

Transport for NSW

Road User Handbook



The Road User Handbook covers the main road rules and requirements for driving on NSW roads. The handbook also aims to help you get your licence, become a safe driver and register your vehicle.

It has been written in plain, easy to understand language and should not be taken as a precise interpretation of the law. See the current and complete set of Road Rules at *legislation.nsw.gov.au*

The handbook is reviewed and updated periodically. Check *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au* for the latest information.

In this handbook, the words 'must' or 'must not' are used for rules that you have to follow. The words 'should' or 'should not' are used when explaining safe and low-risk driving.

The Road User Handbook is also published in community languages.

A free interpreter service is available if you need to take the Driver Knowledge Test (DKT) or Hazard Perception Test (HPT) in another language. Call **13 22 13** to arrange an interpreter.

The statistics in this handbook are sourced from Transport for NSW 2014–2018, unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

The Road User Handbook covers the main rules you need to know to drive legally and safely on NSW roads. It's essential reading for anyone learning to drive. It aims to prepare you for the challenges of driving and reduce your risk on the road.

This handbook is the main resource to get your Car (C) driver licence under the NSW Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS). It covers the questions in the Driver Knowledge Test (DKT), which you have to pass to get your learner licence. Read this handbook to prepare for the DKT, as well as the other tests in the GLS.

This handbook can also be used by other drivers and road users to check the rules, understand their legal responsibilities and learn safe driving behaviour.

There are also similar handbooks for bicycle riders, motorcycle riders and heavy vehicle drivers at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Remember, we all have a responsibility to share our roads, use them safely and look out for each other.

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Licences

Getting your driver licence is a journey. In NSW, it starts with getting your learner licence. Your learning is spread over 3 or 4 years to help build experience to become a safe and skilled driver.

A driver licence gives you freedom but also brings responsibility. It's a commitment between you and the NSW community to keep the roads safe for everyone.

There's a set process and set fees for getting your driver licence. You must go through the process honestly and not bribe anyone or cheat along the way.

When you get your licence, do not abuse or misuse it. If you do, you risk heavy penalties. You may lose your licence and your freedom to drive.

Getting your driver licence

To get a full (unrestricted) Car (C) driver licence, you need to go through three licence stages:

- **Learner licence (Ls)**
- **Provisional P1 licence (red Ps)**
- **Provisional P2 licence (green Ps).**

Along the way, you need to pass three tests:

- **Driver Knowledge Test (DKT)**
- **Hazard Perception Test (HPT)**
- **Driving Test.**

There's a fee for each licence and test. See *Fees* at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

This is called the Graduated Licensing Scheme (GLS) and it aims to help you become a safe and low-risk driver. It takes at least 4 years to get a full licence if you're aged under 25, or at least 3 years if you're over 25.

Before you start, you must:

- be aged 16 or over
- have a residential address in NSW
- be able to prove who you are – see *Proving your identity* at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au
- be medically fit to drive and able to pass an eyesight test – see *Fitness to drive* at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

7 Steps to getting your driver licence

1. Driver Knowledge Test

- Minimum age to commence this stage is 16 years old



2. Learner Licence (Ls)

- Minimum 12 months*
- Valid for 5 years
- Log book (120 hours*)



3. Hazard Perception Test

- Minimum 10 months on a learner licence*
- Valid for 15 months



4. The Driving Test

- Minimum age to commence this stage is 17 years old



5. Provisional P1 Licence

- Minimum 12 months
- Valid for 18 months



6. Provisional P2 Licence

- Minimum 24 months**
- Valid for 36 months



7. Full Licence

- Issued for 12 months, 36 months, 5 or 10 years***



* Applies to under 25 year olds only.

** P2 drivers who receive a suspension for unsafe driving behaviour must stay on their licence for an extra 6 months for every suspension they receive.

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

Step 1: Driver Knowledge Test (DKT)

The first step is to take the DKT. This test is often called the 'learner's test' because you need to pass it to get your learner licence.

