to separate the carriageways.

137. On a two-lane dual carriageway you should stay in the left hand lane. Use the right-hand lane for overtaking or turning right. After overtaking, move back to the left-hand lane when it is safe to do so.
138. On a three-lane dual carriageway, you may use the middle lane or the right-hand lane to overtake but return to the middle and then the left-hand lane when it is safe.
139. **Climbing and crawler lanes.** These are provided on some hills. Use this lane if you are driving a slow-moving vehicle or if there are vehicles behind you wishing to overtake. Be aware of the signs and road markings which indicate the lane is about to end.
140. **Cycle lanes.** These are shown by road markings and signs. You **MUST NOT** drive or park in a cycle lane marked by a solid white line during its times of operation. Do not drive or park in a cycle lane marked by a broken white line unless it is unavoidable. You **MUST NOT** park in any cycle lane whilst waiting restrictions apply.  
Law RTRA sects 5 & 8

141. **Bus lanes.** These are shown by road markings and signs that indicate which (if any) other vehicles are permitted to use the bus lane. Unless otherwise indicated, you should not drive in a bus lane during its period of operation. You may enter a bus lane to stop, to load or unload where this is not prohibited.

142. **High-occupancy vehicle lanes and other designated vehicle lanes.** Lanes may be restricted for use by particular types of vehicle; these restrictions may apply some or all of the time. The operating times and vehicle types will be indicated on the accompanying traffic signs. You **MUST NOT** drive in such lanes during their times of operation unless signs indicate that your vehicle is permitted. ( see 'Information signs')

Vehicles permitted to use designated lanes may or may not include cycles, buses, taxis, licensed private hire vehicles, motorcycles, heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and high occupancy vehicles (HOVs).

Where HOV lanes are in operation, they **MUST ONLY** be used by

- vehicles containing at least the minimum number of people indicated on the traffic signs
  - any other vehicles, such as buses and motorcycles, as indicated on signs prior to the start of the lane, irrespective of the number of occupants.  
Laws RTRA sects 5 & 8, & RTA 1988, sect 36
143. **One-way streets.** Traffic **MUST** travel in the direction indicated by signs. Buses and/or cycles may have a contraflow lane. Choose the correct lane for your exit as soon as you can. Do not change lanes suddenly. Unless road signs or markings indicate otherwise, you should use
- the left-hand lane when going left
  - the right-hand lane when going right
  - the most appropriate lane when going straight ahead. Remember - traffic could be passing on both sides.  
Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & RTRA sects 5 & 8

### General advice

#### 144. You **MUST NOT**

- drive dangerously
- drive without due care and attention
- drive without reasonable consideration for other road users.

Law RTA 1988 sects 2 & 3 as amended by RTA 1991

#### 145. You **MUST NOT** drive on or over a pavement, footpath or bridleway except to gain lawful access to property, or in the case of an emergency.

Laws HA 1835 sect 72 & RTA 1988 sect 34

#### 146. Adapt your driving to the appropriate type and condition of road you are on. In particular

- do not treat speed limits as a target. It is often not appropriate or safe to drive at the maximum speed limit
- take the road and traffic conditions into account. Be prepared for unexpected or difficult situations, for example, the road being blocked beyond a blind bend. Be prepared to adjust your speed as a precaution
- where there are junctions, be prepared for road users emerging
- in side roads and country lanes look out for unmarked junctions where nobody has priority
- be prepared to stop at traffic control systems, road works, pedestrian crossings or traffic lights as necessary
- try to anticipate what pedestrians and cyclists might do.
- If pedestrians, particularly children, are looking the other way, they may step out into the road without seeing you.

#### 147. Be considerate. Be careful of and considerate towards all types of road users, especially those requiring extra care (see Rule 204). You should

- try to be understanding if other road users cause problems; they may be inexperienced or not know the area well
- be patient; remember that anyone can make a mistake
- not allow yourself to become agitated or involved if someone is behaving badly on the road. This will only make the situation worse. Pull over, calm down and, when you feel relaxed, continue your journey

- slow down and hold back if a road user pulls out into your path at a junction. Allow them to get clear. Do not overreact by driving too close behind to intimidate them.
- not throw anything out of a vehicle, for example, cigarette ends, cans, paper or carrier bags. This can endanger other road users, particularly motorcyclists and cyclists.

#### 148. Safe driving and riding needs concentration. Avoid distractions when driving or riding such as

- loud music (this may mask other sounds)
  - trying to read maps
  - inserting a cassette or CD or tuning a radio
  - arguing with your passengers or other road users
  - eating and drinking
  - smoking.
- [Laws TSf(EV) regs 2007, TSfP(W) regs 2007 & TPSCP(S) regs 2006]

### Mobile phones and in-vehicle technology

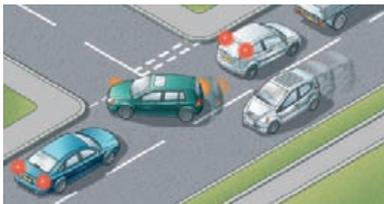
#### 149. You **MUST** exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. You **MUST NOT** use a hand-held mobile phone, or similar device, when driving or when supervising a learner driver, except to call 999 or 112 in a genuine emergency when it is unsafe or impractical to stop. Never use a handheld microphone when driving. Using hands-free equipment is also likely to distract your attention from the road. It is far safer not to use any telephone while you are driving or riding - find a safe place to stop first or use the voicemail facility and listen to messages later.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 2 & 3 & CUR regs 104 & 110

#### 150. There is a danger of driver distraction being caused by in-vehicle systems such as satellite navigation systems, congestion warning systems, PCs, multi-media, etc. You **MUST** exercise proper control of your vehicle at all times. Do not rely on driver assistance systems such as cruise control or lane departure warnings. They are available to assist but you should not reduce your concentration levels. Do not be distracted by maps or screen-based

information (such as navigation or vehicle management systems) while driving or riding. If necessary find a safe place to stop.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 2 & 3 & CUR reg 104



**151. In slow-moving traffic.** You should reduce the distance between you and the vehicle ahead to maintain traffic flow

- never get so close to the vehicle in front that you cannot stop safely
- leave enough space to be able to manoeuvre if the vehicle in front breaks down or an emergency vehicle needs to get past
- not change lanes to the left to overtake
- allow access into and from side roads, as blocking these will add to congestion
- be aware of cyclists and motorcyclists who may be passing on either side.

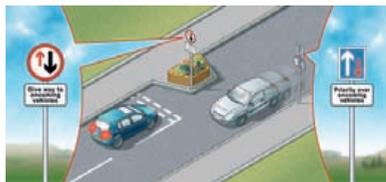
### Driving in built-up areas

**152. Residential streets.** You should drive slowly and carefully on streets where there are likely to be pedestrians, cyclists and parked cars. In some areas a 20 mph (32 km/h) maximum speed limit may be in force. Look out for

- vehicles emerging from junctions or driveways
- vehicles moving off
- car doors opening
- pedestrians
- children running out from between parked cars
- cyclists and motorcyclists.

**153. Traffic-calming measures.** On some roads there are features such as road humps, chicanes and narrowings which are intended to slow you down. When you approach these features reduce your speed. Allow cyclists and motorcyclists room to pass through them. Maintain a reduced speed along

the whole of the stretch of road within the calming measures. Give way to oncoming road users if directed to do so by signs. You should not overtake other moving road users while in these areas.



### Country roads

**154.** Take extra care on country roads and reduce your speed at approaches to bends, which can be sharper than they appear, and at junctions and turnings, which may be partially hidden. Be prepared for pedestrians, horse riders, cyclists, slow-moving farm vehicles or mud on the road surface. Make sure you can stop within the distance you can see to be clear. You should also reduce your speed where country roads enter villages.

**155. Single-track roads.** These are only wide enough for one vehicle. They may have special passing places. If you see a vehicle coming towards you, or the driver behind wants to overtake, pull into a passing place on your left, or wait opposite a passing place on your right. Give way to road users coming uphill whenever you can. If necessary, reverse until you reach a passing place to let the other vehicle pass. Slow down when passing pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.

**156.** Do not park in passing places.

### Vehicles prohibited from using roads and pavements

**157.** Certain motorised vehicles do not meet the construction and technical requirements for road vehicles and are generally not intended, not suitable and not legal for road, pavement, footpath, cycle path or bridleway use. These include most types of miniature motorcycles, also called mini motos, and motorised scooters, also called go

peds, which are powered by electric or internal combustion engines. These types of vehicle **MUST NOT** be used on roads, pavements, footpaths or bridleways.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 34, 41a, 42, 47, 63 & 66, HA 1835, sect 72, & R(S)A sect 129

- 158.** Certain models of motorcycles, motor tricycles and quadricycles, also called quad bikes, are suitable only for off-road use and do not meet legal standards for use on roads. Vehicles that do not meet these standards **MUST NOT** be used on roads. They **MUST NOT** be used on pavements, footpaths, cycle paths or bridleways either. You **MUST** make sure that any motorcycle, motor tricycle, quadricycle or any other motor vehicle meets legal standards and is properly registered, taxed and insured before using it on the roads. Even when registered, taxed and insured for the road, vehicles **MUST NOT** be used on pavements.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 34, 41a, 42, 47, 63, 66 & 156, HA 1835, sect 72, R(S)A sect 129, & VERA sects 1, 29, 31A, & 43A



## General rules

### 159. Before moving off you should

- use all mirrors to check the road is clear
- look round to check the blind spots (the areas you are unable to see in the mirrors)
- signal if necessary before moving out
- look round for a final check.

Move off only when it is safe to do so.



### 160. Once moving you should

- keep to the left, unless road signs or markings indicate otherwise. The exceptions are when you want to overtake, turn right or pass parked vehicles or pedestrians in the road
- keep well to the left on right-hand bends. This will improve your view of the road and help avoid the risk of colliding with traffic approaching from the opposite direction
- drive with both hands on the wheel where possible. This will help you to remain in full control of the vehicle at all times
- be aware of other road users, especially cycles and motorcycles who may be filtering through the traffic. These are more difficult to see than larger vehicles and their riders are particularly vulnerable. Give them plenty of room, especially if you are driving a long vehicle or towing a trailer
- select a lower gear before you reach a long downhill slope. This will help to control your speed
- when towing, remember the extra length will affect overtaking and manoeuvring. The extra weight will also affect the braking and acceleration.

### 161. Mirrors. All mirrors should be used effectively throughout your journey. You should

- use your mirrors frequently so that you always know what is behind and to each side of you
- use them in good time before you signal or change direction or speed
- be aware that mirrors do not cover all areas and there will be blind spots. You will need to look round and check.

## Remember: Mirrors - Signal - Manoeuvre

## Overtaking

### 162. Before overtaking you should make sure

- the road is sufficiently clear ahead
- road users are not beginning to overtake you
- there is a suitable gap in front of the road user you plan to overtake.

### 163. Overtake only when it is safe and legal to do so.

You should

- not get too close to the vehicle you intend to overtake
- use your mirrors, signal when it is safe to do so, take a quick sideways glance if necessary into the blind spot area and then start to move out
- not assume that you can simply follow a vehicle ahead which is overtaking; there may only be enough room for one vehicle
- move quickly past the vehicle you are overtaking, once you have started to overtake. Allow plenty of room. Move back to the left as soon as you can but do not cut in

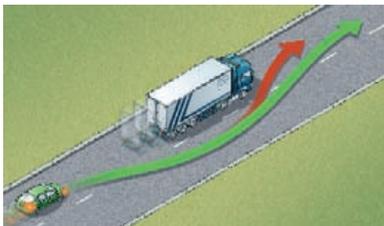


- take extra care at night and in poor visibility when it is harder to judge speed and distance
- give way to oncoming vehicles before passing parked vehicles or other obstructions on your side of the road
- only overtake on the left if the vehicle in front is signalling to turn right, and there is room to do so
- stay in your lane if traffic is moving slowly in queues. If the queue on your right is moving more slowly than you are, you may pass on the left
- give motorcyclists, cyclists and horse riders at least as much room as you would when overtaking a car (see Rules 211-215).

### Remember: Mirrors - Signal – Manoeuvre

**164. Large vehicles.** Overtaking these is more difficult. You should

- drop back. This will increase your ability to see ahead and should allow the driver of the large vehicle to see you in their mirrors. Getting too close to large vehicles, including agricultural vehicles such as a tractor with a trailer or other fixed equipment, will obscure your view of the road ahead and there may be another slow-moving vehicle in front



- make sure that you have enough room to complete your overtaking manoeuvre before committing yourself. It takes longer to pass a large vehicle. If in doubt do not overtake
- not assume you can follow a vehicle ahead which is overtaking a long vehicle. If a problem develops, they may abort overtaking and pull back in.

**165. You **MUST NOT** overtake**

- if you would have to cross or straddle double white lines with a solid line nearest to you (but see Rule 129)

- if you would have to enter an area designed to divide traffic, if it is surrounded by a solid white line
- the nearest vehicle to a pedestrian crossing, especially when it has stopped to let pedestrians cross
- if you would have to enter a lane reserved for buses, trams or cycles during its hours of operation
- after a 'No Overtaking' sign and until you pass a sign cancelling the restriction.  
Laws RTA 1988 sect 36, TSRGD regs 10, 22, 23 & 24, ZPPPCRGD reg 24

**166. DO NOT** overtake if there is any doubt, or where you cannot see far enough ahead to be sure it is safe. For example, when you are approaching

- a corner or bend
- a hump bridge
- the brow of a hill.

**167. DO NOT** overtake where you might come into conflict with other road users. For example

- approaching or at a road junction on either side of the road
- where the road narrows
- when approaching a school crossing patrol
- between the kerb and a bus or tram when it is at a stop
- where traffic is queuing at junctions or road works
- when you would force another road user to swerve or slow down
- at a level crossing
- when a road user is indicating right, even if you believe the signal should have been cancelled. Do not take a risk; wait for the signal to be cancelled
- stay behind if you are following a cyclist approaching a roundabout or junction, and you intend to turn left
- when a tram is standing at a kerbside tram stop and there is no clearly marked passing lane for other traffic.

**168. Being overtaken.** If a driver is trying to overtake you, maintain a steady course and speed, slowing down if necessary to let the vehicle pass. Never obstruct drivers who wish to pass. Speeding up or driving unpredictably while someone is overtaking you is dangerous. Drop

back to maintain a two-second gap if someone overtakes and pulls into the gap in front of you.

- 169.** Do not hold up a long queue of traffic, especially if you are driving a large or slow-moving vehicle. Check your mirrors frequently, and if necessary, pull in where it is safe and let traffic pass.

### Road junctions

- 170.** Take extra care at junctions. You should

- watch out for cyclists, motorcyclists, powered wheelchairs/mobility scooters and pedestrians as they are not always easy to see. Be aware that they may not have seen or heard you if you are approaching from behind
- watch out for pedestrians crossing a road into which you are turning. If they have started to cross they have priority, so give way
- watch out for long vehicles which may be turning at a junction ahead; they may have to use the whole width of the road to make the turn (see Rule 221)



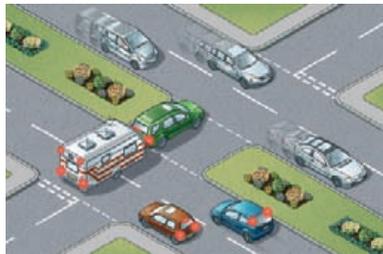
- watch out for horse riders who may take a different line on the road from that which you would expect
- not assume, when waiting at a junction, that a vehicle coming from the right and signalling left will actually turn. Wait and make sure
- look all around before emerging. Do not cross or join a road until there is a gap large enough for you to do so safely.

- 171.** You **MUST** stop behind the line at a junction with a 'Stop' sign and a solid white line across the road. Wait for a safe gap in the traffic before you move off.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 16

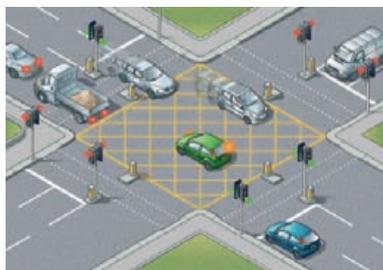
- 172.** The approach to a junction may have a 'Give Way' sign or a triangle marked on the road. You **MUST** give way to traffic on the main road when emerging from a junction with broken white lines across the road.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10(1), 16(1) & 25



- 173. Dual carriageways.** When crossing or turning right, first assess whether the central reservation is deep enough to protect the full length of your vehicle.

- If it is, then you should treat each half of the carriageway as a separate road. Wait in the central reservation until there is a safe gap in the traffic on the second half of the road.
- If the central reservation is too shallow for the length of your vehicle, wait until you can cross both carriageways in one go.



- 174. Box junctions.** These have criss-cross yellow lines painted on the road ( see 'Road markings'). You **MUST NOT** enter the box until your exit road or lane is clear. However, you may enter the box and wait when you want to turn right, and are only stopped from doing so by oncoming traffic, or by other vehicles waiting to turn right. At signalled roundabouts you **MUST NOT** enter the box unless you can cross over it completely without stopping.

Law TSRGD regs 10(1) & 29(2)

## Junctions controlled by traffic lights

**175.** You **MUST** stop behind the white 'Stop' line across your side of the road unless the light is green. If the amber light appears you may go on only if you have already crossed the stop line or are so close to it that to stop might cause a collision.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 36

**176.** You **MUST NOT** move forward over the white line when the red light is showing. Only go forward when the traffic lights are green if there is room for you to clear the junction safely or you are taking up a position to turn right. If the traffic lights are not working, treat the situation as you would an unmarked junction and proceed with great care.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 36

**177. Green filter arrow.** This indicates a filter lane only. Do not enter that lane unless you want to go in the direction of the arrow. You may proceed in the direction of the green arrow when it, or the full green light shows. Give other traffic, especially cyclists, time and room to move into the correct lane.



**178. Advanced stop lines.** Some signal-controlled junctions have advanced stop lines to allow cycles to be positioned ahead of other traffic. Motorists, including motorcyclists, **MUST** stop at the first white line reached if the lights are amber or red and should avoid blocking the way or encroaching on the marked area at other times, e.g. if the junction ahead is blocked. If your vehicle has proceeded over the first white line at the time that the signal goes red, you **MUST** stop at the second white line, even if your vehicle is in the marked area. Allow cyclists time and space to move off when the green signal shows.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10, 36(1) & 43(2)

## Turning right

**179. Well before** you turn right you should

- use your mirrors to make sure you know the position and movement of traffic behind you
- give a right-turn signal
- take up a position just left of the middle of the road or in the space marked for traffic turning right
- leave room for other vehicles to pass on the left, if possible.

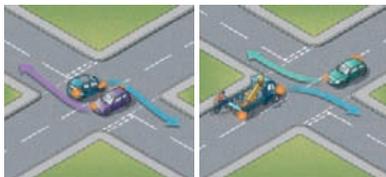
**180.** Wait until there is a safe gap between you and any oncoming vehicle. Watch out for cyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians and other road users. Check your mirrors and blind spot again to make sure you are not being overtaken, then make the turn. Do not cut the corner. Take great care when turning into a main road; you will need to watch for traffic in both directions and wait for a safe gap.

### Remember: Mirrors - Signal - Manoeuvre



**181. When turning right** at crossroads where an oncoming vehicle is also turning right, there is a choice of two methods

- turn right side to right side; keep the other vehicle on your right and turn behind it. This is generally the safer method as you have a clear view of any approaching traffic when completing your turn
- left side to left side, turning in front of each other. This can block your view of oncoming vehicles, so take extra care. Cyclists and motorcyclists in particular may be hidden from your view. Road layout, markings or how the other vehicle is positioned can determine which course should be taken.



## Turning left

**182.** Use your mirrors and give a left-turn signal well before you turn left. Do not overtake just before you turn left and watch out for traffic coming up on your left before you make the turn, especially if driving a large vehicle. Cyclists, motorcyclists and other road users in particular may be hidden from your view.



**183.** When turning

- keep as close to the left as is safe and practicable
- give way to any vehicles using a bus lane, cycle lane or tramway from either direction.

