

Road to Solo Driving



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Several organisations have contributed to the preparation of this handbook, and their help is gratefully acknowledged.

Road laws and legal requirements

Road laws change from time to time. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the most recent edition of this handbook which you can check by visiting vicroads.vic.gov.au If you are in doubt, check with any of the VicRoads Customer Service Centres listed on the inside back cover.

This handbook sets out many of the legal requirements for drivers. It is intended as a guide only. It does not set out in full all of the requirements of the law.

You will need to consult the appropriate Acts and Regulations if you want a complete knowledge of the road law. Remember that ignorance of what the law says on a particular subject is not accepted as an excuse by the courts. Victorian legislation can be found at legislation.vic.gov.au

Most things in this handbook apply to drivers. Motorcycle riders should also refer to the **Victorian Rider Handbook** for further information. Bus and heavy vehicle drivers should refer to the **Victorian Bus and Truck Driver Handbook** for further information. Much of the information in the **Road to Solo Driving** also applies to pedal cyclists.

The term driver is generally used to cover different road users and simplify the language. It does not mean that one group is more important than the other.

The **Road to Solo Driving** handbook is designed to help you understand the road rules, know your legal responsibilities and prepare you for the challenges of driving. The learner permit test questions are based on this handbook. You will also need to know the information in the **Road to Solo Driving** to pass your drive test to get your licence.

The **Road to Solo Driving** is the first of a series of handbooks. When you become a learner driver you can choose to use the myLearners app or you will receive a copy of the **Learner Kit**. If you choose the myLearners app, you will be given a handout on how to download the app to record your 120 hours of driving. More information and top tips for lifelong safe driving behaviours can be found at myLearners.vic.gov.au.

If you received the **The Learner Kit**, it includes:

- the **Guide for Learners** (with the **Learner Log Book**)
- the **Guide for Supervising Drivers**.

The **Guide for Learners** helps you structure your driving practice and keep track of your progress as you work towards your Ps. The **Guide for Learners** includes the **Learner Log Book** that you must use to show you have gained at least 120 hours driving practice to get a licence, if you are under 21 years of age at the time of your licence test. The **Guide for Learners** and the **Learner Log Book** will help you make the most of your minimum 120 hours of driving experience and help you to become a safer driver.

The **Guide for Supervising Drivers** booklet explains how your supervising driver can help you right through your learner period.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving road safety. The **Road to Solo Driving** is one of the important initiatives that help to do this.

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Welcome

Welcome to the Road to Solo Driving

This handbook will help you if you are going for a learner permit, a probationary licence, or converting an interstate or overseas licence to a Victorian licence.

The aim of this handbook is to help you:

- prepare for the challenges of driving
- find out how you will learn to drive
- manage and reduce your risks as a new driver
- understand the rules and responsibilities of driving.

There is a lot to know before you get your learner permit, such as:

- the age requirements
- the Graduated Licensing System
- the **Learner Log Book**
- learner permits
- P licences (P1, P2)
- demerit points
- road rules
- licence tests
- hazards and risks
- problems caused by alcohol and drugs, and so on.

The **Road to Solo Driving** will help make all this information a bit clearer. Your learner permit test will be based on the information in this book. You will also need this information to pass your drive test and get your probationary licence.

New drivers are three times more likely to be involved in casualty crashes than more experienced drivers. Learning the information in the **Road to Solo Driving** is the first step to becoming a safer driver. Reading this handbook alone won't make you a safer driver. What matters is how you use the information.

How to use this handbook

This handbook is divided into five sections. Each is colour coded with a vertical band on the outside edge of each page.

The next section explains the steps to getting your licence and becoming a driver.

Chapter 1 explains the challenges facing new drivers.

Chapter 2 covers the process of learning to drive and the importance of supervised driving practice.

Chapter 3 describes the risks of driving and strategies to manage these risks.

Chapter 4 describes some of the most important road rules and responsibilities.

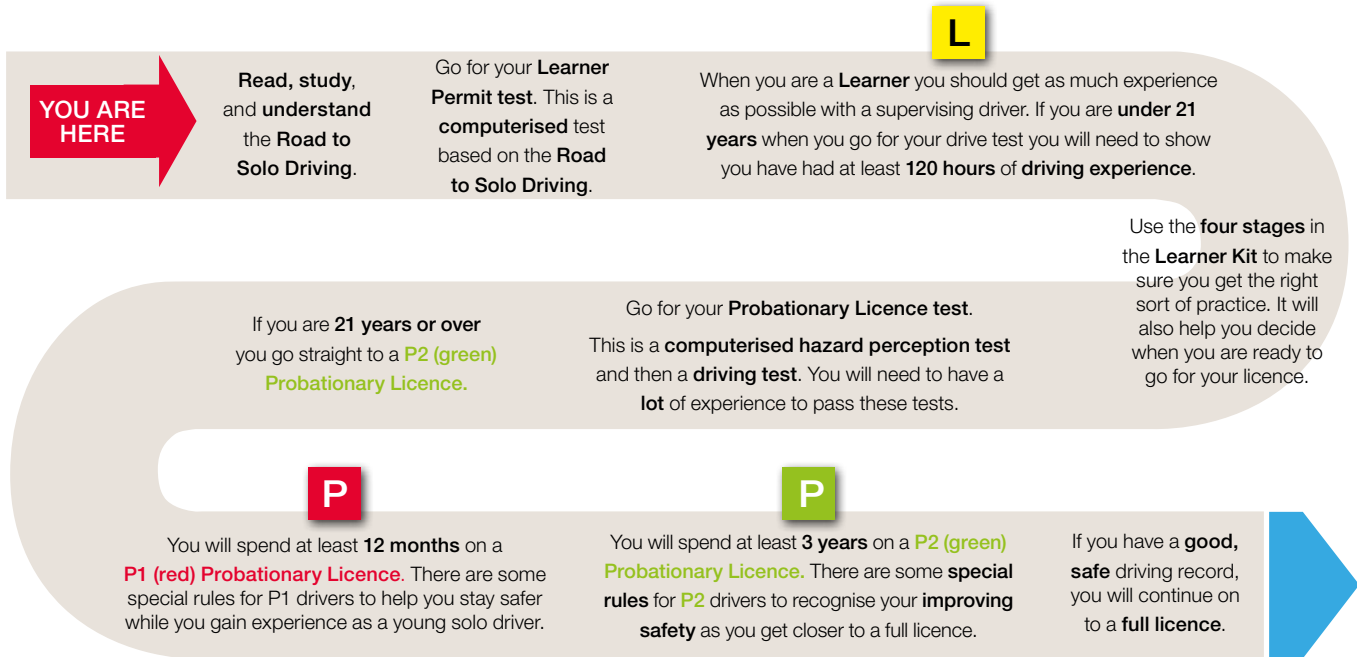
Important information

It is important to know that when there is a statement of road law, the word 'must' is used.



The licensing journey

You are starting on your licensing journey. Here is a quick overview of the path ahead.



The 10 steps to getting your licence

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Step 1 - Read and understand Road to Solo Driving

Make sure you have the latest edition of this handbook and read it thoroughly. You can check whether you have the latest version of this handbook by visiting **vicroads.vic.gov.au** which will tell you when the latest edition was printed.

Learning the information in this handbook and knowing the road rules are the first step to being ready to take the learner permit test.

Language options

When you sit for your learner permit test or your probationary licence test, you can choose to do the learner permit test and the Hazard Perception Test on the computer in any of the 14 languages available (for a full list, visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**).



The 10 steps to getting your licence

Step 2 - Book your learner permit test

You must be at least 16 years old before you can sit the test.

You can book your learner permit test:

- online at **vicroads.vic.gov.au** (using a valid Mastercard or Visa*)
- by phone (using a valid Mastercard or Visa*)
- Call: 13 11 71
International calls: + 61 3 9854 7764 (licensing)
TTY: 13 36 77
Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727
- in person (go to any VicRoads Customer Service Centre, for locations visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au** or call 13 11 71).

*Please note: a card payment fee will apply when using Mastercard or Visa. For further information visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.

You will be asked:

- your full name
- date of birth
- address
- mobile phone number
- email
- when and where you would like to be tested.

Booking and test fees apply and must be paid at the time of booking.

You will be given an appointment number that you should write down. You will need to bring this number with you for your test.

Note: If you cannot keep your appointment, you need to give VicRoads 24 hours notice to cancel your test. Otherwise fees will not be refunded unless you produce a medical certificate or other supporting evidence. If you transfer your appointment, regardless of when you contact VicRoads, an additional appointment fee will apply.

Step 3 - Pass your learner permit test

You need to bring:

- your appointment number
- evidence of identity and age, as set out on page 12
- payment for your 10 year learner permit.

If you have poor vision you must bring an eyesight certificate from a registered optometrist or ophthalmologist (eye doctor). If you have a disability or illness that may affect your driving, you will need to bring a medical report from your doctor stating that you are medically fit to drive. If you are unsure or would like advice, contact VicRoads for further information.

Once you have a learner permit, you must tell VicRoads if you develop any medical condition or injury that may affect your driving.

The learner permit test includes:

- reading an eyesight chart to test your vision
- a computerised, multiple-choice test based on this handbook to test your knowledge of road law and road safety.

The best way to prepare for the test is:

- read and study this handbook until you understand it all
- when you understand the handbook, use the practice test on the VicRoads website at vicroads.vic.gov.au to help revise.

The practice test items on the website are good, but they don't test all the information you will need to know to pass the learner test and the probationary licence test later on. That information is in this handbook.

The 10 steps to getting your licence

Evidence of identity

Before you sit for your learner permit or your probationary licence you **must** prove who you are and that you live in Victoria by bringing certain documents to a VicRoads Customer Service Centre.

All evidence of identity documents must be **originals** and you must also ensure that all names on each of the documents match and are in the same/correct order. Photocopies, certified or otherwise, are **not** acceptable.

You need to bring:

- **one category A evidence document**
For example a passport (current or expired by up to two years) or Australian birth certificate (birth extracts and commemorative certificates are not acceptable).
- **one category B evidence document**
For example a phone, gas or electricity bill (no more than one year old); or a current Medicare card, entitlement card issued by the Commonwealth, student identity card, credit or account card issued by a bank, building society or credit union.

- **evidence of Victorian residence**

If not shown on the category A or B evidence documents or if you have changed address.

If documents cannot be provided, you can ask a referee (who has known you at least 12 months and holds a current Victorian licence) to complete the 'Victorian residence declaration' on your *Licence or learner permit application* form.

- **evidence of change of name or differing names**

If there is a difference in names between the category A and B evidence documents or if you have changed your name, one document that shows your correct name, for example a marriage or Change of Name certificate.

For more information and a complete list of evidence of identity documents visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**

Step 4 - Pay for and be granted your learner permit

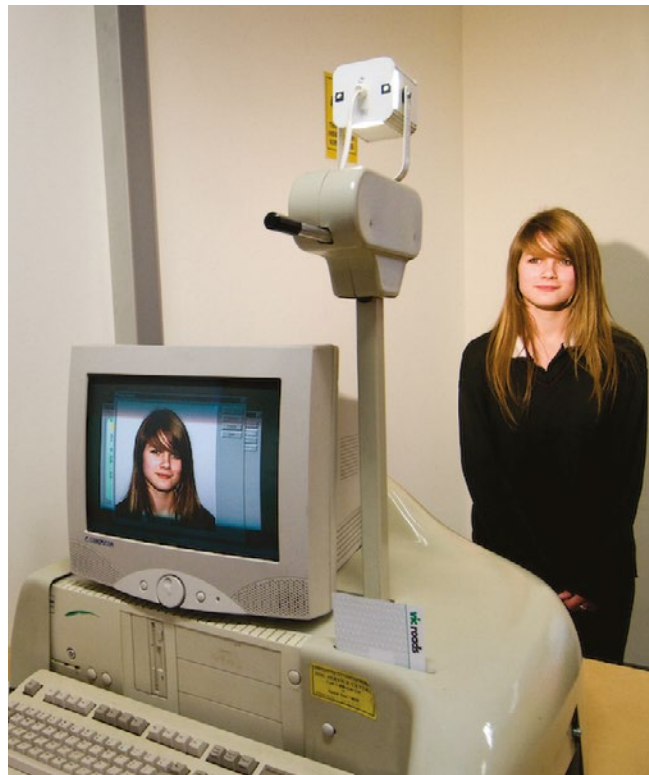
After you pass the test you will:

- pay for your learner permit, which is valid for ten years
- have your photo taken for your learner permit
- be given a paper learner permit receipt
- receive a handout on how to download the myLearners app or a copy of the **Learner Kit** (containing the **Guide for Learners** with the **Learner Log Book** and the **Guide for Supervising Drivers**).

Information found at myLearners.vic.gov.au or in the **Learner Kit** will help you get through your learner period and pass the probationary licence test. If you are not given a **Learner Kit**, you should ask for one.

You will be able to practice driving on the paper learner receipt until you receive your learner permit card.

Your learner permit card will be sent to you through the mail in about a week. Make sure VicRoads has your correct current address.



The 10 steps to getting your licence

Step 5 - Get as much driving experience as possible

The best way to prepare for the Drive Test at the end of the learner period is to get as much supervised experience as possible in many different driving situations. This is true for all learner drivers – it is much harder to pass the test if you only have a small amount of experience.

If you are less than 21 years old when you go for your licence test you must:

- complete a minimum of 120 hours supervised driving experience including 20 hours of driving at night
- ensure that you and your supervising driver have completed the declaration in the myLearners app or take your completed **Learner Log Book** with you when you go for your probationary licence test. The **Learner Log Book** will be checked before you take the drive test to make sure everything has been completed correctly.

If you are 21 years or over you are encouraged to use the **Learner Kit**, but you do not need to present the **Learner Log Book** when you go for your probationary licence test.

This handbook, the myLearners website and the **Learner Kit** are essential in getting your 120 hours of driving experience.

- The **Road to Solo Driving** has important information about road rules that all drivers need to know. You are expected to know and comply with the road rules when you attempt the probationary licence test
- The myLearners app will record your 120 hours of driving. You can also follow the four stages on how to safely commence your driving practice at **myLearners.vic.gov.au**
- The **Guide for Learners** also gives you a four stage plan for your 120 hours
- The **Guide for Supervising Drivers** explains the four stage plan to your supervisor so they know how to help
- The **Learner Log Book** is your record of your progress – and is essential proof that you have achieved your 120 hours.

Do not practise without a learner permit.

Remember, you can't get behind the wheel unless you have a learner permit.

Without a learner permit you can't practise on public roads and in car parks. Doing so can result in you being charged with unlicensed driving.

Driving safely requires a number of skills. Getting your learner permit helps you understand the road rules, know your legal responsibilities and prepare for the challenges of driving.

Learner permit restrictions

All car learner permit holders must:

- carry their learner permit card or receipt at all times while driving
- display L plates on the front and rear of the vehicle, visible from a distance of 20 metres
- be accompanied by a supervising driver holding a full (not probationary) driver licence at all times while driving
- must have a zero **Blood Alcohol Concentration** (BAC) at all times while driving (see pages 71-74 for more information)
- not touch or use voice controls on a hand-held or mounted mobile phone or other device. If you're planning on using navigation, or playing or streaming audio material, you'll need to set it up before driving. For navigation, a safer option is to only use the GPS audio directions and avoid looking at the images on the screen. Simple audio and navigation adjustments may be made using an inbuilt device only when driving. Scrolling, entering numbers and text is not permitted unless parked
- not tow a trailer or another vehicle
- only drive a car (not a bus or truck).



Definition

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is a measure of the amount of alcohol you have in your blood.

The 10 steps to getting your licence

Step 6 - Book your probationary licence test

To get your probationary licence, you must:

- be at least 18 years
- have held a learner permit for a **continuous period** of at least:
 - 12 months in the period immediately before applying for a driver licence if you are under 21 years
 - 6 months in the period immediately before applying for a driver licence if you are over 21 years but under 25 years
 - 3 months in the period immediately before applying for a driver licence if you are 25 years or over.
- not be disqualified from driving in Victoria, in Australia or overseas
- pass a computerised Hazard Perception Test and then pass the driving test (see Drive Test on pages 19-20).

Definition

Continuous period means that the permit must not have been broken by a suspension, cancellation or a break in continuity such as allowing the permit to expire before regaining a new permit.

- If you are under 21 years when you apply for a probationary licence, you must produce evidence of having completed 120 hours of supervised driving (including at least 20 hours at night) either in the myLearners app or by presenting the **Learner Log Book**. If using the **Learner Log Book**:
 - All necessary details must be completed and each entry signed.
 - The Declaration of Completion must be signed by both the applicant and a supervising driver. The List of Supervising Drivers must be completed and signed by all supervising drivers.
 - You should carefully read the instructions on the front of the **Learner Log Book** to understand how to fill in the log book correctly.

Fact

An incomplete or incorrect **Learner Log Book** will not be accepted. You will not be able to take your driving test, all your fees will be forfeited, and you cannot take your test for six weeks.

There are serious consequences if entries in the **Learner Log Book** are found to be incomplete or incorrect. You will lose your booking and test fees, and be prevented from taking the probationary licence test for at least six weeks. You may also be liable to penalties under the *Road Safety Act 1986*.

You can book your test:

- online by visiting **vicroads.vic.gov.au** (using a valid Mastercard or Visa*)
- by phone (using a valid Mastercard or Visa*). See page 10 for contact numbers
- in person (go to any VicRoads Customer Service Centre, for locations visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au** or call 13 11 71).

*Please note: a card payment fee will apply when using Mastercard or Visa.

For further information visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.



Note: If you cannot keep an appointment you will need to give VicRoads 24 hours notice to cancel your test, otherwise fees will not be refunded unless you produce a medical certificate or other supporting evidence. If you transfer your appointment, regardless of when you contact VicRoads, an additional appointment fee will apply.

The 10 steps to getting your licence

Step 7 - Pass your probationary licence test

You can be tested at any of the VicRoads Customer Service Centres listed on the inside back cover of this handbook.

Your driving supervisor or instructor has to provide a registered, roadworthy car with a speed display on the dashboard that the testing officer is able to easily see, have seatbelts for all occupants and that is fitted with L plates for the drive test. The car needs to also have a centrally mounted handbrake accessible to the VicRoads testing officer if you will be sitting the driving test without a driving instructor.

You need to bring your:

- appointment number
- current learner permit
- completed **Learner Log Book** which includes the completed Declaration of Completion and List of Supervising Drivers (if you are under 21 years, when you apply for a probationary licence). If using the myLearners app, ensure that you and your supervising driver have completed the declaration in the app
- payment for your probationary licence.

If you cannot prove that you have completed 120 hours of driving practice, including 20 hours at night, you will not be permitted to sit the test. Your appointment and test fees will be forfeited and you will also have to wait at least six weeks before you can take the driving test.

If you have a medical condition or injury that may affect your driving and you have not previously told VicRoads, you must provide a medical certificate which states your fitness to drive. Once you hold a probationary licence, you must tell VicRoads if you develop any medical condition that might affect your driving.

The test includes:

- reading an eyesight chart to test your vision
- a computerised Hazard Perception Test to see how safely you respond to traffic situations
- a driving test to assess your driving skills (see Drive Test, pages 19-20).

The Hazard Perception Test

The Hazard Perception Test is designed to see how safely you respond to traffic situations.

- For each item in the Hazard Perception Test, you will watch a video of a traffic situation where you are asked when it is safe to do something like slow down or make a turn
- You have to respond safely to each traffic situation
- For some items, you click the mouse button when it is safe to perform the driving task
- For other items, there is no time when it is safe to perform the driving task and you should not click the mouse button.

You can take this test when you are 17 years and 11 months. You have to pass the Hazard Perception Test before you can sit the Drive Test. The Hazard Perception Test will indicate how well you are able to observe the whole road environment and anticipate **potential hazards** (see Practice is the best way on pages 41-42).

Definition

A **potential hazard** can be anything in the road environment that could present a danger or a risk while driving.

Drive Test

The on-road driving test is designed to identify drivers with the safe driving skills that develop with driving experience.

You are more likely to pass the drive test if you:

- have had more than 120 hours of driving experience
- have had driving experience in a broad range of different driving conditions – such as at night, in wet weather, and on roads with different speed zones.

However 120 hours experience does not guarantee that you will pass. You need to also demonstrate safe and legal driving during the test (so you should brush up on your road rules or read this handbook again before you attempt the drive test).

The 10 steps to getting your licence

You will drive for about 30 minutes during the test and the test route will include a range of driving conditions and tasks.

You will have to show that you can:

- control the vehicle correctly
- obey the road rules
- cooperate with other road users
- demonstrate safe driving skills.

Your ability to drive safely in less demanding situations will be assessed first. This is to make sure that you have basic car control and traffic skills. If you pass this part of the test, you will then be assessed in a broad range of traffic situations.

If you do something that is unsafe in the test, the test will be stopped and you will fail.

Further information about the Drive Test is available at **vicroads.vic.gov.au**

If you are tested in a car that has **dual controls** and your instructor holds a current Driving Instructor Authority Number, you can have your driving instructor with you. Otherwise, only the VicRoads testing officer will be with you. Other passengers are not usually permitted.

Definition

If a car has **dual controls**, it has additional pedal(s) on the passenger side for use by the accompanying driver.

If you are tested in a vehicle that is fitted with an automatic transmission you will be restricted to driving only vehicles that are fitted with an automatic transmission during your probationary period. The only way this restriction can be removed earlier is by passing another drive test in a manual car.

If you hold a probationary licence and you are undergoing instruction or testing in a manual vehicle, you must display a yellow plate measuring approximately 150 mm by 150 mm inscribed in black letters with the words 'Driver under instruction'. Your P plates must also be displayed.

Step 8 - Pay for and be granted your probationary licence

Once you have passed the test, you will:

- pay for your probationary licence
- have your photo taken for your probationary licence
- be given a paper probationary licence receipt.

You will be able to drive on the paper probationary licence receipt until you receive your probationary licence card.

Your probationary licence card will be sent to you through the mail in about a week. Make sure VicRoads has your current and valid address.

Step 9 - Follow the P plate rules, stay safe and keep your licence

Having your probationary licence will mean you have demonstrated the minimum skills required to drive solo. New probationary drivers have three times the risk of crashing compared to experienced drivers. There are some rules for probationary drivers to help them stay as safe as possible.

Severe penalties may be applied for breaching any of the rules, including licence suspension, extension of your probationary period, or licence cancellation. Additional penalties for drink driving convictions also include completion of the Drink and Drug Driver Behaviour Change Program, fitting of an alcohol interlock device and other heavy penalties.

You will need a good driving record to progress through the licence system. A good driving record means your licence has not been cancelled or suspended and you have not had any drink and/or drug driving offences. Your licence may also be suspended if you get too many demerit points – probationary drivers have a stricter limit than other drivers.

The 10 steps to getting your licence

If you are less than 21 years old when applying for a probationary licence:

- you will start on a P1 probationary licence (the P1 licence period lasts for a minimum of one year)
- if you have a good driving record you then progress to the P2 licence period that lasts for a minimum of three years
- after holding your probationary licence for a minimum of four years with a good driving record, you can then be issued with a full driver licence.

If you are 21 years or over when applying for a probationary licence:

- you will start on a P2 probationary licence (the P2 probationary licence period lasts for a minimum of three years)
- after holding your probationary licence for a minimum of three years with a good driving record, you can then be issued with a full driver licence.

P1 probationary licence

In addition to obeying the rules that apply to all drivers, when you are driving on a P1 probationary licence, you must:

- display red P plates on the front and rear of your vehicle (plates measuring approximately 150 mm square bearing a white letter P on a red background) and must be clearly visible from a distance of 20 metres
- carry your probationary licence (or valid paper receipt) with you at all times
- have a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC) (see Alcohol on pages 71-75)
- not drive a **probationary prohibited vehicle** (unless you are driving the vehicle during working hours at the request of your employer, have been granted a written exemption by VicRoads, or while being supervised by a full licence holder sitting beside the driver)
- not touch or use voice controls on a hand-held or mounted mobile phone or other device. If you're planning on using navigation, or playing or streaming audio material, you'll need to set it up before driving. For navigation, a safer option is to only use the GPS audio directions and avoid looking at the images on the screen. Simple audio and navigation adjustments may be made using an inbuilt device only when driving. Scrolling, entering numbers and text is not permitted unless parked

- not tow a caravan, trailer or another vehicle (unless for work and at the request of your employer, or for driving solely in connection with agriculture, horticulture, dairying, pastoral or commercial fishing or under supervision of a full licence holder who is authorised to drive that vehicle, and is sitting beside the driver)
- not carry more than one passenger aged between 16 and less than 22 years (unless exempt). Automatic exemptions exist for carrying immediate family members, when you're with a fully licensed supervising driver (as is the case for learner drivers) or for driving an emergency vehicle
- drive only a vehicle fitted with an automatic transmission if you passed the drive test in a vehicle fitted with an automatic transmission
- have less than five demerit points in twelve months
- have a good driving record to progress to a P2 licence – if you don't, your P1 licence will be extended.

Tip

For more information about Probationary prohibited vehicles (PPV) or other probationary restrictions, visit the VicRoads website vicroads.vic.gov.au.

P2 probationary licence

In addition to obeying the rules that apply to all drivers, when you are driving on a P2 probationary licence, you must:

- display green P plates on the front and rear of your vehicle (plates measuring approximately 150 mm square bearing a white letter P on a green background) and must be clearly visible from a distance of 20 metres
- carry your probationary licence (or valid paper receipt) with you at all times
- have less than five demerit points in twelve months
- have a good driving record to progress to a full driver licence – if you don't, your P2 licence will be extended
- not touch or use voice controls on a hand-held or mounted mobile phone or other device. If you're planning on using navigation, or playing or streaming audio material you'll need to set it up before driving. For navigation, a safer option is to only use the GPS audio directions and avoid looking at the images on the screen. Simple audio and navigation adjustments may be made using an inbuilt device only when driving. Scrolling, entering numbers and text is not permitted unless parked
- have a zero blood alcohol concentration (BAC) (see Alcohol on pages 71-75)

The 10 steps to getting your licence

- not drive a **probationary prohibited vehicle** (unless you are driving the vehicle during working hours at the request of your employer or have been granted a written exemption by VicRoads)
- drive only a vehicle fitted with an automatic transmission if you passed a drive test in a vehicle fitted with an automatic transmission.