The DKT is a computer-based test about road rules and road safety. You have to answer 45 questions selected at random from 600 questions. To pass, you need to correctly answer:

- 12 out of 15 general knowledge questions
- 29 out of 30 road safety questions (including traffic signs).

Preparing for the DKT

Everything you need to know to pass the DKT is in this handbook. Study it to give yourself the best chance to pass the test.

You can also:

- take the online Practice Driver Knowledge Test at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au
- download the Practice Driver Knowledge Test app from the App Store or Google Play
- read the DKT questions at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au
- get help from the Driver Licensing Access Program, if you're Aboriginal or a disadvantaged person.

You must pass the DKT honestly. If you cheat, you cannot re-sit the test for 6 weeks and must pay the fee again.

Booking the DKT

Book and pay for your test at service.nsw.gov.au

When you book, you can choose which service centre you want to take the test at.

If you pass the DKT

You get a temporary learner licence on the day you take the test. Your actual learner licence is posted to you. You can also apply for a digital driver licence at service.nsw.gov.au

A digital licence is optional and doesn't replace the plastic card.

If you fail the DKT

Depending on availability, you can re-sit the test on the same day, or book to do it another time. You have to pay for the test each time you re-sit it.

Step 2: Learner licence (Ls)

Once you've passed the DKT and have your learner licence, you can start practising driving (with a supervisor who has a full Australian driver licence).

- If you're over 25, you can go to step 3 as soon as you feel ready. You do not need to log any driving hours.
- If you're under 25, you need to start logging hours.

Your learner licence is valid for 5 years, so you can practice for as long as you need. If you need to, you can renew it for another 5 years by taking the DKT test and paying the test and licence fees again.

Logging driving hours

You need to log at least 120 hours of driving, including 20 hours at night, before you can take the Driving Test. See Learner driver log book at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

To help you gain experience and log your hours, you can:

- Do the Safer Drivers Course. This will help you develop hazard perception and safe driving skills. You get 20 hours log book credit once you complete the course.
- Have structured '3 for 1' driving lessons with a licensed driving instructor. For every 1 hour lesson, the driving instructor will record 3 hours driving experience in your log book.
- Get support from the Driver Licensing Access Program, if you're Aboriginal or a disadvantaged person.

Learner licence restrictions

There are licence restrictions that you need to follow. Examples include always having someone with a full Australian driver licence supervising you when you're learning to drive, zero alcohol and displaying your L plates. These restrictions are there to keep you safe as you develop your driving skills.

Step 3: Hazard Perception Test (HPT)

The HPT is a computer-based test that measures your ability to recognise and respond to road hazards. The test uses film clips of real driving situations. You respond by touching the screen to show what you would do, for example, slow down or turn.

If you're over 25, you can do the test as soon as you have your learner licence and feel ready.

If you're under 25, you need to have your learner licence for at least 10 months before you can take the test.

Preparing for the HPT

Make sure you're prepared before taking the test. These resources will help you prepare:

- Hazard Perception Test details at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au
- Hazard Perception Handbook at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au.

Booking the HPT

Book and pay for your test at service.nsw.gov.au

When you book, you can choose which service centre you want to take the test at.

If you pass the HPT

The next step is to prepare for the Driving Test for a provisional P1 licence.

If you fail the HPT

Depending on availability, you can re-sit the test on the same day, or book to do it another time. You have to pay for the test each time you re-sit it.

Step 4: Driving Test

You need to pass the Driving Test to get your provisional P1 licence. If you do not pass the Driving Test within 15 months of passing the HPT, you must pass the HPT again before you can take the Driving Test.

The Driving Test is a practical, on-road test that you take with a Service NSW testing officer. The test assesses your driving skills, decision-making and how you share the road with others.

You have to bring a suitable car to do the test. It needs to be registered, safe for road use and ready to drive.

If you're over 25, you can book your Driving Test as soon as you've passed the HPT.