## Roundabouts

**184. On approaching a roundabout** take notice and act on all the information available to you, including traffic signs, traffic lights and lane markings which direct you into the correct lane. You should

- use **Mirrors - Signal - Manoeuvre** at all stages
- decide as early as possible which exit you need to take
- give an appropriate signal (see Rule 186). Time your signals so as not to confuse other road users
- get into the correct lane
- adjust your speed and position to fit in with traffic conditions
- be aware of the speed and position of all the road users around you.

**185. When reaching the roundabout** you should

- give priority to traffic approaching from your right, unless directed otherwise by signs, road markings or traffic lights
- check whether road markings allow you to enter the roundabout without giving way. If so, proceed, but still look to the right before joining
- watch out for all other road users already on the roundabout; be aware they may not be signalling correctly or at all
- look forward before moving off to make sure traffic in front has moved off.



**186. Signals and position.**

When taking the first exit to the left, unless signs or markings indicate otherwise

- signal left and approach in the left-hand lane
- keep to the left on the roundabout and continue signalling left to leave.

When taking an exit to the right or going full circle, unless signs or markings indicate otherwise

- signal right and approach in the right-hand lane
- keep to the right on the roundabout until you need to change lanes to exit the roundabout
- signal left after you have passed the exit before the one you want.

When taking any intermediate exit, unless signs or markings indicate otherwise

- select the appropriate lane on approach to the roundabout
- you should not normally need to signal on approach
- stay in this lane until you need to alter course to exit the roundabout

- signal left after you have passed the exit before the one you want.

When there are more than three lanes at the entrance to a roundabout, use the most appropriate lane on approach and through it.

**187. In all cases watch out for** and give plenty of room to

- pedestrians who may be crossing the approach and exit roads
- traffic crossing in front of you on the roundabout, especially vehicles intending to leave by the next exit
- traffic which may be straddling lanes or positioned incorrectly
- motorcyclists
- cyclists and horse riders who may stay in the left-hand lane and signal right if they intend to continue round the roundabout. Allow them to do so
- long vehicles (including those towing trailers). These might have to take a different course or straddle lanes either approaching or on the roundabout because of their length. Watch out for their signals.

**188. Mini-roundabouts.** Approach these in the same way as normal roundabouts. All vehicles **MUST** pass round the central markings except large vehicles which are physically incapable of doing so. Remember, there is less space to manoeuvre and less time to signal. Avoid making U-turns at mini-roundabouts. Beware of others doing this.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10(1) & 16(1)

**189.** At double mini-roundabouts treat each roundabout separately and give way to traffic from the right.

**190. Multiple roundabouts.** At some complex junctions, there may be a series of mini-roundabouts at each intersection. Treat each mini-roundabout separately and follow the normal rules.

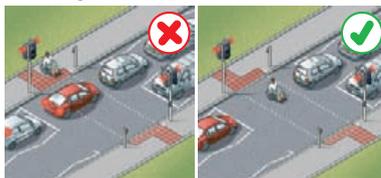


### Pedestrian crossings

**191.** You **MUST NOT** park on a crossing or in the area covered by the zig-zag lines. You **MUST NOT** overtake the moving vehicle nearest the crossing or the vehicle nearest the crossing which has stopped to give way to pedestrians.

Laws ZPPPCRGD regs 18, 20 & 24, RTRA sect 25(5) & TSRGD regs 10, 27 & 28

**192.** In queuing traffic, you should keep the crossing clear.



**193.** You should take extra care where the view of either side of the crossing is blocked by queuing traffic or incorrectly parked vehicles. Pedestrians may be crossing between stationary vehicles.

**194.** Allow pedestrians plenty of time to cross and do not harass them by revving your engine or edging forward.

**195. Zebra crossings.** As you approach a zebra crossing

- look out for pedestrians waiting to cross and be ready to slow down or stop to let them cross
- you **MUST** give way when a pedestrian has moved onto a crossing
- allow more time for stopping on wet or icy roads
- do not wave or use your horn to invite pedestrians across; this could be dangerous if another vehicle is approaching
- be aware of pedestrians approaching from the side of the crossing.

A zebra crossing with a central island is two separate crossings (see picture in Rule 20).  
Law ZPPPCRGD reg 25

### Signal-controlled crossings

**196. Pelican crossings.** These are signal-controlled crossings where flashing amber follows the red 'Stop' light. You **MUST** stop when the red light shows. When the amber light is flashing, you **MUST** give way to any pedestrians on the crossing. If the amber light is flashing and there are no pedestrians on the crossing, you may proceed with caution.

Laws ZPPPCRGD regs 23 & 26 & RTRA sect 25(5)



**197.** Pelican crossings which go straight across the road are one crossing, even when there is a central island. You **MUST** wait for pedestrians who are crossing from the other side of the island.

Laws ZPPPCRGD reg 26 & RTRA sect 25(5)

**198.** Give way to anyone still crossing after the signal for vehicles has changed to green. This advice applies to all crossings.

**199. Toucan, puffin and equestrian crossings.** These are similar to pelican crossings, but there is no flashing amber phase; the light sequence for traffic at these three crossings is the same as at traffic lights. If the signal-controlled crossing is not working, proceed with extreme caution.

### Reversing

**200.** Choose an appropriate place to manoeuvre. If you need to turn your vehicle around, wait until you find a safe place. Try not to reverse or turn round in a busy road; find a quiet side road or drive round a block of side streets.

**201.** Do not reverse from a side road into a main road. When using a driveway, reverse in and drive out if you can.

**202.** Look carefully before you start reversing. You should

- use all your mirrors
- check the 'blind spot' behind you (the part of the road you cannot see easily in the mirrors)
- check there are no pedestrians (particularly children), cyclists, other road users or obstructions in the road behind you.



Reverse slowly while

- checking all around
- looking mainly through the rear window
- being aware that the front of your vehicle will swing out as you turn.

Get someone to guide you if you cannot see clearly.

**203.** You **MUST NOT** reverse your vehicle further than necessary.

Law CUR reg 106



## Road users requiring extra care

**204.** The most vulnerable road users are pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders. It is particularly important to be aware of children, older and disabled people, and learner and inexperienced drivers and riders.

### Pedestrians

**205.** There is a risk of pedestrians, especially children, stepping unexpectedly into the road. You should drive with the safety of children in mind at a speed suitable for the conditions.

**206. Drive carefully and slowly when**

- in crowded shopping streets, Home Zones and Quiet Lanes (see Rule 218) or residential areas
- driving past bus and tram stops; pedestrians may emerge suddenly into the road
- passing parked vehicles, especially ice cream vans; children are more interested in ice cream than traffic and may run into the road unexpectedly
- needing to cross a pavement or cycle track; for example, to reach or leave a driveway. Give way to pedestrians and cyclists on the pavement
- reversing into a side road; look all around the vehicle and give way to any pedestrians who may be crossing the road
- turning at road junctions; give way to pedestrians who are already crossing the road into which you are turning
- the pavement is closed due to street repairs and pedestrians are directed to use the road
- approaching pedestrians on narrow rural roads without a footway or footpath. Always slow down and be prepared to stop if necessary, giving them plenty of room as you drive past.



**207. Particularly vulnerable pedestrians.**  
These include

- children and older pedestrians who may not be able to judge your speed and could step into the road in front of you. At 40 mph (64 km/h) your vehicle will probably kill any pedestrians it hits. At 20 mph (32 km/h) there is only a 1 in 20 chance of the pedestrian being killed. So kill your speed
- older pedestrians who may need more time to cross the road. Be patient and allow them to cross in their own time. Do not hurry them by revving your engine or edging forward
- people with disabilities. People with hearing impairments may not be aware of your vehicle approaching. Those with walking difficulties require more time
- blind or partially sighted people, who may be carrying a white cane or using a guide dog. They may not be able to see you approaching
- deaf /blind people who may be carrying a white cane with a red band or using a dog with a red and white harness. They may not see or hear instructions or signals.

**208. Near schools.** Drive slowly and be particularly aware of young cyclists and pedestrians. In some places, there may be a flashing amber signal below the 'School' warning sign which tells you that there may be children crossing the road ahead. Drive very slowly until you are clear of the area.

**209.** Drive carefully and slowly when passing a stationary bus showing a 'School Bus' sign ( see 'Vehicle markings') as children may be getting on or off.

**210.** You **MUST** stop when a school crossing patrol shows a 'Stop for children' sign (see 'Signals by authorised persons' and 'Signs giving orders').

Law RTRA sect 28

### Motorcyclists and cyclists

**211.** It is often difficult to see motorcyclists and cyclists, especially when they are coming up from behind, coming out of junctions, at roundabouts, overtaking you or filtering through traffic. Always

look out for them before you emerge from a junction; they could be approaching faster than you think. When turning right across a line of slow-moving or stationary traffic, look out for cyclists or motorcyclists on the inside of the traffic you are crossing. Be especially careful when turning, and when changing direction or lane. Be sure to check mirrors and blind spots carefully.



- 212.** When passing motorcyclists and cyclists, give them plenty of room (see Rules 162-167). If they look over their shoulder it could mean that they intend to pull out, turn right or change direction. Give them time and space to do so.
- 213.** Motorcyclists and cyclists may suddenly need to avoid uneven road surfaces and obstacles such as drain covers or oily, wet or icy patches on the road. Give them plenty of room and pay particular attention to any sudden change of direction they may have to make.

### Other road users

- 214. Animals.** When passing animals, drive slowly. Give them plenty of room and be ready to stop. Do not scare animals by sounding your horn, revving your engine or accelerating rapidly once you have passed them. Look out for animals being led, driven or ridden on the road and take extra care. Keep your speed down at bends and on narrow country roads. If a road is blocked by a herd of animals, stop and switch off your engine until they have left the road. Watch out for animals on unfenced roads.

- 215. Horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles.** Be particularly careful of horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles especially when overtaking. Always pass wide and slowly. Horse riders are often children, so take extra care and remember riders may ride in double file when escorting a young or inexperienced horse or rider. Look out for horse riders' and horse drivers' signals and heed a request to slow down or stop. Take great care and treat all horses as a potential hazard; they can be unpredictable, despite the efforts of their rider/driver.

- 216. Older drivers.** Their reactions may be slower than other drivers. Make allowance for this.

- 217. Learners and inexperienced drivers.** They may not be so skilful at anticipating and responding to events. Be particularly patient with learner drivers and young drivers. Drivers who have recently passed their test may display a 'New driver' plate or sticker (see Annex 8 - Safety code for new drivers).



- 218. Home Zones and Quiet Lanes.** These are places where people could be using the whole of the road for a range of activities such as children playing or for a community event. You should drive slowly and carefully and be prepared to stop to allow people extra time to make space for you to pass them in safety.

### Other vehicles

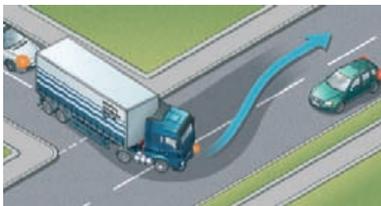
- 219. Emergency and Incident Support vehicles.** You should look and listen for ambulances, fire engines, police, doctors or other emergency vehicles using flashing blue, red or green lights and sirens or flashing headlights, or Highways Agency Traffic Officer and Incident Support vehicles using flashing

amber lights. When one approaches do not panic. Consider the route of such a vehicle and take appropriate action to let it pass, while complying with all traffic signs. If necessary, pull to the side of the road and stop, but try to avoid stopping before the brow of a hill, a bend or narrow section of road. Do not endanger yourself, other road users or pedestrians and avoid mounting the kerb. Do not brake harshly on approach to a junction or roundabout, as a following vehicle may not have the same view as you.

- 220. Powered vehicles used by disabled people.** These small vehicles travel at a maximum speed of 8 mph (12 km/h). On a dual carriageway where the speed limit exceeds 50 mph (80 km/h) they **MUST** have a flashing amber beacon, but on other roads you may not have that advance warning (see Rules 36-46 inclusive).

Law RVLRL reg 17(1) & 26

- 221. Large vehicles.** These may need extra road space to turn or to deal with a hazard that you are not able to see. If you are following a large vehicle, such as a bus or articulated lorry, be aware that the driver may not be able to see you in the mirrors. Be prepared to stop and wait if it needs room or time to turn.



- 222.** Large vehicles can block your view. Your ability to see and to plan ahead will be improved if you pull back to increase your separation distance. Be patient, as larger vehicles are subject to lower speed limits than cars and motorcycles. Many large vehicles may be fitted with speed limiting devices which will restrict speed to 56 mph (90 km/h) even on a motorway.

- 223. Buses, coaches and trams.** Give priority to these vehicles when you can do so safely, especially when they signal to pull away from stops. Look out for people getting off a bus or tram and crossing the road.

- 224. Electric vehicles.** Be careful of electric vehicles such as milk floats and trams. Trams move quickly but silently and cannot steer to avoid you.

- 225. Vehicles with flashing amber beacons.** These warn of a slow-moving or stationary vehicle (such as a Traffic Officer vehicle, salt spreader, snow plough or recovery vehicle) or abnormal loads, so approach with caution. On unrestricted dual carriageways, motor vehicles first used on or after 1 January 1947 with a maximum speed of 25 mph (40 km/h) or less (such as tractors) **MUST** use a flashing amber beacon (also see Rule 220).

Law RVLRL 1989, reg 17



**226.** You **MUST** use headlights when visibility is seriously reduced, generally when you cannot see for more than 100 metres (328 feet). You may also use front or rear fog lights but you **MUST** switch them off when visibility improves (see Rule 236).

Law RVLR regs 25 & 27

**227. Wet weather.** In wet weather, stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry roads (see Rule 126). This is because your tyres have less grip on the road. In wet weather

- you should keep well back from the vehicle in front. This will increase your ability to see and plan ahead
- if the steering becomes unresponsive, it probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually
- the rain and spray from vehicles may make it difficult to see and be seen
- be aware of the dangers of spilt diesel that will make the surface very slippery (see Annex 6)
- take extra care around pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders.

## Icy and snowy weather

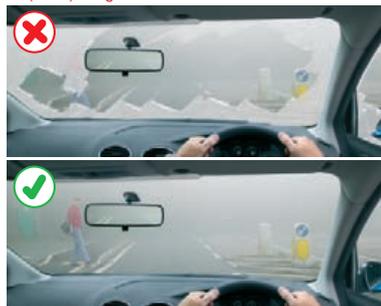
**228.** In winter check the local weather forecast for warnings of icy or snowy weather. **DO NOT** drive in these conditions unless your journey is essential. If it is, take great care and allow more time for your journey. Take an emergency kit of de-icer and ice scraper, torch, warm clothing and boots, first aid kit, jump leads and a shovel, together with a warm drink and emergency food in case you get stuck or your vehicle breaks down.

**229.** Before you set off

- you **MUST** be able to see, so clear all snow and ice from all your windows
- you **MUST** ensure that lights are clean and number plates are clearly visible and legible
- make sure the mirrors are clear and the windows are demisted thoroughly
- remove all snow that might fall off into the path of other road users

- check your planned route is clear of delays and that no further snowfalls or severe weather are predicted.

Laws CUR reg 30, RVLR reg 23, VERA Sect 43 & RV(DRM)R reg 11



**230. When driving** in icy or snowy weather

- drive with care, even if the roads have been treated
- keep well back from the road user in front as stopping distances can be ten times greater than on dry roads
- take care when overtaking vehicles spreading salt or other de-icer, particularly if you are riding a motorcycle or cycle
- watch out for snowploughs which may throw out snow on either side. Do not overtake them unless the lane you intend to use has been cleared
- be prepared for the road conditions to change over relatively short distances
- listen to travel bulletins and take note of variable message signs that may provide information about weather, road and traffic conditions ahead.

**231. Drive extremely carefully** when the roads are icy. Avoid sudden actions as these could cause loss of control. You should

- drive at a slow speed in as high a gear as possible; accelerate and brake very gently
- drive particularly slowly on bends where loss of control is more likely. Brake progressively on the straight before you reach a bend. Having slowed down, steer smoothly round the bend, avoiding sudden actions
- check your grip on the road surface when there is snow or ice by choosing a safe place to brake gently. If the

steering feels unresponsive this may indicate ice and your vehicle losing its grip on the road. When travelling on ice, tyres make virtually no noise.

### Windy weather

**232.** High-sided vehicles are most affected by windy weather, but strong gusts can also blow a car, cyclist, motorcyclist or horse rider off course. This can happen on open stretches of road exposed to strong crosswinds, or when passing bridges or gaps in hedges.

**233.** In very windy weather your vehicle may be affected by turbulence created by large vehicles. Motorcyclists are particularly affected, so keep well back from them when they are overtaking a high-sided vehicle.

### Fog

**234. Before entering fog** check your mirrors then slow down. If the word 'Fog' is shown on a roadside signal but the road is clear, be prepared for a bank of fog or drifting patchy fog ahead. Even if it seems to be clearing, you can suddenly find yourself in thick fog.

**235. When driving in fog** you should

- use your lights as required (see Rule 226)
- keep a safe distance behind the vehicle in front. Rear lights can give a false sense of security
- be able to pull up well within the distance you can see clearly. This is particularly important on motorways and dual carriageways, as vehicles are travelling faster
- use your windscreen wipers and demisters
- beware of other drivers not using headlights
- not accelerate to get away from a vehicle which is too close behind you
- check your mirrors before you slow down. Then use your brakes so that your brake lights warn drivers behind you that you are slowing down
- stop in the correct position at a junction with limited visibility and listen for traffic. When you are sure it is safe to emerge,

do so positively and do not hesitate in a position that puts you directly in the path of approaching vehicles.

**236.** You **MUST NOT** use front or rear fog lights unless visibility is seriously reduced (see Rule 226) as they dazzle other road users and can obscure your brake lights. You **MUST** switch them off when visibility improves.

*Law RVLR regs 25 & 27*

**237. Hot weather.** Keep your vehicle well ventilated to avoid drowsiness. Be aware that the road surface may become soft or if it rains after a dry spell it may become slippery. These conditions could affect your steering and braking. If you are dazzled by bright sunlight, slow down and if necessary, stop.

## Waiting and parking

**238.** You **MUST NOT** wait or park on yellow lines during the times of operation shown on nearby time plates (or zone entry signs if in a Controlled Parking Zone) - see 'Information signs' and 'Road markings'. Double yellow lines indicate a prohibition of waiting at any time even if there are no upright signs. You **MUST NOT** wait or park, or stop to set down and pick up passengers, on school entrance markings (see 'Road markings') when upright signs indicate a prohibition of stopping.

Law RTRA sects 5 & 8

## Parking

**239.** Use off-street parking areas, or bays marked out with white lines on the road as parking places, wherever possible. If you have to stop on the roadside

- do not park facing against the traffic flow
- stop as close as you can to the side



- do not stop too close to a vehicle displaying a Blue Badge: remember, the occupant may need more room to get in or out
- you **MUST** switch off the engine, headlights and fog lights
- you **MUST** apply the handbrake before leaving the vehicle
- you **MUST** ensure you do not hit anyone when you open your door. Check for cyclists or other traffic
- it is safer for your passengers (especially children) to get out of the vehicle on the side next to the kerb
- put all valuables out of sight and make sure your vehicle is secure
- lock your vehicle.

Laws CUR reg 98, 105 & 107, RVLR reg 27 & RTA 1988 sect 42

**240.** You **MUST NOT** stop or park on

- the carriageway or the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency (see Rule 270)
- a pedestrian crossing, including the area marked by the zig-zag lines (see Rule 191)
- a clearway ( see 'Traffic signs')
- taxi bays as indicated by upright signs and markings
- an urban clearway within its hours of operation, except to pick up or set down passengers ( see 'Traffic signs')
- a road marked with double white lines, even when a broken white line is on your side of the road, except to pick up or set down passengers, or to load or unload goods
- a tram or cycle lane during its period of operation
- a cycle track
- red lines, in the case of specially designated 'red routes', unless otherwise indicated by signs.