Probationary prohibited vehicles (PPV)

When you have a P1 or P2 licence, you cannot drive a probationary prohibited vehicle.

A vehicle is considered 'probationary prohibited' if it has:

- a power to mass ratio of greater than 130 kilowatts per tonne, or
- an engine that has been modified to increase performance (other than a modification made by the manufacturer in the course of the vehicle's manufacture), or
- been declared a PPV by a notice published in the Victorian Government Gazette.

You can apply to be exempted from this restriction if it would cause you undue hardship.

Visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au** for more information.

Step 10 - Receive your full driver licence

Before your P2 probationary licence expires, you will be sent a notice to renew it. You will need to take the renewal notice to any photo point listed at **vicroads.vic.gov.au**, pay the renewal fee and be photographed. You will then be issued with a full driver licence paper receipt and your licence card will be sent to you in the mail.

You must have a good driving record to graduate from a P2 licence to a full driver licence. If you do not have a good record, you might have to remain on your P2 licence for longer than three years.

If you do not receive a renewal notice, it is still your responsibility to renew your licence by the expiry date.

Free Licence Scheme

The Free Licence Scheme rewards Victoria's most responsible young drivers. If you are under 25 and have completed your entire P1 and P2 probationary periods and have a good driving record, you may be eligible for a free three year driver licence.

To check the rules for eligibility, go to **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.

Language options

When you sit for your learner permit test or your probationary licence test, the road law questions and the Hazard Perception Test are available in some languages, please check **vicroads.vic.gov.au** for the current list.

If you speak a language or dialect that is not on this list, you can have an interpreter present during the test. If you are hearing impaired, you can ask to have an Auslan or sign language interpreter present. Interpreters are provided free of charge. When you book your test, let the VicRoads officer know you need an interpreter.

Key points

The **Graduated Licensing System** for people who are **under 21 years** when they apply for a probationary licence.

DRIVER'S MINIMUM AGE	LEARNER PERMIT	P1 PROBATIONARY LICENCE	P2 PROBATIONARY LICENCE	FULL DRIVER LICENCE
	16 years	18 years	19 years	22 years
DRIVER'S ELIGIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medically fit evidence of identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medically fit evidence of identity learner permit held continuously for a minimum of one year Learner Log Book kept with a minimum of 120 hours supervised driving practice including 20 hours at night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P1 probationary licence held for a minimum of one year (with no licence suspension) medically fit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> P2 probationary licence held for a minimum of 3 years (with no licence suspensions)
ASSESSMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eyesight test knowledge test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eyesight test hazard perception test <i>(This test must be passed before the practical driving test can be conducted. This test can be undertaken at the age of 17 years and 11 months)</i> practical driving test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> good driving record 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> good driving record
CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L plates displayed at front & rear of vehicle when driving must carry learner permit when driving accompanied by a driver who has a full car licence (non probationary) zero BAC no mobile device use, hands-free or hand-held, (including voice commands), except for navigation and to play or stream audio material if set up before driving no towing a caravan or trailer drives a car only (not a bus, truck or motorcycle) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RED P plates displayed at front & rear of vehicle when driving must carry licence when driving zero BAC no mobile device use, hands-free or hand-held, (including voice commands), except for navigation and to play or stream audio material if set up before driving probationary prohibited vehicle restriction no towing a caravan or trailer (unless for work or if under instruction) not carry more than one passenger aged between 16 and under 22 years of age if tested in an automatic vehicle, only drives a vehicle with automatic transmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GREEN P plates displayed at front & rear of vehicle when driving must carry licence when driving zero BAC no mobile device use, hands-free or hand-held, (including voice commands), except for navigation and to play or stream audio material if set up before driving probationary prohibited vehicle restriction if tested in an automatic vehicle, only drives a vehicle with automatic transmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> under .05 BAC must carry licence when driving if under 26 years of age must not use a hand-held device while driving, no use of messaging, social media, movies/TV, video games and calls, photos, emails and other moving images. Entering text, numbers and scrolling is banned.
DURATION	L 10 years	P 1 year (P1)	P 3 years (P2)	3 years or 10 years

The **Graduated Licensing System** for people who are **21 years and older** when they apply for a probationary licence.

	LEARNER PERMIT	P2 PROBATIONARY LICENCE	FULL DRIVER LICENCE
DRIVER'S MINIMUM AGE	16 years	21 years	24 years
DRIVER'S ELIGIBILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medically fit evidence of identity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> medically fit evidence of identity learner permit held continuously for a minimum of 6 months if 21 to 24 years, or 3 months if 25 years or over 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> probationary licence held for a minimum of 3 years (with no licence suspensions)
ASSESSMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eyesight test knowledge test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> eyesight test hazard perception test <i>(this test must be passed before the practical driving test can be conducted)</i> practical driving test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> good driving record
CONDITIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L plates displayed at front & rear of vehicle when driving must carry learner permit when driving accompanied by a driver who has a full car licence (non probationary) zero BAC no mobile device use, hands-free or hand-held, (including voice commands), except for navigation and to play or stream audio material if set up before driving no towing a caravan or trailer drives a car only (not a bus, truck or motorcycle) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GREEN P plates displayed at front & rear of vehicle when driving must carry licence when driving zero BAC probationary prohibited vehicle restriction if tested in an automatic vehicle, only drives a vehicle with automatic transmission no mobile device use, hands-free or hand-held, (including voice commands), except for navigation and to play or stream audio material if set up before driving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> under .05 BAC must carry licence when driving if under 26 years of age must not use a hand-held device while driving, no use of messaging, social media, movies/TV, video games and calls, photos, emails and other moving images. Entering text, numbers and scrolling is banned.
DURATION	L 10 years	P 3 years (P2)	3 years or 10 years

Key points

The risk of being killed or injured in a crash is much higher during the first few months and years of driving than it is later on.

Victoria's Graduated Licensing System (GLS) aims to reduce this risk. New drivers are introduced to driving progressively. This ensures they can move through the learner permit and the P1 and P2 probationary licence stages to earn their full driver licence without being exposed to challenging driving situations before they are ready.

The conditions of the GLS for those aged under 21 years when they apply for a probationary licence are on page 26. The conditions for those aged 21 years or over when they apply for a probationary licence are on page 27.

Fact

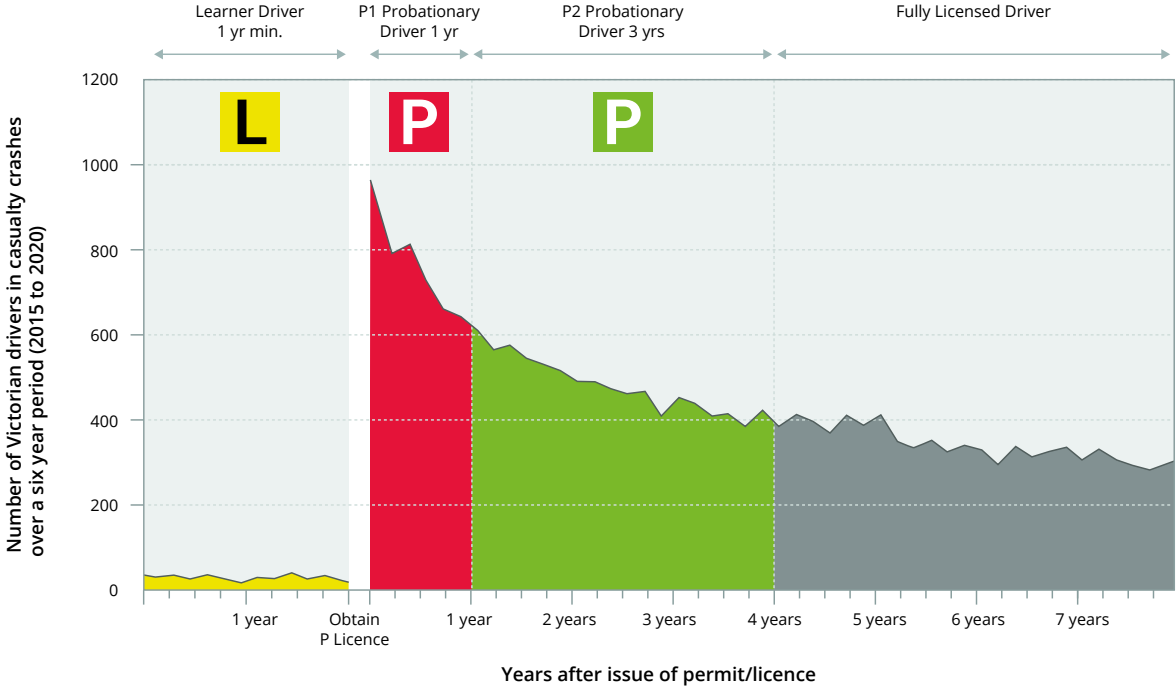
The rules for drivers vary from state to state. You should contact the Interstate Transport Authority to check if additional rules apply.



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The challenges of driving

The challenges of driving



This graph shows how driver safety changes with experience. The periods with the highest line on the graph are the times of greatest crash risk.

You can see that learners do not have many crashes, and that the number of crashes jumps up to very high levels as soon as people first get their probationary licence. It then decreases slowly over the next few years.

The graph shows four important things:

- You are relatively safe as a learner driver with a supervising driver to help you. This is why Victoria has a long learner driver period and a 120 hour requirement. This is the best time to learn the skills you need to be a safer driver
- The highest crash risk is associated with new P plate drivers. When you start to drive on your probationary licence you will have the highest risk of crashing that you will ever have as a driver. This is why Victoria has special requirements for new drivers and a Graduated Licensing System (GLS)
- Your crash risk will go down over the first few years of driving experience, but you will still have a relatively high risk of crashing for those first few years. This is why Victoria has a four-year probationary period for most new drivers

- Your risk of crashing will slowly decrease for many years after you get your licence (see also graph below).



The challenges of driving

Driving is not that easy

Driving is complicated. Safe drivers have to handle many different challenges, such as:

- different traffic conditions – from light traffic in local streets to heavy peak hour traffic on busy highways
- rural and country roads
- extremes in weather – rain, fog or icy conditions
- different driving manoeuvres in busy traffic – driving in roundabouts, changing lanes or turning at different types of intersections
- poor visibility – night driving or sun glare when driving at dawn or dusk
- unexpected actions of other road users – stopping quickly, merging or turning without warning, or pedestrians rushing onto the road without looking
- different types of roads – freeways, divided and undivided highways, main roads, gravel roads or roads with trams
- bad road surfaces – potholes, gravel or slippery surfaces
- any of these challenges when there are distractions inside the car – radio, passengers, mobile phones or other electronic devices.

Even a common driving task like turning right at an intersection is complicated:

- As you approach the intersection you will need to start slowing down at the right time, drive at a safe speed and decide whether you'll need to stop completely
- You will need to be aware of other road users. Cars around you might change lanes or stop suddenly and there may be pedestrians about to cross the road
- If you change lanes you will need to choose a safe gap between other cars. You will need to use your mirrors, do **head checks**, change gears if necessary and use turn indicators at the right times
- As you make the turn you need to be aware of potential hazards like oncoming cars and other road users around the intersection. Choosing a safe gap in oncoming traffic is a significant challenge for new drivers.

The best time to gain experience with these driving challenges is when you are a learner driver and you have a supervising driver with you.



The challenges of driving

Some facts about new solo driving

New solo drivers are more likely to be involved in:

- crashes that involve losing control and driving off the road, most often on straight sections of road
- crashes at an intersection when turning right in front of an oncoming vehicle
- crashes at an intersection where they are hit by a right turning vehicle
- crashes into the rear of another vehicle where the new solo driver is often in the vehicle that hits the car in front. See diagrams on the next page.

Definition

A **head check** means looking over your shoulder to see things through the rear side windows – but don't take your eyes off the road ahead for more than a second.

These crashes occur because new drivers sometimes make mistakes. They:

- misjudge gaps in traffic
- drive too fast for the conditions
- drive too close to other cars
- are slower at recognising potential hazards
- are easily distracted
- do not look further ahead than the car in front of them
- sometimes take risks.

These mistakes are not due to poor car control skills. They relate to poor responses to the road environment and other drivers. New drivers concentrate too much on car control skills rather than observing what is happening around them.

New solo drivers have a high risk of crashing because they don't have as much experience as other drivers. Getting at least 120 hours of experience as a learner in many different driving situations is the best thing you can do to reduce your crash risk.

Common crash types for novice and young drivers

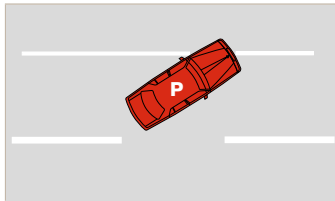


fig 1. Single vehicle crash

- Travel at speeds suitable for traffic conditions and the road environment
- Slow right down on unfamiliar roads and areas
- Don't go beyond your own driving skills or your car's limits.

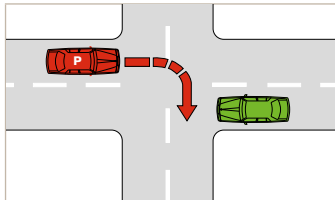


fig 2. Turning right at an intersection

- Reduce speed and slow down before entering intersections
- Wait for a safe gap before turning
- Make eye contact with other drivers
- If you can't see if any traffic is coming – WAIT!

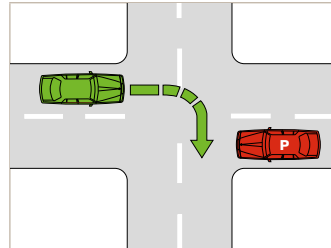


fig 3. Hit by a right turning vehicle

- Slow down before entering intersections and look out for vehicles turning across your path
- Don't change lanes near intersections
- Make eye contact with other drivers
- Don't assume another driver will give way to you.

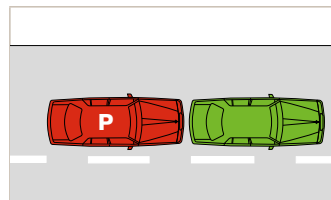


fig 4. Rear end

- Increase following distances
- Reduce speed
- Travel at speeds suitable for traffic conditions.



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Learning to drive



The more you do something, the better you get. This is true in everything people do. Whether it's sport, music, work, or anything else - practice and experience lead to better skills.

Research shows that new solo drivers with about 120 hours of learner driver experience have a crash risk that is 30% lower than new drivers with only about 50 hours of experience. This is why the minimum requirement for young learners in Victoria is 120 hours of driving experience.

It will take many years of driving experience, however, to develop the skills needed to drive safely.

It's not enough just to practice. Skilled sports people and musicians plan and structure their practice and they make sure they practice the key skills that will enable them to perform at a high level. For learner drivers this means you should plan your practice and experience by using information in the **Learner Kit**, and you should focus on practising the safe driving skills that will make you a safer driver.

Hazard perception

Anticipating potential hazards and risky situations is known as **hazard perception**. You will only develop good hazard perception skills if you have lots of driving practice in many different driving situations.

Definition

Hazard perception is the ability to:

- identify possible risks or dangers around you
- assess the level of risk and predict what might happen
- respond in a way and in time to avoid or deal with these potential hazards.

Hazard perception is not the same as reaction time. Young drivers usually have good reaction times but poor hazard perception skills. Reaction time is important – but your ability to anticipate potential hazards is much more important.

Potential hazards can be the vehicles around you, such as:

- the cars in front, behind and beside you
- the motorcycle in the side street to your left
- the truck double-parked up ahead
- the train that will cross the road you're driving on.

Pedestrians and bicycle riders can also present potential hazards.

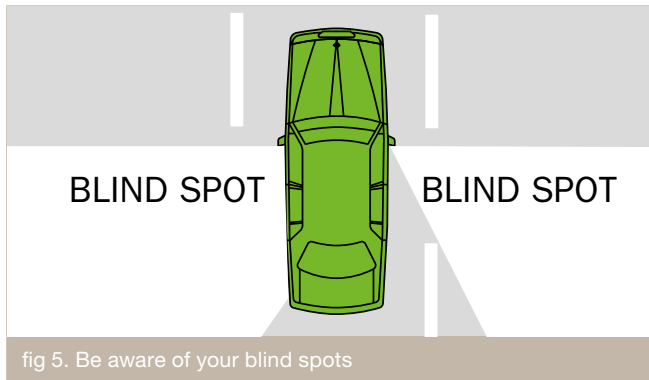
Other hazards include:

- weather conditions
- potholes in the road
- traffic conditions
- the tightness of a curve ahead
- over a hill where you can't see what is on the other side.

Hazards can be anything in the road environment that could present a danger or a risk while driving. New drivers often don't see or anticipate the potential hazards around them, or see them too late.

Learning to drive

Potential hazards can be anywhere, so you can't rely on just looking ahead and using your mirrors. There are blind spots around your car regardless of how well you set up your rear view mirrors. These are areas behind the driver that can't be seen using only mirrors, such as outside the rear door on the driver's side.



You can only see in these blind spots by moving your head and quickly looking over your shoulder – this is called a **head check** (see head check definition, page 34). Do this as well as using mirrors to make sure you see everything around you when reversing, changing lanes, merging or pulling out to overtake.

Definition

To **scan** means taking in the road scene around you by looking ahead, to the sides and in rear view mirrors.

As a driver, knowing exactly what is happening around you at all times is essential. Learn to constantly **scan** and you will be in a better position to anticipate hazards and respond in the best way.

Tip

You will need to do head checks and use your mirrors to check for hazards around your car.

Adjust your mirrors after you have positioned the driver's seat so that you can see clearly. When adjusted correctly there will be an overlap between the view from your outside and inside mirrors.

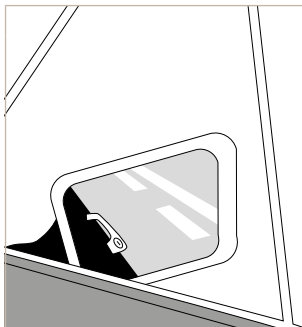


fig 6.

Adjust your outside mirrors so that they just catch a view of the edge of the car. In some cars, a good guide is to be able to see the rear door handle in the bottom corner of the side mirror.

Practice is the best way

Every driving practice session helps.

- Your performance will get smoother
- You will make better decisions
- You will get better at anticipating what might happen around you.

The right structure for your practice will help you make sure you are ready to drive solo by the time you go for your probationary licence test.

The **Learner Kit** has a four stage plan for learning to drive. This is the best way to make sure you get the right sort of practice all through the learner period. You will get the **Learner Kit** when you obtain your learner permit.

Check out the online resource, **Lessons from the Road**, for supervising drivers. It is designed to help supervising drivers support their learner driver. It features an online mentor who guides the viewer through eight short videos with tips and advice about the supervisor's role. You may also find it worthwhile, as it will help you to assist your parent(s) to step into the role of your supervisor. Visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.

Learning to drive

The four stages in the **Learner Kit** are:

- **Stage 1** is all about controlling your car. It is the shortest stage, and aims to get you to start, stop and steer safely in a quiet area without traffic
- **Stage 2** is about applying your new car-control skills and looking out for other road users on quiet roads with little traffic
- **Stage 3** takes longer and uses your Stage 1 and 2 skills on busier roads and in more difficult driving situations. You learn to deal with traffic and other hazards to become safe in varied driving situations
- **Stage 4** can be the longest stage. It involves driving as if you are a solo driver. You still have your Ls on the car and a supervising driver beside you, but you'll make most of the driving decisions yourself. The aim is to build up lots of different experiences where you act like a solo driver. Then when you drive on the road on your own you'll be ready to make the right decisions.

The **Guide for Learners** and the **Guide for Supervising Drivers** contain detailed advice about what you and your supervising driver need to do in each of these four stages. They also include checklists and information about how to know when you are ready to move from one stage to the next one.



Your supervising driver is there to help

Driving takes much more effort in the beginning, when you are learning – that is why you have your supervising driver beside you. They don't take the place of professional driving instructors, but supervising drivers such as your parents can provide the extensive practice opportunities you need. They are there to help you:

- with an extra pair of eyes to watch the road
- with some decisions
- as an early warning system – to help anticipate potential hazards.

You will need a close partnership with your supervising driver to make sure you have plenty of opportunities to practice. You can help your supervising driver by making sure they read the **Guide for Supervising Drivers** that you will get as part of the **Learner Kit** when you pass the learner permit test.

You and your supervising driver will have to work together to:

- plan driving sessions using the four stage plan
- keep track of your progress
- keep your **Learner Log Book** up to date and signed
- decide when you are ready to move to the next stage
- keep motivated to keep practising all the way through the learner period.

The role of your supervising driver will gradually change as you progress through the four stages of learning to drive. You will take more responsibility for your driving and your supervising driver will do less.

Don't forget to tell your supervising driver about **Lessons from the Road**, the online resource for supervising drivers at **vicroads.vic.gov.au**. This will help them in their coaching role as your supervising driver.

Learning to drive

Put variety into your driving practice

Over the learner period, you need to practise driving in a broad range of different conditions, such as at night, in wet weather, peak and off-peak traffic, on roads with different speed zones and on sealed and gravel roads. You need to get this broad driving experience while you have the support of your supervising driver.

Tip

You don't want to attempt to drive in difficult situations for the first time when you're a probationary driver without the help of a supervising driver.

Use the **Learner Kit** to help you decide what sort of driving you should be doing. You will get a broad range of driving experiences if you build your learner period around the four stages in the **Learner Kit**.

You should use the information you record in your **Learner Log Book** to keep track of your hours and type of practice, and the **Guide for Learners** can help you decide when you should start practising in different road types and driving conditions.

You will be a safer driver if you have lots of different experiences as a learner, and you will have less trouble passing the Drive Test.

Take every opportunity to practise for 10, 20, 30 minutes, or an hour. Frequent short drives are far more valuable than a few long drives. At the start of the learner period, shorter more frequent practice sessions are more productive and less stressful for both the learner and the supervising driver.

In Stage 4 you can offer to drive for everyday activities such as going to the shops, schools or other family activities. Becoming the family chauffeur is an easy way to increase your regular driving practice.

Getting confident

As you progress with practice you may think you are picking things up quickly.

Practice will build your confidence as a safe driver and this is a good thing. But don't become overconfident!

You will see early signs of improvement in your driving – this tends to be mainly in controlling the car. What may have seemed difficult or impossible the very first time – such as just turning left – seems simple after a few lessons or a few hours behind the wheel.

This can be misleading. There is more to driving than just car control. There are many skills you need to develop to be a safer driver. You can only develop most of these skills if you have as much practice as possible in many different driving situations. The main skills are:

- **Car control:** This includes steering, braking, using pedals, buttons and other controls. These skills usually come quickly, but there is much more to safe driving.
- **Visual scanning:** New drivers tend to look mostly to the front of the car, and not very far ahead of themselves. As you get more experience you will find it easier to scan to the sides of the car, to use your mirrors and scan further ahead. Experience will help you develop a good awareness of what's happening all around you
- **Identifying and responding to risks:** You need to have a lot of driving experience before you can identify risks or potential hazards. Your experience in many different driving situations helps you learn how to recognise a potential hazard and respond to risky situations – your experience is the best teacher. You will be able to draw on your experience to respond quickly to potential hazards
- **Making decisions:** Drivers have to make many quick decisions while driving, such as deciding when to slow down and by how much, when to accelerate, what speed is best for different conditions, when to change lanes or overtake. New drivers have to think about these decisions and cannot make them as quickly as experienced drivers. Lots of experience in different driving situations helps you to make many driving decisions more quickly – giving you more time to concentrate on safe driving.

Learning to drive

Tip

If your brakes fail:

- pump on the brake pedal hard and fast
- apply the handbrake carefully so the vehicle doesn't skid
- if possible, change to a lower gear (even in an automatic vehicle) and use your horn to alert other drivers
- try to steer the vehicle so that you avoid a severe collision.

Checking your progress

The **Learner Kit** tells you the best way to check on your progress. It has checklists for each stage of driving that you and your supervising driver can use to decide when you are ready to move onto the next stage.

You will notice that your driving improves in some important areas:

- As you become more experienced you will find your driving changes from clunky and jerky to smooth and fluid movements. Your speed control will shift from 'on or off' to 'ease on and ease off'
- You will notice over time that your driving becomes much more consistent. You will make fewer and fewer mistakes like wandering in your lane
- You will get better at low speed actions like reversing the car in a driveway and driving into and out of angled parking bays
- You will get better at anticipating potential hazards and your supervising driver will not have to point things out to you as often
- You will rely less on advice and suggestions from your supervising driver.

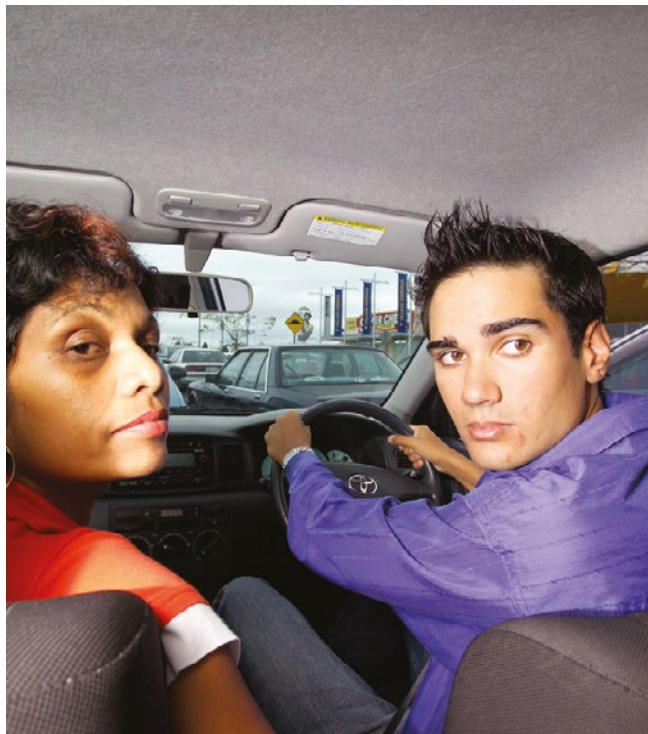
Your aim should be to drive without relying on your supervising driver, long before you sit the Drive Test. This is why Stage 4 in the **Learner Kit** is important. It focuses on taking full responsibility for driving in many different situations. You will not be ready to sit the probationary licence test until you have ticked off the items in the Stage 4 checklist and when you can drive without relying on your supervisor. This may take more than 120 hours.