If you're under 25, you also need to have:

- had your learner licence for at least 12 months
- logged at least 120 hours of supervised driving, including 20 hours of night driving.

Preparing for the Driving Test

Make sure you feel prepared and confident that you can pass before taking the test. Use the Guide to the Driving Test at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au to help you prepare.

Booking the Driving Test

Book and pay for your test at service.nsw.gov.au

When you book, you can choose which service centre you want to take the test at.

If you pass the Driving Test

You can apply for your provisional P1 licence.

If you fail the Driving Test

If you fail the Driving Test, you can take it again after 7 days. You need to pay for the test again.

Step 5: Provisional P1 licence (red Ps)

Once you've passed the Driving Test, you can apply for your provisional P1 licence.

Once you have your P1 licence you no longer have to keep a log book or have a supervisor in the car with you. As you drive on your own, you continue to learn, build your driving skills and gain confidence.

P1 licence restrictions

There are licence restrictions that you need to follow. Examples include the maximum speed you can drive, the vehicles you can drive and the number of passengers you can take. These restrictions are to help keep you safe as you develop your driving skills.

How long a P1 licence is valid

As long as you follow the restrictions of your P1 licence, it's valid for 18 months. You can renew it (for a fee) for another 18 months if you want to.

When you can progress to a P2 licence

If you're ready, you can apply for a P2 licence after 12 months.

If your P1 licence is suspended, the 12 months is extended by the length of the suspension, for example, by 3 months.

If your P1 licence is disqualified, you will need to reapply for a P1 licence when your disqualification ends. This will re-start the P1 licence period and you can apply for a P2 licence after 12 months.

Step 6: Provisional P2 licence (green Ps)

Once you've had your provisional P1 licence for at least 12 months, you can apply for a provisional P2 licence at service.nsw.gov.au

P2 licence restrictions

There are still licence restrictions that you need to follow. Some are the same as the P1 licence, but some are different, such as how many passengers you can take and what you can tow.

How long a P2 licence is valid

As long as you follow the restrictions of your P2 licence, it's valid for 36 months. You can renew it (for a fee) for another 36 months if you want to.

When you can progress to a full licence

If you're ready, you can progress to a full licence after 24 months.

If your P2 licence is suspended, the 24 months is extended by the length of the suspension (for example 3 months) plus an additional 6 months. This is to give you time to refine your safe driving skills and make sure you're ready for a full licence.

If your P2 licence is disqualified, you will need to reapply for a P2 licence when your disqualification ends. This will re-start the P2 licence period and you can progress to a full licence after 24 months.

Step 7: Full (unrestricted) licence

Once you've had your provisional P2 licence for at least 24 months, you can apply for your full driver licence at service.nsw.gov.au

You can apply for a full licence for 1, 3 or 5 years, or 10 years if you're aged between 21 and 44.

Your driver licence gives you a great sense of freedom, but it comes with responsibility. Driving is one of the riskiest things we do on a daily basis. Make sure you keep up your driving skills and follow the road rules.

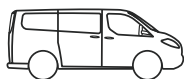
Licence classes

This handbook is about getting a Car (C) licence. The vehicles you can drive with a C licence are below.

If you have a provisional P1 or P2 licence, there are restrictions on the vehicles you can drive. See Licence restrictions on page 19.

Other vehicles, such as motorcycles and heavy vehicles, need different licences. You must have your C licence before getting these licences – except for Rider (R) licences. You also have to take tests, competency assessments and medical checks.

Car (C) licence



Drivers with a C licence can drive vehicles:

- up to 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass (GVM)
- that seat up to 12 adults including the driver.

This includes:

- utes, vans and some light trucks
- tractors, and implements such as road graders
- car-based motor tricycles (3-wheeled vehicles made from car components).

Drivers with a C licence must not carry passengers aged under 16 in a car-based motor tricycle.

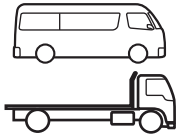
Rider (R) licence



Riders with an R licence can ride any motorcycle, scooter or motor tricycle.