Any vehicle may enter a bus lane to stop, load or unload where this is not prohibited (see Rule 141).

Laws MT(E&W)R regs 7 & 9, MT(S)R regs 6 & 8, ZPPPCRGD regs 18 & 20,

RTRA sects 5, 6 & 8, TSRGD regs 10, 26 & 27, RTA 1988 sects 21(1) & 36

**241.** You **MUST NOT** park in parking spaces reserved for specific users, such as Blue Badge holders, residents or motorcycles, unless entitled to do so.

Laws CSDPA sect 21 & RTRA sects 5 & 8

**242.** You **MUST NOT** leave your vehicle or trailer in a dangerous position or where it causes any unnecessary obstruction of the road.

Laws RTA 1988, sects 22 & CUR reg 103

**243. DO NOT** stop or park

- near a school entrance
- anywhere you would prevent access for Emergency Services
- at or near a bus or tram stop or taxi rank
- on the approach to a level crossing/tramway crossing
- opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space
- near the brow of a hill or hump bridge

- opposite a traffic island or (if this would cause an obstruction) another parked vehicle
  - where you would force other traffic to enter a tram lane
  - where the kerb has been lowered to help wheelchair users and powered mobility vehicles
  - in front of an entrance to a property
  - on a bend
  - where you would obstruct cyclists' use of cycle facilities **except** when forced to do so by stationary traffic.
- 244.** You **MUST NOT** park partially or wholly on the pavement in London, and should not do so elsewhere unless signs permit it. Parking on the pavement can obstruct and seriously inconvenience pedestrians, people in wheelchairs or with visual impairments and people with prams or pushchairs.  
**Law GL(GP)A sect 15**
- 245. Controlled Parking Zones.** The zone entry signs indicate the times when the waiting restrictions within the zone are in force. Parking may be allowed in some places at other times. Otherwise parking will be within separately signed and marked bays.
- 246. Goods vehicles.** Vehicles with a maximum laden weight of over 7.5 tonnes (including any trailer) **MUST NOT** be parked on a verge, pavement or any land situated between carriageways, without police permission. The only exception is when parking is essential for loading and unloading, in which case the vehicle **MUST NOT** be left unattended.  
**Law RTA 1988 sect 19**
- 247. Loading and unloading.** Do not load or unload where there are yellow markings on the kerb and upright signs advise restrictions are in place (see 'Road markings'). This may be permitted where parking is otherwise restricted. On red routes, specially marked and signed bays indicate where and when loading and unloading is permitted.  
**Law RTRA sects 5 & 8**

### Parking at night

**248.** You **MUST NOT** park on a road at night facing against the direction of the traffic flow unless in a recognized parking space.

**Laws CUR reg 101 & RVLR reg 24**

**249.** All vehicles **MUST** display parking lights when parked on a road or a lay-by on a road with a speed limit greater than 30 mph (48 km/h).

**Law RVLR reg 24**

**250.** Cars, goods vehicles not exceeding 1525 kg unladen weight, invalid carriages, motorcycles and pedal cycles may be parked without lights on a road (or lay-by) with a speed limit of 30 mph (48 km/h) or less if they are

- at least 10 metres (32 feet) away from any junction, close to the kerb and facing in the direction of the traffic flow
- in a recognised parking place or lay-by.

Other vehicles and trailers, and all vehicles with projecting loads, **MUST NOT** be left on a road at night without lights.

**Laws RVLR reg 24 & CUR reg 82(7)**

**251. Parking in fog.** It is especially dangerous to park on the road in fog. If it is unavoidable, leave your parking lights or sidelights on.

**252. Parking on hills.** If you park on a hill you should

- park close to the kerb and apply the handbrake firmly
- select a forward gear and turn your steering wheel away from the kerb when facing uphill
- select reverse gear and turn your steering wheel towards the kerb when facing downhill
- use 'park' if your car has an automatic gearbox.



### Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE)

DPE is becoming increasingly common as more authorities take on this role. The local traffic authority assumes responsibility for enforcing many parking contraventions in place of the police. Further details on DPE may be found at the following websites:

[www.parking-appeals.gov.uk](http://www.parking-appeals.gov.uk) (outside London)

[www.parkingandtrafficappeals.gov.uk](http://www.parkingandtrafficappeals.gov.uk) (inside London)



Many other Rules apply to motorway driving, either wholly or in part: Rules 46, 57, 83-126, 130-134, 139, 144, 146-151, 160, 161, 219, 221-222, 225, 226-237, 274-278, 280, and 281-290.

## General

**253. Prohibited vehicles.** Motorways **MUST NOT** be used by pedestrians, holders of provisional motorcycle or car licences, riders of motorcycles under 50 cc, cyclists, horse riders, certain slow-moving vehicles and those carrying oversized loads (except by special permission), agricultural vehicles, and powered wheelchairs/powering mobility scooters (see Rules 36-46 incl).

Laws HA 1980 sects 16, 17 & sch 4, MT(E&W)R regs 3(d), 4 & 11, MT(E&W)(A)R, R(S)A sects 7, 8 & sch 3, RTRA sects 17(2) & (3), & MT(S)R reg 10

**254.** Traffic on motorways usually travels faster than on other roads, so you have less time to react. It is especially important to use your mirrors earlier and look much further ahead than you would on other roads.

## Motorway signals

**255.** Motorway signals (see 'Light signals controlling traffic') are used to warn you of a danger ahead. For example, there may be an incident, fog, a spillage or road workers on the carriageway which you may not immediately be able to see.

**256.** Signals situated on the central reservation apply to all lanes. On very busy stretches, signals may be overhead with a separate signal for each lane.

**257. Amber flashing lights.** These warn of a hazard ahead. The signal may show a temporary maximum speed limit, lanes that are closed or a message such as 'Fog'. Adjust your speed and look out for the danger until you pass a signal which is not flashing or one that gives the 'All clear' sign and you are sure it is safe to increase your speed.

**258. Red flashing lights.** If red lights on the overhead signals flash above your lane and a red 'X' is showing, you **MUST**

**NOT** go beyond the signal in that lane. If red lights flash on a signal in the central reservation or at the side of the road, you **MUST NOT** go beyond the signal in any lane.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 38

## Driving on the motorway

**259. Joining the motorway.** When you join the motorway you will normally approach it from a road on the left (a slip road) or from an adjoining motorway. You should

- give priority to traffic already on the motorway
- check the traffic on the motorway and match your speed to fit safely into the traffic flow in the left-hand lane
- not cross solid white lines that separate lanes or use the hard shoulder
- stay on the slip road if it continues as an extra lane on the motorway
- remain in the left-hand lane long enough to adjust to the speed of traffic before considering overtaking.

## On the motorway

**260.** When you can see well ahead and the road conditions are good, you should

- drive at a steady cruising speed which you and your vehicle can handle safely and is within the speed limit (see Rule 124)
- keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front and increase the gap on wet or icy roads, or in fog (see Rules 126 and 235).

**261.** You **MUST NOT** exceed 70 mph (112 km/h), or the maximum speed limit permitted for your vehicle (see Rule 124). If a lower speed limit is in force, either permanently or temporarily, at road works for example, you **MUST NOT** exceed the lower limit. On some motorways, mandatory motorway signals (which display the speed within a red ring) are used to vary the maximum speed limit to improve traffic flow. You **MUST NOT** exceed this speed limit.

Law RTRA sects 17, 86, 89 & sch 6

**262.** The monotony of driving on a motorway can make you feel sleepy. To minimise the risk, follow the advice in Rule 91.

**263.** You **MUST NOT** reverse, cross the central reservation, or drive against the traffic flow. If you have missed your exit, or have taken the wrong route, carry on to the next exit.

Laws MT(E&W)R regs 6, 8 & 10 & MT(S)R regs 4, 5, 7 & 9

## Lane discipline

**264.** You should always drive in the left-hand lane when the road ahead is clear. If you are overtaking a number of slower-moving vehicles, you should return to the left-hand lane as soon as you are safely past. Slow-moving or speed-restricted vehicles should always remain in the left-hand lane of the carriageway unless overtaking. You **MUST NOT** drive on the hard shoulder except in an emergency or if directed to do so by the police, HA traffic officers in uniform or by signs.

Laws MT(E&W)R regs 5, 9 & 16(1)(a), MT(S)R regs 4, 8 & 14(1)(a), and RTA 1988, sects 35 & 186, as amended by TMA 2004 sect 6.

**265.** The right-hand lane of a motorway with three or more lanes **MUST NOT** be used (except in prescribed circumstances) if you are driving

- any vehicle drawing a trailer
- a goods vehicle with a maximum laden weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes but not exceeding 7.5 tonnes, which is required to be fitted with a speed limiter
- a goods vehicle with a maximum laden weight exceeding 7.5 tonnes
- a passenger vehicle with a maximum laden weight exceeding 7.5 tonnes constructed or adapted to carry more than eight seated passengers in addition to the driver
- a passenger vehicle with a maximum laden weight not exceeding 7.5 tonnes which is constructed or adapted to carry more than eight seated passengers in addition to the driver, which is required to be fitted with a speed limiter.

Laws MT(E&W)R reg 12, MT(E&W)AR (2004), MT(S)R reg 11 & MT(S)AR (2004)

**266. Approaching a junction.** Look well ahead for signals or signs. Direction signs may be placed over the road. If you need to change lanes, do so in good time. At some junctions a lane may lead directly off the motorway. Only get in that lane if you wish to go in the direction indicated on the overhead signs.

## Overtaking

**267.** Do not overtake unless you are sure it is safe and legal to do so. Overtake only on the right. You should

- check your mirrors
- take time to judge the speeds correctly
- make sure that the lane you will be joining is sufficiently clear ahead and behind
- take a quick sideways glance into the blind spot area to verify the position of a vehicle that may have disappeared from your view in the mirror
- remember that traffic may be coming up behind you very quickly. Check all your mirrors carefully. Look out for motor cyclists. When it is safe to do so, signal in plenty of time, then move out
- ensure you do not cut in on the vehicle you have overtaken
- be especially careful at night and in poor visibility when it is harder to judge speed and distance.

**268.** Do not overtake on the left or move to a lane on your left to overtake. In congested conditions, where adjacent lanes of traffic are moving at similar speeds, traffic in left-hand lanes may sometimes be moving faster than traffic to the right. In these conditions you may keep up with the traffic in your lane even if this means passing traffic in the lane to your right. Do not weave in and out of lanes to overtake.

**269. Hard shoulder.** You **MUST NOT** use the hard shoulder for overtaking. In areas where an Active Traffic Management (ATM) Scheme is in force, the hard shoulder may be used as a running lane. You will know when you can use this because a speed limit sign will be shown above all open lanes, including the hard shoulder. A red cross

or blank sign above the hard shoulder means that you **MUST NOT** drive on the hard shoulder except in an emergency or breakdown. Emergency refuge areas have also been built into these areas for use in cases of emergency or breakdown.

Laws MT(E&W)R regs 5, 5A & 9, MT(S)R regs 4 & 8



your speedometer and adjust your speed accordingly. Some slip-roads and link roads have sharp bends, so you will need to slow down.

### Stopping

270. You **MUST NOT** stop on the carriageway, hard shoulder, slip road, central reservation or verge except in an emergency, or when told to do so by the police, HA traffic officers in uniform, an emergency sign or by flashing red light signals. Do not stop on the hard shoulder to either make or receive mobile phone calls.

Laws MT(E&W)R regs 5A, 7, 9, 10 & 16, MT(S)R regs 6(1), 8, 9 & 14, PRA 2002 sect 41 & sched 5(8), & RTA 1988 Sects 35 & 163 as amended by TMA 2004, Sect 6

271. You **MUST NOT** pick up or set down anyone, or walk on a motorway, except in an emergency.

Laws RTRA sect 17 & MT(E&W)R reg 15

### Leaving the motorway

Unless signs indicate that a lane leads directly off the motorway, you will normally leave the motorway by a slip road on your left. You should

- watch for the signs letting you know you are getting near your exit
- move into the left-hand lane well before reaching your exit
- signal left in good time and reduce your speed on the slip road as necessary.

273. On leaving the motorway or using a link road between motorways, your speed may be higher than you realise - 50 mph may feel like 30 mph. Check



## Breakdowns and incidents

### Breakdowns

**274.** If your vehicle breaks down, think first of all other road users and

- get your vehicle off the road if possible
- warn other traffic by using your hazard warning lights if your vehicle is causing an obstruction
- help other road users see you by wearing light-coloured or fluorescent clothing in daylight and reflective clothing at night or in poor visibility
- put a warning triangle on the road at least 45 metres (147 feet) behind your broken-down vehicle on the same side of the road, or use other permitted warning devices if you have them. Always take great care when placing or retrieving them, but never use them on motorways
- if possible, keep your sidelights on if it is dark or visibility is poor
- do not stand (or let anybody else stand) between your vehicle and oncoming traffic
- at night or in poor visibility do not stand where you will prevent other road users seeing your lights.

### Additional rules for the motorway

**275.** If your vehicle develops a problem, leave the motorway at the next exit or pull into a service area. If you cannot do so, you should

- pull on to the hard shoulder and stop as far to the left as possible, with your wheels turned to the left
- try to stop near an emergency telephone (situated at approximately one-mile intervals along the hard shoulder)
- leave the vehicle by the left-hand door and ensure your passengers do the same. You **MUST** leave any animals in the vehicle or, in an emergency, keep them under proper control on the verge. Never attempt to place a warning triangle on a motorway
- do not put yourself in danger by attempting even simple repairs
- ensure that passengers keep away from the carriageway and hard shoulder, and that children are kept under contro



- walk to an emergency telephone on your side of the carriageway (follow the arrows on the posts at the back of the hard shoulder) - the telephone is free of charge and connects directly to the Highways Agency or the police. Use these in preference to a mobile phone (see Rule 283). Always face the traffic when you speak on the phone
- give full details to the Highways Agency or the police; also inform them if you are a vulnerable motorist such as disabled, older or travelling alone
- return and wait near your vehicle (well away from the carriageway and hard shoulder)
- if you feel at risk from another person, return to your vehicle by a left-hand door and lock all doors. Leave your vehicle again as soon as you feel this danger has passed.

Laws MT(E&W)R reg 14 & MT(S)R reg 12

**276.** Before you rejoin the carriageway after a breakdown, build up speed on the hard shoulder and watch for a safe gap in the traffic. Be aware that other vehicles may be stationary on the hard shoulder.

**277.** If you cannot get your vehicle onto the hard shoulder

- do not attempt to place any warning device on the carriageway
- switch on your hazard warning lights
- leave your vehicle only when you can safely get clear of the carriageway.

**278. Disabled drivers.** If you have a disability which prevents you from following the above advice you should

- stay in your vehicle
- switch on your hazard warning lights
- display a 'Help' pennant or, if you have a

car or mobile telephone, contact the emergency services and be prepared to advise them of your location.

### Obstructions

- 279.** If anything falls from your vehicle (or any other vehicle) on to the road, stop and retrieve it only if it is safe to do so.
- 280. Motorways.** On a motorway do not try to remove the obstruction yourself. Stop at the next emergency telephone and call the Highways Agency or the police.

### Incidents

- 281. Warning signs or flashing lights.** If you see or hear emergency or incident support vehicles in the distance, be aware there may be an incident ahead (see Rule 219). Police Officers and Highways Agency Traffic Officers may be required to work in the carriageway, for example dealing with debris, collisions or conducting rolling road blocks. Police officers will use rear-facing flashing red and blue lights and HA Traffic Officers will use rear-facing flashing red and amber lights in these situations. Watch out for such signals, slow down and be prepared to stop. You **MUST** follow any directions given by Police officers or Traffic officers as to whether you can safely pass the incident or blockage.

Laws RTA1988, sects 35 &163, and as amended by TMA 2004, sect 6

- 282.** When passing the scene of an incident or crash do not be distracted or slow down unnecessarily (for example if an incident is on the other side of a dual carriageway). This may cause a collision or traffic congestion, but see Rule 283.
- 283.** If you are involved in a crash or stop to give assistance
- use your hazard warning lights to warn other traffic
  - ask drivers to switch off their engines and stop smoking
  - arrange for the emergency services to be called immediately with full details of the incident location and any casualties (on a motorway, use the emergency

telephone which allows easy location by the emergency services. If you use a mobile phone, first make sure you have identified your location from the marker posts on the side of the hard shoulder)

- move uninjured people away from the vehicles to safety; on a motorway this should, if possible, be well away from the traffic, the hard shoulder and the central reservation
- do not move injured people from their vehicles unless they are in immediate danger from fire or explosion
- do not remove a motorcyclist's helmet unless it is essential to do so
- be prepared to give first aid as shown in Annexe 7, First Aid on the road
- stay at the scene until emergency services arrive.

If you are involved in any other medical emergency on the motorway you should contact the emergency services in the same way.

### Incidents involving dangerous goods

- 284.** Vehicles carrying dangerous goods in packages will be marked with plain orange reflective plates. Road tankers and vehicles carrying tank containers of dangerous goods will have hazard warning plates (see 'Vehicle markings').
- 285.** If an incident involves a vehicle containing dangerous goods, follow the advice in Rule 283 and, in particular
- switch off engines and **DO NOT SMOKE**
  - keep well away from the vehicle and do not be tempted to try to rescue casualties as you yourself could become one
  - call the emergency services and give as much information as possible about the labels and markings on the vehicle. **DO NOT** use a mobile phone close to a vehicle carrying flammable loads.

### Documentation

**286.** If you are involved in a collision which causes damage or injury to any other person, vehicle, animal or property, you **MUST**

- stop
- give your own and the vehicle owner's name and address, and the registration number of the vehicle, to anyone having reasonable grounds for requiring them
- if you do not give your name and address at the time of the collision, report it to the police as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any case within 24 hours.

Law RTA 1988 sect 170

**287.** If another person is injured and you do not produce your insurance certificate at the time of the crash to a police officer or to anyone having reasonable grounds to request it, you **MUST**

- report it to the police as soon as possible and in any case within 24 hours
- produce your insurance certificate for the police within seven days.

Law RTA 1988 sect 170



## Road works

**288.** When the 'Road Works Ahead' sign is displayed, you will need to be more watchful and look for additional signs providing more specific instructions. Observe all signs – they are there for your safety and the safety of road workers.

- You **MUST NOT** exceed any temporary maximum speed limit.
- Use your mirrors and get into the correct lane for your vehicle in good time and as signs direct.
- Do not switch lanes to overtake queuing traffic.
- Take extra care near cyclists and motorcyclists as they are vulnerable to skidding on grit, mud or other debris at road works.
- Where lanes are restricted due to road works, merge in turn (see Rule 134).
- Do not drive through an area marked off by traffic cones.
- Watch out for traffic entering or leaving the works area, but do not be distracted by what is going on there. Concentrate on the road ahead, not the road works.
- Bear in mind that the road ahead may be obstructed by the works or by slow moving or stationary traffic.
- Keep a safe distance - there could be queues in front.

To obtain further information about road works see 'Other information'.

Law RTRA sect 16

## Additional rules for high-speed roads

**289.** Take special care on motorways and other high-speed dual carriageways.

- One or more lanes may be closed to traffic and a lower speed limit may apply.
- Works vehicles that are slow-moving or stationary with a large 'Keep Left' or 'Keep Right' sign on the back are sometimes used to close lanes for repairs, and a flashing light arrow may also be used to make the works vehicle more conspicuous from a distance and give earlier warning to drivers that they need to move over to the next lane.
- Check mirrors, slow down and change lanes if necessary.

- Keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front (see Rule 126).
- 290.** Contraflow systems mean that you may be travelling in a narrower lane than normal and with no permanent barrier between you and oncoming traffic. The hard shoulder may be used for traffic, but be aware that there may be broken-down vehicles ahead of you. Keep a good distance from the vehicle ahead and observe any temporary speed limits.



## Level crossings

**291.** A level crossing is where a road crosses a railway or tramway line. Approach and cross it with care. Never drive onto a crossing until the road is clear on the other side and do not get too close to the car in front. Never stop or park on, or near, a crossing.