Tip

Use the checklists in the **Guide for Learners** and the **Guide for Supervising Drivers** as a helpful way to monitor how you are going. The more practice you do before driving solo the better prepared and safer you will be.

Of course you will still keep learning while driving solo but make the most of your time as a learner driver!

Also make sure you check **Lessons from the Road** at vicroads.vic.gov.au.



Learning to drive



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Managing risk

Managing risk



Driving involves risk – a risk that you may crash and that you or others may be injured or killed. Good drivers aim to reduce and manage this risk.

Getting at least 120 hours of supervised driving experience as a learner driver will get you well on the way to being a safer driver.

Some things increase the risk of crashing or being seriously hurt for all drivers, and especially for new drivers:

- driving when affected by alcohol or drugs
- speeding
- using mobile phones and other electronic devices
- passengers in your car
- other types of distractions inside and outside your car
- fatigue – driving when tired
- not wearing a seatbelt
- poor vehicle maintenance.

Alcohol and drugs

Alcohol, drugs and some medicines reduce your ability to drive safely.

- You are much more likely to be involved in a crash if you are affected by alcohol. Your risk of crashing increases as your blood alcohol level increases. A driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05 has double the risk of crashing
 - Learner and probationary drivers must stick to zero BAC. This means no alcohol at all. There is absolutely no exception to this rule
 - There are severe penalties for any driver who commits a drink driving offence. Anyone whose licence and/or learner permit is cancelled for a drink driving offence will have to complete the Behaviour Change Program, and install and use an alcohol interlock device for a period of at least 6 months as a condition of relicensing
 - Alcohol can remain in your system for some time after you finish drinking. Drivers often test above zero BAC in the morning after drinking the night before. More information on alcohol and road safety can be found on pages 71-75
- Different drugs will affect you in different ways, but many have a bad effect on your driving. Driving while impaired by drugs is illegal and carries severe penalties. Like alcohol, there are no exceptions to this rule (see pages 75-77)
 - Many prescription and over-the-counter medicines can affect your ability to drive safely. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about how your medicine may affect your driving. Don't just rely on what your friends say
 - Mixing alcohol, drugs or medicines together is even worse than any one of them by itself. A driver who has had a few drinks and used some cannabis will drive as dangerously as a very drunk driver. The same is true for other combinations of alcohol, drugs and certain medicines.

Don't mix driving with alcohol, drugs or medicines.

To avoid the risks plan ahead:

- organise someone to drive who stays alcohol and drug free
- stay over rather than drive home
- arrange to be picked up by a friend or relative
- use public transport or take a taxi.

Managing risk



Speed

There is a clear link between speed and crashes. The faster you go the greater your risk of having a crash. Speed is a factor in almost 20% of fatal crashes and about 30% of crashes involving only one vehicle – such as running off the road. Speed also increases how seriously injured you will be if you do have a crash.

Speeding is riskier for new solo drivers. Going faster than other traffic reduces your margin for error. As a new solo driver speeding gives you less time to do all the things you have to do, such as:

- scanning the road
- anticipating possible hazards
- making the right decisions for each situation.

More information on speed can be found on pages 79 and 83.

Mobile phones and other electronic devices

Any use of a mobile phone or electronic device including text messaging while driving is dangerous because it takes your attention away from the road and affects your driving. Anything that takes your attention away from driving and your eyes off the road will increase your risk of having a crash. This even applies to older, more experienced drivers.

- Using a mobile phone or other device causes you to:
 - wander in and out of your lane
 - follow too close to the vehicle in front of you
 - not see traffic lights, other road users and other signals
- Talking on a mobile phone, even a hands-free one, increases your chance of a crash.

Fact

Texting while driving is dangerous because it takes your eyes and mind off the road.

- Learners, P1 and P2 probationary licence holders are permitted to use a phone or any device **only** if set up **before driving** and **only**:
 - for navigation and to play or stream audio material
 - if mounted in a commercial holder while driving.
- Learner and probationary drivers **cannot**:
 - touch a phone, other portable, commercially mounted or wearable devices (including motorcycle helmet devices) whilst driving
 - use voice commands whilst driving
 - change the audio once it has been set up before driving, unless making simple changes using an inbuilt device when driving
 - Interact with text messages in **any** way
- Fully licensed drivers are permitted to use a mobile phone or other device to make or receive calls using voice commands while driving, or with minimal touch, **only** if it:
 - is securely fixed in a commercial holder, **or**
 - can be remotely operated via the inbuilt device

Managing risk

- **All Drivers** (Learners, probationary and fully licensed) are **not** permitted:
 - to use a device for messaging, social media, movies/TV, video games, photos and other moving images, emails and entering text, numbers and scrolling.
 - to rest a device on your lap and pass a device to a passenger

It helps to set the message on your phone to make it clear to callers that you will not answer a call while driving.

You avoid the temptation of answering a phone by:

- switching the phone off
- putting the phone on silent
- putting the phone out of reach when driving.

If you have to make or receive a call, pull over safely and park. Do not stop in an emergency lane to use a phone as this is illegal.

Your mobile phone is not the only electronic device that can distract you. You could be distracted by using or reaching for:

- GPS navigation systems
- in-car infotainment system
- a smart watch
- your passenger's phone

- tablets or other visual display units (VDUs)
- hand-held game consoles
- laptops.

You can reduce the risk by:

- not having distracting devices in your car, especially just after you get your P licence
- getting used to one or two distractions, such as the radio or a GPS, late in your learner period while you still have the support of a supervising driver
- making any changes to devices (setting up your GPS, setting the radio) before you start driving
- using spoken directions from your GPS rather than trying to look at the map while driving.

It is illegal to have a visual display unit (such as a DVD player, passenger's phone with a video) operating so you can see it from the driver's seat – even when the car is stopped, but not parked. The only exception is for drivers' aids, such as navigation devices mounted to the car. The penalty can include a fine and possible suspension of your licence. Mobile phone and electronic device enforcement cameras operate in Victoria.

Passengers

Passengers can distract you and might increase your risk of having a crash. You can reduce the risk by:

- keeping the conversation to a minimum – it is OK to ask passengers to be quiet while you concentrate on driving
- ignoring any conversation when you need to concentrate hard on your driving
- recognising situations where you need extra concentration – such as intersections, school zones or heavy traffic
- reducing your speed
- leaving a bigger gap between your vehicle and the one ahead to give you more space and time to react to a hazard
- asking passengers not to use their mobile phone or other electronic device while you are driving unless it is an emergency
- being a responsible passenger yourself and not distracting other drivers, especially in complex conditions
- turning off the radio and other electronic devices that might make the distraction worse.

While passengers can be distracting, they can also help you with some tasks, such as changing the audio selection.

If you have a P1 licence, you must not carry more than one passenger, aged between 16 and less than 22 years.

Regardless of your licence type, avoid carrying more than one passenger during your first year as a solo driver.

Managing risk

Other distractions

There are many other things inside and outside the car that can distract you while you are driving. These include:

- eating and drinking
- smoking
- brushing your hair
- reading maps
- fidgeting with the car controls
- feeling upset or angry about something that has happened
- advertising signs
- unusual events near the road
- pedestrians and other road users
- checking your makeup
- reaching for a bag or another object.

Distraction caused by any of these can take your attention from driving and might have serious consequences.

Your risk of being involved in a crash is much higher when you are distracted and you take your eyes and mind off the road.

You can reduce the risk by resisting any temptation to do something other than concentrating on your driving. This is especially important in the first months of solo driving as a P driver.

Fact

If a distraction is causing you to drive inappropriately, you can be fined under laws for careless or dangerous driving, or failing to have proper control of a motor vehicle. As a result, you may receive a heavy fine, loss of demerit points, or have your licence suspended or cancelled.

Fatigue

Driver fatigue is also a major cause of crashes. It can:

- cause you to fall asleep at the wheel
- slow your reflexes, and affect your attention and judgement.

Fatigue is often the result of having a busy lifestyle – parties, late-night jobs and studying. It can happen when:

- you are driving during hours you would normally be sleeping (10 pm - 6 am)
- you have not had enough sleep
- you have been awake too long (e.g. 17 hours)
- you drive as soon as you wake up
- you have been driving for more than 2 hours non-stop.

You might think that having coffee or taking a short break will stop fatigue. They don't – the only way to stop being fatigued is to get enough sleep.

Tip

A 15 minute power nap can reduce your chances of having a crash.

Stop driving if you notice any of the following:

- repeated yawning
- starting to drift across the lane
- eyes closing or your eyesight getting fuzzy
- trouble keeping your head up
- speed is increasing or decreasing unintentionally
- can't remember the last few kilometres of road
- day-dreaming.

To reduce the effect of fatigue:

- stop if you are tired and have a nap
- don't drive at times when you would normally be asleep such as between 10 pm and 6 am
- ensure any medicines you take don't cause drowsiness. (Ask your doctor or pharmacist.).

On a long trip:

- get plenty of sleep before the trip
- share the driving whenever possible
- plan ahead and rest overnight
- take regular breaks
- try to avoid driving during times you would normally be asleep
- don't start a trip after a long day's work.

Managing risk

Seatbelts

Wearing a seatbelt correctly increases the chance of surviving a crash.

Wearing a seatbelt is an important way of reducing risk not just for you as a driver, but for your passengers as well. Don't just think about yourself – make sure your passengers also buckle up, including rear seat passengers.

In a crash unrestrained drivers and passengers are often thrown out of cars or are tossed around inside the car, against the steering wheel, windscreen or other passengers. People who are thrown out of cars in crashes are up to 25 times more likely to be killed than those who remain within the vehicle.

Most crashes happen on short journeys. You must wear a seatbelt at all times even if it's only a trip around the corner. More information on seatbelts can be found on pages 77-79.

Fact

Drivers will be fined (including demerit points) if passengers are not wearing seatbelts and children under seven years are not using appropriate child restraints (see pages 77-78).

Passengers 16 years or older will also be fined for not wearing seatbelts.

Fact

It is both dangerous and illegal to carry unrestrained passengers in the boot, the back of utes or to drive with any part of a passenger's body outside the door or window of a vehicle. Fines and demerit points apply.

Vehicle safety

Analysis of crashes show that larger cars and cars with more safety features generally provide better real world occupant protection in a crash than smaller cars with less safety features.

The most important vehicle safety features you should try to get are airbags and Electronic Stability Control (ESC), which can only be fitted to the car at the time of manufacture.

Buying a safe vehicle will protect you and your passengers if you are involved in a crash. Whether you're planning to buy a new or used car, you can find out the safety rating of the cars you're interested in at TAC website howsafeisyourcar.com.au or the Australasian New Car Assessment program website ancap.com.au. Also look out for the 'Buyer's Guide to Used Car Safety Ratings' brochure.

Vehicle maintenance

- Tyre pressure and tread depth need to be checked and maintained at safe levels. Tyre problems are a common cause of defect related crashes
- Vehicles should be regularly maintained by an expert.

Tip

If you have a tyre blowout while driving, remember to keep a firm grip on the steering wheel, take your foot off the accelerator and brake gently once you feel the vehicle is under some control.

Tip

Operation of Antilock Braking Systems (ABS)

In an emergency stop with ABS, keep firm pressure on the brake pedal. When ABS is operating there may be a vibration or shuddering through the car and the brake pedal may pulsate. For ABS to work properly keep firm pressure on the brake pedal.

To confirm if the car is fitted with ABS – check the owner's manual or ask the owner. Visit vicroads.vic.gov.au and search for ABS for more information.

Managing risk

Keys to reducing your risk of a crash

There are some simple strategies which will help you stay safe, especially in the first six months on your P plates.

Strategy 1 - Choose when and where to drive

As a new driver, you don't want to jump in the deep end, even with 120 hours experience as a learner. When possible, avoid driving in challenging situations such as:

- very late at night
- peak hour traffic in the city
- freeways
- rural roads
- wet weather
- fog
- snow and ice
- gravel and dirt roads.

You can reduce your risk of being in a crash by avoiding driving too much in situations where you don't have much driving experience. Build up your experience slowly in these situations.

Strategy 2 - Slow down

As you are still building your experience, you cannot anticipate potential hazards as well as drivers with more experience.

Having a young person's reaction time is not enough.

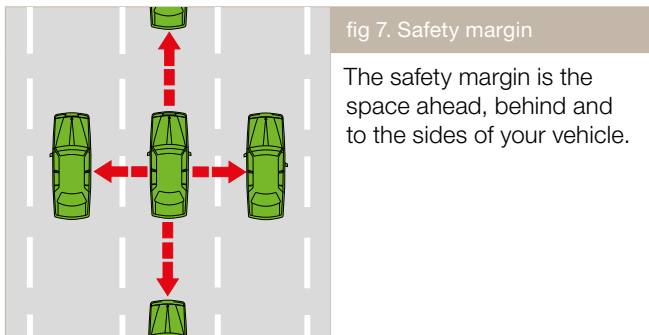
- Choose to drive at a safe speed under the speed limit
- When you see any potential hazard, such as pedestrians or bicycle riders near the road, or turning vehicles in front of you, slow down a little and move your foot on or near the brake so you can stop if needed
- Create a buffer to give you a bit more time to react to the unexpected
- You won't notice going 2 or 3 km/h slower – it certainly isn't going to delay you in any way. So slow down a bit!
- The more you speed, the greater your risk of crashing and the more severe your injuries could be. In a 60 km/h zone your risk of crashing doubles for every 5 km/h you exceed the speed limit
- The other thing to remember is that if you get caught speeding you will be fined and will lose demerit points. You may even lose your licence.

Strategy 3 - Give yourself some space

Having a bit more room to move gives you the space and time to overcome mistakes – including mistakes made by other drivers.

Give yourself enough time to react by leaving plenty of distance between your vehicle and the vehicles around you.

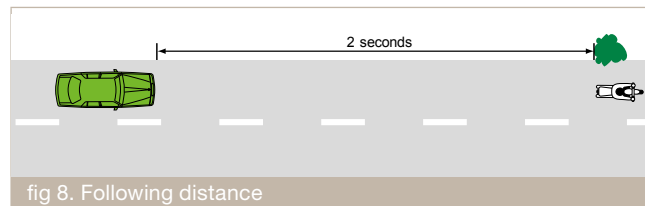
Leaving a safety margin can make the difference between stopping in time and crashing.



You must keep your vehicle a safe distance from any vehicle in front of you. A safe distance should be enough to allow time to slow down and avoid trouble.

Most drivers should be at least two seconds behind the vehicle in front. You can check this by a simple test:

- Focus on a marker in the distance such as a signpost or tree and note when the vehicle in front passes the marker
- Count the number of seconds before your vehicle passes the same marker
- If your count is not at least two seconds then you're too close.



Managing risk

Definition

The **following distance** is the space or gap between you and the vehicle in front.

A two second gap will allow for an average person's reaction time but leaving a larger gap – say three or four seconds – is a safer option for young drivers as they develop their hazard perception skills. Three or four second gaps are also a good safety margin:

- in distracting conditions
- when visibility is poor or when it is dark
- when the road is wet or slippery
- when you have a heavy load
- on a gravel road.

Heavy vehicles such as buses, trucks, trams and trains cannot manoeuvre like cars. They take longer to stop and longer to change direction, so they need larger safety margins to drive safely. Do not move into their safety margin.

If a vehicle behind is too close don't feel pressured to speed up.

If it is safe to do so, slow down slightly to increase the safety margin in front of your vehicle. This will give you more time to respond to a potential hazard so you don't have to brake suddenly.

Don't forget to make sure you have enough space all around you before you change lanes by using your mirrors and doing a head check.

Fact

If you are driving a long vehicle (any vehicle which, together with its trailer, is at least 7.5 metres long) and you are following another long vehicle, you must drive at least 60 metres away from it, except:

- in a built-up area (one with buildings next to the road or street lights), or
- on a multi-lane road.

You also need to keep back at least 200 metres when following another long vehicle in a road train area.

Strategy 4 - Think ahead

Don't focus all your attention on the vehicle in front. Keep your eyes moving and scan the traffic scene. Look well into the distance, to both sides and behind you by using your mirrors.

You don't naturally look around like this. You will need to practise and think about what others on the road might be intending to do. Your supervising driver will be able to help you. You can also use your time as a passenger to practise.

Plan your trips before you start out. Use a directory to check out the route you will travel.

Try using familiar routes wherever possible. This helps to reduce your workload and stress while driving.

Strategy 5 - Driving safely at night

Driving at night is more complicated than driving during the day because you cannot see as far ahead or as far around your car. It's much harder to anticipate potential hazards at night.

Even with 120 hours of driving experience you may not have had much experience at night. Once you get your licence, ease into driving and keep night driving to a minimum, particularly in the first few months of solo driving.

Keep your speed down at night so you will have time to identify and respond to potential hazards.

Tip

Make sure you get lots of practice driving at night when you are driving with your supervisor.

Fact

Crash risk is higher at night, with half of all probationary night-time crashes occurring on Friday and Saturday nights.

Managing risk

Strategy 6 - Driving safely on country roads

Country roads can present a variety of conditions: sealed, unsealed and gravel.

Get as much practice as you can under a variety of weather and light conditions on all forms of country roads when you are a learner.

Strategy 7 - Dealing with other road users

As a driver you share the road with many other people:

- other drivers of cars, vans, trucks, buses and trams
- pedestrians
- motorcyclists
- bicycle riders.

Sharing the road with all these road users is easier and safer if you drive cooperatively. This means:

- using your indicators to allow plenty of warning when you are turning or changing lanes
- allowing plenty of space between your car and the one in front of you
- controlling your speed in a smooth manner rather than a fast stop/start manner
- staying in the left lane except when you are passing
- keeping intersections clear
- letting others merge into the traffic
- changing lanes correctly
- slowing down when approaching and passing through roadworks.

There are times when the need for cooperative driving is essential. This includes places where:

- two lanes merge
- the left lane ends
- extra lanes exist just before and after intersections
- overtaking lanes or divided roads end
- cars are parked and there is not enough room for two vehicles to pass
- drivers need to exit from a small side street
- drivers are parking.

Driving a car in today's traffic can be frustrating and stressful at times. If you lose your temper, it affects your judgement and reduces your ability to drive safely.

You can keep your cool by:

- planning your trip, allowing plenty of time to get to your destination and knowing how to get there
- if you're running late, calling ahead before you get behind the wheel
- where possible, avoiding driving if angry, tired or emotionally stressed.

Sometimes you might make a mistake – it might be as simple as not indicating early enough or moving into what another driver considers to be their personal space. This might upset another driver and lead to them losing their cool. They might tailgate, flash their headlights, use the horn or make obscene gestures.

You can help others keep their cool on the road. Here's what you can do.

- Always drive cooperatively, even when others are not
- Give other drivers plenty of space so they don't feel like you are invading their personal space
- Concentrate on driving and pay attention to changes in driving conditions (speed, roadworks etc.)
- If you make a mistake while driving, acknowledge it
- If another driver makes a mistake or becomes aggressive, try not to react – remember it is a mistake, not a personal attack
- Only flash your headlights or use the horn to warn other drivers about a situation that could be dangerous
- Don't make offensive hand gestures.

Managing risk

If you come into contact with an aggressive driver, don't take it personally.

- Drive normally and try not to react
- Avoid eye contact
- Give the other driver plenty of space: if the other driver is in front, increase the gap between you, and if the other car is tailgating you, maintain a steady speed or provide an opportunity to let them pass
- If hassled or confronted, keep your doors and windows locked and do not get out of your car
- If you are very concerned, drive to the nearest police station.



Driving and the environment

Using a car affects the environment. You can reduce your impact on the environment by using 'Eco-driving' techniques. Eco-driving is smart driving as it helps you save money, protects the environment, and keeps you and your passengers safe.

You can start using eco-driving techniques when you are in stage 4 of learning to drive, or once you've got your licence and feel more confident.

Drive smoothly.

- Avoid hard or unnecessary acceleration and severe braking
- Decelerate smoothly by releasing the accelerator and leaving the car in gear as you slow down
- Don't take off too fast – otherwise you could use 60% more fuel.

Slow down and maintain a steady speed.

- Slowing down and maintaining a steady speed will use less fuel (at 110 km/h a car uses up to 25% more fuel than cruising at 90 km/h)
- Use cruise control whenever safe.

Read the traffic flow.

- Stay back from the car in front to allow travel with the flow of traffic
- Tailgating causes unnecessary acceleration and deceleration and increases fuel use
- Allowing plenty of space gives you more time to see and anticipate traffic situations, and minimise fuel use.

Plan your journeys.

- Try to avoid peak-hour
- Try not to use your car if you don't need to – use public transport, carpool, walk or cycle instead
- Take fewer car trips by planning to do a number of things at once
- Reduce travel distances by going to nearby shops, and walking or cycling to your local shops.

Maintain your vehicle.

- Keep your car's tyres inflated to the highest pressure recommended in the owner's manual. If your tyre pressure is too low, you'll increase your fuel consumption
- Regularly service your vehicle to save yourself money and minimise your impact on the environment.



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Rules and Responsibilities

Rules and responsibilities



There is more to driving than just knowing the road rules. However, knowing the basic road rules is essential.

Important

In the diagrams shown in this section, the vehicles are coloured green and red. In all cases, the red vehicle B must give way to the green vehicle A.

The rules listed here are only a summary of the road rules motorists must know. For more information visit **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.

You can also purchase a copy of *Road Safety Road Rules 2009*, or view the relevant Acts and Regulations online (see Resources to help you on pages 166-167).

Alcohol

Learner and probationary drivers must not drive with any alcohol in their blood.

Zero Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) also applies to all restricted motorcycle licence holders, drivers of taxis, buses and other large vehicles, professional driving instructors and some full licence holders who have previously had a drink driving conviction.

All other full licence holders (including supervising drivers) must have a **BAC** of less than .05.

In nearly 30% of Victorian driver fatalities, the driver had a BAC of .05 or more.

Definition

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is a measure of the amount of alcohol you have in your blood. It is measured by the number of grams of alcohol in 100 millilitres of blood.

For example, a BAC of .05 means .05 grams or 50 milligrams of alcohol in every 100 millilitres of blood.

It is also illegal to drink alcohol while driving a motor vehicle or supervising a learner driver.



Rules and responsibilities

The effects of alcohol on driving

Alcohol affected drivers:

- feel overconfident and take risks
- are often unaware of the level of their driving impairment
- have slower reflexes and poorer co-ordination making it less likely that they will be able to stop or swerve in an emergency
- are less able to process information and make appropriate decisions as their vision, hearing and brain are all affected.

A driver who has been drinking struggles to judge speeds and distances accurately and will often fail to respond to potential dangers in the traffic environment.

The ability to cope with more than one thing at a time is greatly reduced (for example, steer a course within a lane, respond to traffic signals and avoid a pedestrian who steps onto the road).

What are the risks?

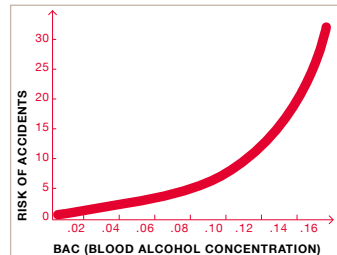


fig 9.

Relative chance of crashing as your BAC increases

The risk of being involved in a crash increases dramatically if the driver has been drinking alcohol. The graph shows the average relationship between the risk of having a crash and the amount of alcohol in the blood. For inexperienced drivers the risk at any BAC level above zero will be even higher.

Factors affecting BAC

Alcohol affects different people in different ways and can even affect the same person on different occasions in different ways. You can drink the same amount of alcohol on different days and have different BAC readings each time.

Some of the factors that affect BAC include:

- gender – a woman drinking the same amount of alcohol as a man of a similar size will have a higher BAC
- body size – a person of small build will have a higher BAC than a larger person drinking the same amount of alcohol
- food consumption – food slows down the absorption of alcohol so, if you have not had a substantial meal before drinking, you will reach a higher BAC more quickly
- rate of drinking and the types of alcohol consumed – the quicker

you drink and the greater the alcoholic content of the drink, the sooner you will reach a higher BAC

- general health – if you are in poor health, your liver is less able to process the alcohol you drink
- use of other drugs – combining alcohol with drugs increases the risk of motor vehicle crashes even if you only drink a small amount of alcohol.

The effect of alcohol can also exaggerate the mood you are in, and make you more tired if you are already tired.

Only time reduces your BAC level

Your body takes time to get rid of alcohol. No amount of coffee, exercise, cold showers, fresh air or vomiting will help reduce your BAC. Whilst these may make you feel more alert, they don't change the amount of alcohol in your bloodstream or speed up the processing of the alcohol by your liver. The liver does this in its own time.

Tip

It is important to remember that if you have a lot to drink the night before, you are likely to have alcohol in your blood the next morning.

How to avoid drink driving

- Plan ahead. It is more difficult to plan how to get home if you have had alcohol to drink, as your judgement will be impaired. Work out your travel arrangements before you go out and start drinking
- Planning ahead is especially important for P1 drivers who need to comply with the peer passenger restriction
- Share a taxi with friends
- Take public transport
- Organise transport with a friend and agree that whoever is driving will not drink alcohol
- Organise to stay the night
- Arrange to be picked up by a relative or friend who hasn't been drinking.

You can measure your BAC level by using a public breath tester. These are located in some hotels, clubs and restaurants, and are useful to determine your BAC level.

Rules and responsibilities

You could do this a number of times to get an idea of what BAC your usual pattern of drinking leads to, and how long it takes for your BAC to return to zero.