See the Motorcycle Riders' Handbook at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

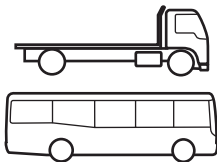
Light Rigid (LR) licence



Drivers with an LR licence can drive C vehicles as well as vehicles:

- over 4.5 tonnes (GVM) but not more than 8 tonnes (GVM) – for example, small delivery trucks
- that seat more than 12 adults (including driver) and are not more than 8 tonnes (GVM) – for example, minibuses
- with a towing trailer up to 9 tonnes (GVM).

Medium Rigid (MR) licence



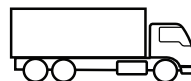
Drivers with an MR licence can drive C and LR vehicles as well as rigid vehicles with:

- 2 axles and over 8 tonnes (GVM) – for example, buses
- a towing trailer up to 9 tonnes (GVM).

Heavy Rigid (HR) licence

Drivers with an HR licence can drive C, LR and MR vehicles, as well as rigid vehicles and articulated buses with:

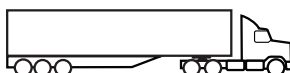
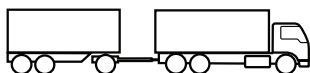
- 3 or more axles and over 8 tonnes (GVM)
- a towing trailer up to 9 tonnes (GVM).



Heavy Combination (HC) licence

Drivers with an HC licence can drive C, LR, MR and HR vehicles, as well as:

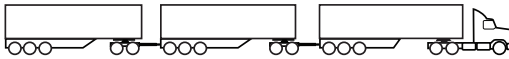
- prime movers attached to single semi-trailers (plus any unladen converter dolly)
- rigid vehicles towing a trailer over 9 tonnes (GVM) (plus any unladen converter dolly).



Multi Combination (MC) licence

Drivers with an MC licence can drive C, LR, MR, HR and HC vehicles, as well as:

- B-double or road trains
- low loader dollies
- low loader trailer combinations.



For information about LR, MR, HR, HC and MC licences, see Heavy Vehicle Driver Handbook at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Other licences

Once you have your full C licence, you can apply for a:

- Passenger Transport (PT) licence code (taxis, chauffeur-driven hire cars and rideshare vehicles) – see Point to point transport drivers at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au
- Driving instructor licence – see Driving instructors at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au
- Tow truck driver certificate – see Tow trucks at fairtrading.nsw.gov.au

Once you have a licence for the class of bus you want to drive, you can apply for a:







- Bus Driver Authority – see Applying for a new Bus Driver Authority at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Licence restrictions

There are restrictions you must follow when you drive with a:

- **Learner licence (Ls)**
- **Provisional P1 licence (red Ps)**
- **Provisional P2 licence (green Ps).**

These restrictions are in place to help keep you safe as you develop your driving skills. They also apply when you drive in another state or territory. If you do not follow these restrictions, you'll get a fine. You can also get demerit points or even lose your licence.

Restriction	Applies to
Alcohol limit Your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) must be zero. This means you must not have any alcohol in your system when you drive.	  
Maximum speed limit You can drive to a maximum of 90 km/h. You must observe all speed limits below 90km/h.	 
You can drive to a maximum of 100 km/h. You must observe all speed limits below 100km/h.	

Restriction

Applies to

Mobile phone use



You must not use a mobile phone while driving, even when you're stationary, for example, stopped at lights or stuck in traffic. This includes:

- texting
- phone calls
- music
- emailing
- social media
- using the internet
- maps
- photography.

The only time you can use your phone is to:

- show your digital driver licence when instructed by police
- use wallet functions to make a transaction or show a voucher, but only in areas such as a car park, driveway or drive-through and if the vehicle is stationary.

Number of passengers



You can carry only the number of passengers that you have seatbelts and approved and suitable child car seats for.

If you return to driving after being disqualified, you can only carry one passenger at a time, for 12 months.



If you are aged under 25, between 11pm and 5am, only one of your passengers can be aged under 21. Exemptions may apply.