**292. Overhead electric lines.** It is dangerous to touch overhead electric lines. You **MUST** obey the safe height warning road signs and you should not continue forward onto the railway if your vehicle touches any height barrier or bells. The clearance available is usually 5 metres (16 feet 6 inches) but may be lower.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36, TSRGD 2002 reg 17(5)

**293. Controlled crossings.** Most crossings have traffic light signals with a steady amber light, twin flashing red stop lights (see 'Light signals controlling traffic' and 'Warning signs') and an audible alarm for pedestrians. They may have full, half or no barriers.

- You **MUST** always obey the flashing red stop lights.
- You **MUST** stop behind the white line across the road.



- Keep going if you have already crossed the white line when the amber light comes on.
- Do not reverse onto or over a controlled crossing.
- You **MUST** wait if a train goes by and the red lights continue to flash. This means another train will be passing soon.
- Only cross when the lights go off and barriers open.
- Never zig-zag around half-barriers, they lower automatically because a train is approaching.

- At crossings where there are no barriers, a train is approaching when the lights show.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 40

**294. Railway telephones.** If you are driving a large or slow moving vehicle, a long, low vehicle with a risk of grounding, or herding animals, a train could arrive before you are clear of the crossing. You **MUST** obey any sign instructing you to use the railway telephone to obtain permission to cross. You **MUST** also telephone when clear of the crossing if requested to do so.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 16(1)

**295. Crossings without traffic lights.**

Vehicles should stop and wait at the barrier or gate when it begins to close and not cross until the barrier or gate opens.

**296. User-operated gates or barriers.**

Some crossings have 'Stop' signs and small red and green lights. You **MUST NOT** cross when the red light is showing, only cross if the green light is on. If crossing with a vehicle, you should

- open the gates or barriers on both sides of the crossing
- check that the green light is still on and cross quickly
- close the gates or barriers when you are clear of the crossing.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 36 & TSRGD regs 10 & 52(2)

**297.** If there are no lights, follow the procedure in Rule 296. Stop, look both ways and listen before you cross. If there is a railway telephone, always use it to contact the signal operator to make sure it is safe to cross. Inform the signal operator again when you are clear of the crossing.

**298. Open crossings.** These have no gates, barriers, attendant or traffic lights but will have a 'Give Way' sign. You should look both ways, listen and make sure there is no train coming before you cross.

**299. Incidents and breakdowns.** If your vehicle breaks down, or if you have an incident on a crossing you should

- get everyone out of the vehicle and clear of the crossing immediately
- use a railway telephone if available to tell the signal operator. Follow the instructions you are given
- move the vehicle clear of the crossing if there is time before a train arrives. If the alarm sounds, or the amber light comes on, leave the vehicle and get clear of the crossing immediately.

## Tramways

**300.** You **MUST NOT** enter a road, lane or other route reserved for trams. Take extra care where trams run along the road. You should avoid driving directly on top of the rails and should take care where trams leave the main carriageway to enter the reserved route, to ensure you do not follow them. The width taken up by trams is often shown by tram lanes marked by white lines, yellow dots or by a different type of road surface. Diamond-shaped signs and white light signals give instructions to tram drivers only.

Law RTRA sects 5 & 8

**301.** Take extra care where the track crosses from one side of the road to the other and where the road narrows and the tracks come close to the kerb. Tram drivers usually have their own traffic signals and may be permitted to move when you are not. Always give way to trams. Do not try to race or overtake them or pass them on the inside, unless they are at tram stops or stopped by tram signals and there is a designated tram lane for you to pass.

**302.** You **MUST NOT** park your vehicle where it would get in the way of trams or where it would force other drivers to do so. Do not stop on any part of a tram track, except in a designated bay where this has been provided alongside and clear of the track. When doing so, ensure that all parts of your vehicle are outside the delineated tram path. Remember that a tram cannot steer round an obstruction.

Law RTRA sects 5 & 8

**303. Tram stops.** Where the tram stops at a platform, either in the middle or at the side of the road, you **MUST** follow the route shown by the road signs and markings. At stops without platforms you **MUST NOT** drive between a tram and the left-hand kerb when a tram has stopped to pick up passengers. If there is no alternative route signed, do not overtake the tram - wait until it moves off.

Law RTRA sects 5 & 8

**304.** Look out for pedestrians, especially children, running to catch a tram approaching a stop.

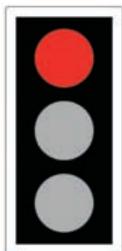
**305.** Always give priority to trams, especially when they signal to pull away from stops, unless it would be unsafe to do so. Remember that they may be carrying large numbers of standing passengers who could be injured if the tram had to make an emergency stop. Look out for people getting off a bus or tram and crossing the road.

**306.** All road users, but particularly cyclists and motorcyclists, should take extra care when driving or riding close to or crossing the tracks, especially if the rails are wet. You should take particular care when crossing the rails at shallow angles, on bends and at junctions. It is safest to cross the tracks directly at right angles. Other road users should be aware that cyclists and motorcyclists may need more space to cross the tracks safely.

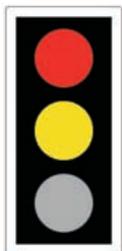
**307. Overhead electric lines.** Tramway overhead wires are normally 5.8 metres above any carriageway, but can be lower. You should ensure that you have sufficient clearance between the wire and your vehicle (including any load you are carrying) before driving under an overhead wire. Drivers of vehicles with extending cranes, booms, tipping apparatus or other types of variable height equipment should ensure that the equipment is fully lowered. Where overhead wires are set lower than 5.8 metres, these will be indicated by height clearance markings - similar to 'low bridge' signs. The height clearances on these plates should be carefully noted and observed. If you are in any doubt as to whether your vehicle will pass safely under the wires, you should always contact the local police or the tramway operator. Never take a chance as this can be extremely hazardous.



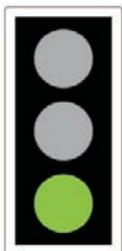
## Traffic Light signals



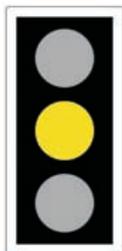
RED means 'Stop'. Wait behind the stop line on the carriageway



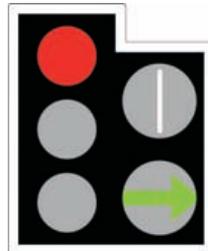
RED AND AMBER also means 'Stop'. Do not pass through or start until GREEN shows



GREEN means you may go on if the way is clear. Take special care if you intend to turn left or right and give way to pedestrians who are crossing



AMBER means 'Stop' at the stopline. You may go on only if the AMBER appears after you have crossed the stop line or are so close to it that to pull up might cause an accident



A GREEN ARROW may be provided in addition to the full green signal if movement in a certain direction is allowed before or after the full green phase. If the way is clear you may go but only in the direction shown by the arrow. White light signals may be provided for trams

## Flashing Red Lights

*Alternately flashing red lights mean YOU MUST STOP.*

At level crossings, lifting bridges, airfields, fire stations, etc



## Motorway signals



Do not proceed further in this lane



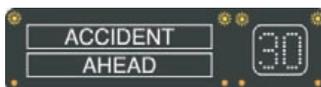
Change lane



Reduced visibility ahead



Lane ahead closed



Temporary maximum speed limit and information message



Leave motorway at next exit



Temporary maximum speed limit



End of restriction

## Lane control signals



Green arrow - lane available to traffic facing the sign.  
 Red crosses - lane closed to traffic facing the sign.  
 White diagonal arrow - change lanes in direction shown

## Direction indicator signals



I intend to move out to the right or turn right



I intend to move in to the left or turn left or stop on the left

## Brake light signals



I am applying the brakes

## Reversing light signals



I intend to reverse

The above signals should not be used except for the purposes described.

## Arm signals

For use when direction indicator signals are not used, or when necessary to reinforce direction indicator signals and stop lights. **Also for use by pedal cyclists and those in charge of horses.**



I intend to move in to the left or turn left



I intend to move out to the right or turn right



I intend to slow down or stop



## Police officers

### Stop



Traffic approaching from the front



Traffic approaching from both front and behind



Traffic approaching from behind

### To beckon traffic on



From the side



From the front



From behind\*

### Arm signals to persons controlling traffic



I want to go straight on



I want to turn left; use either hand



I want to turn right

\*In Wales, bilingual signs appear on emergency services vehicles and clothing

## Vehicle and Operator Services Agency and Highways Agency Traffic Officers



**Highways Agency Traffic Officer**



**VOSA Traffic Officer**

These officers now have new powers to stop/direct vehicles and will be using hand signals and light signals similar to those used by police. You **MUST** obey any signals given (see Rules 107 and 108).

## School Crossing Patrols



Not ready to cross pedestrians



Barrier to stop pedestrians crossing



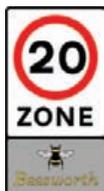
Ready to cross pedestrians, vehicles must be prepared to stop



All vehicles must stop

## Signs giving orders

Signs with red circles are mostly prohibitive.  
Plates below signs qualify their message.



Entry to 20 mph zone



End of 20 mph



Maximum



National



School



Stop and give



Give way to traffic on



Manually operated temporary STOP and GO signs



No entry for



No vehicles except

No vehicles except



No cycling



No motor vehicles



No buses (over 8 passenger seats)



No overtaking



No towed caravans



No vehicles carrying explosives



No vehicle or combination of vehicles over length shown



No vehicles over height shown



No vehicles over width shown



Give priority to vehicles from opposite direction



No right turn



No left turn



No U-turns



No goods vehicles over maximum gross weight shown (in tonnes) except for loading and unloading

# Traffic signs



No vehicles over maximum gross weight shown (in tonnes)



Parking restricted to permit holders



No stopping during period indicated except for buses



No stopping during times shown except for as long as necessary to set down or pick up passengers



No waiting



No stopping (Clearway)

Signs with blue circles but no red border mostly give positive instruction.



Ahead only



Turn left ahead (right if symbol reversed)



Turn left (right if symbol reversed)



Keep left (right if symbol reversed)



Vehicles may pass either side to reach same destination



Mini-roundabout (roundabout circulation - give way to vehicles from the immediate right)



Route to be used by pedal cycles only



Segregated pedal cycle and pedestrian route



Minimum speed



End of minimum speed



Only

Buses & cycles



Only

Trams only



Pedestrian crossing point over tramway



One-way traffic (note: compare circular 'Ahead only' sign)



With-flow bus and cycle lane



With-flow pedal cycle lane



Contra-flow bus lane

## Mostly triangular



The priority through route is indicated by the broader line.



Gradients may be shown as a ratio i.e. 20% = 1:5





School crossing patrol ahead (some signs have amber lights which flash when children are crossing)



Frail elderly people (or blind or disabled as shown) crossing to road



Pedestrians in road ahead



Zebra crossing



Overhead electric cable; plate indicates maximum height of vehicles which can pass safely



Available width of headroom indicated



Sharp deviation of route to left (or right if chevrons reversed)



Light signals ahead at level crossing, airfield or bridge



Miniature warning lights at level crossings



Cattle



Wild animals



Wild horses or ponies



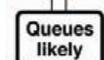
Accompanied horses or ponies



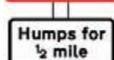
Cycle route ahead



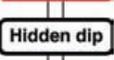
Risk of ice



Traffic queues likely ahead



Distance over which road humps extend



Other danger; plate indicates nature of danger



Soft verges



Side winds



Hump bridge



Worded warning sign



Quayside or river bank



Risk of grounding

## Mostly rectangular Signs on motorways - blue backgrounds



At a junction leading directly into a motorway (junction number may be shown on a black background)



On approaches to junctions (junction number on black background)



Route confirmatory sign after junction



Downward pointing arrows mean 'Get in lane'  
The left-hand lane leads to a different destination from the other lanes.



The panel with the inclined arrow indicates the destinations which can be reached by leaving the motorway at the next junction

## Signs on primary routes - green backgrounds



On approaches to junctions



At the junction



Route confirmatory sign after junction



On approaches to junctions



On approach to a junction in Wales (bilingual)

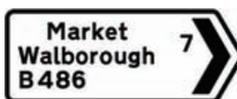
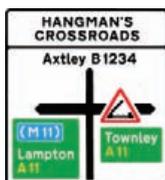
- Blue panels indicate that the motorway starts at the junction ahead.
- Motorways shown in brackets can also be reached along the route indicated.
- White panels indicate local or non-primary routes leading from the junction ahead.
- Brown panels show the route to tourist attractions.
- The name of the junction may be shown at the top of the sign.
- The aircraft symbol indicates the route to an airport.
- A symbol may be included to warn of a hazard or restriction along that route.



Primary route forming part of a ring road



Signs on non-primary and local routes - black borders



At the junction



Direction to toilets with access for the disabled

On approaches to junctions

Green panels indicate that the primary route starts at the junction ahead.  
Route numbers on a blue background show the direction to a motorway.  
Route numbers on a green background show the direction to a primary route.

Other direction signs



Picnic site



Ancient monument in the care of English Heritage



Direction to a car park



Tourist attraction



Direction to camping and caravan site



Advisory route for lorries



Route for pedal cycles forming part of a network



Recommended route for pedal cycles to place shown



Route for pedestrians



Symbols showing emergency diversion route for motorway and other main road traffic



Diversion route

All rectangular



Entrance to controlled parking zone



Entrance to congestion charging zone



End of controlled parking zone



Advance warning of restriction or prohibition ahead



Parking place for solo motorcycles



With-flow bus lane ahead



Lane designated for use by high occupancy vehicle (HOV) see rule 142



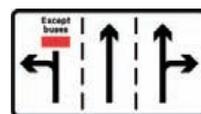
Vehicle permitted to use an HOV lane ahead



End of motorway



Start of motorway and point from which motorway regulations apply



Appropriate traffic lanes at junction ahead



Traffic on the main carriageway coming from right has priority over joining traffic



Additional traffic joining from left ahead. Traffic on main carriageway has priority over joining traffic from right hand lane slip road



Traffic in right hand lane of slip road joining the main carriageway has priority over left hand lane



'Countdown' markers at exit from motorway (each bar represents 100 yards to the exit). Green-backed markers may be used on primary routes and white-backed markers with black bars on other routes. At approaches to concealed level crossings white-backed markers with red bars may be used. Although these will be erected at equal distances the bars do not represent 100 yard intervals.



Motorway service area sign showing the operator's name



Priority over oncoming vehicles

Traffic has priority over oncoming vehicle



Hospital ahead with Accident and Emergency facilities



Tourist information point



No through road for vehicles



Recommended route for pedal cycles



Home Zone Entry



Area in which cameras are used to enforce traffic regulations



Bus lane on road at junction ahead

## Road works signs



Road works



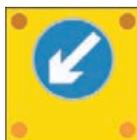
Loose chippings



Temporary hazard at road works



Temporary lane closure (the number and position of arrows and red bars may be varied according to lanes open and closed)



Slow-moving or stationary works vehicle blocking a traffic lane. Pass in the direction shown by the arrow



Mandatory speed limit ahead



Road works 1 mile ahead



End of road works and any temporary restrictions



Signs used on the back of slow-moving or stationary vehicles warning of a lane closed ahead by a works vehicle. There are no cones on the road.

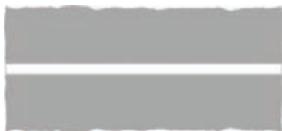


Lane restrictions at road works ahead



One lane crossover at contraflow road works

## Across the carriageway



Stop line at signals or police control



Stop line at 'Stop' sign



Stop line for pedestrians at a level crossing



Give way to traffic on major road



Give way to traffic from the right at a roundabout



Give way to traffic from the right at a mini-roundabout

## Along the carriageway



Edge line



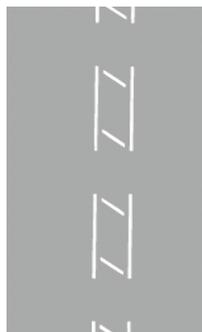
Centre line  
See Rule 106



Hazard warning line  
See Rule 106



Double white lines  
See rules 107 and 108



Diagonal hatching  
See Rule 109

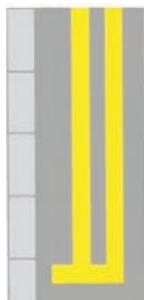


Lane line  
See Rule 110

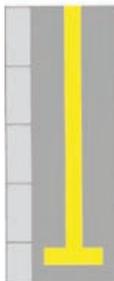
## Along the edge of the carriageway

### Waiting restrictions

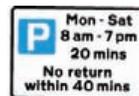
Waiting restrictions indicated by yellow lines apply to the carriageway, pavement and verge. You may stop to load and unload or while passengers board or alight unless there are also loading restrictions as described below. The times at which the restrictions apply are shown on nearby plates or on entry signs to controlled parking zones. If no days are shown on the signs, the restrictions are in force every day including Sundays and Bank Holidays. White bay markings and upright signs (see below) indicate where parking is allowed.



No waiting at any time



No waiting during times shown on sign

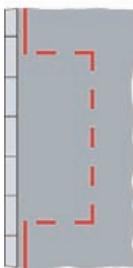


Waiting is limited to the times and duration shown

### Red Route stopping controls

Red lines are used on some roads instead of yellow lines. In London the double and single red lines used on Red Routes indicate that stopping to park, load/unload or to board and alight from a vehicle (except for a licensed taxi or if you hold an Orange Badge) is prohibited. The red lines apply to the carriageway, pavement and verge. The times that the red line prohibitions apply are shown on nearby signs, but the double red line ALWAYS means no stopping at any time. On Red Routes you may stop to park, load/unload in specially marked boxes and adjacent signs specify the times and purposes and duration allowed. A box MARKED IN RED indicates that it may only be available for the purpose specified for part of the day (eg between busy peak periods). A box MARKED IN WHITE means that it is available throughout the day.

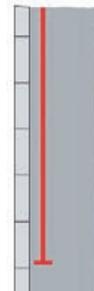
YELLOW OR RED LINES CAN ONLY GIVE A GUIDE TO THE RESTRICTIONS AND CONTROLS IN FORCE AND SIGNS, NEARBY OR AT A ZONE ENTRY, MUST BE CONSULTED.



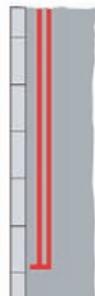
No stopping at any time



No stopping during times shown on sign



Parking is limited at the times for duration shown



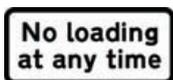
Only loading may take place at the times shown for up to a maximum duration of 20 mins

## On the kerb or at the edge of the carriageway

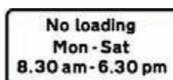
**Loading restrictions on roads other than Red Routes** Yellow marks on the kerb or at the edge of the carriageway indicate that loading or unloading is prohibited at the times shown on the nearby black and white plates. If no days are indicated on the signs the restrictions are in force every day including Sundays and Bank Holidays.

### ALWAYS CHECK THE TIMES SHOWN ON THE PLATES.

Lengths of road reserved for vehicles loading and unloading are indicated by a white 'bay' marking with the words 'Loading Only' and a sign with the white on blue 'trolley' symbol. This sign also shows whether loading and unloading is restricted to goods vehicles and the times at which the bay can be used. If no times or days are shown it may be used at any time. Vehicles may not park here if they are not loading or unloading.