Tip

If you drive after drinking your driving will suffer. So remember, the safest BAC is zero even when you have a full licence.

Breath testing procedures

Police can request the driver of a vehicle to undergo a breath test at any time. There are many breath testing stations or booze buses on Victorian roads.

You may also be stopped by police in other vehicles and asked to undergo a breath test. Thousands of drivers are randomly tested every week.

You will be asked to blow into a small device. It will give an indication of the alcohol in your blood – if any. If you haven't been drinking there is no problem. If you have a positive result, you will be asked to do a second test on another breath testing instrument. This reading will be used as evidence if you are over the legal limit.

Drivers admitted to hospital after any kind of road crash are required to provide a breath test and when requested to provide a blood sample.

Penalties

The penalties for drink driving are severe. Anyone who is convicted of a drink driving offence will have their licence and/or learner permit cancelled. Before they can get their licence/learner permit back they must complete a Behaviour Change Program and will be required to install and use an alcohol interlock device in any vehicle they drive for at least 6 months, and at least 12 months for repeat offenders, after relicensing.

Cancellation periods:

- Learner permit and/or probationary licence holder with a BAC between zero and less than .05 (first offence) - 3 months
- Learner permit and/or probationary licence holder with a BAC between .05 and less than .1 (first offence) - 6 months
- Full licence holder under the age of 26 with a BAC between .05 and less than .1 (first offence) - 6 months
- Learner permit, probationary or full licence holder with a BAC of .1 or more (first offence) - cancellation period and interlock condition will depend on the BAC
- Repeat offender (learner permit, probationary or full licence holder) - 12 months or more

- Any repeat drink driving conviction will result in a learner permit and/or licence cancellation of at least 12 months followed by a mandatory Intensive Drink and Drug Driver Behaviour Change Program and require the installation and use of an alcohol interlock device of 12 months or more when relicensed
- You will have to start again on your learner permit or probationary licence if your licence is cancelled
- Heavy fines can also be imposed
- You may have your vehicle impounded.

Drugs, medicine and driving

Medicines and illegal drugs that can affect safe driving are detected in over 30% of Victorian driver fatalities. In Victoria it is an offence to drive a motor vehicle while impaired by a drug.

Fact

Refusing a breath, blood or saliva test is an offence.

Your licence will be cancelled and you will be disqualified from driving for at least two years if convicted and will also have to complete an Intensive Drink and Drug Driver Behaviour Change Program. If you refused a breath or blood alcohol test you will also have to install and use an alcohol interlock for at least six months when relicensed.

Illegal drugs

Illegal drugs such as ecstasy, cannabis (marijuana) and heroin can affect your ability to drive safely.

Drugs like ice or ecstasy can:

- make you feel as if you are a better driver
- have a negative effect on your ability to drive, so you will be more confident but less skilful
- lead to a strong need for sleep when their effects wear off that can increase your risk of crashing. You may have your vehicle impounded.

Cannabis can:

- stop you responding quickly to what other drivers are doing
- reduce your ability to concentrate and maintain attention, make decisions and to react to unexpected events
- make you miss important road signs
- reduce your ability to avoid potential hazards.

Rules and responsibilities

Combining even small amounts of cannabis and alcohol causes much greater impairment than either one on its own.

Driving with drugs in your blood or saliva is an offence. Anyone who is convicted of a drug driving offence will have a licence ban and must complete a Behaviour Change Program before being relicensed.

Conditions that affect safe driving

Legally, if you are suffering from any serious (permanent or long-term) illness, disability, medical condition or injury (or the effect of treatment for any of those things) that may impair your ability to drive safely, you must:

- contact VicRoads to report your condition
- talk to a doctor about how it might affect your driving.

Reporting a medically unfit driver

If you are genuinely concerned about someone's ability to drive safely, write us a letter with their details (e.g. name, address) and the reasons for your concern. Under Victorian law, we must investigate this information.

Medicines

Many prescription medicines and some medicines bought over the counter from a pharmacist can impair your driving ability and increase the risk of crashes by affecting your:

- mood
- concentration
- co-ordination
- reaction time.

Examples of prescription medications that can affect driving are:

- sleeping tablets
- muscle relaxants
- sedatives
- some antihistamines (such as in hay fever or cold and flu medicines)
- some strong painkillers.

Not everyone will experience the effects of a drug in the same way. When you start using a new medicine, it is best to ask your doctor or pharmacist for advice on how it may affect your driving.

You can reduce the risk of a crash when on medication by:

- not using alcohol with your medicines
- keeping to the prescribed doses
- not treating yourself with additional medicines or other remedies. Always check with your doctor or pharmacist
- not using other people's medicines

- reading and following the advice on the labels on all your medicines. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if the label on your medicine states that the medicine may cause drowsiness.

Tip

If you are worried about the effect that your medicine has on your driving, stop your driving – not your medicine!

Stop driving and contact your doctor or pharmacist if your medicine:

- affects your reflexes
- affects your ability to concentrate
- makes you sleepy or drowsy
- gives you blurred or double vision.

Plan to use alternative transport such as taxis or public transport or ask a friend to drive you.

Seatbelts

Wearing a seatbelt is the most effective measure for reducing serious injury in a crash. All drivers and passengers must wear a seatbelt or appropriate restraint. This includes children and pregnant women.

Drivers are responsible for the restraint of all passengers. The penalties for unrestrained or improperly restrained passengers include:

- fines and demerit points for the driver, and
- fines for passengers aged 16 years and over.

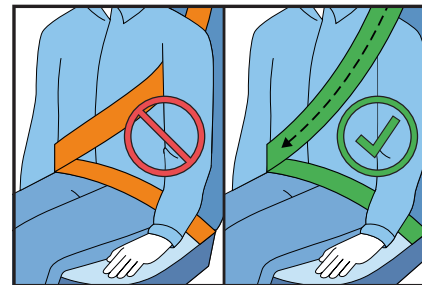
Seatbelt enforcement cameras operate in Victoria.

Seatbelts are not designed to protect small bodies in a crash. Children need restraints that specifically fit their size.

Correct seatbelt use

Seatbelts must be worn with:

- the belt over your shoulder, running across your chest, and
- be buckled low on your hip.



Tip

Buckling up takes seconds – serious crashes take lives.

Rules and responsibilities

Children

Drivers must ensure that children are restrained in:

- a properly fastened and adjusted rearward facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness if they are less than six months old
- a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward facing OR forward facing child restraint with inbuilt harness if they are more than six months and less than four years old.
- a properly fastened and adjusted approved forward facing child restraint with in-built harness OR a properly positioned approved booster seat and fastened and adjusted seatbelt if they are more than four years but less than seven years old. The type of restraint will depend on the child's size

- either a booster seat or an adult seatbelt if they are seven years to less than 16 years. It is recommended that children continue to use a booster seat until they are at least 145cm tall.

Children under four years old must not be seated in the front seat (in vehicles with two or more rows of seats). Children four years to less than seven years old can only be seated in the front if all other seats in the row(s) behind are occupied by other passengers less than seven years old.

Tip

Restraint Fitting Stations can help you fit a child restraint or booster seat to your vehicle.

Call 1300 360 745 for the nearest location.

Child restraints, booster seats and airbags

A rearward facing child restraint cannot be used in the front seat when there is a passenger airbag.

Children using forward facing child restraints or booster seats in the front seat of a vehicle should do so with the seat pushed as far back from the dashboard as possible.

It is safer for children to travel in the back seat.

If a vehicle has airbags in other positions, consult the vehicle owner's manual for advice on positioning child restraints.

More information about child restraints, booster seats and Restraint Fitting Stations is available at: **vicroads.vic.gov.au** and VicRoads Customer Service Centres.

Taxis and children

Although there is an exemption for taxi drivers from mandatory child restraint requirements for children under seven years old, taxis are required to have anchorage points and parents are encouraged to provide their own child restraint or booster seat when transporting a child under seven years old in a taxi.

If there is no restraint available for use in a taxi, children under one year must not travel in the front seat and children one year and over must be restrained in a seatbelt.

Pregnant women

Seatbelts protect pregnant women and their unborn babies, as long as the seatbelt is properly fastened and adjusted with the lap part of the belt across the hips and below the baby.

Tip

An unborn baby is more at risk in a crash if a seatbelt is not worn.

Travelling with animals

You must not drive with an animal on your lap.

Animals carried in a trailer or on the tray of a utility or truck (other than dogs engaged in moving stock) must be tethered in a way that prevents them from falling off or being injured by the movement of the vehicle.

Speed limits

Speed limit signs tell you the maximum speed at which you can drive in good conditions. You must always obey the speed limit. Speed limits are set according to the characteristics of the road and the level of use by vulnerable road users.

Built-up areas

The speed limit in a **built-up area** is 50 kilometres per hour (km/h) unless signed otherwise.

Definition

A **built-up area** is where there are buildings and/or houses next to the road or there is street lighting at intervals not over 100 metres apart for a distance of 500 metres or more.

Rules and responsibilities

Speed limited areas

There are other signs which designate speed limits for whole areas (networks of roads) which have a sign on each road into the area. These reduced speed limits are to improve safety and like all speed limits must be obeyed.



Area speed limit sign

Freeways and country roads

The speed limit on freeways and outside built-up areas in Victoria is 100 km/h unless signs tell you otherwise. Some main streets in rural town centres have 50 km/h speed limits and, many rural railway level crossings have 80 km/h speed limits.

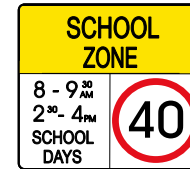
School speed limits

Children need to be protected from fast travelling vehicles. Children are easily distracted and can forget to look for dangers on the road. They also have trouble judging the speed of approaching vehicles. For these reasons, there are lower speed limits outside all Victorian schools. Static or electronic variable signs are used to alert drivers to lower speed limits, such as:



Permanent speed sign

permanent 40 km/h speed limits outside schools on most 50 km/h roads.



Time based speed sign

time based 40 km/h speed limits outside schools on 60 km/h and 70 km/h roads.



Electronic speed sign

40 km/h and 60 km/h time based limits apply on roads where the speed limit is 80 km/h or above.

Shared zones

A pedestrian struck by a vehicle travelling at 40 km/h or more is unlikely to survive. Shared zones have been created to protect pedestrians.



Shared zones have a speed limit of 10 km/h or as indicated on the Shared zone sign. In a shared zone, drivers must give way to pedestrians.

Shared zone sign

Safe speeds for different needs

Speed limit signs tell you the maximum speed at which you can travel. You have to decide on a safe speed under the specified limit.

Here are some factors you should consider.

Light or heavy traffic

If there is a lot of traffic, slow down to the average speed of everyone else and watch out for hazards. Pedestrians often weave through cars stuck in peak hour.

Shops, parked cars and people

Where there are shops, there are people and cars. Electronic variable signs at selected strip shopping centres indicate reduced speed limits at high risk times. Be alert. Pedestrians can step out from between parked cars, and parked cars can pull out from the kerb suddenly. Slow down and try to anticipate what others may do.

Green lights can change to red

A green light may turn amber or red before you enter an intersection, so drive at a speed that will allow you to stop safely.

The time of the day

It can be difficult to see the road ahead when you are driving into bright sunlight at dawn or dusk. You will need to slow down.

Wear sunglasses and use the sun visor in your car. You need to slow right down, or in some cases, pull over off the road and wait for the conditions to improve.

Weather conditions

Driving in heavy rain, frost or snow can be very dangerous – it may be difficult to see and roads may be slippery. You need to slow right down, or in some cases, pull over off the road and wait for the conditions to improve. You may need to use hazard warning lights or rear fog lights while parked (see Driving in dangerous conditions or situations on page 129).

Rules and responsibilities

Take care when mist or fog affects visibility.

Curving roads

Slow down before entering a curve or bend and accelerate gently as you drive out of the curve. It can be dangerous to brake on a curve or bend; you may lose control of your vehicle.

Road works

At road work sites the number of lanes is often reduced and the road layout changed to protect road workers. Temporary speed limit signs are erected to guide traffic through the work site at safe speeds. All drivers must slow down and obey the speed limits.

Unpredictable surfaces

The risk of losing control of a vehicle can increase on roads with potholes, wheel ruts or grooves, slippery surfaces and loose gravel. Always be aware of the road surface and adjust your driving and speed according to the conditions.

Country roads and animals

When you see animals – beware. They are unpredictable and can wander or dart onto the road. Farmers often move sheep or cattle and you need to **slow down** while you are passing (see Sharing the road with animals on page 144).

Slippery roads

Slippery roads can be caused by rain, mud, frost or ice. Not all areas that are slippery when wet are signposted. Rain makes all roads slippery. When it first starts to rain, oil and dirt are washed to the surface. Until further rain washes these away, skidding can occur. **Slow down** and always keep your distance from the vehicle in front in these conditions.

Unsealed roads

Dust from oncoming vehicles may conceal unexpected hazards, such as other vehicles, a dip or corner. Unsealed roads can become very slippery when wet or corrugated. Mud thrown onto windows can reduce visibility. **Slow down** and drive at a speed appropriate for conditions because road holding is reduced and stopping distances are greater.

Road edge

If you need to move a wheel off the bitumen, such as when passing an oncoming vehicle on a narrow road, don't panic. Pulling the wheel quickly to get back on the road may lead to over-correction and potential loss of control. **Slow down**, brake gently if needed, take your time and steer normally back onto the bitumen when safe to do so.

How quickly do you think you can stop?

Speed makes a big difference to your ability to stop. If you double your speed, you cover almost four times the distance before you stop.

Fact

At **60 km/h** you may cover up to **67 metres** before you can stop.

At **100 km/h** you may cover up to **142 metres** before you can stop.

This makes a significant difference to your chance of being involved in a crash.

Wet conditions

The road is wet, you have a modern vehicle with good brakes and tyres. A child runs onto the road 45 m ahead of you while you are travelling in a 60 km/h zone. You brake hard.

Will you stop in time?

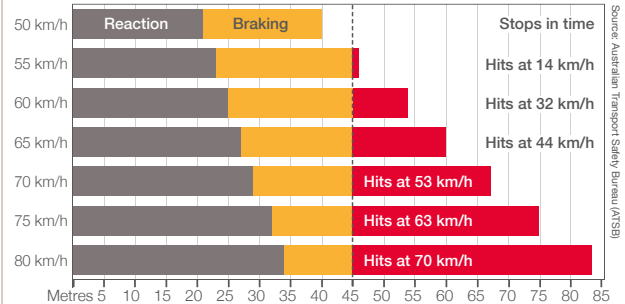


fig 10.

Dry conditions

The road is dry, you have a modern vehicle with good brakes and tyres. A child runs onto the road 45 m ahead of you while you are travelling in a 60 km/h zone. You brake hard.

Will you stop in time?

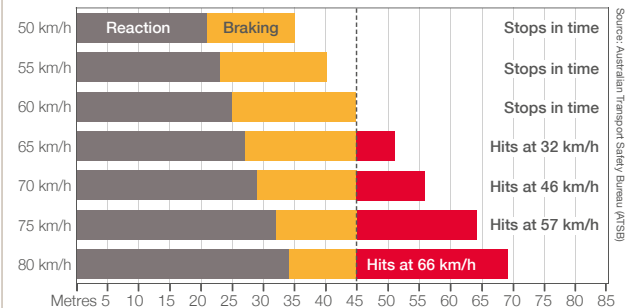


fig 11.

Rules and responsibilities

Road signs

Road signs provide information to help keep you and others safe on the road.

Regulatory signs

These signs tell you what you must or must not do. You are committing an offence if you disobey these signs. They are usually black and white, sometimes with red indicating danger or a restriction.



Keep left sign

However, some regulatory signs are black and yellow:



Safety zone sign and
Pedestrians crossing sign

Obey these traffic signs

These are signs showing which direction you must, or must not take.



No left turn



No entry sign



Left turn only sign

Stop and Give Way signs

These signs enable drivers to get through intersections and other places safely (see Giving way to vehicles at intersections on page 102).



Stop sign



Give way sign

Hand-held signs

Hand-held signs are often used at work sites. They may also be found at school crossings. Be prepared to obey the sign.



Hand-held stop sign

Keep left unless overtaking

Where this sign is shown, or on multi-lane roads where the speed limit is over 80 km/h, you must not drive in the right lane unless overtaking another vehicle, turning right, making a U-turn, avoiding an obstruction, or traffic is congested.



Keep left unless overtaking sign

Rules and responsibilities

Warning signs

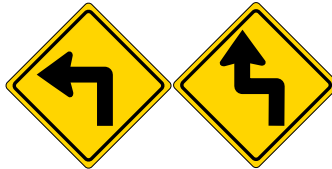
These signs alert you to possible danger ahead. They are usually yellow diamond shapes with black words or symbols. Take notice of the advice these signs give. It usually means slowing down.

Curves and bends signs

Curves and bends signs tell you what to expect – from simple curves, to winding sections and sharp bends.



Normal bend



Sharp bends



A winding section of road

Intersection warning signs

Intersection warning signs are used to warn you of the type of intersection ahead, particularly when the **intersection** is dangerous or difficult to see.

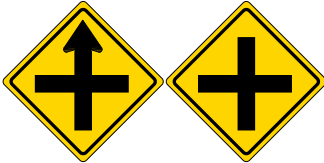
Definition

An **intersection** is where two or more roads meet and where vehicles travelling on different roads might collide.

There are many types of intersections.

Intersection control warning signs

Changing road layout



Cross-road intersection



Traffic lights ahead



End of divided road



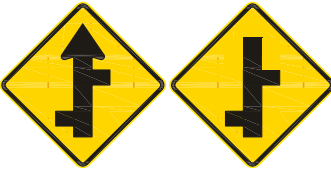
T-intersection



Stop sign ahead



Two lanes for oncoming traffic



Staggered side road junction



Roundabout ahead

Rules and responsibilities

Advisory speed signs

Advisory speed signs are sometimes used with other warning signs. The advisory speed sign shows the maximum speed that is safe to drive in good conditions.



Advisory speed sign used with curve warning sign

Changing conditions



Hollow/dip in the road sign



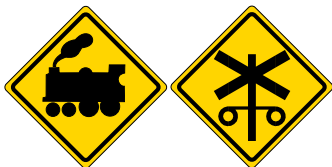
Gravel road sign



Slippery when wet sign

Railway level crossings

When approaching railway level crossings – slow down and be prepared to stop.



Rail crossing ahead sign



Uncontrolled crossing ahead sign



Uncontrolled rail crossing on side road sign

Pedestrian signs

These signs warn drivers of pedestrians crossing the road.



Pedestrians crossing sign



Children crossing sign

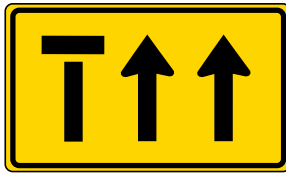
Rules and responsibilities

Road work signs

These are usually temporary signs warning drivers to slow down and drive carefully because there are road works ahead. Keep road workers and yourself safe when approaching road works. Remember, road workers may not be visible.



Workers on the road ahead sign



Left lane ends, prepare to move (merge) into another lane sign



You may proceed slowly sign



Slow down and be prepared to stop sign

Direction signs

These standard green signs with white lettering give information such as road names, destinations along a route and distances to the destinations.

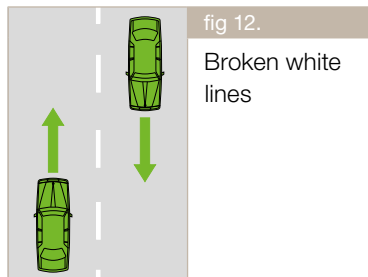


Road markings

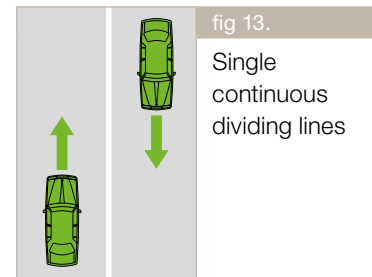
It is important to be able to 'read' the white or yellow markings on the road. Road markings can create regulatory requirements which you must obey and are there to provide a safer driving environment.

Dividing lines

Many roads are painted with broken white lines and single continuous lines in the centre of the road.



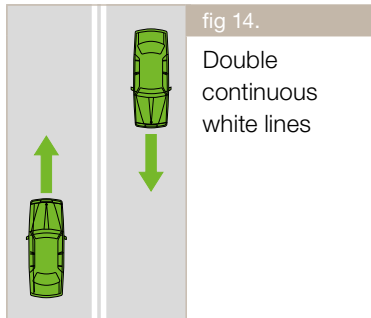
On a road with a broken white dividing line you must keep left of the lines and drive as close to the left side of the road as you can. You may cross these lines to enter or leave the road, but only overtake or U-turn if it is safe and if the road ahead is clear.



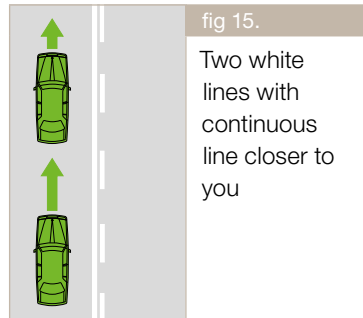
A single continuous dividing line means you can cross it to enter or leave the road, but you **must not U-turn or overtake other motor vehicles**.

Crossing a continuous white line is only permitted to safely pass a bicycle rider, and when the road ahead is clear and it is safe to do so.

Rules and responsibilities

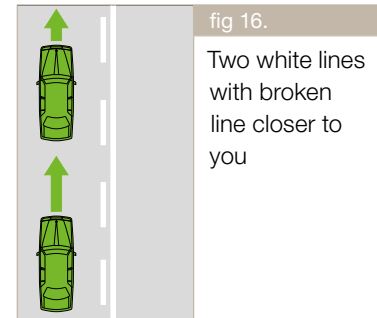


You must always keep left of these lines. Do not cross them to overtake a motor vehicle, to turn, or to enter or leave the road. However, you can cross them briefly to pass a bicycle rider, only if the road ahead is clear and it is safe to do so.



A single continuous line to the left of a broken line means you can cross it to enter or leave the road, but you must not overtake or make a U-turn.

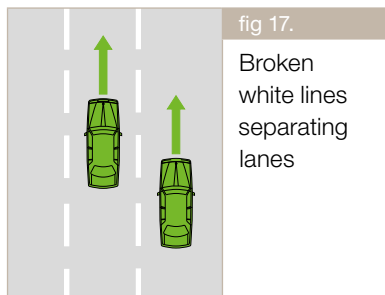
Crossing a continuous white line is only permitted to safely pass a bicycle rider, and when the road ahead is clear and it is safe to do so.



You may cross these lines to overtake, or to enter or leave the road, but only overtake or U-turn if it is safe and the road ahead is clear.

You must not park on the same side of the road as a continuous white dividing line unless there is at least three metres of clearance between your vehicle and the dividing line or unless otherwise indicated on a parking sign. The green vehicles in Figures 13, 14 and 15 are driving alongside a continuous line, and must leave at least three metres clearance if they wish to park on the left side of the road.

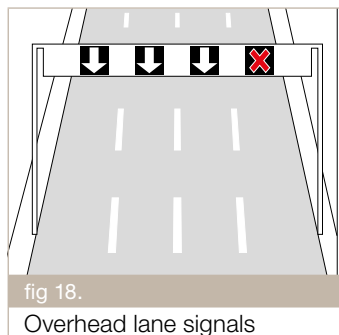
Lane markings



Broken white lines separate lanes of traffic going in the same direction. You may change lanes if you signal, and if it is safe to do so. Remember, you must give way to any vehicle already in that lane. You must drive with your vehicle completely within a lane.

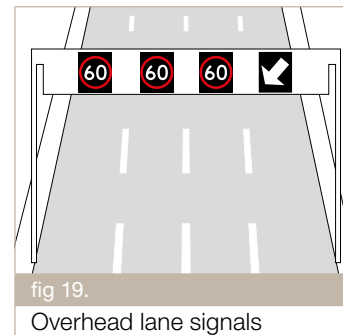
A driver must not cross a continuous line separating lanes unless avoiding an obstruction, permitted by sign, or permitted to drive in a special purpose lane.

Overhead lane signals



If overhead lane signals are in use, travel in the lanes over which there is a speed limit sign, or a green or white arrow.

If the lane control device is showing a red cross, you must not drive in that lane past that point.



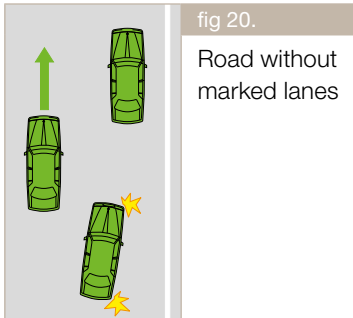
Sometimes the overhead lane signals can change.

If the lane control device is showing a downward arrow indicating a direction, this means that the lane is closed ahead. You must change lanes in the direction advised when it is safe to do so.

Rules and responsibilities

Roads without marked lanes

Where there are no lane markings and there are two or more lines of traffic travelling in the same direction, you may change from one line of traffic to another if you signal, and if it is safe to do so. However, you may only overtake another vehicle on the left side when it is turning right or if the vehicle is stationary and it is safe to do so.



Special purpose lanes

Special purpose lanes include bicycle lanes, bus lanes, transit lanes and tram lanes. Signs and/or road markings are used to set aside lanes for special vehicles. If specified on the signs other vehicles may use these lanes. Drivers must keep out of these lanes during the times marked on the signs or, if no time is specified, at all times. However, you may travel in these lanes for up to 100 metres (only up to 50 metres in a bicycle lane or tram lane), only when necessary to do so, to enter or leave the road, or to avoid an obstruction or turning vehicle.

You must give way before entering a special purpose lane. Some examples of special purpose lanes are shown on pages 94-95.

Tram lanes

For trams and public buses only (see Sharing the road with trams on pages 138-140).

Bus lanes

For buses and other vehicles as specified on a sign (see Sharing the road with buses on page 141).