Restriction	Applies to
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High-performance cars



You must not drive high-performance cars, such as those:

- with a power to mass ratio greater than 130 kilowatts per tonne
- with significant modifications made to the vehicle's engine
- that are listed as a banned high-performance vehicle.

See the full list of Banned high-performance cars at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

There's no restriction on learning to drive in a high-performance car.



Displaying L or P plates



You must clearly display plates on the front and back, or roof, of the exterior of the vehicle you're driving.

Learners must display an L plate.

P1 drivers must display a red P plate.

P2 drivers must display a green P plate.

The whole letter (L or P) must be visible.













Location restrictions









You must not drive in Parramatta Park, Centennial Park or Moore Park when in Sydney.

There's no location restriction.



Restriction	Applies to
Being supervised You must be supervised by a person with an appropriate full (unrestricted) Australian driver licence (not a learner, provisional or overseas licence). They must sit next to you.	
You do not need to be supervised.	
The exception is if you passed your Driving Test in an automatic car and want to drive a manual car.	
You do not need to be supervised.	
Supervising a learner You must not supervise or instruct a learner driver.	  
Towing a trailer You must not tow a trailer or any other vehicle.	
You can tow light trailers that weigh up to 250kg when empty.	
A red P plate must be on the back of the trailer.	
Full licence towing rules apply.	
A green P plate must be on the back of the trailer.	
Manual or automatic cars You can learn to drive in either an automatic or a manual car.	
If you passed your Driving Test in a manual car, you can drive either a manual or an automatic car.	
If you passed your Driving Test in an automatic car, you can only drive an automatic car, unless supervised in a manual car by someone with a full Australian driver licence.	
There's no restriction: you can drive either an automatic or manual car.	

Restriction	Applies to
Trucks and heavy vehicles You must not drive, or learn to drive, vehicles that need another class of licence, such as trucks and other heavy vehicles.	 
You can learn to drive the following vehicles that need a different class of licence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Light Rigid (LR) or Medium Rigid (MR) vehicles, as soon as you have your P2 licence. • Heavy Rigid (HR) vehicles after 1 year. 	
Motor tricycles You must not drive car-based motor tricycles.	  

Medical conditions and disability

When you apply for your driver licence, you must state whether you have a medical condition or disability that could affect your driving. You also need to pass an eyesight test.

Medical conditions

For some medical conditions, such as epilepsy or cardiovascular conditions, you'll need regular medical assessments to make sure you're fit to drive.

If you develop a medical condition once you've got your licence, you must tell Transport for NSW. This is because driving with a medical condition can put yourself and other road users at risk. Failure to follow medical direction can lead to losing your licence.

See Fitness to drive at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

People with disability

Disability can have either a minor or serious effect on your driving ability. If Transport for NSW determines that a disability has a serious effect, you'll need to take a test. This is to show your driving ability and see if you need any aids or vehicle modifications. You may have conditions placed on your driver licence, for example, only driving automatic vehicles.

See Driving with a disability at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

As you get older

As you get older, changes to your health may affect your ability to drive. From the age of 75, you'll need to pass a medical assessment and eyesight test every year to keep your driver licence. From 85, you'll also need to take a practical driving assessment every 2 years. Alternatively, if you no longer require an unrestricted licence, you can opt for a modified (ie. local area) licence, without the need for a practical driving assessment.

See Older drivers at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Interstate and overseas licences

If you have a current interstate or overseas driver licence, you can use it to drive in NSW. The conditions and how long you can use it for depend on your circumstances.

If you have a:

- provisional licence – you also need to follow the conditions of your current interstate or overseas licence
- learner licence – you also need to follow the conditions of your current interstate or overseas licence and the NSW learner licence restrictions on page 19.

Interstate and New Zealand licences

You can drive in NSW using your interstate or New Zealand driver licence for up to 3 months, as long as:

- your licence is not suspended or disqualified
- your licence is the correct licence class for the vehicle you're driving
- you follow NSW road rules
- your right to drive in NSW has not been withdrawn.