No loading or unloading at any time



No loading or unloading at the times shown



Loading bay

## Other road markings



Keep entrance clear of stationary vehicles, even if picking up or setting down children



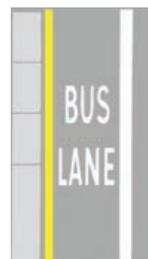
Warning of 'Give Way' just ahead



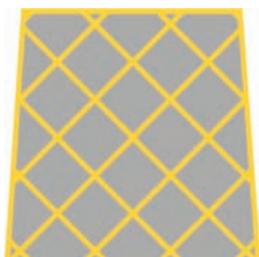
Parking space reserved for vehicles named



See Rule 217



See rule 120



Box junction  
See Rule 150



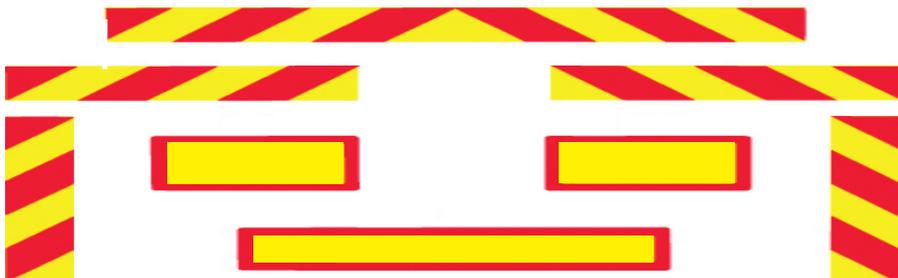
Do not block that part of the carriageway indicated



Indication of traffic lanes

## Large goods vehicle rear markings

Motor vehicles over 7500 kilograms maximum gross weight and trailers over 3500 kilograms maximum gross weight



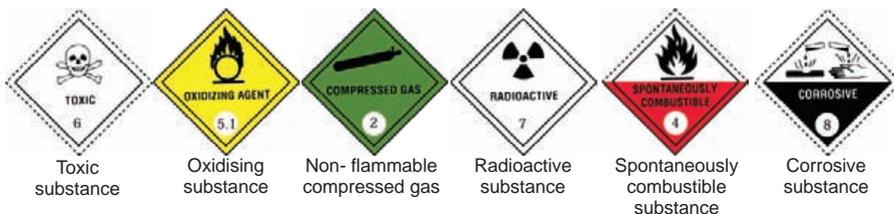
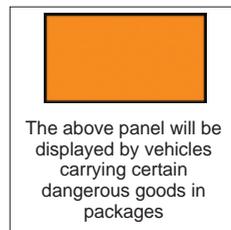
The vertical markings are also required to be fitted to builders' skips placed in the road, commercial vehicles or combinations longer than 13 metres (optional on combinations between 11 and 13 metres)

## Hazard warning plates

Certain tank vehicles carrying dangerous goods must display hazard information panels



The panel illustrated is for flammable liquid. Diamond symbols indicating other risks include



## Projection markers



Both required when load or equipment (eg crane jib) overhangs front or rear by more than two meters

## Other



School bus (displayed in front or rear window of bus or coach)

## 1. You and your bicycle

Make sure that you feel confident of your ability to ride safely on the road. Be sure that

- you choose the right size and type of cycle for comfort and safety
- lights and reflectors are kept clean and in good working order
- tyres are in good condition and inflated to the pressure shown on the tyre
- gears are working correctly
- the chain is properly adjusted and oiled
- the saddle and handlebars are adjusted to the correct height.

It is recommended that you fit a bell to your cycle.

You **MUST**

- ensure your brakes are efficient
- at night, use lit front and rear lights and have a red rear reflector.

Law PCUR regs 6 & 10 & RVLR reg 18

**Cycle training** can help both children and adults, especially those adults returning to cycling to develop the skills needed to cycle safely on today's roads. A new national cycle training standard has been developed which the Government is promoting and making funding available for delivery in schools.

All cyclists should consider the benefits of undertaking cycle training. For information, contact your local authority.

## 2. Motorcycle licence requirements

If you have a provisional motorcycle licence, you **MUST** satisfactorily complete a Compulsory Basic Training (CBT) course. You can then ride on the public road, with L plates (in Wales either D plates, L plates or both can be used), for up to two years. To obtain your full motorcycle licence you **MUST** pass a motorcycle theory test and then a practical test.

Law MV(DL)R regs 16 & 68

**If you have a full car licence** you may ride motorcycles up to 125 cc and 11 kW power output, with L plates (and/or D plates in Wales), on public roads, but you **MUST** first satisfactorily complete a CBT course if you have not already done so.

Law MV(DL)R reg 43

**If you have a full moped licence** and wish to obtain full motorcycle entitlement, you will be required to take a motorcycle theory test if you did not take a separate theory test when you obtained your moped licence. You **MUST** then pass a practical motorcycle test. Note that if CBT was completed for the full moped licence there is no need to repeat it, but if the moped test was taken before 1/12/90 CBT will need to be completed before riding a motorcycle as a learner.

Law MV(DL)R reg 42(1) & 69(1)

**Light motorcycle licence (A1):** you take a test on a motorcycle of between 75 and 125 cc. If you pass you may ride a motorcycle up to 125 cc with power output up to 11 kW.

**Standard motorcycle licence (A):** if your test vehicle is between 120 and 125 cc and capable of more than 100 km/h you will be given a standard (A) licence. You will then be restricted to motorcycles of up to 25 kW for two years. After two years you may ride any size machine.

**Direct or Accelerated Access** enables riders over the age of 21, or those who reach 21 before their two-year restriction ends, to ride larger motorcycles sooner. To obtain a licence to do so they are required to

- have successfully completed a CBT course
- pass a theory test, if they are required to do so
- pass a practical test on a machine with power output of at least 35 kW.

To practise, they can ride larger motorcycles, with L plates (and/or D plates in Wales), on public roads, but only when accompanied by an approved instructor on another motorcycle in radio contact.

You **MUST NOT** carry a pillion passenger or pull a trailer until you have passed your test.

Law MV(DL)R reg 16

### Moped licence requirements

A moped **MUST** have an engine capacity not exceeding 50 cc, not weigh more than 250 kg and be designed to have a maximum speed not exceeding 31 mph (50 km/h). From June 2003 all EC Type Approved mopeds have been restricted to 28 mph (45 km/h).

Law RTA 1988 (as amended) sect 108

## To ride a moped, learners **MUST**

- be 16 or over
- have a provisional moped licence
- complete CBT training.

You **MUST** first pass the theory test for motorcycles and then the moped practical test to obtain your full moped licence. If you passed your driving test before 1 February 2001 you are qualified to ride a moped without L plates (and/or D plates in Wales), although it is recommended that you complete CBT before riding on the road. If you passed your driving test after this date you **MUST** complete CBT before riding a moped on the road.

Laws RTA 1988 sects 97(e) & 101 & MV(DL)R regs 38(4) & 43

**Note.** For motorcycle and moped riders wishing to upgrade, the following give exemption from taking the motorcycle theory test

- full A1 motorcycle licence
- full moped licence, if gained after 1/7/96.  
Law MV(DL)R reg 42

## 3. Motor vehicle documentation and learner driver requirements

### Documents

**Driving licence.** You **MUST** have a valid driving licence for the category of motor vehicle you are driving. You **MUST** inform the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) if you change your name and/or address.

Law RTA 1988 sects 87 & 99(4)

Holders of non-European Community licences who are now resident in the UK may only drive on that licence for a maximum of 12 months from the date they become resident in this country.

To ensure continuous driving entitlement

- a British provisional licence should be obtained and a driving test(s) passed before the 12-month period elapses, or
- in the case of a driver who holds a licence from a country which has been designated in law for licence exchange purposes, the driver should exchange the licence for a British one.

**MOT.** Cars and motorcycles **MUST** normally pass an MOT test three years from the date of the first registration and every year after that. You **MUST NOT** drive a motor vehicle without an MOT certificate when it should have one. Exceptionally, you may drive to a pre-arranged test appointment or to a garage for repairs required for the test. Driving an unroadworthy motor vehicle may invalidate your insurance.

Law RTA 1988 sects 45, 47, 49 & 53

**Insurance.** To use a motor vehicle on the road, you **MUST** have a valid insurance policy. This **MUST** at least cover you for injury or damage to a third party while using that motor vehicle. Before driving any motor vehicle, make sure that it has this cover for your use or that your own insurance provides adequate cover. You **MUST NOT** drive a motor vehicle without insurance. Also, be aware that even if a road traffic incident is not your fault, you may still be held liable by insurance companies.

Law RTA 1988 sect 143

Uninsured drivers can now be automatically detected by roadside cameras. Further to the penalties for uninsured driving listed in Annexe 5, Penalties, an offender's vehicle can now be seized by the police, taken away and crushed.

Law RTA 1988, sect 165a & 165b

The types of cover available are indicated below:

*Third-party insurance* - this is often the cheapest form of insurance, and is the minimum cover required by law. It covers anyone you might injure or whose property you might damage.

It does not cover damage to your own motor vehicle or injury to yourself.

*Third-party, Fire and Theft insurance* - similar to third-party, but also covers you against your motor vehicle being stolen, or damaged by fire.

*Comprehensive insurance* - this is the most expensive but the best insurance. Apart from covering other persons and property against injury or damage, it also covers damage to your own motor vehicle, up to the market value of that vehicle, and personal injury to yourself.

**Registration certificate.** Registration certificates (also called harmonised registration certificates) are issued for all motor vehicles used on the road, describing them (make, model, etc.) and giving details of the registered keeper. You **MUST** notify the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency in Swansea as soon as possible when you buy or sell a motor vehicle, or if you change your name or address. For registration certificates issued after 27 March 1997, the buyer and seller are responsible for completing the registration certificates. The seller is responsible for forwarding them to DVLA. The procedures are explained on the back of the registration certificates.

Law RV(R&L)R regs 21, 22, 23 & 24

**Vehicle Excise Duty (VED).** All motor vehicles used or kept on public roads **MUST** display a valid Vehicle Excise Duty disc (tax disc) displayed at all times. Even motor vehicles exempt from duty **MUST** display a tax disc at all times.

Law VERA sects 29 & 33

#### **Statutory Off-Road Notification (SORN).**

This is a notification to the DVLA that a motor vehicle is not being used on the road. If you are the vehicle keeper and want to keep a motor vehicle untaxed and off the public road you **MUST** declare SORN - it is an offence not to do so. You then won't have to pay any road tax for that vehicle for a period of 12 months. You need to send a further declaration after that period if the vehicle is still off the public road. The SORN will end if you sell the vehicle and the new owner will become immediately responsible.

Law RV(RL)R 2002, reg 26 sched 4

**Production of documents.** You **MUST** be able to produce your driving licence and counterpart, a valid insurance certificate and (if appropriate) a valid MOT certificate, when requested by a police officer. If you cannot do this you may be asked to take them to a police station within seven days.

Law RTA 1988 sects 164 & 165

#### **Learner drivers**

Learners driving a car **MUST** hold a valid provisional licence. They **MUST** be supervised by someone at least 21 years old who holds a full EC/EEA licence for that type of car (automatic or manual) and has held one for at least three years.

Laws MV(DL)R reg 16 & RTA 1988 sect 87

**Vehicles.** Any vehicle driven by a learner **MUST** display red L plates. In Wales, either red D plates, red L plates, or both, can be used. Plates **MUST** conform to legal specifications and **MUST** be clearly visible to others from in front of the vehicle and from behind. Plates should be removed or covered when not being driven by a learner (except on driving school vehicles).

Law MV(DL)R reg 16 & sched 4

You **MUST** pass the theory test (if one is required) and then a practical driving test for the category of vehicle you wish to drive before driving unaccompanied.

Law MV(DL)R reg 40

## **4. The road user and the law**

### **Road traffic law**

The following list can be found abbreviated throughout the Code. It is not intended to be a comprehensive guide, but a guide to some of the important points of law. For the precise wording of the law, please refer to the various Acts and Regulations (as amended) indicated in the Code. Abbreviations are listed in the following table.

Most of the provisions apply on all roads throughout Great Britain, although there are some exceptions. The definition of a road in England and Wales is 'any highway and any other road to which the public has access and includes bridges over which a road passes' (RTA 1988 sect 192(1)). In Scotland, there is a similar definition which is extended to include any way over which the public have a right of passage (R(S)A 1984 sect 151(1)).

It is important to note that references to 'road' therefore generally include footpaths, bridleways and cycle tracks, and many roadways and driveways on private land (including many car parks). In most cases, the law will apply to them and there may be additional rules for particular paths or ways. Some serious driving offences, including drink-driving offences, also apply to all public places, for example public car parks.

Chronically Sick & Disabled Persons Act 1970	CSDPA
Functions of Traffic Wardens Order 1970	FTWO
Greater London (General Powers) Act 1974	GL(GP)A
Highway Act 1835 or 1980 (as indicated)	HA
Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Act 1990	H(PHYR)A
Horses (Protective Headgear for Young Riders) Regulations 1992	H(PHYR)R
Motor Cycles (Eye Protectors) Regulations 1999	MC(EP)R
Motor Cycles (Protective Helmets) Regulations 1998	MC(PH)R
Motorways Traffic (England & Wales) Regulations 1982	MT(E&W)R
Motorways Traffic (England & Wales) Amended Regulations	MT(E&W)(A)R
Motorways Traffic (Scotland) Regulations 1995	MT(S)R
Motor Vehicles (Driving Licences) Regulations 1999	MV(DL)R
Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) Regulations 1993	MV(WSB)R
Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts) (Amendment) Regulations 2006	MV(WSB)(A)R
Motor Vehicles (Wearing of Seat Belts by Children in Front Seats) Regulations 1993	MV(WSBCFS)R
New Roads and Streetworks Act 1991	NRSWA
Pedal Cycles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1983	PCUR
Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000	PCC(S)A
Police Reform Act 2002	PRA
Prohibition of Smoking in Certain Premises (Scotland) Regulations 2006, Scottish SI 2006/No 90	TPSCP(S)R*
Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981	PPVA
Road Safety Act 2006	RSA
Road Traffic Act 1984, 1988 or 1991 ( as indicated)	RTA
Road Traffic (New Drivers) Act 1995	RT(ND)A
Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988	RTOA
Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984	RTRA
Road Vehicles (Construction & Use) Regulations 1986	CUR
Road Vehicles (Display of Registration Marks) Regulations 2001	RV(DRM)R
Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989	RVLR
Road Vehicles (Registration & Licensing) Regulations 2002	RV(R&L)R
Roads (Scotland) Act 1984	R(S)A
Smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007	SI 2007/765
Smoke-free Premises etc (Wales) Regulations 2007	TS(EV)*
Traffic Management Act 2004	SI 2007/W787
Traffic Signs Regulations & General Directions 2002	TSfP(W)R*
Use of Invalid Carriages on Highways Regulations 1988	TMA
Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994	TSRGD
Zebra, Pelican and Puffin Pedestrian Crossings Regulations and General Directions 1997	UICHR
	VERA
	ZPPPCRGD

Acts and regulations from 1988 can be viewed on the Office of Public Sector Information website ([www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk)). Acts and regulations prior to 1988 are only available in their original print format which may be obtained from The Stationery Office as detailed inside the back cover.

\* Specific legislation applies to smoking in vehicles which constitute workplaces.

For information visit:  
[www.smokefreeengland.co.uk](http://www.smokefreeengland.co.uk)  
[www.clearingthairsotland.com](http://www.clearingthairsotland.com)  
[www.smokingbanwales.co.uk](http://www.smokingbanwales.co.uk)

## 5. Penalties

Parliament sets the maximum penalties for road traffic offences. The seriousness of the offence is reflected in the maximum penalty. It is for the courts to decide what sentence to impose according to circumstances.

The penalty table in Annex 5, Penalties indicates some of the main offences, and the associated penalties. There is a wide range of other more specific offences which, for the sake of simplicity, are not shown here. The penalty points and disqualification system is described below.

### Penalty points and disqualification

The penalty point system is intended to deter drivers and motorcyclists from following unsafe motoring practices. Certain non-motoring offences, e.g. failure to rectify vehicle defects, can also attract penalty points. The court **MUST** order points to be endorsed on the licence according to the fixed number or the range set by Parliament. The accumulation of penalty points acts as a warning to drivers and motorcyclists that they risk disqualification if further offences are committed.

Law RTOA sects 44 & 45

A driver or motorcyclist who accumulates 12 or more penalty points within a three-year period **MUST** be disqualified. This will be for a minimum period of six months, or longer if the driver or motorcyclist has previously been disqualified.

Law RTOA sect 35

For every offence which carries penalty points the court has a discretionary power to order the licence holder to be disqualified. This may be for any period the court thinks fit, but will usually be between a week and a few months.

In the case of serious offences, such as dangerous driving and drink-driving, the court **MUST** order disqualification. The minimum period is 12 months, but for repeat offenders or where the alcohol level is high, it may be longer. For example, a second drink-drive offence in the space of 10 years will result in a minimum of three years' disqualification.

Law RTOA sect 34

## Penalty Table

Offence	Maximum penalties		DIS-QUALIFICATION	PENALTY POINTS
	PRISON	FINE		
*Causing death by dangerous driving	14 years	Unlimited	Obligatory - 2 years minimum	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
*Dangerous driving	2 years	Unlimited	Obligatory	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
Causing death by careless driving under the influence of drink or drugs	14 years	Unlimited	Obligatory-2 years minimum	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
Careless or inconsiderate driving		£2,500	Discretionary	3-9
Driving while unfit through drink or drugs or with excess alcohol; or failing to provide a specimen for analysis	6 months	£5,000	Obligatory	3-11 (if exceptionally not disqualified)
Failing to stop after an accident or failing to report an accident	6 months	£5,000	Discretionary	5-10
Driving when disqualified	6 months (12 months in Scotland)	£5,000	Discretionary	6
Driving after refusal or revocation of licence on medical grounds	6 months	£5,000	Discretionary	3-6
Driving without insurance		£5,000	Discretionary	6-8
Using a vehicle in a dangerous condition		LGV £5,000 PCV £5,000 other £2,500	Discretionary in each case	3 in each case
Driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence		£1,000	Discretionary	3-6
Speeding		£1,000 (2,500 for motorway offences)	Discretionary	3-6 or 3 (fixed penalty)
Traffic light offences		£1,000	Discretionary	3
No MOT certificate		£1,000		
Seat belt offences		£500		
Dangerous cycling		£2,500		
Careless cycling		£1,000		
Cycling on pavement		£500		
Failing to identify driver of a vehicle	£1,000		Discretionary	3

\* Where a court disqualifies a person on conviction for one of these offences, it must order an extended retest. The courts also have discretion to order a retest for any other offence which carries penalty points, an extended retest where disqualification is obligatory, and an ordinary test where disqualification is not obligatory.

Furthermore, in some serious cases, the court **MUST** (in addition to imposing a fixed period of disqualification) order the offender to be disqualified until they pass a driving test. In other cases the court has a discretionary power to order such disqualification. The test may be an ordinary length test or an extended test according to the nature of the offence.

Law RTOA sect 36

**New drivers.** Special rules as set out below apply for a period of two years from the date of passing their first driving test, to drivers and motorcyclists from

- the UK, EU/EEA, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands or Gibraltar who passed their first driving test in any of those countries;
- other foreign countries who have to pass a UK driving test to gain a UK licence, in which case the UK driving test is treated as their first driving test; and
- other foreign countries who (without needing a test) exchanged their licence for a UK licence and subsequently passed a UK driving test to drive another type of vehicle, in which case the UK driving test is treated as their first driving test. For example a driver who exchanges a foreign licence (car) for a UK licence (car) and who later passes a test to drive another type of vehicle (eg an HGV) will be subject to the special rules.

Where a person subject to the special rules accumulates six or more penalty points before the end of the two year period (including any points acquired before passing the test), their licence will be revoked automatically. To regain the licence they must reapply for a provisional licence and may drive only as a learner until they pass a further driving test (Also see Annex 8 - Safety code for new drivers.)

Law RT(ND)A

**Note.** This applies even if they pay for offences by fixed penalty. Drivers in the first group (UK, EU/EEA, etc.) who already have a full licence for one type of vehicle are not affected by the special rules if they later pass a test to drive another type of vehicle.

### Other consequences of offending

Where an offence is punishable by imprisonment then the vehicle used to commit the offence may be confiscated.

Law PCC(S)A, sect 143

In addition to the penalties a court may decide to impose, the cost of insurance is likely to rise considerably following conviction for a serious driving offence. This is because insurance companies consider such drivers are more likely to be involved in a collision.