Bicycle lanes

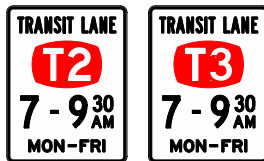
For bicycle riders only. Parking is allowed unless prohibited by signs. If you need to turn left from the road, you may drive along the bicycle lane for up to 50 metres only if it is necessary to do so. You should be courteous to bicycle riders. You must give way to bicycle riders in a bicycle lane, and only move into a bicycle lane when it is safe to do so.



Bicycle lane sign

Transit lanes

During times specified on the signs, transit lanes are for buses, taxis, motorcycles, trams and vehicles carrying two or more people (T2 sign), or three or more people (T3 sign).



Transit lane sign

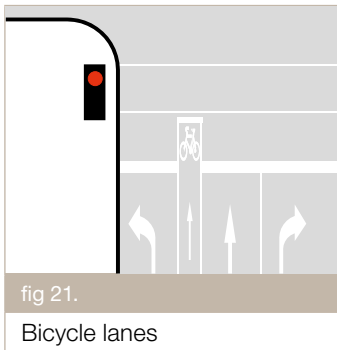
Fact

You may drive in a transit lane for up to 100 metres if it is necessary to make a turn.

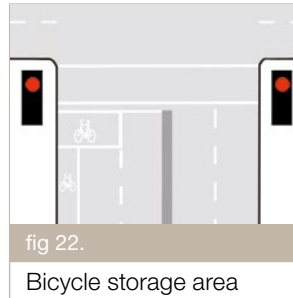
Rules and responsibilities

Traffic lane arrows

Arrows are painted on the road at some intersections. They tell you the direction traffic in each lane must go. If two directions are shown, you may go either way. You must not go in a direction other than that indicated by the arrows.



Arrows may also be applied to bicycle lanes.



A 'head start' bicycle area is sometimes provided so that bicycle riders can be seen by drivers when stopped at red traffic lights. This is called a bicycle storage area. A driver facing a red light at an intersection with a bicycle storage area must stop at the first stop line and not proceed into the area marked for bicycles until the light changes.

Painted traffic islands

Traffic islands are sometimes painted on the road before a right turning lane. You can drive over the painted island

or stop to wait on it, as long as there are no double lines outlining the island on the left, but you must give way to any vehicle in a turning lane or entering a turning lane from a marked lane.



You should not enter the painted island to turn right if the traffic is not banked up.

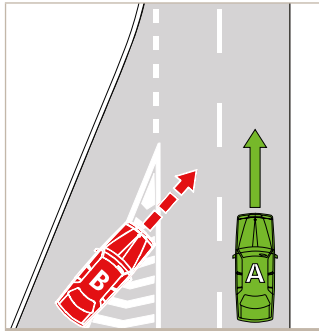


fig 24.

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A

Where a painted island with a continuous line separates traffic that is travelling in the same direction, such as at a freeway on-ramp, a driver must not drive on the painted island.

Give Way signs or lines

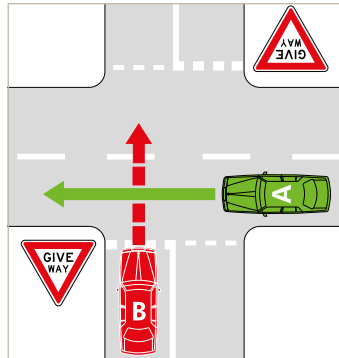


fig 25.

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A

See Giving way to vehicles at intersections on page 102.

Stop signs or lines

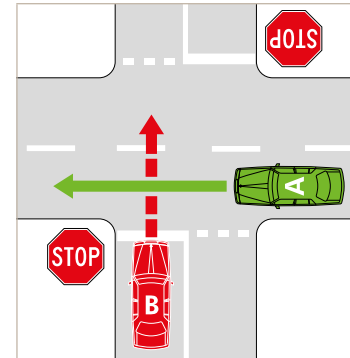


fig 26.

Red vehicle B must come to a complete stop and give way to green vehicle A.

See Giving way to vehicles at intersections on page 102.

Rules and responsibilities

Traffic controls at intersections

Traffic lights

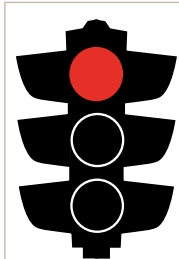


fig 27.

Red means you must STOP. Do **not** enter the intersection

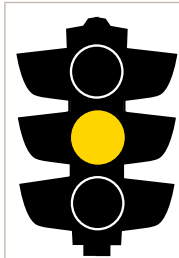


fig 28.

Yellow means STOP unless you are unable to do so safely

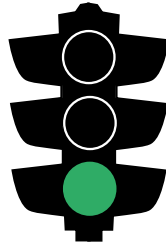


fig 29.

Green means you may enter the intersection, but only if you do not block the intersection

Traffic lights with arrows

Traffic lights with arrows make turns easier. If the arrow pointing in the direction you want to go is red, you must stop. If the arrow is green you may proceed in the direction it is pointing if it is safe to do so.

Tip

Half of all crashes happen at intersections. Stay alert and obey the intersection rules.

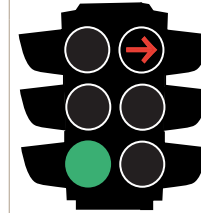


fig 30.

You must not turn right

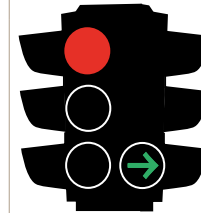


fig 31.

You may turn right

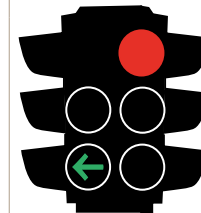


fig 32.

You may turn left

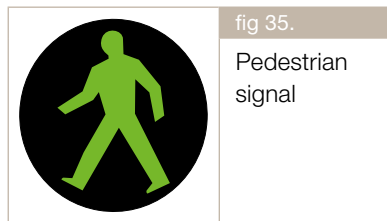
Traffic lights for trams, buses and bicycles

Some traffic lights signal a white T or B on a black background. These are used for trams and buses at some intersections. Some traffic lights may have red, yellow and green bicycle lights which apply to bicycle riders. Other road users must wait for the normal green light.



Pedestrian signals

Turning vehicles must always give way to pedestrians who are crossing the road they are turning into whether or not there is a green 'walking figure' facing the pedestrian.



Traffic control signs



Stop and Give Way signs are used for safety control at many intersections and other places.

See Giving way to vehicles at intersections on page 102.

Traffic lights not working

If the traffic lights are not working or flashing yellow you must give way as at any other uncontrolled intersection (see page 103).

Rules and responsibilities

Give way rules

There will be many times when you are driving when your path crosses that of other road users. When this happens, one or more of the people involved must give way in order to avoid a collision.

Definition

To **give way** means that if there is a danger that your vehicle could collide with another vehicle, person or animal you must slow down and stop if necessary to avoid a collision. If you are stationary, you must remain stationary until it is safe to proceed.

Here are some everyday driving situations when you will be required to give way.

Giving way to pedestrians

Pedestrians are vulnerable road users because they are not protected in a crash (unlike drivers and passengers protected within a vehicle). The road rules are designed to protect pedestrians on the road in many situations.

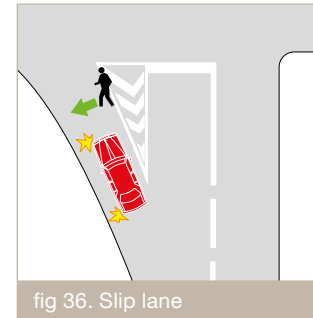
There are a number of driving situations when you must give way to pedestrians.

At pedestrian crossings

You must give way to any pedestrian on a pedestrian crossing, and you must not overtake another vehicle which has stopped at a pedestrian crossing. When approaching a pedestrian crossing, you must drive at a speed that would enable you to stop safely.

In slip lanes

You must give way to any pedestrian in a slip lane.



Definition

A **slip lane** is an area of road for vehicles turning left that is separated, at some point, from other parts of the road by a painted island or traffic island.

At intersections

When turning left or right at any intersection (except a roundabout), you must give way to any pedestrians crossing the road you are turning into.

At children's crossings

See Sharing the road with pedestrians on page 131.

On the footpath

When entering the road from a driveway or adjacent land, you must give way to pedestrians on any footpath, path or nature strip you cross to enter the road. You must also give way to bicycles and other vehicles on the footpath, path or nature strip.

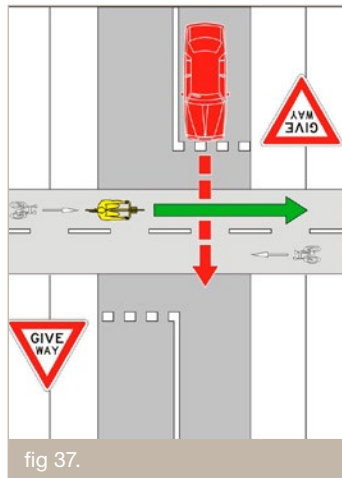
This also applies when leaving the road to enter a driveway or adjacent land.

In shared zones

In a shared zone shared by both vehicles and pedestrians, you must give way to pedestrians (see Speed limits on page 79).

At Stop or Give Way signs or lines not at intersections

You must give way not only to vehicles, but also to any pedestrian at or near the sign or line. This includes pedestrians as well as bicycles crossing in front of you on a shared or bicycle path.

**When making a U-turn**

You must give way to all pedestrians as well as vehicles when making a U-turn.

At tram stops

Before passing a stopped tram, you must stop at the rear of the tram, give way to any pedestrians crossing between the tram and the left side of the road and not proceed while the doors are open.

There are other requirements that drivers must comply with when passing stopped trams (see Sharing the road with trams pages 138-140).

Remember pedestrians can run onto the road at the last minute in order to catch a tram, so take extra care to look out for them.

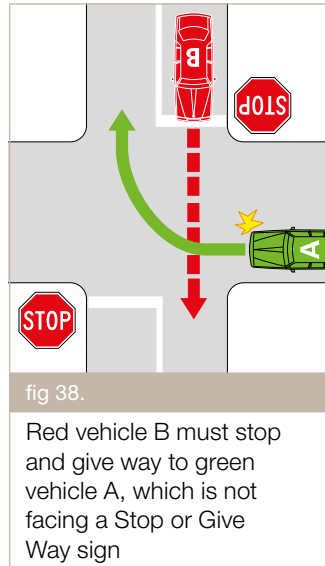
Rules and responsibilities

Giving way to vehicles at intersections

Stop or Give Way signs or lines at an intersection

A driver facing a Stop sign or line must come to a complete stop. After stopping at a Stop sign or line, or when facing a Give Way sign or line at an intersection, you must give way to any vehicle in, entering or approaching the intersection except:

- a vehicle making a U-turn
- a vehicle turning left using a slip lane
- an oncoming vehicle turning right if that vehicle is also facing a Stop or Give Way sign or line.



Fact

When the law refers to **vehicles**, this includes not only motor vehicles but also bicycles and horses being ridden.

The Give Way rules apply equally for these smaller vehicles.

You could be charged just the same for failing to give way to a bicycle or a horse being ridden as for failing to give way to a truck!

Giving way at intersections (except T-intersections or roundabouts)

If there are no traffic lights or signs or lines at an intersection, you must give way to any vehicle on your right.

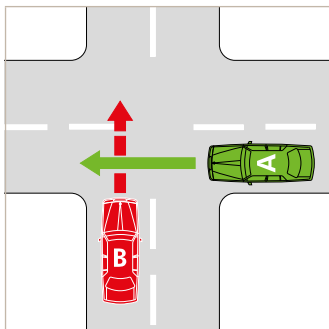


fig 39.

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A (on the right) that is going straight ahead

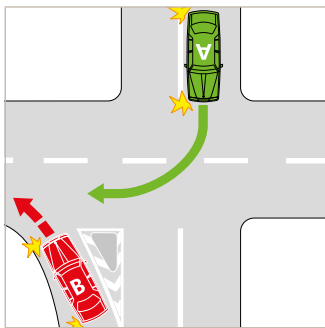


fig 40.

Red vehicle B using a slip lane must give way to green vehicle A (on the right)

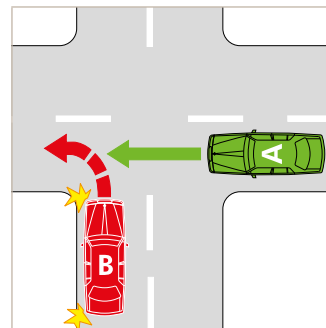


fig 41.

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A (on the right) that is going straight

The same requirements apply if the traffic lights are not working or flashing yellow.

Rules and responsibilities

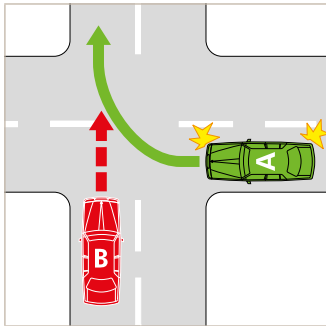


fig 42.

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A (on the right) that is turning right

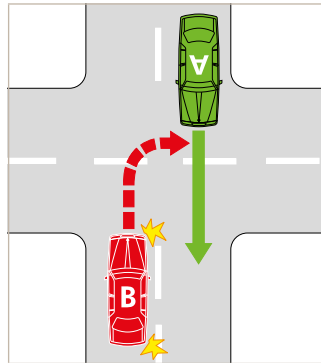


fig 43.

Red vehicle B turning right must give way to oncoming green vehicle A

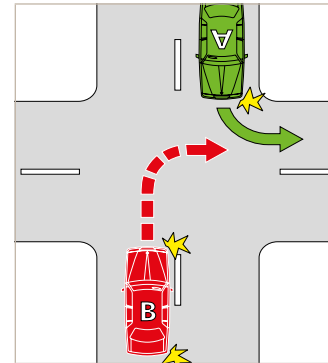


fig 44.

Red vehicle B turning right must give way to oncoming green vehicle A that is turning left

If you are turning right at an intersection without traffic lights or signs or lines, you must also give way to oncoming vehicles going straight ahead or turning left (except if they are turning in a slip lane) as well as any vehicle on your right.

Giving way at T-intersections

The Give Way rule is the same for all T-intersections. When you enter the continuing road from the road that ends, you must give way to vehicles travelling along the continuing road.

Definition

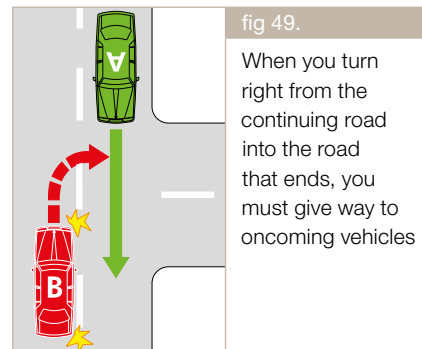
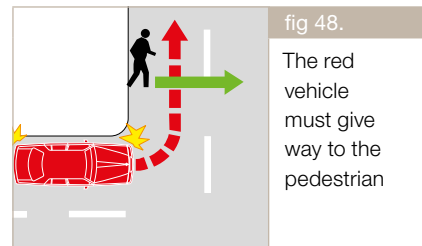
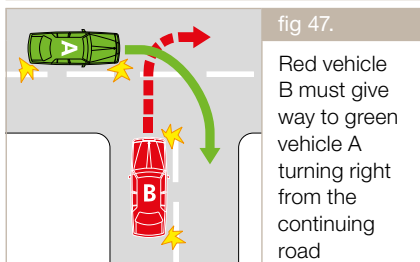
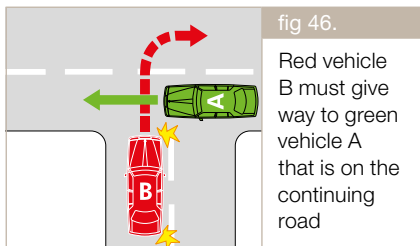
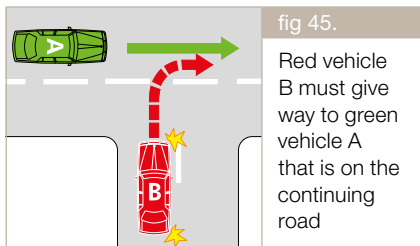
A **T-intersection** is where two roads meet and one of them ends.

T-intersections may not always form a regular T



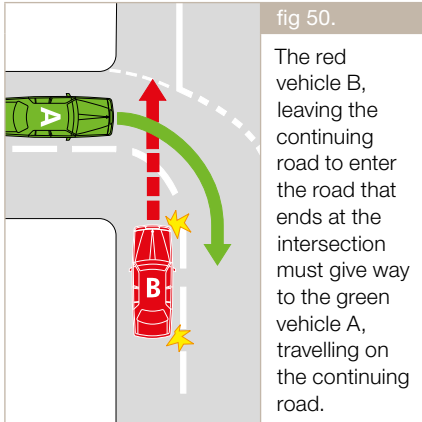
Differing T-intersections

These diagrams show how to give way at T-intersections without lights or signs, or when traffic lights have failed or are flashing yellow.



Rules and responsibilities

Some T-intersections are modified so that the continuing road goes round a corner. The road that ends is marked by a continuity line and Give Way or Stop lines or signs.



Giving way at roundabouts

When entering a **roundabout**, you must give way to:

- all vehicles already in the roundabout
- all trams entering, or approaching the roundabout.

Take care to look out for motorcyclists and bicycle riders already in the roundabout who may be harder to see.



Roundabout sign

Definition

A **roundabout** is an intersection with a roundabout sign at each entrance, a central island and one or more marked lanes, or lines of traffic, all of which have vehicles travelling in the same direction. You must always keep to the left of the central island.

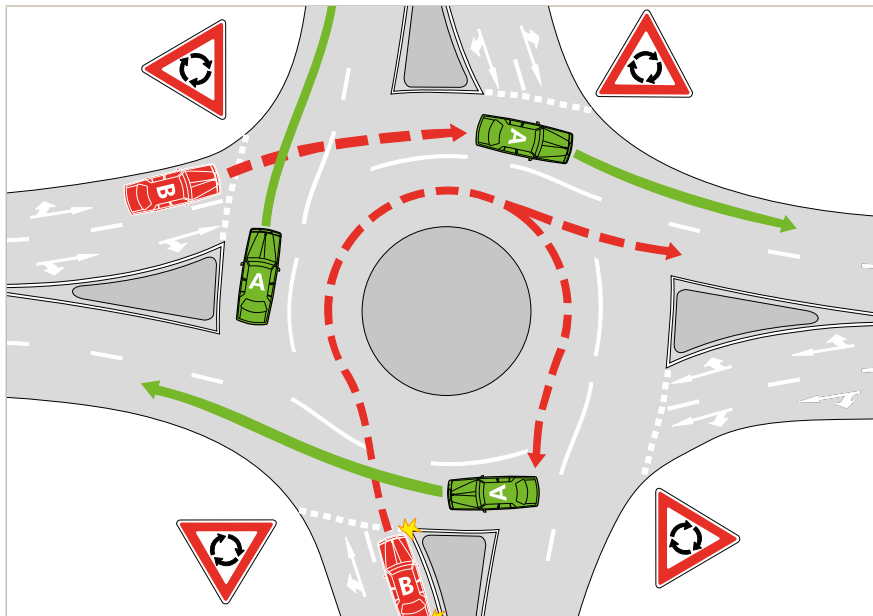


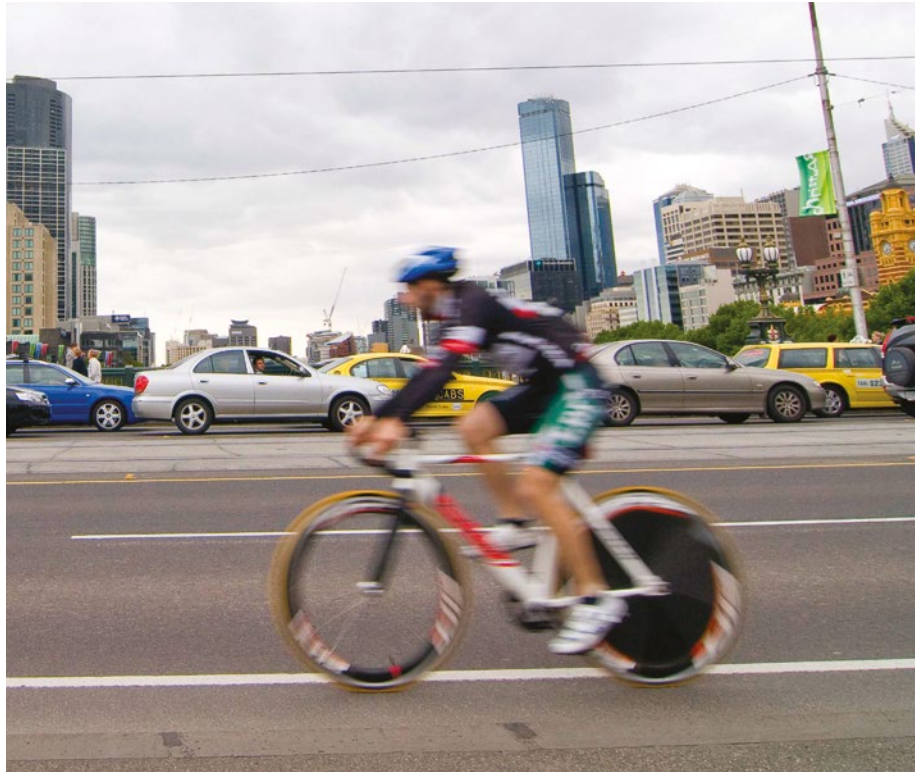
fig 51. Roundabout

Always give way to vehicles already in the roundabout. In this diagram, the red B vehicles must give way to the green A vehicles. Enter only when there is a safe gap in the traffic.

Rules and responsibilities

Bicycle and animal riders

In a roundabout, bicycle and animal riders have the option of turning right from the left lane, but they must give way to drivers exiting the roundabout.



Giving way on divided roads

When a two-way road is divided by a **median strip**, a Give Way or Stop sign applies to the whole of the intersection.

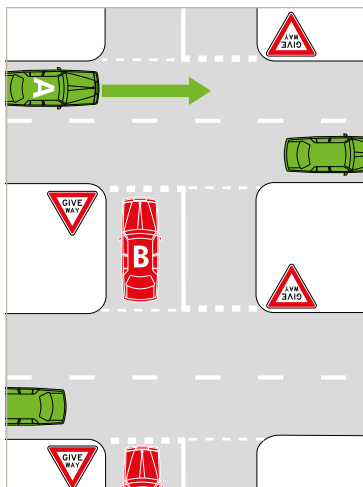


fig 52.

The red vehicle B must give way to the green vehicle A

Definition

A **median strip** is a dividing strip on the road designed to separate vehicles travelling in opposite directions.

Turning from a divided road

When turning from a divided road, you must obey the signs on the road you are turning from. Normally a vehicle in the same position as the red vehicle B could continue if it is safe to do so. However in Figure 53 the red vehicle B is facing a Stop Here On Red Signal sign, therefore it must stop until that signal is green. If there is no sign, you must give way to traffic when entering a road from a break in the median strip after turning.

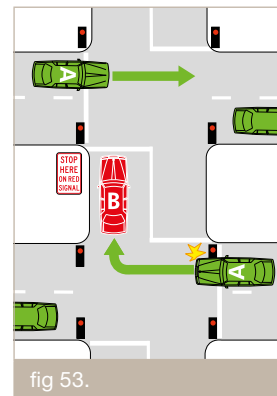


fig 53.

Other driving situations when you are required to give way

U-turn

When making a U-turn you must give way to all other vehicles and pedestrians.

Entering the road

Whenever you enter the road from a driveway or adjacent land, you must give way to all vehicles and pedestrians.

Rules and responsibilities

Entering the traffic stream

Whenever you enter the traffic stream from a parked position, or through a break in a median strip, you must give way to all vehicles travelling on the road.

Changing lanes

Whenever you change lanes from one marked lane or line of traffic to another, you must give way to vehicles already in that lane or line of traffic. This includes crossing over any broken line marked on the road which indicates that a lane ends, for example when merging into freeway traffic.

Tip

Make a head check whenever you are changing lanes or pulling out from the kerb, but don't take your eyes off the road ahead for more than a second.

Zip merging

If you are on a road where there are no lines marked and the road is such that two rows of vehicles must merge into one, you must give way to any vehicle which has any part of its vehicle ahead of yours. This is called zip merging.

Note: If you cross any lines marked on the road, then you are not zip merging but changing lanes and you must give way accordingly.

Definition

When two lanes of traffic merge into one and there are no lane markings, this is known as **zip merging**.

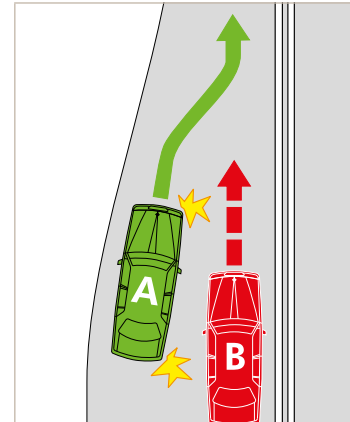


fig 54. Zip Merging

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A

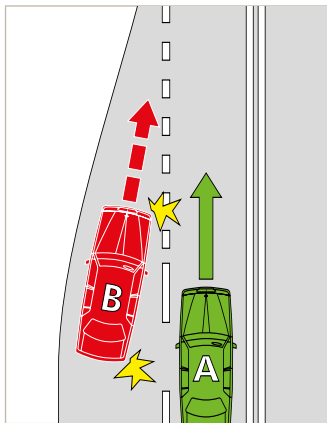


fig 55. Changing Lanes

Red vehicle B must give way to green vehicle A

Police direction

You **must** always follow instructions from the Police or any other authorised person.



Rules and responsibilities

Turning

Plan when you will turn well in advance. Move into the correct lane long before you need to turn. Use the indicators to give other road users plenty of warning.

Tip

Remember, road users can make mistakes about who should give way. Never assume the other driver has seen you or will give way to you. Make eye contact and always proceed carefully.