To continue to drive in NSW after 3 months, you must transfer your licence to a NSW licence. You must do this within the 3 months.

Overseas licences (except New Zealand)

You can drive in NSW using your overseas driver licence as long as:

- your licence is current and is not suspended or disqualified
- your right to drive in NSW has not been withdrawn
- your licence is the correct licence class for the vehicle you're driving
- you were not issued an Australian permanent resident visa more than 3 months ago
- you follow NSW road rules.

If your licence is not in English, you must carry an International Driver Permit or a translation of your licence when driving.

You're encouraged to transfer to a NSW licence if you intend to live in NSW for a long period of time.

If you get an Australian permanent resident visa, you must transfer to a NSW licence within 3 months.

Transferring your licence

When you transfer your interstate or overseas licence, you transfer to an equivalent NSW licence.

Interstate or overseas licence	NSW equivalent licence
Learner licence	Learner licence You may be eligible to sit the Hazard Perception Test and the Driving Test without getting a NSW learner licence.
Driver licence held for less than 12 months	Provisional P1 licence*
Driver licence held for more than 12 months but less than 3 years	Provisional P2 licence*
Driver licence held for more than 3 years	Full (unrestricted) licence*

* Depending where your overseas licence is from, you may need to take the Driver Knowledge Test and the Driving Test. See Moving to NSW at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

To transfer your interstate or New Zealand licence

- full licence, see Transfer an interstate driver licence at service.nsw.gov.au
- provisional licence, see Transfer a provisional driver licence at service.nsw.gov.au
- learner licence, see Apply for a learner driver licence at service.nsw.gov.au

To transfer your overseas licence

- Transfer an overseas driver licence at service.nsw.gov.au

Once you have a NSW licence, your interstate or overseas licence is invalid. This is because in Australia you can only have one driver licence.

Driving without a licence

You must always carry your licence when driving.

Police can ask to see your licence anytime. If you're using a digital driver licence make sure your phone is charged and the screen is not cracked.

You can get a fine for driving without your licence with you or refusing to show it when asked.

Your licence must be:

- current (not expired, suspended or disqualified)
- the correct licence class for the type of vehicle you're driving
- a NSW licence, unless you're complying with the current requirements and conditions for interstate and overseas driver licences. See Interstate and overseas licences on page 25.

Penalties for driving without the correct, current licence include large fines and prison, and increase for repeat offences within 5 years.

You must not let anyone without a licence drive your vehicle.

Learner driver supervisor

You must always drive with a supervisor sitting in the seat next to you.

Your learner licence can be immediately suspended if you drive without a supervisor.

Supervisor requirements

Licence

A supervisor must have a full (unrestricted) Australian driver licence. This means a driver with a learner, provisional P1 or P2, or overseas licence must not supervise a learner driver. See Licence restrictions on page 19.

Both the supervisor and the learner driver can be fined if the supervisor does not have a full Australian driver licence.

Alcohol and drugs

When supervising a learning driver, a supervisor must:

- have a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) under 0.05
- not have illegal drugs present in their system or be under the influence of any drug.

Police can breath-test a supervisor involved in a crash.

If a supervisor is admitted to hospital after a crash, medical practitioners can also take blood and urine tests. See Alcohol limits on page 39.

Police can also test a supervisor who shows signs of being under the influence of drugs, including prescription drugs. See Drugs and medicines on page 43.

The same severe penalties for alcohol and drugs that apply to drivers also apply to supervisors.

Safety first

When you're learning to drive, your supervisor is both a role model and a mentor. They should support and help you become a safe and skilled driver.

When you start learning, you should practice simple skills, such as steering, accelerating and braking. It's best to learn these on quiet roads during the day. Once you've mastered those, you can move on to more difficult tasks on busier roads and in more challenging conditions. When you start practising at night, drive on roads you know well.