Drivers disqualified for drinking and driving twice within 10 years, or once if they are over two and a half times the legal limit, or those who refused to give a specimen, also have to satisfy the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency's Medical Branch that they do not have an alcohol problem and are otherwise fit to drive before their licence is returned at the end of their period of disqualification. Persistent misuse of drugs or alcohol may lead to the withdrawal of a driving licence.

## 6. Vehicle maintenance, safety and security

### Vehicle maintenance

Take special care that lights, brakes, steering, exhaust system, seat belts, demisters, wipers and washers are all working. Also

- lights, indicators, reflectors, and number plates **MUST** be kept clean and clear
- windscreens and windows **MUST** be kept clean and free from obstructions to vision
- lights **MUST** be properly adjusted to prevent dazzling other road users. Extra attention needs to be paid to this if the vehicle is heavily loaded
- exhaust emissions **MUST NOT** exceed prescribed levels
- ensure your seat, seat belt, head restraint and mirrors are adjusted correctly before you drive
- ensure that items of luggage are securely stowed.

Laws RVL R 1989 regs 23 & 27 & CUR 1986, regs 30 & 61

**Warning displays.** Make sure that you understand the meaning of all warning displays on the vehicle instrument panel. Do not ignore warning signs, they could indicate a dangerous fault developing.

When you turn the ignition key, warning lights will be illuminated but will go out when the engine starts (except the handbrake warning light). If they do not, or if they come on while you are driving, stop and investigate the problem, as you could have a serious fault.

If the charge warning light comes on while you are driving, it may mean that the battery isn't charging. This should also be checked as soon as possible to avoid loss of power to lights and other electrical systems.

**Window tints.** You **MUST NOT** use a vehicle with excessively dark tinting applied to the windscreen, or to the glass in any front window to either side of the driver. Window tinting applied during manufacture complies with the Visual Light Transmittance (VLT) standards. There are no VLT limits for rear windscreens or rear passenger windows.

Laws RTA 1988 sect 42 & CUR reg 32

**Tyres.** Tyres **MUST** be correctly inflated to the vehicle manufacturer's specification for the load being carried. Always refer to the vehicle's handbook or data. Tyres should also be free from certain cuts and other defects.

**Cars, light vans and light trailers MUST** have a tread depth of at least 1.6 mm across the central three-quarters of the breadth of the tread and around the entire circumference.

**Motorcycles, large vehicles and passenger-carrying vehicles MUST** have a tread depth of at least 1 mm across three-quarters of the breadth of the tread and in a continuous band around the entire circumference.

**Mopeds** should have visible tread.

Be aware that some vehicle defects can attract penalty points.

Law CUR reg 27

If a tyre bursts while you are driving, try to keep control of your vehicle. Grip the steering wheel firmly and allow the vehicle to roll to a stop at the side of the road.

If you have a flat tyre, stop as soon as it is safe to do so. Only change the tyre if you can do so without putting yourself or others at risk - otherwise call a breakdown service.

**Tyre pressures.** Check weekly. Do this before your journey, when tyres are cold. Warm or hot tyres may give a misleading reading.

Your brakes and steering will be adversely affected by underinflated or over-inflated tyres. Excessive or uneven tyre wear may be caused by faults in the braking or suspension systems, or wheels which are out of alignment. Have these faults corrected as soon as possible.

**Fluid levels.** Check the fluid levels in your vehicle at least weekly. Low brake fluid may result in brake failure and a crash. Make sure you recognise the low fluid warning lights if your vehicle has them fitted.

**Before winter.** Ensure that the battery is well maintained and that there are appropriate anti-freeze agents in your radiator and windscreen bottle.

**Other problems.** If your vehicle

- pulls to one side when braking, it is most likely to be a brake fault or incorrectly inflated tyres. Consult a garage or mechanic immediately
- continues to bounce after pushing down on the front or rear, its shock absorbers are worn. Worn shock absorbers can seriously affect the operation of a vehicle and should be replaced
- smells of anything unusual such as burning rubber, petrol or an electrical fault; investigate immediately. Do not risk a fire.

**Overheated engines or fire.** Most engines are water-cooled. If your engine overheats you should wait until it has cooled naturally. Only then remove the coolant filler cap and add water or other coolant.

If your vehicle catches fire, get the occupants out of the vehicle quickly and to a safe place. Do not attempt to extinguish a fire in the engine compartment, as opening the bonnet will make the fire flare. Call the fire brigade.

**Petrol stations/fuel tank/fuel leaks.** Ensure that, when filling up your vehicle's tank or any fuel cans you are carrying, you do not spill fuel on the forecourt. Any spilled fuel

should be immediately reported to the petrol station attendant. Diesel spillage is dangerous to other road users, particularly motorcyclists, as it will significantly reduce the level of grip between the tyres and road surface. Double-check for fuel leaks and make sure that

- you do not overfill your fuel tank
- the fuel cap is fastened securely
- the seal in the cap is not torn, perished or missing
- there is no visual damage to the cap or the fuel tank

Emergency fuel caps, if fitted, should form a good seal.

Never smoke, or use a mobile phone, on the forecourt of petrol stations as these are major fire risks and could cause an explosion.

### Vehicle security

**When you leave your vehicle** you should

- remove the ignition key and engage the steering lock
- lock the car, even if you only leave it for a few minutes
- close the windows completely
- never leave children or pets in an unventilated car
- take all contents with you, or lock them in the boot. Remember, for all a thief knows a carrier bag may contain valuables
- never leave vehicle documents in the car.

**For extra security** fit an anti-theft device such as an alarm or immobiliser. If you are buying a new car it is a good idea to check the level of built-in security features. Consider having your registration number etched on all your car windows. This is a cheap and effective deterrent to professional thieves.

## 7. First Aid on the road

In the event of an incident, you can do a number of things to help, even if you have had no training.

### 1. Deal with danger

Further collisions and fire are the main dangers following a crash. Approach any vehicle involved with care. Switch off all engines and, if possible, warn other traffic. Stop anyone from smoking.

### 2. Get help

Try to get the assistance of bystanders. Get someone to call the appropriate emergency services as soon as possible. They will need to know the exact location of the incident and the number of vehicles involved.

### 3. Help those involved

**DO NOT** move casualties still in vehicles unless further danger is threatened. **DO NOT** remove a motorcyclist's helmet unless it is essential. Remember the casualty may be suffering from shock. **DO NOT** give them anything to eat or drink. **DO** try to make them warm and as comfortable as you can, but avoid unnecessary movement. **DO** give reassurance confidently and try not to leave them alone or let them wander into the path of other traffic.

### 4. Provide emergency care

Remember the letters **DR A B C**:

**D - Danger** - check that you are not in danger.

**R - Response** - try to get a response by asking questions and gently shaking their shoulders.

**A - Airway** - the airway should be clear and kept open. Place one hand on the forehead, two fingers under the chin and gently tilt the head back.

**B - Breathing** - normal breathing should be established. Once the airway is open check breathing for up to 10 seconds.

**C - Compressions** - if they are not breathing normally compressions should be administered to maintain circulation; place two hands in the centre of the chest and press down 4-5 cms at a rate of 100/minute. You may only need one hand for a child.

Give 30 chest compressions. Then tilt the head back gently, pinch the casualty's nostrils together and place your mouth over theirs. Give two breaths, each lasting one second (use gentle breaths for a small child).

**Bleeding.** First check for anything that may be in the wound, such as glass. If there is nothing embedded apply firm pressure over the wound. Take care not to press on the object - build up padding on either side of it. Fasten a pad to the wound with a bandage or length of cloth. Use the cleanest material available. If a limb is bleeding, but not broken, raise it above the level of the heart to reduce the flow of blood. Any restriction of blood circulation for more than a short time could cause long-term injuries.

**Burns.** Try to cool the burn by dousing it with clean, cold water or similar non-toxic liquid for at least 10 minutes. Do not try to remove anything sticking to the burn.

### 5. Be prepared

Always carry a first aid kit. You could save a life by learning emergency aid and first aid from a qualified organisation, such as the local ambulance services, the St John Ambulance Association and Brigade, St Andrew's Ambulance Association, the British Red Cross or any suitable qualified body (see Other Information section for contact details).

## 8. Safety code for new drivers

Once you have passed the driving test you will be able to drive on your own. This will provide you with lots of opportunities but you need to remain safe. Even though you have shown you have the skills you need to drive safely, many newly qualified drivers lack experience. You need to continue to develop your skills, especially anticipating other road users' behaviour to avoid having a collision. As many as one new driver in five has some kind of collision in their first year of driving. This code provides advice to help you get through the first twelve months after passing the driving test, when you are most vulnerable, as safely as possible.

- Many of the worst collisions happen at night. Between midnight and 6 am is a time of high risk for new drivers. Avoid driving then unless it's really necessary.
- If you are driving with passengers, you

are responsible for their safety. Don't let them distract you or encourage you to take risks. Tell your passengers that you need to concentrate if you are to get to your destination safely.

- Never show off or try to compete with other drivers, particularly if they are driving badly.
- Don't drive if you have consumed any alcohol or taken drugs. Even over-the-counter medicines can affect your ability to drive safely - read the label to see if they may affect your driving.
- Make sure everyone in the car is wearing a seat belt throughout the journey.
- Keep your speed down - many serious collisions happen because the driver loses control, particularly on bends.
- Most new drivers have no experience of driving high-powered or sporty cars. Unless you have learnt to drive in such a vehicle you need to get plenty of experience driving on your own before driving a more powerful car.
- Driving while uninsured is an offence. See Annex 3 for information on types of insurance cover.

**REMEMBER** that under the New Drivers Act you will have your licence revoked if you get six penalty points on your licence within two years of passing your first driving test. You will need to pass both the theory and practical tests again to get back your full licence. You could consider taking further training such as Pass Plus, which could also save you money on your insurance, as well as helping you reduce your risk of being involved in a collision. There are three ways to find out more:

internet - [www.passplus.org.uk](http://www.passplus.org.uk)

telephone - DSA head office on 0115 901 2633

email - [passplus@dsa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:passplus@dsa.gsi.gov.uk)

## Other information

### Metric conversions

The conversions given throughout *The Highway Code* are rounded but a detailed conversion chart is shown below.

Miles	Kilometres	Miles	Kilometres
1.00	1.61	40.00	64.37
5.00	8.05	45.00	72.42
10.00	16.09	50.00	80.47
15.00	24.14	55.00	88.51
20.00	32.19	60.00	96.56
25.00	40.23	65.00	104.60
30.00	48.28	70.00	112.65
35.00	56.33		

### Useful websites

[www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk) (St John Ambulance Association and Brigade)  
[www.firstaid.org.uk](http://www.firstaid.org.uk) (St Andrew's Ambulance Association)  
[www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk) (The British Red Cross)  
[www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)  
[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)  
[www.transportoffice.gov.uk](http://www.transportoffice.gov.uk)  
[www.highways.gov.uk/traffic](http://www.highways.gov.uk/traffic) info  
[www.direct.gov.uk/highway](http://www.direct.gov.uk/highway) code  
[www.larsoa.org.uk](http://www.larsoa.org.uk)  
[www.collisionreporting.gov.uk](http://www.collisionreporting.gov.uk)  
[www.askthe.police.uk](http://www.askthe.police.uk)  
[www.parking-appeals.gov.uk](http://www.parking-appeals.gov.uk) (outside London)  
[www.parkingandtrafficappeals.gov.uk](http://www.parkingandtrafficappeals.gov.uk) (inside London)

## Further reading

### Best practice

Further information about good driving and riding practice can be found in The Driving Standards Agency books *The Official DSA Guide to Driving - the essential skills* and *The Official DSA Guide to Riding - the essential skills*. Information specifically for drivers of large vehicles can be found in *The Official DSA Guide to Driving Goods Vehicles* and *The Official DSA Guide to Driving Buses and Coaches*.

### The Blue Badge Scheme

Information on this scheme can be found on the Department for Transport Website:  
[www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

## Code of Practice for Horse-Drawn Vehicles

The Code of Practice is available from the Department for Transport, Transport Technology and Standards Division 6, 2nd Floor, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR. Tel 0207 944 2078

### Road works

A leaflet giving further information on driving through road works can be obtained from Highways Agency Publications, tel 0870 1226 236, quoting reference number HA113/04. For general Highways Agency information, tel 08457 504030 or email [ha\\_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ha_info@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

## Introduction

Unfortunately about 20% of the questions in the car drivers theory test cannot be answered by the Highway Code.

Consequently, we have produced a set of supplementary notes to cover the extra knowledge you need.

## 1. Motor Insurance and Vehicle Excise Duty

It is a legal requirement that before you drive a vehicle on public roads you have the proper insurance cover. Indeed to obtain a vehicle excise licence (i.e. a tax disc) it is necessary for you to have insurance cover. There are three main types insurance cover.

These are:

- Third Party Insurance  
This is the legal minimum cover and is also the cheapest. It covers anyone who you might injure or whose property you might damage. It does not cover your own property or injury to yourself.
- Third Party, Fire and Theft  
This offers the same benefits as third party insurance but also covers your own vehicle should it be damaged by fire or stolen.
- Fully Comprehensive  
This is the best and the most expensive. As well as the benefits of the two previous types it also covers damage to your own vehicle and injury to yourself.

The cost of insurance varies from company to company and also depends on certain factors. These include:

- Age of driver (e.g. people in the age group 17 - 25 years are the most likely to have an accident, therefore the younger the driver the more expensive the insurance).
- Make of vehicle.
- Size of engine.
- Number of years driving experience.
- Full or provisional licence holder.
- Court convictions, if any.
- Where you live.
- Where the vehicle is to be kept and if it has an alarm.
- Intended use of vehicle.
- No Claims Bonus (a discount given to drivers off their insurance premium for each year they do not make a claim).

- Amount of excess (the amount you are required to pay towards each claim the higher the excess the lower the premium).
- Completion of Pass Plus Scheme to reduce the risk of an accident (a scheme to give new drivers more experience by taking further training with an ADI after passing their test). Everyone who takes and passes the course will get reduced premiums with certain insurance companies.

When looking for insurance shop around to find the best policy for your requirements.

Buy the best policy you can afford. Do not just go for the cheapest as you may regret it later if you need to make a claim. Please remember you can be fined up to £5,000 and acquire 6-8 penalty points if you are caught driving without insurance.

## Vehicle Excise Duty (Car Tax)

All vehicles using the road must display a valid vehicle licence (tax disc) in the bottom nearside corner of the windscreen. Any vehicle which is exempt from duty must display a 'nil' tax disc.

The registered keeper of a vehicle is responsible for taxing the vehicle or making a SORN (Statutory Off Road Notification) until the vehicle is officially transferred to a new keeper.

Keepers who fail to declare SORN or re-licence will incur an automatic penalty.

A keeper can declare SORN if the vehicle is not going to be used or kept on a public road, this means that road tax does not have to be paid.

A SORN declaration is valid for 12 months provided the vehicle remains off the road.

## 2. The Environment

The car is no longer a luxury. It has now become an essential part of modern life. As more and more cars are using our roads they are unfortunately having a detrimental effect on the environment.

As fuel is burned in the engine it produces waste gases which are toxic and harmful. These pollutants are released into the air

These pollutants are released into the air causing damage to plant life and human health problems such as asthma. Buildings are now showing the effects of these pollutants as stone and brickwork start to deteriorate.

The more cars that are being used means that we need to make more roads or widen the existing ones. This changes the landscape and disrupts wildlife. More fuel is also being used which depletes our natural resources.

As we are becoming more aware of the effects of pollution on the environment, motor manufacturers are researching and developing ways that these effects can be minimised. Smaller and more efficient vehicles for town use are being developed. Engines able to run on unleaded fuel are used more widely. All modern vehicles with a petrol engine are now fitted with a catalytic converter.

A catalytic converter is a honeycombed filter fitted to the exhaust system. The surface area of this honeycomb is coated with precious metals, usually platinum or palladium, which speed up the chemical reaction in the exhaust gases as the engine heats up and remove up to 75% of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide (the toxic and polluting gases) and hydrocarbons (the unburned fuel compounds).

The MOT test now includes a strict emissions test to ensure that car engines are properly tuned so that pollution is reduced. The responsibility for looking after the environment cannot rest solely on the shoulders of the motor vehicle manufacturers. Drivers themselves can do a lot to reduce the effects of pollution, for example:

- Share a vehicle with someone who makes the same journey.
- Walk or cycle instead of using the car.
- Avoid using the car for very short journeys particularly when the engine is cold.
- Use public transport.
- Make sure your car is properly serviced and the engine is correctly tuned.
- Inflate your tyres to the correct pressure. Under inflated tyres increase fuel consumption.

- Travelling at a constant speed will not only reduce your fuel consumption but will also reduce your overall journey time. In fact driving smoothly can reduce fuel consumption by about 15%.
- Avoid rapid acceleration or harsh braking because this leads to increased fuel consumption.
- Slow down as the faster you go the more fuel you will use. At 70mph a vehicle will use up to 30% more fuel than at 50mph.
- Do not carry unnecessary weight in your car.
- Remove your roof rack when not in use.
- Have your vehicles engine converted to unleaded fuel.
- Plan well ahead when driving so as to avoid braking hard.
- Do not over rev the engine in the lower gears.
- If you service your own car dispose of the old engine oil safely by taking it to a local authority site. Do not pour it down the drain as it is harmful to the environment, illegal and could result in prosecution.
- If in a city use trams where available. They are environmentally friendly because they reduce noise pollution, use electricity and reduce town traffic.

Be careful about the way you dispose of the car battery or the cars oil as both pose potential hazards to the environment. In both cases take them to a local authority refuse site or garage who will have facilities to dispose of them safely. Remember, this is our world and we must do everything we can to protect it.

### 3. Tyres

It is vitally important that the tyres on your car are in good condition and inflated to the correct pressure. They are your only contact with the road and will not grip safely if they are in bad condition. Check the condition of your tyres regularly and replace them if necessary. The walls of the tyres should be free from cuts and bulges.

The tread depth should be a minimum of 1.6mm across the central three quarters of the breadth of the tyre and around the entire circumference. This is the minimum legal requirement.

If the tyres are worn unevenly this could be due to the wheels not being aligned or balanced correctly. Alternatively it may be a fault with the suspension or braking systems. Get it checked and put right.  
If the wheels are not balanced correctly this can cause a vibration on the steering wheel as you drive.

Tyre pressures should be checked weekly and before any long journey, particularly one which will include motorway driving. Always try to check pressures when the tyres are cold so as to get a more accurate reading. Do not forget the spare!  
Recommended tyre pressures for each vehicle can be found in the owner's handbook.

Tyres can be inflated to a higher pressure (but never more than the recommended maximum) when carrying a heavy load or driving at speed for long distances. Under-inflated tyres can reduce stability and cause the car to use more fuel. This will also have the effect of making the steering of the car heavy, as the tyres will not have enough air in them, which will cause the rubber to drag against the surface of the road.  
It is an offence to drive a car with an incorrectly inflated tyre.

The penalties for using a car with defective tyres or a tread depth below the legal minimum are severe and will apply for every tyre on your vehicle. The most severe penalty of all is DEATH.

#### 4. Fuel

##### Leaded Petrol

Becoming increasingly unpopular because of its high lead content and bad effect on the environment. Used mainly in older cars, it is gradually being phased out. It must not be used in cars fitted with a catalytic converter.

##### Unleaded Petrol

Most common type of petrol used today. When used in a car fitted with a catalytic converter the harmful emissions are greatly reduced.

##### Diesel

Only to be used in engines designed to be fuelled by diesel. Although these engines produce higher levels of some pollutants they are very fuel efficient. To improve

they are very fuel efficient. To improve emissions further low sulphur diesel could be used.

Spare fuel should be carried in a container specifically designed and approved for that purpose. It is illegal and dangerous to carry fuel in any other type of container.

#### 5. Power Steering

Power steering is becoming increasingly common in modern cars. A motor assists the driver when he turns the steering wheel, making it easier to steer as the driver does not need as much strength to turn the wheel. The steering on a car fitted with power steering seems lighter than that on a car fitted with conventional steering. Because of this you need to be particularly careful not to steer while the vehicle is stationary as this may cause damage to the tyres and the steering mechanism.