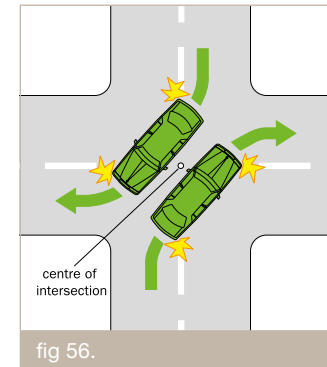
Making turns

Signalling your moves

Always use your indicators to let others know you are about to turn or change lanes.

The signal must be given for long enough to warn others that you are about to change lanes or direction. You must signal for at least five seconds when moving from a stationary position at the side of the road or from a median strip parking area.

Making right turns



To make a right turn you must:

- approach the intersection as close to the left of the centre of the road as possible
- turn just right of the centre of the intersection.

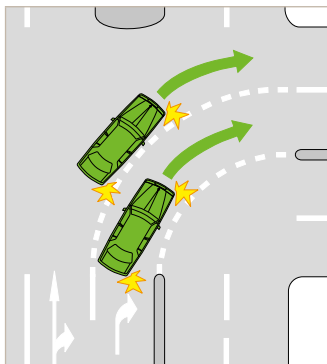


fig 57.

Right turns on multi-lane roads

On some multi-lane roads, arrows painted on the road will show you if right turns may also be made from other lanes.

If road markings indicate how a turn is to be made, you must make a turn as indicated by the road markings.

Making left turns

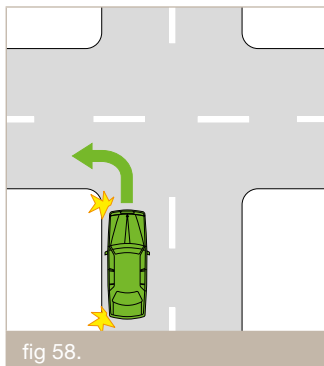


fig 58.

To make a left turn you **must** approach the intersection as close to the left side of the road as possible, but give way to bicycles when crossing into the bicycle lane (see page 95).

Where there is a slip lane, you must turn using the slip lane (see slip lane definition on page 100). But look out for bicycle riders on your left who may be going straight ahead.

Left turns on multi-lane roads

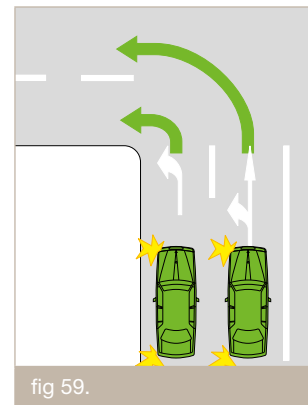


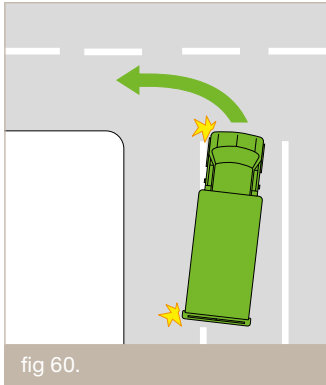
fig 59.

For a multi-lane road, arrows painted on the road will show you if left turns may also be made from other lanes.

If road markings allow turns from more than one lane, it is advisable that you stay in the same lane when you turn from one road into the other.

Rules and responsibilities

Exception to the turning rules



Trucks or vehicles over 7.5 metres long displaying a Do Not Overtake Turning Vehicle sign may use more than one lane to turn (see Sharing the road with trucks and other heavy vehicles on pages 141-143). Do not overtake these vehicles while turning if they display a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign.

Hook turns



Hook Turn sign

A driver turning right at an intersection with traffic lights and a Hook Turn sign must turn right by making a hook turn as shown in Figure 61.

Fact

Hook Turn signs are found at some intersections in central Melbourne and South Melbourne. The signs may be at the side of the road or hung from overhead wires, so be alert in checking for these signs.

To make a hook turn, you must:

- 1 Approach and enter the intersection from as near as possible to the left.
- 2 Move forward, keeping clear of any marked foot crossing, until your vehicle is as near as possible to the far side of the road that you are entering.
- 3 Remain at the position reached under Step 2 until **the traffic lights on the road you are entering have changed to green**.
- 4 Turn right into the road and continue straight ahead.

Fact

A bicycle rider may make a hook turn at any intersection – not just at hook turn intersections – unless there is a No hook turn by bicycles sign.

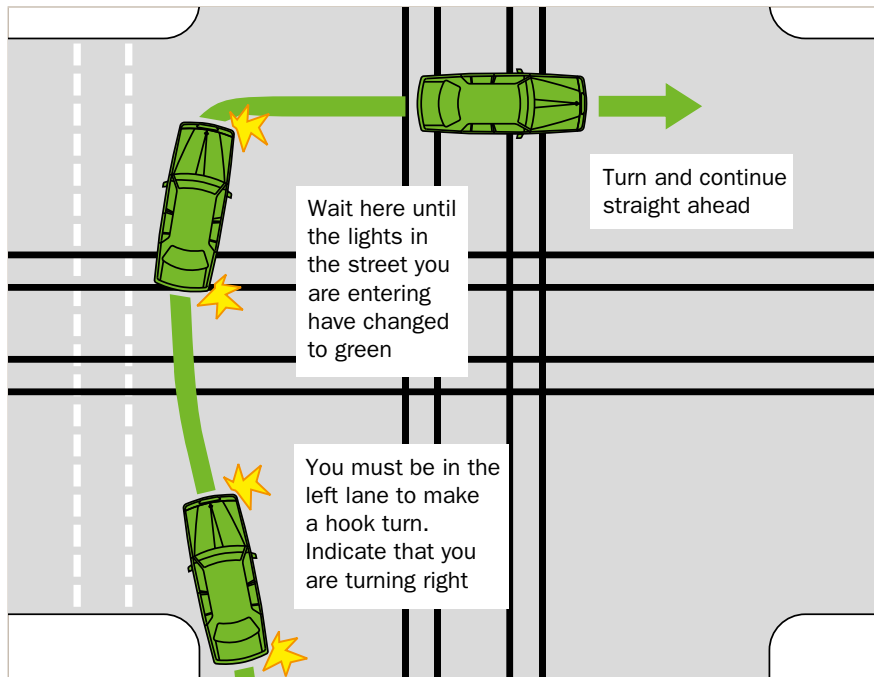


fig 61.

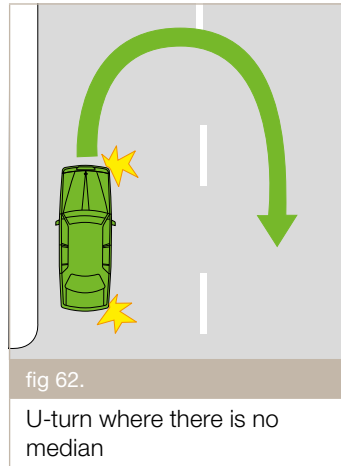
Doing a hook turn - turning right from the left lane

Rules and responsibilities

U-turns

When making a U-turn you must:

- have a clear view of traffic in either direction
- signal your intention for a reasonable time
- give way to all other vehicles and pedestrians
- safely complete your U-turn without disrupting other traffic.



Where there is no median, it is advisable that the U-turn be made from the left side of the road. Remember to watch out for traffic approaching from behind you.

You must not make a U-turn:

- over double continuous lines
- over a single continuous line
- where there is a No U-turn sign.

If the sign is not at an intersection continue on until you reach an intersection before you make a U-turn.

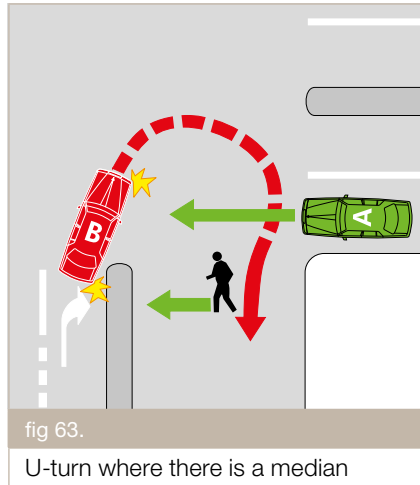


No U-turn sign



No Right Turn sign

- at a No Right Turn sign unless there is a U-turn Permitted sign.



Where there is a median, a U-turn must be made from the right lane.

Rules and responsibilities

Turning and one way roads

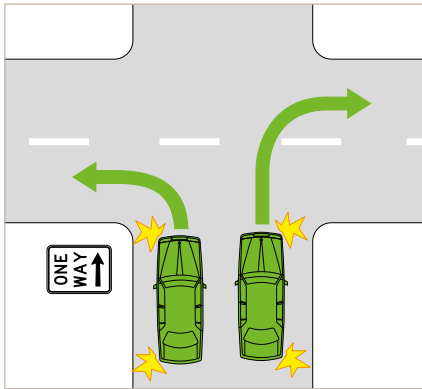


fig 64.

Turning from one-way roads

When turning left or right from a one-way road into a two-way road, you must turn from a position close to the side you are turning towards.

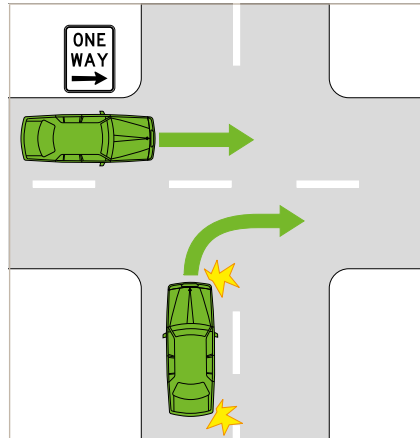


fig 65.

Turning into one-way roads

When turning left or right from a two-way road into a one-way road, it is advisable to turn into the nearest lane.

Making turns at roundabouts

A roundabout is considered to be a special type of intersection, so different rules apply. The Give Way rules on page 107 explain what you must do when entering the roundabout and who should give way.

Sometimes roundabouts have more than one lane. You need to follow these rules about turning left or right or going straight ahead.

Tip

Decide before you enter the roundabout if you are going to turn right, turn left or go straight ahead.

Turning left

Approach in the left lane and stay in that lane.

Signal a left turn on your approach to the roundabout and keep the signal on until you have left the roundabout.

Going straight ahead

Approach the roundabout in the left or right lane.

Drive in the same lane through the roundabout.

Do not signal on your approach to the roundabout, but if practicable, signal left as you exit.

Fact

Bicycle and animal riders may make a right turn from a left lane.

Rules and responsibilities

Turning right

Always approach the roundabout in the right lane.

Drive close to the centre of the roundabout and follow the right lane as you leave.

Signal a right turn on your approach, and signal left, if practicable, just before the exit you are turning into, keeping the signal on until you have left the roundabout.

Fact

Where arrow(s) are marked on the road before or in a roundabout you must drive in the direction of the arrow(s).

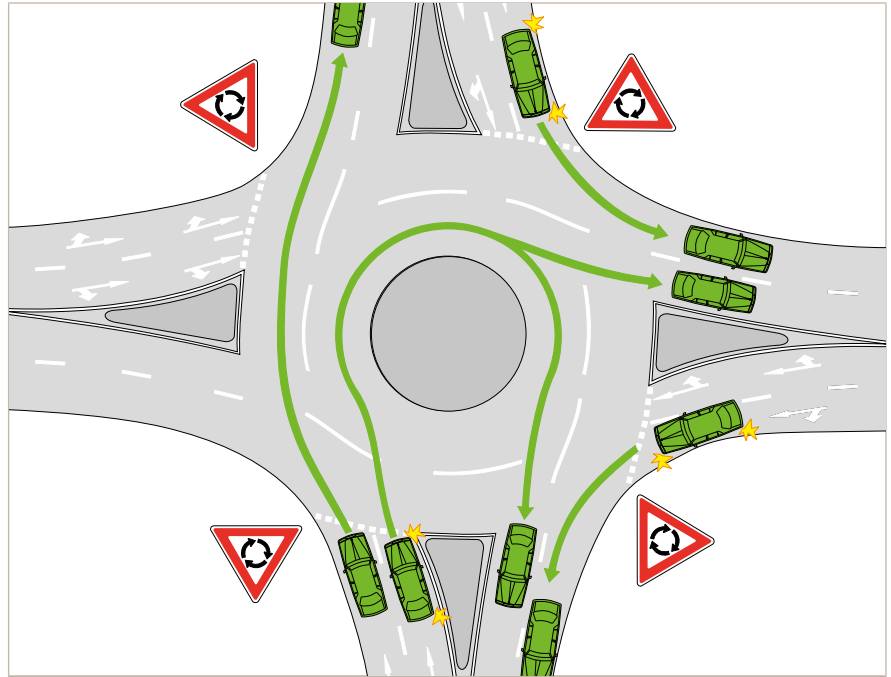


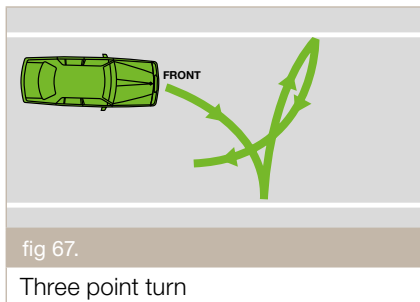
fig 66.

Turning at a roundabout

Three point turn

A three point turn is used to turn your car around on a road which is not as wide as your car's turning circle. When making a three point turn you must:

- put on your left signal before stopping at the kerb
- put on your right signal before leaving the kerb
- look in both directions before commencing the turn
- proceed across the road to the opposite kerb
- look in both directions along the road before reversing
- look in the direction of travel before and during reversing
- after reversing, look in both directions before moving off.



Rules and responsibilities

Freeways

There is special advice when driving on freeways as freeway speeds are often high and the traffic is heavy.

Entering a freeway

- Adjust your speed as you drive along the entry ramp to match that of the freeway traffic
- Clearly indicate your intentions
- Give way to traffic on the freeway
- Where there is a large enough gap, merge smoothly with the freeway traffic.



Start Freeway sign

There are traffic lights at some freeway entrances to control the flow of vehicles onto the freeway when the traffic is heavy. Electronic advisory signs will let you know if these traffic lights are operating. When operating, the lights will change quickly, so that when the light is green only one vehicle will be able to enter the freeway.

Exiting a freeway

- Watch for signs that tell you that you are approaching an exit ramp. Exit lanes are usually on the left
- Maintain your speed and signal your intention to exit well in advance
- Adjust your speed once you have entered the exit ramp.

If you miss your exit, continue travelling on the freeway until you reach the next exit. Do not reverse on a freeway. Do not cross the median strip.



Warragul exit 2 km sign



Wrong way go back sign

Some freeway exits will have an exit number sign which you can use to help navigate and map your route. The freeway exit signs can also provide a location reference for emergency services in emergency situations.



Freeway number exit sign

Overtaking lanes

Be alert on freeways as traffic travels at high speed. You must not drive in the right lane unless overtaking or unless all lanes are congested. This rule also applies to the right lane used by all traffic, if the lane to the right of that is a **transit lane**.

More information on transit lanes can be found on page 95.

Stopping

You must not stop on a freeway except in an emergency. If you have to stop, use the emergency stopping lane only. Put on your hazard warning lights.

Fact

Buses and taxis can sometimes use the emergency stopping lane when signs allow it. So watch out for vehicles in the emergency stopping lane, especially when entering or exiting freeways.

Variable speed zones

Electronic variable signs on freeways indicate reduced speed limits at high risk times.



Electronic variable speed limit signs

Tollways

Fact

Tollways are sections of road which the driver must pay to use. Signs are displayed to advise drivers that they will soon be entering the tollway.



Start tollway sign

You are entering a tolled section of road.



Tollway entrance sign

You are about to enter the tollway from a non-tollway road. If you do not want to enter the tollway, take the next exit.

Rules and responsibilities

Driving safely in tunnels

When **driving in tunnels**:

- Remove sunglasses before entering a tunnel
- Turn on your headlights, so that your vehicle is more visible
- Tunnels usually have variable speed limits. Lower limits apply when traffic is congested or when an incident has occurred (e.g. a crash or broken down vehicle). Look for speed limit signs and stay within the limit in accordance with conditions
- Check and obey variable message and lane control signs that provide important information about safety and traffic conditions
- Stay out of closed lanes. Even if you can't see the problem, always obey signs and controller instructions
- Keep a safe distance from other vehicles
- Lane changing causes many crashes on busy arterial roads.

Avoid lane changing and overtaking while travelling through tunnels

- If you really need to overtake another vehicle (e.g. if it is broken down) make sure you are clear of all other traffic and it is safe. Always use your indicators to show your intention to merge or change lanes
- Turn your car radio on. Tunnels have re-broadcast systems that convey safety and traffic information to drivers via their radio and the tunnel public announcement system
- Do not stop in a tunnel except in an emergency or if directed by the tunnel controller. Try to drive out of a tunnel even if your vehicle is damaged or has a mechanical malfunction
- Do not reverse in a tunnel
- Do not enter a tunnel if your vehicle is very low on fuel or you think that you might break down.

If you **break down in a tunnel** you should:

- If possible, drive out of the tunnel; otherwise, try to stop in a right or left lane, not the centre lane
- Switch on your hazard lights and the radio
- Stay calm, an incident response unit will attend to you as quickly as possible
- Remain in your vehicle, unless there's a fire or you are asked to evacuate by the control room
- If you do have to get out, watch carefully for other traffic and move to either the walkway or in front of your vehicle. Never stand behind your vehicle
- In an evacuation, look for the running man symbols and flashing lights for a safe exit point.

Sharing the road safely

As a driver you share the road with many other people:

- other drivers of cars, vans, trucks, buses and trams
- pedestrians
- motorcyclists
- bicycle riders.

Cooperative driving

We all have places to get to and want to arrive there safely. The best way to make this happen is to cooperate and help each other. It doesn't really hurt or waste any time to let somebody in from a side street, when the traffic is moving slowly.

You must not block intersections or crossings. If an intersection, crossing or road beyond an intersection or crossing is blocked you must not enter.

Cooperative strategies include:

- always using your signals when turning or changing lanes
- not following too closely
- smoothly controlling your speed rather than driving in a fast start/stop manner
- changing lanes correctly
- slowing down when approaching road work sites.

Remember that cooperation is for all road users. You also share the road with pedestrians, motorcyclists, bicycle riders, trucks, buses and trams.

There are times and places when cooperation is essential. These include places where:

- two lanes have to merge
- the left lane ends
- extra lanes exist just before and after intersections
- overtaking lanes or divided roads end

- tram stops where a tram passenger unexpectedly alights from the tram some time after other patrons have alighted
- cars are parked and there is not enough room for two vehicles to pass.

Tip

Cooperative driving helps you to be a 'green driver'. There is a connection between your driving style and the impact your driving has on the environment. Drive smoothly and avoid fast start/stop driving – you'll save fuel, pollute less and save money as well. Even better leave the car at home and walk, ride your bike or use public transport!

Rules and responsibilities

Keeping your cool when driving

Road rage or aggressive driving is dangerous. It involves people losing their cool, perhaps in response to a mistake or action of another driver. You can avoid road rage easily.

- The fundamental rule is do not retaliate – it is never worth it!
- If you make a mistake while driving, acknowledge it
- Don't take the mistakes of other drivers personally – remember it's a mistake not a personal attack
- Keep your cool and keep your distance!
- Drive cooperatively and consider the other people on the road!.

(For more information on strategies to keep your cool when driving, see pages 64-66.)

Sharing the road with other motorists

Keeping to the left

On multi-lane roads with a speed limit over 80 km/h, you must keep out of the right lane unless you are:

- overtaking
- turning right
- making a U-turn
- avoiding an obstruction
- driving in congested traffic.

You must also keep out of the right lane where a Keep Left Unless Overtaking sign applies.



Keep left unless overtaking sign

Signalling your moves

Before turning or changing lanes you must signal for long enough to give sufficient warning to other road users, including other drivers, bicycle riders and pedestrians. In 60 km/h zones, it is best to signal for at least 30 metres or about the length of two houses and driveways before turning or changing lanes.

Tip

Check that your indicator is off after you have made your turn or lane change – it may not have turned off by itself. If it is left on, other drivers will think you intend to turn.

Before moving from a stationary position at the side of the road or a parking area in the middle of the road, you must signal for at least five seconds.

Here are some of the ways you can signal your intentions.

Using your indicators

You must use your indicators when:

- turning to the right or left
- changing lanes or line of traffic
- overtaking
- making U-turns
- pulling into and out of parking spots
- leaving a continuing road which curves to the left or right
- leaving a roundabout (if practicable)
- moving to the left or right from a stationary position
- diverging to the left or right.

Tip

Use indicators even if there is no-one else around – it's the driver you cannot see who can be the most dangerous.

Watch other vehicles' indicators and make sure they are doing what is indicated. Sometimes an indicator has not cancelled from the last turn, or has been put on too early. Make sure you indicate in such a way that your signal cannot be misleading.

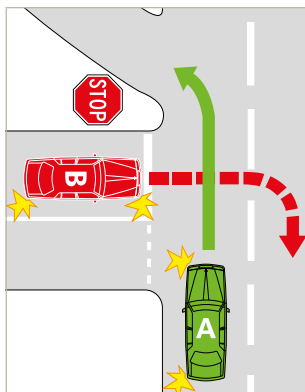


fig 68.

These vehicles are signalling their moves, but could be heading for trouble as vehicle A's signal could be misleading

Using your brake lights

Every time your foot touches the brake pedal, your brake lights glow, warning other drivers you are slowing down. Likewise, you will need to slow down when the brake lights on the vehicle in front of you are glowing red. So give lots of warning by braking early and slowing gradually.

Making eye contact

As well as watching out for indicators, you can get an idea of what another person might do by making eye contact. To make sure another driver knows you are there, try to make eye contact, especially at intersections.

Rules and responsibilities

Using your headlights and tail lights

Headlights help you to see at night. Headlights and tail lights help others to see you in poor light conditions. Your headlights and tail lights must be on between sunset and sunrise.

They must also be on in hazardous weather conditions where there is reduced visibility.

Tip

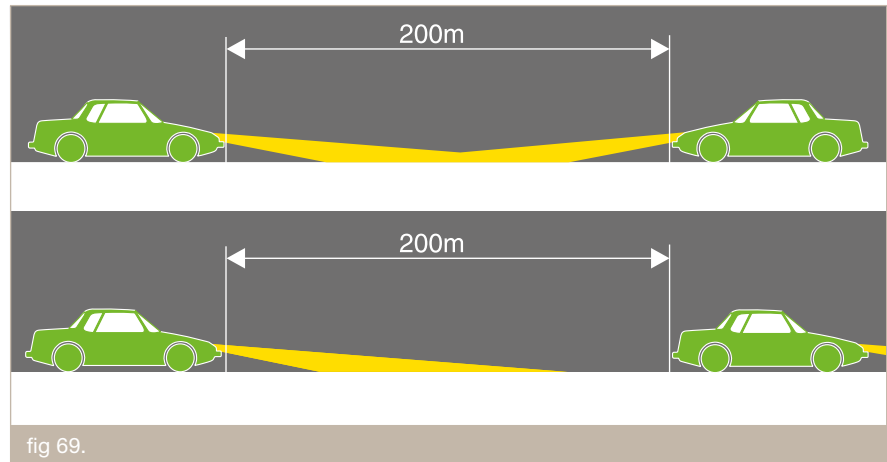
If the street lights are on, your lights should also be on.

High-beam headlights

Headlights on high-beam enable you to see further. However, headlights on high-beam may dazzle an oncoming driver, so you must 'dip' them to low-beam when another vehicle is within 200 metres. You must also dip your high-beam headlights when driving within 200 metres behind another vehicle.

Don't be dazzled by high-beam

Look to the left side of the road and drive towards the left of your lane if a car with high-beam headlights on is approaching. If dazzled by the lights, slow down and pull over until your eyes recover.



Using emergency signals

If your vehicle breaks down on the road

Make sure other drivers can see your vehicle and stop in time. If possible, pull out of the traffic flow. If you can't get completely off the road, try to stop where people have a clear view of you and your vehicle. Don't stop just over a hill or just around a curve.

Tip

Turn on your hazard warning lights to warn other drivers. If your vehicle doesn't have hazard warning lights use your left indicator instead. Lift your bonnet or boot lid to show other drivers you are in trouble.

Driving in dangerous conditions or situations

You may use hazard warning lights if you are driving in dangerous weather conditions, such as fog, smoke, or if you are driving slowly and likely to obstruct other vehicles or pedestrians. You must not operate front or rear fog lights unless driving in fog or hazardous weather conditions. They can dazzle other drivers if used in other weather conditions.

Warning others of your approach

You must only use your horn if it is necessary to warn other road users of the approach or position of your vehicle.

Rules and responsibilities

How to overtake safely

If someone is overtaking you, you must not increase your vehicle's speed.

Here are some tips to reduce your risk when overtaking:

Overtaking on a two way road

- Check the centre of the road markings (see Road markings, page 91). If there are double continuous white lines, two white lines with a continuous line closest to you or a single continuous line, you must not overtake
- Make sure you have a clear view of any approaching traffic and that there is enough space to overtake safely. Remember that it is hard to estimate the speed of approaching vehicles
- Check that the vehicle in front or behind is not also about to pull out to overtake
- Do a head check
- Use your right indicator to let others know you are about to overtake. A vehicle behind may want to overtake both you and the vehicle in front
- If you are not sure you have enough time, just wait. A few seconds or minutes could save your life
- Never overtake if the road is not wide enough for you to stay completely on the sealed part of the road, unless you can do so at a low speed
- Judge the length of the vehicle you are overtaking, because some heavy vehicles are very long
- When safe, accelerate and overtake the vehicle, then indicate left when safe to return to your lane. You must not exceed the speed limit at any time

- You must keep a safe distance when overtaking and not return into the line of traffic until you are a sufficient distance past the vehicle you are overtaking.

Tip

One way to know if it is safe to return to your lane is when you see both headlights of the vehicle you have overtaken in your rear view mirror.

Overtaking where there are no lane markings

When a road has no lane markings, you must overtake a vehicle on its right side. You must not overtake a moving vehicle on the left, unless the vehicle is turning right, or making a U-turn from the centre of the road, and has its right indicator flashing.

Overtaking where lanes are marked

When a road has lane markings, you may overtake in the left lane but remember you are less visible to the driver of the vehicle you are going past if you overtake on the left.

Overtaking where there are oncoming vehicles

Never underestimate the space and time you will need to safely overtake when there are oncoming vehicles. It is hard to judge the speed at which they are travelling. If in doubt – don't pull out.

Overtaking where there are hills and curves

If your view is blocked, don't pull out. Remember, you must not overtake when there are double unbroken white lines, two white lines with a continuous line closest to you or a single continuous line.

Overtaking at intersections, rail crossings, shopping centre entrances and pedestrian crossings

These are never good places to overtake. Wait until you are on a clearer section of road. You must not overtake another vehicle stopped at a pedestrian or a children's crossing.

Passing bicycle riders

The same overtaking requirements apply when passing a bicycle rider. You must leave at least one metre between your vehicle and bicycle riders when passing on roads with speeds up to 60km/h. On roads above 60km/h the space must be at least 1.5m.

You may cross the centre line to pass bicycle riders, if you have a clear view of the road ahead and it is safe for you to do so.

Sharing the road with pedestrians

Pedestrians don't always do what you expect. You should watch out for them at all times. Here are some places where you should take extra care. Drivers are obliged to try to avoid a collision even if the pedestrian is doing the wrong thing. More information on giving way to pedestrians can be found on page 100.

Tip

Pedestrians include not only people on foot but also those on wheeled devices such as skateboards, rollerblades, wheelchairs and motorised mobility devices. A person pushing a bicycle is also considered to be a pedestrian.

Rules and responsibilities

Tip

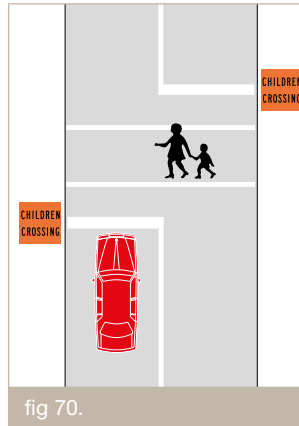
Remember whenever you are a pedestrian, you cannot rely solely on the speed limits and road rules to protect you. Always keep a look out for vehicles (including bicycles and motorcycles) because in a crash a pedestrian will come off second best.

At a children's crossing



Children's crossing flag

Always approach a children's crossing at a speed from which you can safely stop. You must stop at flagged children's crossings if a pedestrian is on or entering the crossing, even if there is no crossing supervisor present. You must not proceed until the pedestrian has left the crossing.



Hand-held stop sign

You must also stop if a hand-held Stop sign is displayed at the crossing.

At intersections and traffic lights

When turning, you must give way to pedestrians crossing the road you are entering. Elderly people may not cross the road in the time allowed by the lights. Be patient and wait for them to cross safely.

Pedestrian lights are often located away from intersections to enable pedestrians to cross roads safely. These traffic signals generally operate the same as lights at intersections. However, at some locations, drivers may proceed when the yellow light starts flashing, provided they give way to any pedestrians still on the crossing. These crossings have When Flashing Give Way To Pedestrians signs.



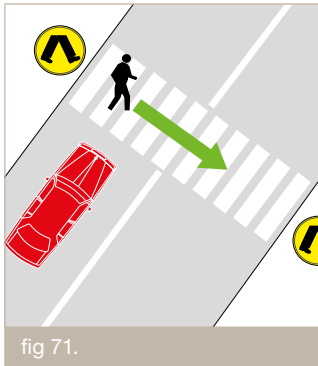
Pedestrian give way sign at a traffic light



Rules and responsibilities

At pedestrian crossings

Always approach pedestrian crossings at a speed from which you can safely stop. Not all pedestrians look before they step onto crossings, so take care. You must give way to any pedestrian on a pedestrian crossing.



At shared zones

Shared zones have a speed limit of 10 km/h or as indicated on the Shared Zone sign. In a shared zone, you must give way to pedestrians.

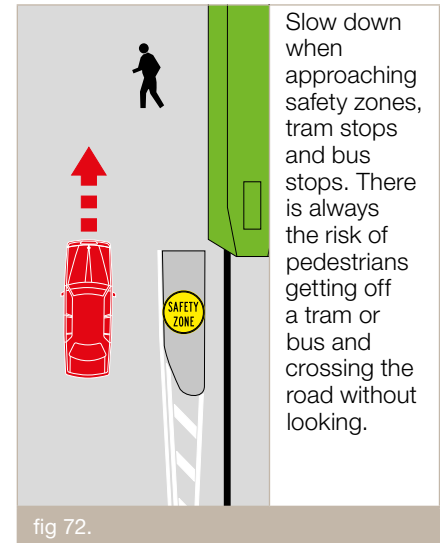
At safety zones, tram stops and bus stops

Definition

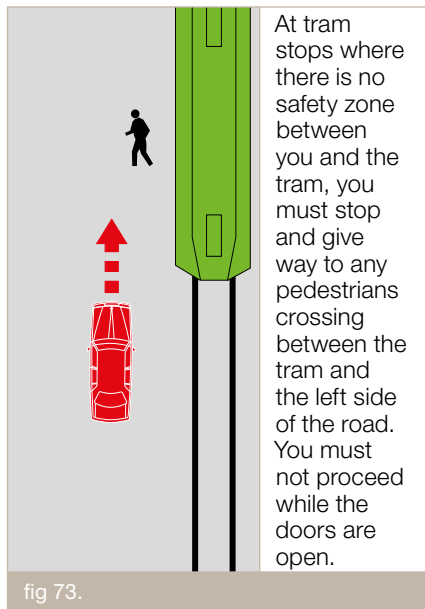
A **safety zone** is the area of the road at or near a tram stop with safety zone signs and a traffic island or dividing strip.

Slow down when approaching **safety zones**, tram stops and bus stops. There is always the risk of pedestrians getting off a tram or bus and crossing the road without looking. Pedestrians are often hard to see when stepping out suddenly from behind or in front of a bus or tram.

It is also a good idea when you are waiting to pick up a bus passenger to park on the same side of the road that the bus will be travelling. More information on sharing the road with trams can be found on pages 138-140.

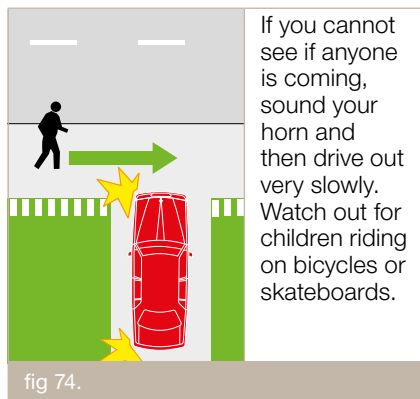


Slow down when approaching safety zones, tram stops and bus stops. There is always the risk of pedestrians getting off a tram or bus and crossing the road without looking.



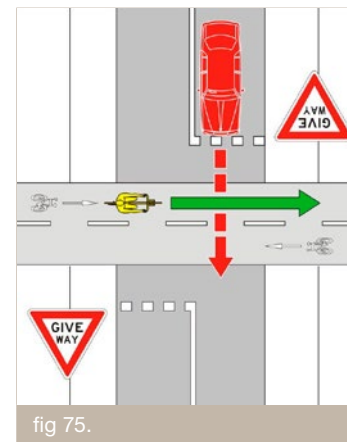
There are other requirements that drivers must comply with when passing stopped trams (see Sharing the road with trams on pages 138-140).

When coming out of driveways



You must give way to any bicycles or pedestrians when leaving any private property, such as homes, shopping centres, service stations and car parks.

Crossing on paths



You must give way to any vehicles or pedestrians on a shared or bicycle path which crosses the road if you are facing a Give Way or Stop sign.

Rules and responsibilities

At shopping centres and car parks

At shopping centres, car parks and other busy places there is a greater chance of pedestrians crossing the road unexpectedly or stepping out from behind or between vehicles without looking. Slow down and be alert.

Near schools

Take care when driving near schools especially at times when children are arriving or leaving. Watch out for 40 km/h or 60 km/h speed limits outside schools.

Where children are walking or playing

Beware of children darting out suddenly from between parked cars, near playgrounds, bus stops or anywhere you see children walking or playing.

Near libraries and senior citizens' clubs

Be alert and take extra care in areas where there are elderly people, such as libraries, senior citizens' clubs and homes for the elderly.

Tip

Beware of children suddenly coming out from between parked cars, near playgrounds or bus stops – they are often hard to see over the tops of cars.

Vision impaired

Be aware of pedestrians with poor or impaired vision who may be using a guide dog, a white cane or white walking stick. They may not see your vehicle clearly or be able to judge the speed of your vehicle.

Near hotels or nightclubs

Pedestrians who have been drinking may be impaired by alcohol. They may not pay attention to the traffic before crossing the road.

Wet weather

Pedestrians may hurry and take risks in the wet. Slow down and take extra care in these conditions.

At night

Pedestrians may be particularly difficult to see in the dark or near-dark conditions.

Motorised mobility devices

Motorised mobility devices include wheelchairs, scooters and buggies that are used by people who are unable to walk or have difficulty walking. People using motorised mobility devices must obey the same road rules as other pedestrians. Watch out for motorised mobility devices.

Sharing the road with bicycle riders and motorcyclists

You need to be especially alert for bicycle riders and motorcyclists as they are more at risk of injury than drivers.

Give bicycle riders and motorcyclists space – they have the same rights and responsibilities as you.

You must leave at least one metre between your vehicle and both bicycle riders and motorcyclists when passing on roads with speeds up to 60km/h.

On roads above 60km/h, the space must be 1.5m.

Before you open your car door, use your mirrors and do a headcheck to look for bicycle riders and motorcyclists passing your car.

Tip

Doing a head check can be easier if you open the car door with your left hand.

When passing a parked car, bicycle riders and motorcyclists should keep well clear in case a door is opened unexpectedly.

Bicycle riders and motorcyclists are legally allowed to ride two abreast (up to 1.5 metres apart); this makes them easier to see. Give bicycle riders and motorcyclists their own space.

Never share the lane with bicycle riders or motorcyclists if you cannot leave this clearance.

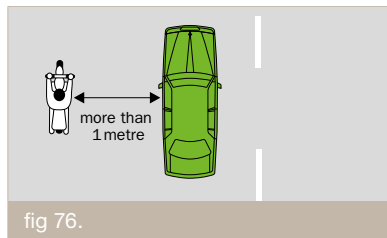


fig 76.

Watch out for bicycle riders and motorcyclists

Bicycles and motorcycles are smaller than cars and therefore harder to see and are more likely to be hidden in your blind spot. Keep a lookout for them, particularly before turning or entering an intersection or preparing to change lanes. Intersections are where many bicycle and motorcycle crashes occur because vehicles turning left or right cut across in front of the them.

Many motorcycles can accelerate faster than a car. What looks like a safe gap in traffic, may not be if there is a motorcycle among the cars.

Riders can be hidden by large vehicles which are overtaking them, such as trucks and buses. Only move left or turn left from behind a large vehicle when you have a clear view and are sure that the road is clear.

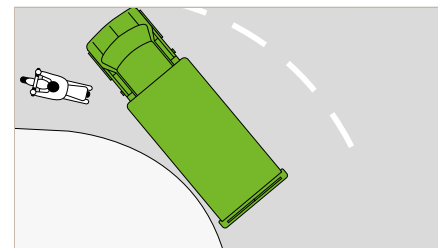


fig 77.

Watch out for bicycle riders and motorcycles. Riders can be hidden by large vehicles which are overtaking them, such as trucks and buses.

Fact

Over one third of motorcycle crashes and over a half of bicycle crashes happen at intersections. Remember: Always 'Look Bike'.

Rules and responsibilities

Sharing the road with trams

Young, inexperienced drivers are involved in more tram-pedestrian crashes than more experienced drivers.

Remember these general rules about sharing the road with trams.

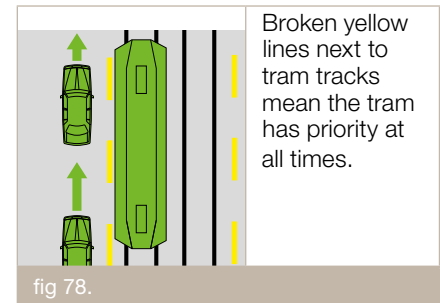
- Do not pass a tram stopped at a tram stop unless there is a safety zone. You must stop level with the rear of the tram, and not drive past while the tram doors are open
- You may only overtake a stopped tram if there are no pedestrians on the road and the tram doors are closed or if a uniformed tram employee signals you through. However, you must not exceed 10 km/h while passing the tram
- You must give way to a tram moving into or across a roundabout

- You must not pass on the right of a tram unless the tram tracks are at or near the far left side of the road
- Buses travelling along tram tracks must be treated as trams.

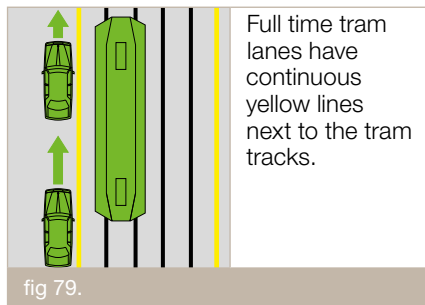
Broken yellow lines next to tram tracks

These lines on roads give trams priority at all times.

- You can cross a broken yellow line and drive on tram tracks at any time, however you must keep out of the path of trams
- You must not delay a tram
- If you want to turn right, allow the tram to pass you, or keep going and turn right further on
- Do not pull out in front of a tram and do not delay a tram.



Full time tram lanes



These tram lanes are in operation at all times and the Tram Lane sign will not show any times of operation. You are not allowed to travel in a tram lane. You may drive in a part-time tram lane for up to 50 metres to enter or leave the road, or briefly to overtake a bicycle rider. However, you must not delay a tram.



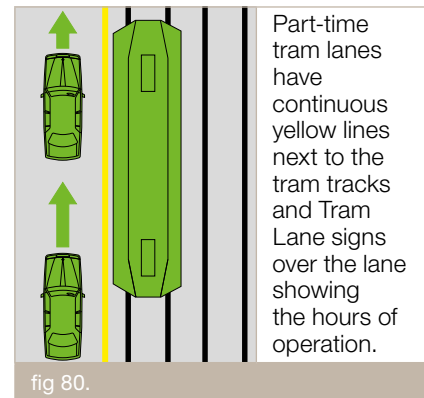
Tram lane sign

Part-time tram lanes

Part-time tram lanes have Tram Lane signs over the lane which indicate the hours of operation and a continuous yellow line to the left of the tracks. You are not allowed to travel in a part-time tram lane during the times it is in operation (as shown on the Tram Lane signs). You may drive in a part-time tram lane for up to 50 metres to enter or leave the road, or briefly to overtake a bicycle rider. However you must not delay trams even during the times when the tram lane is not operating.



Tram lane with hours of operations sign



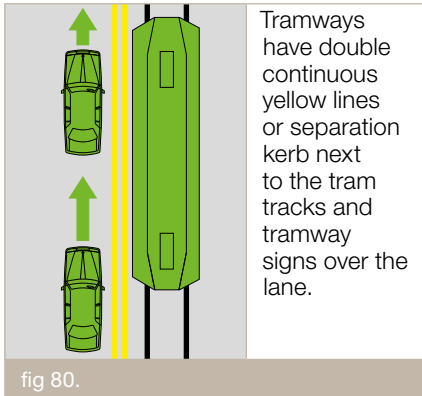
Definition

A tram lane is a part of the road with tram tracks that is marked along the left side of the tracks by a continuous yellow line, and is indicated by a Tram Lane sign.

Rules and responsibilities

Tramways

Tramways are in operation at all times. You must not drive in a tramway at any time unless you have to avoid an obstruction. Tramways are marked by a Tramway sign over the lane and double continuous yellow lines or physical structures to separate trams from other traffic. You may only cross where there are breaks designed to permit vehicles to cross the tramway.



Common sense and tramways

If a parked or double parked vehicle blocks your lane, you may not be able to avoid driving in a tramway. You won't be breaking the law, but move to your own lane as soon as possible to avoid delaying a tram.

Trams are longer and heavier than cars and it takes them longer to stop safely. So, when you are passing a tram or changing lanes, don't pull into the empty space immediately in front of a tram. This is their 'safety margin'. Be careful and leave plenty of room.



Tramway sign

Sharing the road with buses

Buses may have special lanes. Only public buses or other vehicles as specified on the sign may use these lanes. However, you may drive in a bus lane for up to 100 metres if it is necessary:

- to enter or leave the road
- to overtake a vehicle that is turning right or making a U-turn from the centre of the road.



Bus lane sign

Bus only lanes

Some lanes are dedicated bus only lanes and cannot be used by other vehicles (unless avoiding an obstruction).

You will need to turn across these lanes, giving way to any buses in the lane



Bus only sign



Give Way to bus sign

Watch out for buses pulling out from the kerb. In a built-up area you must give way to a bus displaying a Give Way To Bus sign and signalling that it is about to pull out from the kerb into the left lane. More information on built-up areas can be found on page 79.

Sharing the road with police and emergency vehicles

You must get out of the way of a police or emergency, enforcement or escort vehicle when its siren is on or it is displaying red, blue or magenta flashing lights. Give way and stop if necessary (despite any other rules), even if you have a green traffic light. These vehicles have exemptions to rules in the case of emergencies and may act unpredictably.

You must slow down when approaching enforcement, emergency or escort vehicles that are stationary or moving slowly (less than 10km/h) when its siren is on or it is displaying red, blue or magenta flashing lights.

You must not exceed 40km/h when passing enforcement, emergency or

escort vehicles that are stationary or moving slowly (less than 10km/h) when its siren is on or it is displaying red, blue or magenta flashing lights and not increase your speed until a safe distance from the vicinity of the scene.

You do not need to slow for enforcement, emergency or escort vehicles on the opposite side of a divided carriageway (separated by a median strip).

You must also stop if twin red lights are flashing on a road, for example, outside a Fire Station or Ambulance Station.

Sharing the road with trucks and other heavy vehicles

Here are some tips about sharing the road with trucks of any size.

Blind spots – be seen, be safe

All vehicles have blind spots where the driver loses sight of vehicles around them. The blind spot is larger for truck drivers. If you cannot see the truck's external mirrors, the truck driver can't see you. This should be a 'no stay spot'. Either accelerate to overtake if safe

Rules and responsibilities

to do so or decrease speed and pull back to where you can be seen. More information on blind spots can be found on page 40.

Don't cut in

Trucks are longer and heavier than cars and it takes them longer to stop safely. So, when you are overtaking a truck or changing lanes, don't pull in to the empty space immediately in front of a truck. This is their 'safety margin'.

Tip

If you can't see the whole front of the truck in your rear vision mirror before you pull into the same lane, there may not be enough room for the truck to stop safely if the traffic suddenly stops; it may hit you or another vehicle. Be careful and leave yourself plenty of room when turning in the vicinity of a truck.

Trucks pick up and deliver goods

Be prepared for trucks that are entering or leaving driveways, roads or loading docks to pick up and deliver goods. Sometimes this will require extra patience and courtesy on your part to let them do so safely. Always be prepared to allow extra room for a truck to swing in or out of delivery points. If possible make eye contact with the driver to let them know you have seen them.

The nature of trucks

Trucks are bigger and heavier than cars and therefore take more time to accelerate especially when starting, merging into traffic or going uphill. You need to allow for this if you see a truck pulling into traffic ahead of you. Be prepared to overtake if it's safe, or to reduce speed if necessary.

Signs on trucks

An 'Oversize' sign, sometimes accompanied by flashing amber lights, is displayed on a truck that is longer or wider than usual. The load may even overhang into your lane. Take notice and watch what is different about it and adjust your driving to suit. Remember, yellow flashing lights always indicate caution is necessary. Some oversized trucks are supported by pilot vehicles and VicRoads Transport Safety Services vehicles. Pilot vehicles provide advance warning to other road users of the presence of 'Oversize' vehicles and staff in VicRoads vehicles manage traffic.



Oversize sign

A 'Long Vehicle' sign is displayed on a truck that is much longer than normal. It will take longer to overtake, and will need extra room to safely stop behind you. Make sure you can see the entire front of the truck and a little space around it in your rear vision mirror before you pull in after you overtake.



Pilot Vehicle



VicRoads Transport Safety Vehicle

A 'Do Not Overtake Turning Vehicle' sign tells you that the truck is at least 7.5 metres long and requires more turning room to negotiate corners, intersections or roundabouts. Trucks displaying this sign may need part or all of two lanes to turn and can legally do so (see page 114 for more information). This sign tells you that you must not overtake alongside a turning truck.



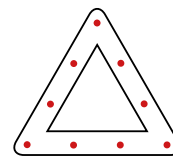
Do not overtake turning vehicle sign



Do not overtake turning vehicle sign

Reflective portable warning triangles warn drivers that there is a broken down

truck or fallen load ahead. Slow down and drive past carefully when you see these on the road.



Button reflectors



Beaded reflection

Portable warning triangles

Tip

Blind spots are increased when the truck is turning and the chance of damage to your vehicle, injury or death is increased. Stay where you can be seen so you can be safe.

Rules and responsibilities

Sharing the road with animals

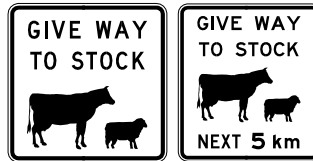
Each year there are a number of serious crashes involving kangaroos, horses and other farm animals.

Horses

Slow down and watch out for horses being led or ridden on the road – leave as much space as possible to allow for unexpected movements by the horse. Never use your car horn around horses – it may startle even the most placid horse and could cause it to bolt resulting in a crash.

Farm animals on roads

A Give Way To Stock sign may be displayed on country roads to enable stock such as cows or sheep to move across or along the road.



Give way to stock signs

Warning signs are also displayed on the approaches to permanent stock crossings. When a Give Way To Stock sign is displayed, you must travel at a safe speed that will enable you to slow down or stop to avoid a collision with an animal either at or near the sign or within the distance shown on the sign.



Stock crossing ahead warning sign

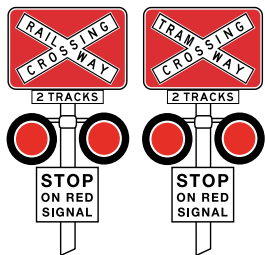
When a Stop sign is displayed at a stock crossing, you must stop before reaching the crossing and must not proceed until all animals have crossed the road.

Railway level crossings

Look and listen for trains when there is a crossing ahead. Even if you think you know when trains usually pass by, the train schedule can change at any time, without notice, so you need to always check for trains as you approach a railway level crossing. Drive slowly, at a speed which will allow you to stop if necessary. However, if there is a Stop sign, you must stop.

The following information also applies to tram level crossings. Obey the tram level crossing signs.

Gates, booms and flashing lights



Railway and tramway level crossings

Where there are gates, booms, or flashing lights at railway level crossings, you must not cross until signals have stopped flashing and the gates or booms are fully open.

Keep clear of the train tracks

If there is traffic stopped on the other side of the railway crossing, you must not enter the crossing unless there is room for your vehicle on the other side – otherwise you could be stuck on the tracks in the path of an oncoming train. At some level crossings Yellow Box Markings painted on the road define the crossing area. You must not stop on the painted area.

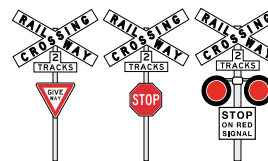
Trains need long stopping distances because they are heavy, so the train will be unable to stop in time regardless of what or who is stuck on the crossing.

Where there are no gates, booms or flashing lights

At some railway level crossings, particularly in the country, where there are no gates, booms or flashing lights,

take extra care. Slow down. Look and listen for trains in both directions. Usually there are warning signs placed well in advance of these crossings.

Following other signs or directions



Level crossing signs

There may be other signs you must obey at railway level crossings. These are usually either Give Way or Stop signs.

You **should** also stop if a railway employee signals you to stop.

Look both ways for trains

If you have stopped for a train, don't move off until you have checked that another train is not following or coming the other way.

Rules and responsibilities

Parking

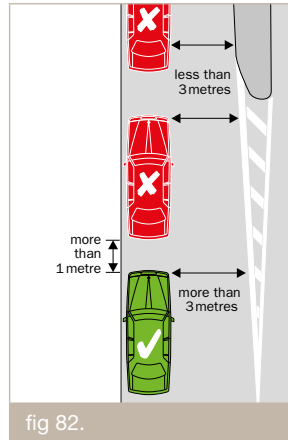
Parking is not as easy as it seems. So that you don't cause problems for others or risk parking fines, you need to observe and interpret many types of parking signs.

Fact

A person must not cause a hazard to any person or vehicle by opening a door of a vehicle, leaving a door of a vehicle open, or exiting a vehicle.

Parallel parking

Figure 82 is the usual way to park unless signs tell you otherwise. You must park completely within the parking bay, in line with and close to the kerb.

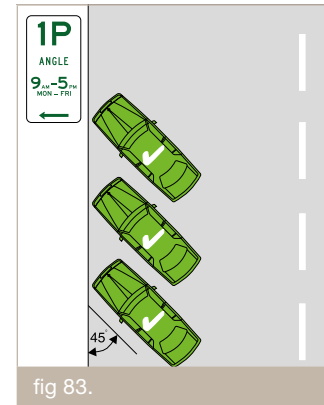


If parking bays are not marked, you must:

- leave one metre between you and the vehicles in front and behind
- park with your vehicle facing the direction of travel of vehicles next to where your vehicle is parked
- not unreasonably obstruct the path of other vehicles or pedestrians.

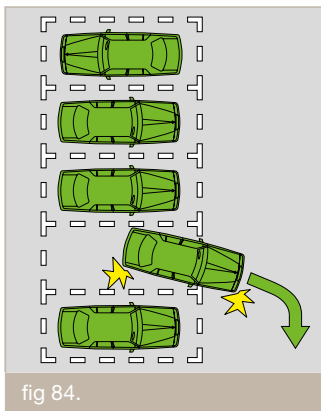
Angle parking

You must park at the angle indicated by the signs or marked bays. Where no angle is indicated by signs or marked bays, you must park at a 45° angle.