#### 6. Oil and electrics

Oil is a vital component needed to lubricate the engine of your car. It performs at high pressures and temperatures of up to 300°C. It helps to keep the engine cool, resists wear on the moving surfaces and also combats the corrosive acids formed whilst hydrocarbons in the fuel are burnt. It is therefore important that the oil is kept at the level recommended by your vehicle's manufacturer. Check the oil level weekly, before any long journey and top up as required with the correct grade of oil. The engine oil and filter should be changed at regular intervals (see recommendations in owner's handbook).

##### How to check the oil level

- Oil should be checked when the engine is cold.
- Park your car on level ground.
- Raise bonnet and locate the dipstick on the engine block.
- Take the dipstick out and wipe clean with a dry cloth.
- Note the markings on the dipstick which indicate the lowest and highest levels.
- Push the dipstick fully back into the engine block.
- Take the dipstick out and see where the oil level has reached.
- If oil is below the minimum then top up as required, being careful not to overfill as this will cause excessive pressure that

as this will cause excessive pressure that could damage the engine seals and gaskets and cause oil leaks. It can also result in the vehicles exhaust becoming very smoky. If oil is above the minimum then no oil is required.

### How to check your battery fluid levels

The distilled water in your battery cells may occasionally need to be topped up. You do this by filling each cell until the distilled water is just above the cell plate.

### 7. Brakes

The foot brake operates the brakes on all four wheels. Typically, the braking system on a modern front wheel drive car comprises two hydraulic systems. Each is connected to a front and a rear wheel. This ensures that should there be a leak of hydraulic fluid from either system, at least half the braking force will still be available.

Note any variations in the braking efficiency. If the brakes feel spongy or the vehicle pulls to one side when braking, get them checked by a qualified mechanic.

You can check the brake fluid level regularly and keep it topped up by following the instructions in the owner's handbook.

Excessive use of the foot brake makes the brakes hot. When this happens the brakes are liable to become less effective and are then said to 'fade'.

The handbrake is used to hold the car still after it has stopped. It operates on two wheels only (usually the back) and, unlike the other brakes, it is mechanically operated.

### 8. Cooling System

Most cars use water to take the heat away from the engine. The water flows through spaces around the cylinders and valves and out of the top of the engine to the radiator. Cooling air takes the heat from the water as it passes through the radiator before returning to the engine. The water is usually mixed with a dual purpose antifreeze/coolant which prevents the water from freezing in winter and so causing serious damage.

The level of water/coolant mix must not be allowed to drop below the minimum level marked on the bottle. Instructions on how to refill and keep it topped up can be found in the owner's handbook.

### 9. Distractions

When driving it is important that your attention is concentrated on the task of driving and that there are no unnecessary distractions.

Do not hang anything from the rear view mirror as it will restrict your view as well as distract your attention.

Playing loud music will prevent you from hearing anything else, particularly the sirens of emergency vehicles. You can gain a lot of information about your surroundings by listening as well as looking.

You need a good unrestricted view from all the windows of your car so do not cover them with stickers or block the view to the rear by piling things on the parcel shelf. If you have a mobile phone do not use it while you are driving, either to make or receive calls. Pull over into a safe and convenient place first. People who use mobile phones while driving are not only now breaking the law they are also 4 times as likely to have an accident.

Do not drive if you are angry or upset as this will seriously affect your concentration. If you are still feeling angry after an argument, you should always give yourself time to Calm Down, before attempting to set out on any journey.

### 10. Mirrors

There are three main mirrors fitted to your car: an interior mirror and two exterior mirrors. The surface of the exterior mirrors is usually convex which gives a wider field of vision but makes vehicles appear to be further away than they actually are. The surface of the interior mirror is flat, making it easier to judge the speed, distance and position of following vehicles than when looking in the exterior mirrors.



They should be used as part of the basic Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre (MSM) routine and to keep up to date with what is behind and to the sides of your vehicle, thus enabling you to make safe and sensible decisions based on the position and speed of other road users. Always check your mirrors well before signalling, changing speed and changing direction. If you use the mirrors early as part of the MSM routine you can deal with hazards in plenty of time which will help other road users to know your intentions. If you are dazzled by the lights of following vehicles when driving at night set your interior mirror to 'antidazzle'. Just behind the lower edge of the mirror is a small lever pull this forward and you will still be able to see the lights of the vehicles behind but the dazzle will be greatly reduced. Always remember to reset the mirror by pushing the lever towards the windscreen.

If you are towing a caravan or a trailer it is difficult to see alongside your vehicle and almost impossible to use the rear view mirror. So, fit an exterior mirror on an extended arm to be able to see past the caravan or trailer.

Remember, a good driver always knows what is happening behind his vehicle as well as what is happening to the front.

### 11. The Dashboard

Directly in front of the driver is an instrument panel which gives the driver information as he drives along. Two of the main instruments are the speedometer and the fuel gauge.

#### The Speedometer

This tells the driver how fast the car is travelling in both miles per hour and kilometres per hour. It is usually a dial with a needle but it can also be digital. It must not be obscured from the drivers view.

#### The Fuel Gauge

This indicates the amount of fuel in the tank. Some show a reading all the time, others will only show a reading when the ignition is switched on. Before setting off on a journey always make sure you have enough fuel to reach your destination or to get you to the next petrol station.

### WARNING LIGHTS

There are also several warning lights which come on to warn the driver of any problems or to give information about the functions selected. Details of all the warning lights on your car can be found in the owner's handbook. They will include the Oil Warning Light, the Brake Warning Light and the Parking Brake Light.

#### Oil Warning Light

This light with a small oil can warns of low oil pressure which could mean there is little or no oil in the engine. If this light comes on when you are driving, stop as soon as you can and check the oil level. If it stays on after checking and correcting the oil level do not drive your car as serious damage may occur. Have your car checked by a qualified mechanic.

#### Brake Warning Light

If this light with an exclamation mark in a circle comes on when you are driving it could indicate that there is a fault within the braking system. This could be dangerous and so you should stop as soon as you can, trying not to rely on the brakes too much, and get the braking system checked by a qualified mechanic. This light may also come on when the hand brake is applied so make sure you release the handbrake fully and the light goes out.



#### Parking Brake Light

Some cars have this light with the letter "P" in a circle. This light which comes on when the handbrake is applied. If the hand-brake is not released properly the light will stay on.



#### Headlight/Fog light indicator lights

This light with a side view of a headlight with a series of horizontal lines in front indicates that your lights are on full beam.



This light with a side view of a headlight with a series of downward pointing lines in front indicates that your lights are on dipped beam.

This light with a side view of a headlight with a series of short horizontal lines and two vertical wavy lines in front indicates that your fog lights are on.

### Indicator lights

There are two of these lights, one with an arrow pointing to the right and one with an arrow pointing to the left. When you use the flashing indicators to signal your intentions to other road users, one of these lights will flash and you will hear a clicking noise. Always check that your signal has cancelled when it is no longer required.

### Hazard light indicator

This light with a triangle will flash when the hazard warning lights are on.

If you have access to a vehicle owner's manual read the section on warning lights.

## 12. Stopping in an Emergency

The cause of most accidents is driver error. When an accident happens it is usually blamed on the weather (fog, rain, bright sunshine etc.), the road surface (ice, snow, gravel, water etc.), the pedestrian who ran out from 'nowhere' and numerous other causes, when in fact it was the driver who was not driving appropriately for the road and weather conditions. If he had been then the accident may never have happened.

However there are the rare occasions when even the most alert and careful driver can do little to prevent an accident occurring. The best he can do is know how to stop as quickly and as safely as possible and to try to do so.

If you need to stop in an emergency quick reactions can save vital seconds and even a life.

The quicker you apply the foot brake the sooner the car will stop. Be careful though. If you press the brake too hard or 'slam' the brakes on your car is likely to skid. Always use the brake pedal progressively i.e. pushing the brake pedal harder as the car slows down.

Harsh braking throws the weight of the car forwards rapidly, making it very difficult to keep the vehicle straight, and makes the rear lighter. The wheels may lock (stop turning) but the car will keep going, skidding along the road surface. If this happens release the foot brake so as to allow the wheels to turn again. Then reapply so the brakes can continue to slow the car. Keep both hands on the steering wheel and depress the clutch just before the car comes to a halt. This will

allow the engine and the brakes to work together so stopping the car quicker.

Some modern cars are fitted with an antilocking brake system (ABS) which senses when the wheels are about to lock and very quickly releases the braking pressure such that the wheels are allowed to turn very slowly spreading the frictional force over more of the tyre. This allows optimum braking to be achieved on a normal road surface while allowing the driver to steer the car at the same time. ABS is slightly less effective on icy, wet or loose surfaces and the brakes are only as good as the tyre grip on the road.

So try to avoid having to stop quickly and brake harshly by always driving at a speed that is appropriate for the road and traffic conditions and that allows you to stop safely within the distance you can see to be clear. If it is not clear SLOW DOWN.

## 13. First Aid

It may happen that one day you come across the scene of, or are involved in, an accident so it may be helpful to be familiar with a few basic first aid procedures.

Firstly there is the ABC procedure for dealing with unconscious accident victims. It is essential that you follow this procedure immediately if the casualty is unconscious and permanent injury is to be avoided.

A - Clear the airway of any obstructions including false teeth, chewing gum etc. Breathing should begin and colour improve.

B - If breathing does not begin, lift the chin and tilt the head gently backwards. Pinch the casualty's nose and blow gently (particularly if it is a child) into the mouth until the chest rises. Repeat this every four seconds until the casualty can breathe unaided.

C - Circulation must be maintained by preventing blood loss. If the casualty is bleeding apply firm pressure over the wound, using clean material if possible, taking care not to press on any foreign body which may be in the wound. If the limb is not broken it should be raised to lessen the bleeding.

### Back Injury

Any casualty you suspect has a back or neck injury should not be moved unless they are in danger. Movement could add to the injury. Do not remove the safety helmet of an injured motorcyclist unless it is absolutely essential as serious injury could result.

### Burns

If any casualty is suffering from burns, no matter how severe, it is possible that they could go into immediate nervous shock. This will cause them to go pale, confused, anxious, frightened or they may even faint. Douse the burns with a cold, clean, nontoxic liquid unless they are very severe, in which case the burn should be lightly covered with a clean cloth and professional medical attention sought immediately.

Never try to remove anything which is stuck to the burn. Leave that to the experts. You should always carry a first aid kit in your car.

You could also learn first aid by attending a course run by the St. John's Ambulance Brigade or the British Red Cross Society. Hopefully you will never need to use either, but it might just help to save a life!

### 14. Hills

When going uphill it is more difficult to maintain or increase speed as the engine has to work harder to make the car go faster. You may find you will need to change to a lower gear to give you more power. This should be done fairly quickly as the car will lose speed when the gas pedal is released and the clutch pedal pressed down. Ideally you should change down before you start to climb the hill.

The brakes will slow the car down quicker when going uphill. Remember to apply the handbrake once you have stopped otherwise the car will roll back.

When going downhill the engine is helped along by the weight of the car and so it will travel faster, making it more difficult to slow down, as the brakes have less effect. Select a lower gear before you start to go down a hill. Using a lower gear in this manner to reduce the speed of the car is known as engine braking. Use the foot brake carefully to keep control of the speed. Try to avoid

depressing the clutch as the car will go faster until the clutch is reengaged. If you need to change gear when going downhill do so with your foot on the foot brake to prevent the car from speeding up.

Always be on the lookout for signs warning you of hills. Assess the gradient early, whether uphill or downhill, and decide on what action, if any, you need to take to negotiate the hill. Then take that action before you start to climb or descend. Driving downhill or uphill can have an effect on your control of the car.

### 15. Fuel Spillage

Fuel is a precious commodity and all precautions to avoid wasting it should be taken. If you suspect that the fuel tank of your vehicle is leaking have it checked and, if necessary, replaced. Your leaking fuel tank may result in a fire or an explosion. While leaking diesel might not ignite it will make the road surface extremely slippery. When refuelling make sure you do not overfill the tank and ensure that the filler cap is securely fastened.

### 16. Manoeuvring

You can legally remove your seat belt when performing any manoeuvre that includes reversing.

This allows you greater freedom to move around and turn your head for better observation.

Always check all around before you start to reverse. If you are not sure whether or not it is clear behind your vehicle, get out and have a look. If you cannot see clearly as you reverse get someone to guide you.

There are many dangers as you reverse, mainly from approaching traffic and pedestrians. Keep your speed down and give yourself time to take good observations. Before you steer check for other road users as the front of your vehicle may swing out into the path of another vehicle.

Always be prepared to give way to other traffic when reversing. It is much easier for other drivers to go round your car when it is stood still than when it is moving. Remember it is illegal to reverse for longer than necessary so once you have completed the manoeuvre, stop.

## 17. Vehicle Loading

As a driver it is your responsibility to ensure that your vehicle is loaded properly and safely. If you have to carry a load it must be fastened securely and not stick out dangerously. A heavy load on a roof rack will reduce the stability of your vehicle and make it more difficult to handle.

## 18. Signs and Markings

The majority of road signs and road markings are explained in The Highway Code. However there are a few less common ones, which are not included. Some of these are explained below.

This sign with a "P" over a car on a raised verge on a blue background means that you may legally park your car fully on the verge or footpath.



This arrow sign with a "P +" and a silhouette of a bus on a blue background is becoming more common. It indicates an area where a Park and Ride system is in operation. You can park your car in an out-of-town car park and a bus service is provided to take you into the town. This system is successful in keeping traffic out of busy town centres.



You will find this sign with an "R" on a green background at intervals alongside the road, indicating that you are travelling on the Ring Road.



This sign with a silhouette of a man running towards an open door on a green background is found in tunnels, indicating the Emergency Exit For Pedestrians.



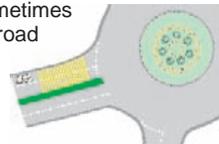
This sign with a man walking on a white circle with a red band is sometimes seen on dual carriageways, ring roads and places where it would be dangerous for pedestrians to walk. It means No Pedestrians.



On the approach to a concealed railway crossing you might see countdown markings denoting the distance to the stop line. Red diagonal strips on a white background. Three strips means three hundred feet, two strips two hundred feet and one strip one hundred feet.



Drivers sometimes ignore "zz SCHOOL KEEP CLEAR zz" road markings that are used to mark where school children cross the road. The markings are there to inform drivers not to wait or park in this area. To do so would cause danger by potentially blocking the view of children crossing the road or drivers driving up or down the road. Yellow lines are sometimes painted across the road surface on the approach to a hazard, such as a roundabout. Their function is to make the driver aware of his speed and direct him to slow down.



Some road markings, such as the white lines between the motorway carriageway and the hard shoulder, have raised areas at regular intervals, which make a noise as you drive over them. These rumble devices are there to alert the driver to a hazard, in this case the edge of the carriageway, or to encourage the driver to slow down as would be the case if the yellow lines illustrated above were slightly raised.

To separate traffic flowing in opposite directions, particularly on bends, you may see an area in the middle of the road painted red enclosed with broken or unbroken white lines with white diagonal strips. This area is designed to discourage drivers from moving too close to the centre of the road and therefore present a hazard to oncoming vehicles that may do the same.

When driving through a tunnel make sure you look out for variable message signs. These signs will provide warnings and orders as necessary.

### 19. Lane Discipline

Lane discipline is vital when travelling along multi-lane roads. You should always follow the lane markings and road signs. They are there to guide the traffic and make the best use of road space.

When driving in lanes, position yourself in the centre of your lane, keeping to the left hand lane wherever possible.

If you find that you are in the wrong lane do not move across immediately. Carry on in that lane until you can change lanes safely or, if it is not possible to change lanes, continue in your lane and find another way back to your route.

The same applies to a one-way street. If you find yourself travelling down a one-way street but you need to go in the opposite direction, you must not turn round.

Continue to the end of the road and then find an alternative route to your destination.

### 20. Towing

If you passed your driving test before 1st January 1997 you are allowed to drive a vehicle towing a trailer provided their combined weight is under 8.25 tonnes and you are over 21 years old (7.5 tonnes if you are under 21 years old).

If you passed your driving test on or after 1st January 1997 then you may have to take a further test if you want to tow a large trailer. Details can be obtained from DVLA leaflet INF30 'Towing Trailers in Great Britain'.

When towing a caravan or trailer there are a few basic principles you need to follow. These include:

- Never exceed the manufacturer's recommended maximum weight that can be towed by your car or the maximum noseweight that can be applied to the tow ball (details can be found in owner's handbook). It is usually safest for the loaded weight of the trailer not to exceed 85% of the kerbside (empty) weight of the towing vehicle.
- Fit exterior mirrors with extending arms so you can see clearly along both sides of the trailer.

- Fit a stabiliser to help reduce the effects of cross winds. It can also help to make the combination (i.e. the towing vehicle and trailer) easier to handle but will not compensate for a poorly loaded combination. Heavy items should be loaded as low as possible, mainly over the axle. Any lighter items should be distributed to give a suitable noseweight at the front. The overall stability of the towing vehicle and the trailer depends on correct weight distribution.
- Passengers must never be allowed to travel in a caravan when it is being towed.
- Before starting on a journey ensure that the trailer is correctly hitched and that the breakaway cable is properly connected. Should the trailer and the towing vehicle become separated this will break and apply the brakes to the trailer. Check that all the lights, indicators and brakes are working properly, that windows, roof light and doors are closed and that the tyre pressures on both the trailer and the towing vehicle are correct.
- Before towing for the first time take professional instruction from one of the larger caravanning organisations. You will then feel more confident in your ability to handle the combination and deal with difficult traffic situations.

### 21. Automatic Transmission

A car fitted with automatic transmission will change gear automatically as it detects the need for a different gear according to the road speed and the load on the engine. It will change to a higher gear as the road speed increases and to a lower gear as the road speed decreases.

Sometimes the driver may need quick acceleration, for example to overtake. This can be achieved by pressing the accelerator pedal all the way to the floor, causing a quick change to a lower gear, so speed can be increased quickly. A higher gear will then be selected as the pressure on the accelerator is eased off. This technique is known as 'kick down'.

## 22. Four Wheel Drive

Most cars are two wheel drive which means that either the front or rear wheels are driven by the engine, the other two are either pushed or pulled along.

However some vehicles are fitted with four wheel drive which means that all four wheels are driven by the engine. One of the main benefits of this system is that road holding is improved.

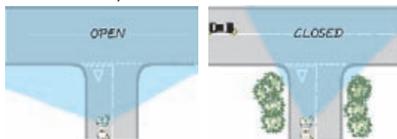
## 23. Emergency Vehicles

When driving along always be on the look out for emergency vehicles. You can recognise them by their flashing blue lights and loud sirens. They include police, fire brigade, ambulance, coastguard, blood transfusion service, bomb disposal and mountain rescue vehicles. Check where they are coming from and watch to see where they are going. Keep out of their way and take any action you can to help them get through but do not endanger other road users. If all you need to do is pull in on the left, signal left as you do so. The driver then knows you have seen him and he can drive past safely.

If you see a vehicle with a green flashing light treat it just the same as this is a doctor on an emergency call out.

## 24. Junctions and bends

Special care must be taken when emerging from a junction (going from the side road into the main road).



Make good, early observations as you approach. This will help you to decide if you can see clearly enough to determine whether it is safe to go or not. This decision will be influenced by your zone of vision (the amount of the new road you can see to either the left or the right as you approach the junction). Your zone of vision can be limited by parked vehicles, buildings, bends, hills, traffic on the main road, trees, hedges, walls and fences.

As you approach the junction your zone of vision usually improves, but it can be blocked by parked cars. In cases where there is reduced visibility you can only decide when it is safe to emerge by edging forward very slowly, looking both ways, into a position where your zone of vision is improved. If you are near shops or other buildings or objects with reflective surfaces you may be able to use this to help you determine if it is safe to emerge.