Centre of road parking

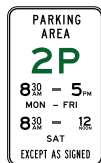
You must drive in forwards and drive out forwards. Do not reverse out of these spots, unless a sign indicates you may do so.



Parking control signs

Parking signs

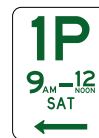
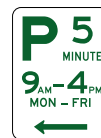
Parking signs tell you whether or not you can park, for how long, during which hours, and if you have to pay. Some parking signs provide more details than others. You must not park continuously in the area to which the sign applies, for longer than indicated on a sign.



General parking signs

General parking signs – arrows may indicate to which length of road the sign applies, or area parking signs may apply to the whole parking area.

A sign with only the letter 'P' means you can park without a time limit. Any number next to the 'P' indicates the amount of time you can park. For example, the sign below left indicates a five minute parking limit, whilst the sign on the right shows a one hour limit.



General parking signs

The parking limits apply during the periods shown on the sign. For example, the five minute parking sign on the left means that parking is allowed for a five minute period between the hours of 9 am and 4 pm from Monday to Friday. Outside that time period parking is allowed with no restrictions.

Rules and responsibilities

The 1P sign on the right indicates a one hour time limit during the hours of 9 am to 12 noon on Saturdays. At any other time you are free to park in that area with no restrictions.

Meter parking

An individual parking meter next to your vehicle means you must pay as instructed on the parking sign or meter.

A group meter for the parking area nearby means you must purchase a ticket. Follow the instructions on the meter or sign. Some group meters print out a ticket you must display on your dashboard.

Other group meters require your parking bay number (marked on the road) and electronically record your fee paid and time allowed.

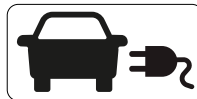
All meters are checked regularly by parking inspectors.

Tip

When you park beside the road look out for other road users, including bicycle riders and motorcyclists, before opening your car door. Look out for all other road users before you drive out of your parking space.

Electric-powered vehicle parking

Parking bays with this sign must only be used by electric-powered vehicles and the vehicle must be plugged in to an external source of electricity.



Electric Vehicle Parking sign

Parking for people with disabilities

Parking bays with this sign or ones that are indicated by a road marking have been set aside to allow disabled persons easy access to places such as shops, libraries or community centres. You must not park in these reserved parking spots without a valid disabled permit.



Disabled Parking sign

Where not to park



No Parking signs

No Parking signs

You are allowed two minutes in a 'No Parking' area only if you remain within three metres of the vehicle and you are picking up or dropping off passengers or goods. Otherwise, if you stop, you are considered to have parked, even if you stay in the vehicle.

No Stopping signs



No Stopping sign

These signs tell you that you must not stop at the kerb for any reason.

Yellow edge lines

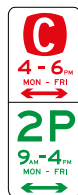
Yellow edge lines are sometimes used instead of 'No Stopping' signs. A driver must not stop next to a continuous yellow edge line.

Clearways

Clearways help traffic move faster during peak times.



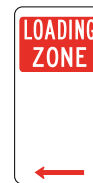
Clearway sign used at start of clearway



This sign is used within the clearway

On the signs the letter 'C' means clearway – you must not stop here for any reason during the hours and days noted on the sign.

Zone signs



Loading Zone sign

Unless another limit is specified on the sign, a loading zone is only for vehicles recorded by VicRoads as goods-carrying vehicles, signed delivery and courier vehicles, trucks while dropping off or picking up goods, and public passenger vehicles or taxis that are dropping off or picking up passengers (30 minute limit or as shown on the sign).

Other drivers must not stop in a loading zone (even if loading or unloading).

Rules and responsibilities



Truck Zone sign

A Truck Zone is only for trucks with a gross vehicle mass over 4.5 tonnes. No time limit is applied for a truck loading or unloading goods.



Permit Zone sign

Only for vehicles displaying a valid permit for that zone issued by the relevant authority.



Works Zone sign

Only for vehicles engaged in construction work in or near the zone.



Bus Zone sign

Only for public buses.



Taxi Zone sign

Only for taxis.

Fact

Stopping and parking regulations apply even if you have stopped or parked your car and have your hazard warning lights on. If signs say it is illegal for you to be stopping or parking at a place, having your hazard warning lights on will not change this.

Tow away zones

Typical use of Tow Away Zone signs



Typical use of Tow Away Zone signs

A tow away zone means your vehicle will be towed away if you park at this spot during the times specified. Not only do you pay a parking fine, you also need to pay a fee to reclaim your car.

General stopping and parking rules

You must not leave a vehicle stationary:

- double parked
- where there is a Keep Clear road marking
- within an intersection (except on the continuous side of a continuing road of a T-intersection)
- on freeways (except in an emergency stopping lane)
- across a lane or private driveway
- where you would leave less than three metres of road clear for traffic
- on the wrong side of the road, i.e. on the far right side of a two-way road
- on a footpath, nature strip, dividing strip or median strip (unless the vehicle is a motorcycle or bicycle)
- in a bus lane
- half in, half out of a No Parking or No Stopping area
- opposite a dividing strip, continuous single line, or any combination of continuous or broken double lines, unless there is at least three metres of clearance between your vehicle and the dividing line (unless otherwise indicated on a parking sign).
- on a curve or crest outside a built-up area unless visible for 100 metres from behind, or unless signs allow
- next to a continuous yellow edge line
- in a slip lane (unless permitted by a sign)
- within 20 metres (unless permitted by a sign) of:
 - both sides of an intersection with traffic lights
 - the approach side of a bus stop
 - the approach side of a children's crossing
 - both sides of a level crossing
 - the approach side of a pedestrian crossing that is not at an intersection
 - the approach side of a tram stop sign (unless permitted by a sign)

Rules and responsibilities

- within 10 metres (unless permitted by a sign) of:
 - an intersection without traffic lights
 - the departure side of a bus stop sign
 - both sides of a safety zone
 - the approach side of traffic lights not at an intersection
 - the departure side of a pedestrian crossing that is not at an intersection
 - the departure side of a children's crossing
- within three metres of an Australia Post mail box
- within three metres of the departure side of a crossing with traffic lights not at an intersection
- within one metre of a fire hydrant.

Penalties

All traffic offences will result in some type of penalty.

These include monetary fines, loss of your learner permit or licence, or you may be taken to court.

Many offences also attract demerit points.

In serious cases prison sentences may be imposed.

Remember that a good driving record is required to progress through the Graduated Licensing System. A good driving record means you avoid having your licence cancelled or suspended, as well as avoid any drink and/or drug driving offences. If you do not have a good driving record, your probationary period will be extended. If your licence is cancelled you will need to start your probationary period again.

A licence or learner permit may be suspended or cancelled as a result of:

- a court conviction
- a Traffic Infringement Notice
- accumulation of demerit points
- action taken by Fines Victoria
- action taken by VicRoads.

If a licence or learner permit is not held, a person may be disqualified from obtaining a licence or a learner permit for a specified period. A person is not permitted to drive if their licence or learner permit is suspended or cancelled by a court, a Traffic Infringement Notice, Fines Victoria or by VicRoads. Severe penalties exist if driving while suspended, unlicensed, or whilst disqualified.

The following provides a summary of the actions that may arise from a traffic offence. Contact VicRoads for further information.

Suspension

The licence or learner permit is withdrawn for a specified period. You cannot drive during this period. In most cases the original licence or learner permit is returned. However, if the suspension has resulted in a change to the conditions of the licence, a new licence will need to be issued (see Penalties for probationary licence holders on pages 154-155. Probationary drivers will have their probationary period extended).

Cancellation

A licence or learner permit that is cancelled is no longer valid. You cannot drive. Once the period of cancellation is over, you will need to apply to have your licence or learner permit reissued before you can start driving again.

Reissue of the licence or learner permit may require one or more of the following actions to be completed:

- knowledge of road law and/or practical driving test
- an order from a court to be relicensed
- an education course to be completed
- other requirements as specified by VicRoads (i.e. payment of licence fee or fitting of an alcohol interlock device)
- start again on a probationary licence if the offence was committed whilst on a probationary licence.

Disqualification

Permission to drive or to apply for a driver licence or learner permit is withdrawn as a result of a cancellation or suspension.

Impoundment

Your vehicle may be impounded for serious traffic offences. These include dangerous driving, careless driving, failure to have proper control of the vehicle, burnouts, doughnuts and

causing the vehicle to make excessive noise or smoke. A vehicle may also be impounded for offences such as:

- speeding at 45 km/h or more over the limit
- street racing
- repeat offences of unlicensed, disqualified, drink and/or drug driving.

If you commit a vehicle impoundment offence, you may have your vehicle impounded for the following periods:

- first offence - 30 days by police
- second offence – 30 days by police, plus an additional 45 days to 3 months as imposed by the courts
- more serious offences such as driving 70 km/h or more over the limit, repeat disqualified, unlicensed, drink or drug driving – 30 days by police, plus an additional 45 days to 3 months as imposed by the courts
- third offence - 30 days by police, plus an additional 45 days to 3 months as imposed by the courts or possible vehicle forfeiture as imposed by the courts.

Rules and responsibilities

Imprisonment

In some cases, a court may impose a jail term as well as a monetary fine.

Infringements Court

The role of the Infringements Court is to administratively resolve unpaid infringement notices. These offences generally have fixed penalties and include parking offences and driving offences.

Fines Victoria

Fines Victoria will administer a new model for collecting and enforcing infringements and court fines in Victoria. The new model will make it simpler for people to deal with their fines and will become the single, central point-of-contact for individuals with outstanding fines.

As directed by Fines Victoria, sanctions will be applied on a customer's registration, licence or vehicle status. These sanctions will include individual registration or licence suspensions, not renewing registrations or licences, not granting a registration or licence, not allowing individuals to drive other vehicles, not enabling individuals

to replace or change number plates on vehicles, and cancelling the registration of company vehicles.

Demerit points

Demerit points are one type of penalty that will be recorded against your driver licence or learner permit when you commit certain traffic offences anywhere in Australia. Demerit points vary in number depending on the severity of the offence.

Learner and probationary drivers who incur five or more demerit points in any twelve month period, or twelve or more points in any three year period, may have their licence suspended for three months or more.

If your licence is not suspended because you choose a twelve month extended demerit point period, any further demerit points would lead to at least a six months licence suspension. This gives drivers the opportunity to learn from their mistakes, but makes licence loss a reality for persistent offenders.

Further information and a full list of offences and demerit points can be found at the VicRoads website at vicroads.vic.gov.au.

Penalties for learner permit holders

If a learner permit is cancelled or suspended, it may affect the permit holder's eligibility to apply for a licence, as a learner permit must be held for a continuous period of 12 months immediately before applying for a licence, for those under 21 years of age. For those who are 21 but under 25 years the period is six months, and it is three months if you are 25 years or over.

Penalties for probationary licence holders

If your probationary licence is suspended, your probationary period will be extended.

If your probationary licence is cancelled, your probationary period will start again, no matter how close you were to graduating to the next stage.

Penalties for full licence holders

When a full licence is cancelled, a full licence will be reissued when all relicensing requirements have been met. If a court order is required to be produced due to an alcohol or drug driving offence, then a three year zero BAC restriction will be imposed on the licence when it is reissued – the inclusion of an alcohol interlock device may be a condition of the restrictions.

Legal responsibilities

As the holder of a licence or learner permit, there are a number of additional legal responsibilities you must fulfil.

Carry your licence

You must carry your probationary licence or licence receipt whenever you drive. If you are under 26 years of age you must carry your licence at all times when driving. All learner drivers must also carry their learner permit or learner permit receipt at all times when driving.

Change of name

You must notify VicRoads within 14 days when your name has changed. This can only be done in person at any VicRoads Customer Service Centre. It must be supported by original documents along with either a photo licence or documents that prove your identity.

The following documents are acceptable for a change of name:

- marriage certificate (issued by a Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages in Australia)
- divorce papers
- deed poll (pre 1 November 1986 in Victoria)
- change of name registration (after 1 November 1986 in Victoria)
- guardianship order
- adoption paper
- birth certificate (issued after 26 June 2000 in Victoria showing the change of name details on the back of the certificate). Commemorative birth certificates are not acceptable.

Rules and responsibilities

Change of address or contact details

You must notify VicRoads within 14 days if your residential or postal address, mobile phone number or email has changed.

Change your details:

- online with a myVicRoads account at **vicroads.vic.gov.au**
- by calling us on 13 11 71
- at any VicRoads Customer Service Centre.

Notification of a medical condition or disability

You must notify VicRoads if you are suffering from any serious (permanent or long-term) illness, disability, medical condition or injury (or the effects of treatment for any of those things) that may impair your ability to drive safely.

You will need to provide a current medical report from your treating medical practitioner that states that you meet the national medical standards for fitness to drive and provides details of your medical condition or disability.

Standard medical or eyesight report forms are available from any VicRoads Customer Service Centre or by calling VicRoads. These forms are also available on VicRoads website.

Replacing a lost or stolen card

Always be careful with your permit and licence information and keep the card secure. If your card is lost or stolen report it to VicRoads immediately and apply for a replacement. It is important that you do this as your lost or stolen card could be used to create a fraudulent identity.

If you want more information on preventing and responding to identity fraud this can be found at **crimeprevention.gov.au**.

Air and noise pollution

You must ensure any vehicle you drive meets relevant air and noise emission standards. Drivers of offending vehicles may be fined or taken to court and the owner may be issued with a notice to repair the vehicle.

Hoon driving

Police can impound or immobilise motor vehicles for 30 days if used for offences such as excessive speeding, and for improper use of a motor vehicle, causing loss of traction or excessive noise or smoke. See impoundment page 153.

Fact

Registration and roadworthiness

You must not drive a motor vehicle that is unroadworthy or without current registration.

Breakdown safety

Before a long journey

Remember

- Check your fuel, oil, water and tyre pressures (including the spare) before a long journey
- Carry a high-visibility vest, safety markers and a torch inside your vehicle
- Breakdown lanes are only for breakdown situations
- Use a rest area for making social phone calls, toilet stops or attending to children.

Tips for staying safe in a breakdown

1. Find a safe spot to pull over such as an emergency breakdown area.
2. Park your vehicle as far to the left as possible.
3. Always activate your hazard lights.
4. Activate your headlights in poor light.
5. Call roadside assistance on your mobile phone or use a roadside emergency phone.
6. When leaving your vehicle always check for traffic.
7. Leave your vehicle from the passenger side if possible.
8. Avoid crossing the road at all times.
9. Stand clear of the road. Move behind a safety barrier if possible.
10. Stay in your vehicle with your seatbelt on if it's not safe to leave.

Breakdown on a freeway or country road

If you breakdown on a freeway or country road you should also follow this advice:

- Do not change a tyre yourself, wait for roadside assistance
- Stay calm, help may take longer to arrive on a country road
- Let roadside assistance come to your vehicle and follow their instructions.

If you see a breakdown

- Slow down to about 30 km/h below the posted speed limit
- Avoid crossing the road if you are helping someone.

(Text derived from Transport for NSW glove box 'Breakdown Safety Guide'.)

Rules and responsibilities

Crash responsibilities

If you are involved in a crash causing death or injury and do not stop and give assistance, you can be fined over \$140,000 and/or be imprisoned for up to 10 years. You will also lose your licence for at least two years. If you are involved in a crash there are certain things you must do immediately after the crash.

What you must do after a crash

- Stop immediately
- Give assistance to any injured person
- Provide your name, address, registration number details and the vehicle owner's name to the other parties involved in the crash, or their representative, and to the police (if in attendance)
- If anyone is injured and the police are not in attendance, you must report the crash to the nearest open police station
- If there is any property damage and the owner (or Police) is not present, you must report the crash to the nearest open police station.

There are other things you should do at a crash scene to prevent other people getting hurt, and to help those people involved in the crash (see First aid after a crash on this page).

There are emergency phones on the side of the road on most freeways throughout Victoria. These are called VicRoads 'Help Phones' and can be used 24 hours a day for vehicle breakdowns or any other kind of emergency. The phones are directly linked to the VicRoads Traffic Management Centre.

Tip

To call an ambulance, police or fire brigade, phone 000. To call a tow truck, phone 13 11 76.

First aid after a crash

The following first aid information is based on current Red Cross teaching in line with Australian Resuscitation Council guidelines.

These guidelines are intended to provide basic principles to assist at a crash site and/or attempt resuscitation.

To learn basic first aid such as CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) you will need to undertake an appropriate course.

Applying first aid after a crash

Many of us may need treatment after a road crash at some stage of our lives. Whether or not we survive until trained help arrives may well depend on somebody's willingness to give first aid.

Three actions that could save a life

- 1. Keep a person's airway open and clear**
- 2. Make sure that they are breathing**
- 3. Stop heavy bleeding.**

Read these simple instructions now and keep this handbook in your car. Someone else may use it to help you in an accident.

If you are at a crash site, try to remain calm and...

- **act quickly**
- **if necessary, call for an ambulance, or send someone to call for one**
- **ask if there is anybody trained in first aid at the crash site and if not, and you are first on the crash scene, follow these steps.**

Fact

Four ways you can help casualties after a crash:

- 1. Survey the scene**
- 2. Make the crash scene safe and protect the area**
- 3. Check the casualties – check airway, breathing and signs of life**
- 4. Stop the heavy bleeding.**

1. Survey the scene

- Is the area safe for you to approach?
- Ask bystanders to help make the area safe
- Count the number of people who are injured
- Call an ambulance (dial 000) or send someone to call one
- Ask if there is anybody trained in first aid at the crash site.

Rules and responsibilities

2. Make the crash scene safe and protect the area

- Position your car with its hazard lights flashing, to warn other motorists, or use headlights to light up the scene if necessary
- Send someone down the road to warn approaching traffic, and turn off the ignition in damaged vehicles.

3. Check the casualties

Is the person conscious?

- **For conscious casualties:**
 - Talk to the casualty, tell them your name and reassure them
 - Treat any injuries
 - Check for and control any heavy bleeding (see Stop heavy bleeding on page 161).

If the person seems to be unconscious:

- Gently touch the casualty on the shoulder, give a simple command e.g. 'squeeze my hands' to see if they can respond.

If they do not respond:

- **Check airway.**
 - Open the casualty's mouth and check for any loose or obstructive objects e.g. loose dentures, vomit, blood etc., and clear from the airway
 - If the airway is clear, open the airway by gently tilting the head back, and check for breathing.
- **Check breathing.**
 - Look for the rise and fall of the chest
 - Listen for breathing
 - Feel for the casualty's breath on your cheek.

- Continue to maintain an open airway
- If the casualty is not breathing begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (see page 161)
- Check for signs of life (movement, breathing, colour, etc.).

For conscious, breathing casualties still in the vehicle:

- If you are certain that the vehicle and surrounds are safe, and the casualty is either conscious and/or breathing, they do not have to be unnecessarily removed until specialist help arrives, **unless circumstances arise**, such as:
 - They stop breathing
 - Their condition worsens
 - It is no longer safe for them to stay in the vehicle.

Fact

If a casualty inside or outside a vehicle must be moved to escape danger, or for you to give CPR, do so carefully and gently because of the risk of spinal injury or increased bleeding.

For unconscious, breathing casualties outside the vehicle:

- Keep a close eye on them to make sure their airway is clear and they are still breathing, whilst waiting for the ambulance to arrive
- If the casualty is lying on the ground, it is vital to keep them on their side in a stable position with their head tilted back and face pointed down in order to maintain an open airway.

For casualties unconscious and NOT breathing:

Even if the casualty is injured, you will need to remove them from the vehicle to perform these steps.

Cardiopulmonary (CPR) resuscitation

With the casualty on their back, check the airway

1. Tilt the head back fully to open the airway
2. Cover the casualty's mouth with your mouth blocking their nose with your cheek
3. Breathe into the casualty until the chest begins to rise
4. Remove your mouth (make sure the chest falls)
5. Give another normal breath

6. Check to see if the casualty is now breathing by watching for chest rise and fall, whilst at the same time, checking for signs of life. If the casualty is still not breathing
7. Begin CPR and continue until Emergency Services arrive.

Fact

If performing CPR on children, use minimal head tilt and small breaths. For infants, give small puffs and do NOT use head tilt.

4. Stop heavy bleeding

Heavy bleeding of any type can be fatal. Heavy external bleeding requires quick action as follows: To stop external bleeding do the following tasks:

- Locate where the blood is coming from
- Apply firm pressure where the blood is coming from, using

Rules and responsibilities

whatever clean cloth is available, e.g. an item of clothing, to make a pad

- If possible tie the pad firmly in place
- If possible, raise the injured area. This may reduce or help to stop the bleeding.

In an emergency, when gloves are not available and you have to control bleeding:

- Ask the casualty to help by applying pressure or by placing a dressing or other clean dry cloth between your hands and the wound.

Fact

Always give first aid care in ways which protect you and the casualty from disease transmission.

- **Use protective barriers (for example disposable gloves or face mask) which are appropriate to the emergency**
- **When gloves are not available and you have to control bleeding, ask the casualty to help you by applying pressure, or placing a dressing or other clean dry cloth between your hands and the wound**
- **Wash your hands thoroughly as soon as possible after giving first aid**
- **Avoid touching or being splashed by body fluids where possible.**

Assisting victims following motorcycle crashes

The incidence of spinal injuries, multiple fractures and loss of skin are much higher for motorcyclists than those in other motor vehicle crashes.

Helmets should only be removed if absolutely necessary.

If a helmet is worn then this should only be removed when the victim is unconscious, the airway is blocked, or airway clearance is uncertain and likely to be compromised.

This will enable resuscitation to be given.

Wherever possible, **two people should undertake helmet removal** – one to steady the head and neck, and the other to gently remove the helmet.

The procedure should only be carried out by a single person if no-one is available to assist.



Victoria Police

Resources

Test yourself questions

The questions you will find in this section are examples of the type of questions you will be asked. The actual test questions are not the ones asked in this handbook.

(The answers to Test Yourself Questions are upside down at the bottom of the next page).

Q1 In good conditions, a safe following distance is:

- A** at least 1 second behind the car in front
- B** at least two seconds behind the car in front
- C** at least two car lengths from the car in front

Q2 If the police stop you at a random breath test station, you must take a breath test:

- A** when you are asked to do so
- B** only if you have been drinking
- C** only if you have been speeding

Q3 Driving can best be described as:

- A** an easy task that just about everyone can do
- B** a task which most people can learn after a few lessons over several weeks
- C** a complicated task

Q4 Supervised learner drivers:

- A** are more at risk of being involved in a crash causing injury than probationary drivers
- B** have the same risk of being involved in a crash causing injury as do probationary drivers
- C** are amongst the safest drivers on the road

Q5 Are your responsibilities the same for a school crossing as for a pedestrian crossing?

- A** Yes, in both cases you may drive on after giving way to pedestrians
- B** No, at a children's crossing you must stop and remain stopped until the crossing is completely clear of pedestrians
- C** No, at a children's crossing you have to give way only to children

Q6 A head check is:

- A** making eye contact with other road users so that you know they have seen you
- B** looking quickly over your shoulder to look out the side windows
- C** a place behind the driver that can't be seen by using the mirrors

Q7 In the early stages of learning to drive, it is best to take:

- A** frequent, short drives in light traffic with your supervising driver
- B** the occasional long drive with your supervising driver
- C** regular drives with your supervising driver in heavy traffic

Q8 The likelihood of a crash is almost halved after:

- A** 6-8 months of solo driving experience
- B** 1 year of solo driving experience
- C** 2-3 years of solo driving experience

Q9 What is the best way to check the crashworthiness of a new or used car?

- A** check the car safety rating at **howsafeisyourcar.com.au** or in the Australasian New Car Assessment Program or the Buyers Guide to Used Car Safety Rating brochures
- B** ask your parents or a friend
- C** ask the person you're buying the car from

Answers: Q1 B, Q2 A, Q3 C, Q4 C, Q5 B, Q6 B, Q7 A, Q8 C, Q9 A

Resources

Resources to help you

VicRoads telephone enquiries

All registration and licensing enquiries and test bookings.

Monday to Friday 8.30 am – 5.00 pm
Saturday 8.30 am – 2.00 pm

Tel: 13 11 71

International calls: +61 3 9854 7763
(registration and licensing)
+61 3 9854 2666 (general enquiries)

TTY: 13 36 77

Speak and Listen: 1300 555 727

VicRoads website

VicRoads website provides many online services and information about VicRoads services, products and strategies. **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.

Legislation

The Road Safety Act 1986, the Road Safety Road Rules 2009 and associated Regulations can be viewed at **legislation.vic.gov.au**.

The Road Rules - Victoria can be viewed on VicRoads website.

Victoria Police

For information and assistance with road law issues. Tel: (03) 9247 5779 or visit **police.vic.gov.au**

VicRoads Traffic Management Centre

This Centre provides information about:

- emergency road conditions
- freeway breakdowns
- traffic accident reports
- traffic light faults.

Tel: 13 11 70

Personal Property Securities Register

If you are thinking about buying a second hand vehicle privately, you should check whether:

- there is money owing on the vehicle
- the vehicle is recorded as stolen.

For a small fee, you can also obtain a Personal Property Securities Search certificate at **ppsr.gov.au** which includes these details.

Tel: 1300 007 777

Vehicle Registration Enquiry Service

You can check registration status for free at **vicroads.vic.gov.au**.

CityLink

CityLink is Melbourne's fully electronic toll way. To use CityLink, you'll need an e-TAG, Day Pass or Tulla Pass. Call CityLink to arrange your e-TAG or Day Pass, or visit the website at **citylink.com.au** or call 13 26 29.

EastLink

EastLink (M3) is the 39 km fully electronic tollway from the end of the Eastern Freeway at Mitcham to Frankston. To use EastLink, you need a tag, non-tag account or EastLink trip pass. If you already have a tag it will work. To open a Breeze account or buy a trip pass, visit **breeze.com.au** or call 13 LINK (13 54 65).

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