Do not emerge unless you are absolutely certain it is clear and safe to do so. Similarly any vehicles turning left into the side road, particularly large vehicles, can hide other vehicles travelling behind or alongside them. Always take extra care at junctions where visibility is reduced. If parked vehicles obscure your view of the junction continue to creep forward slowly until you can obtain a view as in the example shown.

## Emerging at Y junctions

The procedure for approaching and emerging from Y junctions is basically the same as T-junctions. However, the position of the vehicle may need to be slightly different just prior to emerging to make emerging safer and extra observations must be taken as the windscreen pillars of the car may obscure your view and may cause you to miss something small like a motorcycle. Therefore, make sure to look around your windscreen pillars by moving your head backwards and forwards to minimise this risk. The windscreen pillars can also obscure your view when negotiating bends.



## Emerging at unmarked crossroads

Neither road is the major road and therefore no one has priority.

Consequently you must slow down on approach and be prepared to stop.



Anticipating other driver's actions and driving at a speed that enables you to stop is critical.

Priority regarding oncoming vehicles is not changed, if you are turning right you would need to give way to oncoming traffic turning left or going straight ahead. If you come across a crossroad where the traffic lights have failed you should treat this as an unmarked crossroad, slow down on approach, look both ways and be prepared to stop.

When you want to pull up on the left just after a junction on the left is very careful not to mislead anyone with your signal. You should indicate left just as you pass the junction and not before it.

## 25. Motorcyclists

Motorbikes and pedal cycles are not as large or as wide as a car and as such are much more difficult to see. Many accidents happen because drivers do not notice them, particularly at junctions. So always be on the look out for them. When driving in slow moving queues of traffic motorcyclists sometimes ride between the lanes. Before you change lanes make sure you have checked for bikes filtering through the traffic.

THINK ONCE, THINK TWICE, THINK BIKE.

## 26. Following Other Vehicles

When following any vehicle always leave a safe gap between your vehicle and the one in front.

This gap should not be less than the overall stopping distance for the speed you are travelling. If you are travelling very slowly in heavy urban traffic then this distance can be reduced to no less than your thinking distance. As a rough guide leave a gap equal to 1 metre for every mile per hour you are travelling e.g. a speed of 50mph = a distance of 50 metres.

When following a large vehicle, such as a lorry or double decker bus, always keep well back, even when travelling slowly. This will allow you a better view of what is happening in front of the lorry and you will be able to judge when or if you can overtake it safely. Keeping well back also allows the driver of the lorry to see you in his mirrors. If you cannot see the mirrors on the lorry then the driver cannot see you.

It may be that you find yourself being followed very closely by another vehicle (tailgating). This can make you feel uneasy and pressured into going faster in an effort to get away from it. If this happens try to stay calm and do not speed up as the following driver will only speed up as well. If you can do so safely allow him to overtake.

Sometimes this is not possible so the safest thing you can do is to gradually allow the gap between your vehicle and the one in front to increase to double what it should be by gradually slowing down. This will then give you more time to slow down or stop, should the need arise, without putting yourself in too much danger.

## 27. Dead Ground

Dead ground is a section of road that



is hidden in a dip. Vehicles in this dip cannot be seen so care must be taken before overtaking to ensure there are no areas of dead ground hiding the oncoming traffic.

## 28. Humpback Bridge

This type of bridge is found mainly on rural roads where the road goes over a stream or a river. The 'hump' can be quite high and will sometimes hide an oncoming vehicle from view. Consider using the horn to warn any other road users of your presence before you start to go over the bridge particularly if the road is narrow. Also listen out for the horns of other vehicles warning you and watch for pedestrians using the bridge.



## 29. Priorities

The Highway Code says that where there is an obstruction on your side of the road, such as a parked car, you should give way to oncoming traffic. However sometimes

common sense and courtesy should prevail and the advice of the Highway Code altered to suit the situation. For example, if you are travelling downhill and a large heavy vehicle is travelling uphill with an obstruction on his side of the road, you should give way to the lorry allowing him to continue up the hill without stopping. It is far easier for you to restart downhill than it is for the lorry going uphill.

### 30. Bad Weather

#### Fog

If you have to travel in foggy conditions always allow extra time for your journey as you will have to drive slower and so it will take you longer to reach your destination.

Use dipped headlights, even in daytime fog, and if visibility is reduced to less than 100 metres use your fog lamps.

Do not follow the lights of the vehicle in front as you could be too close. Try to leave as large a gap as possible between your vehicle and the one in front.

Give signals earlier than you would do normally to allow other drivers time to see your signal and react accordingly. Keep a check on your speed; you may be travelling faster than you think. Use the wipers to keep the windscreen clear.

Remember to turn your fog lamps off when they are no longer needed or they will dazzle other drivers.

If it is foggy and your journey is not essential, stay in.

#### Snow

In deep snow special wheel chains can be fitted to help prevent skidding.

#### Heavy Rain

When driving in heavy rain use your dipped headlights so that other drivers will be able to see your car easier. Do not use fog lights as this will dazzle other drivers and give the false impression that you are braking.

Increase the distance between you and the car in front. It should be at least double on a wet than on a dry road surface. Keep your speed down to reduce the risk of aquaplaning. This is where a build up of ad

water between the tyre and the road surface causes the vehicle to slide as the tyres loose contact with the road. You can tell when this happens as the steering suddenly becomes very light. To correct it ease off the accelerator and try to keep the vehicle in a straight line. Do not try to steer. Once the car has slowed down the tyres will grip again.

### 31. Security

If possible you should always park your car in the garage if you have one. This is the safest place for it. Failing this you should look to park your car in a secure car park. If you do have to park your car on the street try to look for a prominent position where the car is very visible. At night make sure the area is also well lit.

If you have a local vehicle watch scheme in operation join this so that you can help to protect your car when parked near your home.

If you install a car radio/CD/DVD make sure it is a security coded radio.

### 32. Pedestrian Crossings

There are four main types of pedestrian crossing. These are the zebra crossing, pelican crossing, puffin crossing and the toucan crossing. Pelican, puffin and toucan crossings are controlled by traffic lights. Even if a traffic light is on green you should always be prepared to stop, particularly, if pedestrians have been waiting for sometime and as a consequence you suspect that the green light may shortly change to red. You should also pay special attention to certain types of pedestrian who are particularly at risk when crossing the road. For example, pedestrians over 60 and those under 15.

Pedestrians who have disabilities or who may be deaf and/or blind. If you see a pedestrian with a dog who has a bright orange collar and lead then this informs you that the pedestrian is deaf. If the person is carrying a white stick they are blind and if they are carrying a white stick with a red band they are blind and deaf.

#### Types of crossing

Although each of the 4 types of pedestrian crossing are different certain rules and advice apply to them all:-

- You must not park on a crossing or in the area within the zigzag lines.
- You must not overtake the vehicle nearest the crossing.
- Never beckon pedestrians to cross; let them decide when they feel it is safe to cross.
- In a queue of traffic keep the crossing clear.
- Do not harass pedestrians when they are crossing by revving the engine or inching forward. Give them plenty of time to cross.

Some rules and advice apply to certain types of crossing:

### Zebra Crossing

- You must give way to anyone who has stepped onto the crossing, so be on the lookout as you approach for people who are waiting to cross or who are approaching from the side and be prepared to stop.
- A zebra crossing with a central island is two crossings. If it goes straight across the road with no island it is one crossing.

### Pelican Crossing

These are signal controlled crossings. The sequence of the lights is:

Red

Flashing Amber

Green

Amber

Red.

The lights are operated by pedestrians using a push button when they want to cross. If the amber light is flashing you must give way to pedestrians who are still on the crossing. If there are no pedestrians on the crossing when the amber light is flashing you may proceed but with caution in case anyone runs onto the crossing in an attempt to beat the lights.

Pelican crossings which go straight across the road with an island in the centre are one crossing. If the crossing is staggered it is two crossings.

You must give way to pedestrians who are still crossing even when the signal for traffic changes to green. Remember green means you can proceed only if it is clear and safe to do so.

### Puffin Crossing

A puffin crossing is signal controlled. The sequence of the lights is the same as normal traffic lights. They are also operated using a push button. However they also have a sensor which detects when someone is within the crossing area. Once activated the lights will not go back to green until the crossing area is clear of people as detected by the sensor.

### Toucan Crossing

A toucan crossing is signal controlled and has the same sequence as traffic lights. This type of crossing is shared by pedestrians and cyclists ( 'two can cross'). Cyclists can ride across the crossing but at other crossings they should dismount and walk. The signals are push button operated and there is a separate light to indicate when cyclists can cross.

### 33. Night-time Driving

At night you will not be able to see as far as you can in daylight and so the way you drive must change to allow for the conditions.

When you first go out into the darkness give your eyes a minute or two to adjust before you start to drive.

Make sure you switch on your vehicle lights so you can see and be seen.

Only use main beam headlights on roads without street lamps. These lights are very bright and can dazzle the drivers of oncoming vehicles or vehicles in front so switch to dipped headlights if another vehicle approaches you or overtakes you. If a vehicle is overtaking (and there is no oncoming traffic) do not dip your headlights until the vehicle passes you. Your main beam will help the overtaking vehicle to see if there are any hazards up ahead that would make the manoeuvre unsafe.

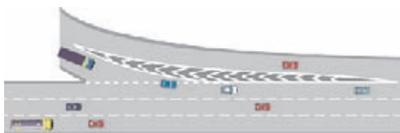
When waiting at a junction do not keep your foot on the brake pedal as the lights can dazzle the driver behind.

Beware of bends if you overtake anything. It is difficult to see as far in the dark and it is not easy to judge distances.

Pedestrians are more difficult to see and can seem to appear from 'nowhere'. You need to be more alert. Never drive so fast that you cannot stop within the distance you can see to be clear. At night that distance is within the range of your lights.

### 34. Motorways

Once you have passed your driving test you are allowed to drive on the motorway. The traffic travels faster which means that conditions change rapidly. You need to be alert and have total concentration. Continuous high speeds may increase the risk of your vehicle breaking down so remember to particularly check your vehicle carefully before you embark on a long motorway journey.



As you join the motorway the slip road may be divided into lanes or separated from the main carriageway by chevron road marking. You must not cross the solid white line; it is there to keep the lanes of traffic separate. Stay in lane. If you are travelling along the left hand lane of a motorway and you see vehicles ahead joining from a slip road be prepared to move into another lane to help the merging traffic.

You must not stop on the motorway except in an emergency, in which case use the hard shoulder. Emergency telephones are located along the edge of the motorway approximately 1 mile apart. They are connected to police control or the highways agency control centre who can locate you from the number on the box. If you break down use the emergency telephone not a mobile telephone as you may not know exactly where you are. To find the nearest emergency telephone look for the small marker posts which will have an arrow on them pointing in the direction of the closest one. When using an emergency telephone always face the oncoming traffic.

If you see a car on the hard shoulder displaying a HELP pennant this means the driver is disabled and may need assistance in calling for the breakdown services.

If you need to stop for a break to relieve tiredness and fatigue use the closest service area or leave the motorway at the next exit.

Motorways are statistically safer than other roads in so far as the number of accidents which occur is concerned. However when accidents do happen, because the traffic is travelling at high speed, the injuries are usually more serious and there is a greater loss of life.

So if you are a new driver, before you use the motorway make sure you know all the rules and advice as laid down in the Highway Code, ensure you know the meaning of all the road signs and markings, and, most importantly, take further training from an ADI so you are fully prepared and can drive safely on these fast moving roads. Your forward planning and rear observation skills need to be well honed.

### 35. Active Traffic Management

Active Traffic Management is a new pilot scheme being introduced in an effort to reduce congestion.

When driving in an actively managed area you must obey all signals displayed on the overhead gantries. In addition to the normal signals found on motorways there may also be a single red X which is applicable to the hard shoulder only. This red X does not have flashing beacons and when you see this sign do not use this lane except in an emergency. If you see a mandatory speed limit sign displayed above the hard shoulder this means the hard shoulder can be used as a running lane.

You may also see Emergency Refuge Areas these are designed to be used in cases of emergency or breakdown. They are wider than the hard shoulder, approximately 100 metres long and located about every 500 metres along the carriageway. Features include:

- CCTV – allowing assistance to be sent as needed
- sensors to alert the control centre when a vehicle has entered
- additional distance from the main carriageway
- emergency roadside telephones containing additional support for the hard of hearing and foreign visitors.

They can also pinpoint your location.

### Highway Agency Traffic Officers

These officers are working in partnership with the police and are extra eyes and ears on the motorway. They wear a full uniform including a high visibility orange and yellow jacket and drive a high visibility vehicle with yellow and black chequered markings. A traffic officers duties include:

- offering safety advice for motorists
- helping broken down motorists
- clearing debris from the carriageway
- supporting police and emergency services
- managing diversion routes
- undertaking high visibility patrols
- providing mobile/temporary road closures

Traffic officers do not have any enforcement powers but are able to stop and direct anyone travelling on the motorway. It is an offence not to comply with the directions given by a traffic officer.

### 36. Journey Planning

To help ease and avoid congestion and stress plan your journey so as to avoid busy times of day wherever possible. This will help you to have a shorter and more pleasant journey. Make sure that you know where you are going by looking on a map or contact one of the major motoring organisations who offer a route planning service. This can also be done on the internet using one of the widely available route planners. You may find it useful to plan an alternative route just in case you encounter road works or an accident.

### 37. Urban Congestion

A congestion charge scheme was introduced into London to ease congestion in the City.

Not all drivers have to pay the charge, some of those who are exempt include

- residents living within the zone
- disabled people who hold a blue badge
- drivers of electrically propelled or alternative fuel vehicles
- riders of two wheelers

### 38. Eco-safe driving

Transport is an essential part of our lives and most of us appreciate this does not come without certain environmental consequences. In particular, the emissions produced by vehicles cause significant air pollution and are a major contributor to global warming. Eco-safe driving is a style of driving that will help to reduce this damage to our planet and the air we breath whilst improving road safety. Transport currently accounts for 20% of all air pollution emissions in the world. Eco-safe driving is not about driving at lower speeds (although this would undoubtedly help to reduce fuel consumption and accidents) it is more about avoiding senseless wastage of fuel through unnecessary acceleration or braking, inefficient use of the gears and speeding (i.e. exceeding permitted limits or driving at speeds unsafe for the prevailing conditions).

When you accelerate quickly or rapidly you disproportionately use more fuel. Accelerating rapidly allows you to gain speed in a shorter space of time, however, that saving in time costs you dearly in fuel. The accelerator can be compared to a tap handle in that it controls the flow of fuel to the engine. The harder you depress the pedal the faster the fuel will flow. If the accelerator can be compared to a tap handle then each gear can be compared to a different tap size. First gear is a very large wide tap and fifth gear is a very small narrow tap. Therefore the more you need to use the big wide taps (i.e. the lower gears) the more fuel you will use when you turn the handle (i.e. depress the accelerator). You particularly use more fuel when you accelerate from a standstill because more energy is needed to move a static object than one that is already moving and has momentum. This is why first gear is required to move a stationary vehicle.

The skills required for hazard perception, defensive driving and progressive driving play a big part in Eco-safe driving as they will help you to avoid inefficient use of the accelerator, brake and gears through better awareness, anticipation and planning. In particular to be Eco friendly you need to: Minimise harsh or rapid acceleration. Whenever it is safe to do so, gradually increase speed by gently depressing the accelerator. Look well ahead to see what is

happening, to ensure that any acceleration now, will not be wasted a little later on because you have to brake. Let gravity aid you so that if you are going down hill you may find you can fully release pressure on the accelerator and still maintain a safe speed. With your foot fully off the accelerator the engine needs very little fuel, so take advantage of engine braking wherever possible. Avoid using acceleration to exceed legal speed limits or driving faster than it is safe for the prevailing road, traffic or weather conditions as this may not only cost you more fuel it may cost you your life. Vehicles travelling at 70 mph use up to 30% more fuel to cover the same distance as those travelling at 50 mph.

Minimise harsh braking or unnecessary stopping. Look well ahead and if you see that you will need to reduce speed, do it gradually using engine braking rather than applying the brake at the last minute. Gradually adjust your speed to time your arrival at meet situations or when turning right such that you can potentially maintain progress and avoid having to stop. Similarly, you can do this when emerging from a give way junction provided you have a good view of the road you intend to emerge into as you approach the junction.

Engage higher gears as soon as possible without labouring the engine. Avoid engaging unnecessary intermediate gear changes so that you can more quickly engage higher gears or delay engaging lower gears. Modern cars are designed to deliver power even when engine revs are quite low and provided you haven't lost momentum as you slow down you will be surprised how late you can leave a downward gear change without risking an engine stall.

Cold engines use more fuel; therefore avoid manoeuvring whilst the engine is cold if at all possible. Do any manoeuvring before you get out of the vehicle rather than when you return to the vehicle (for example by reversing into parking places or driveways rather than reversing out). Not only does this save fuel, it is also a much safer way to emerge onto a road. Finally, if you need to use a manual choke to start the vehicle, always remember to press it back in once the engine is sufficiently warm. When driving remember, safety is paramount, so never sacrifice safety for fuel saving.

Other ways you can save fuel include making sure your vehicle is properly maintained, that tyre pressures are correct and that no objects are fastened to the vehicle that will cause drag. Before making any journey carefully plan your route to avoid any known hold ups or road works. This will help you save fuel by avoiding slow moving queuing traffic.

Therefore Eco-safe drivers do not:

- Rev-up the engine whilst waiting to move off.
- Use excessive acceleration to move off at speed as if competing in a race.
- Tailgate vehicles resulting in continual harsh braking and acceleration.
- Wait until the last minute to react to hazards including junctions ahead by braking harshly.
- Peak the revs in each gear to obtain maximum acceleration.
- Rush to overtake at each and every opportunity even on congested roads where little benefit will be gained.
- Eco-safe driving is the exact opposite of rally, drag or formula one racing driving.

When done properly Eco-safe driving can save up to 15% on your fuel bill while helping road safety. So save money, save lives, save our planet - adopt an Eco-safe style of driving.

### 39. Tunnels

The following is an extract from the official DSA guide to Driving the essential skills:

“Should an emergency arise in a tunnel advice will be broadcast on the radio frequency shown at the entrance to a tunnel. If you break down or have an accident in a tunnel. If you break down or have an accident in a tunnel

- switch on your hazard warning lights
- switch off the engine
- leave your vehicle
- give first aid to any injured people, if you are able
- call for help from an emergency point.

If your vehicle is on fire and you can drive it out of the tunnel, do so. If not

- pull over to the side and switch off the engine
- leave the vehicle immediately

- put out the fire using the vehicle's extinguisher or the one available in the tunnel
- move without delay to an emergency exit if you cannot put out the fire
- call for help from the nearest emergency point.
- Tremors
- Dizziness
- Cramps

If the vehicle in front is on fire switch on your warning lights, then follow the above procedure, giving first aid to the injured if possible.”

### 40. Drugs and driving

#### Driving under the influence of drugs

Driving under the influence of drugs - whether prescribed medication or illegal substances - is just as dangerous as driving under the influence of alcohol. It's also against the law. Drugs can affect your mind and body in a variety of ways that mean you aren't able to drive safely. Not only that, the effects can last for hours or even days. Some substances can effect your driving for up to 72 hours after being taken.

#### Drug tests

The police can carry out roadside tests of impairment to help them decide whether to arrest you if they think you are unfit to drive through drugs. Their code of practice for testing for impairment is at: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk). The penalties are the same as for drink driving. You face a minimum one year driving ban, a fine of up to £5,000 and six months jail.

#### Drug information

A website - [www.drugdrive.com](http://www.drugdrive.com) - has been set up to give 17-35 year olds information on how different drugs can impair their driving.

Drugs can affect your driving by causing:

- Slower reaction times
- Poor concentration
- Sleepiness/fatigue
- Confused thinking
- Distorted perception
- Over confidence, so you take unnecessary risks
- Impaired co-ordination
- Erratic behaviour
- Nausea
- Hallucinations
- Blurred vision/enlarged pupils
- Aggression
- Panic attacks and paranoia