See Supervising a learner driver at *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au*

Safe driving behaviour

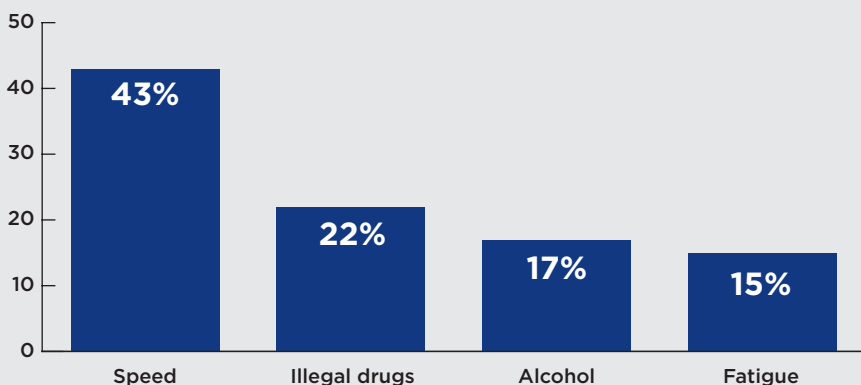
Every year around 350 people are killed on NSW roads. Another 22,000 are injured.

The major behavioural factors that contribute to deaths on the road are:

- speeding
- drink driving
- drug driving
- fatigue
- not wearing seatbelts.

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

Young drivers/riders involved in fatal crashes

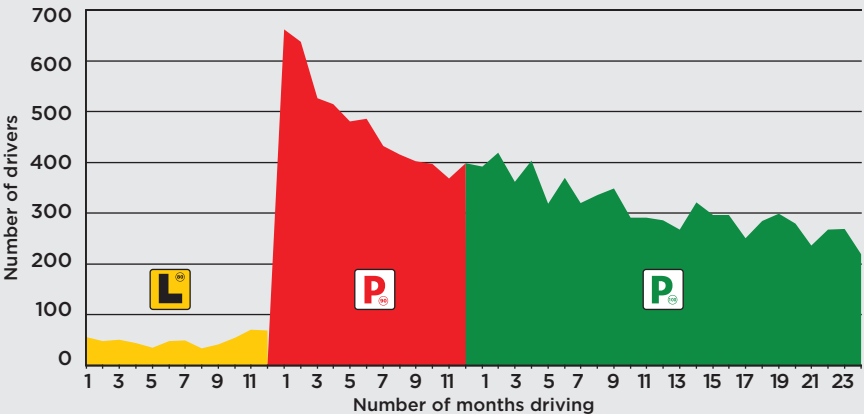


Of the fatal crashes involving young drivers/riders aged 17 to 25:

- 43% involved speeding
- 22% involved the presence of illegal drugs
- 17% involved alcohol
- 15% involved fatigue.

Learner, P1 and P2 drivers in casualty crashes

NSW crash data shows that Provisional P1 drivers are most likely to be involved in a crash. This graph shows the number of learner and provisional drivers involved in crashes that have casualties and their months of driving experience.



To make sure our roads are safe for all road users, it's critical drivers understand and practice safe driving behaviours and follow the road rules.

You can reduce your chances of being in a crash if you:

- follow the speed limits and drive to the conditions
- do not drink or take drugs and drive
- get enough sleep and be aware when you're too tired to drive
- make sure everyone in your vehicle is wearing a seatbelt.

Your decisions can make a big difference to safety on the road.

Speed limits

Speeding is the number one killer on NSW roads. On average, it's a factor in around 40% of deaths and 20% of serious injuries each year.

The rules

Speed limits

On roads where there's a **speed limit sign**, you must not drive faster than that speed limit.

On roads where there's **no speed limit sign**, you must not drive faster than the default speed limit:

- 50km/h in 'built-up areas' – areas with street lights and buildings next to the road less than 100m apart
- 100 km/h for all other roads.

Licence restrictions

You must not drive faster than the maximum speed allowed by your driver licence, even when a speed limit sign is higher.

Driver licence	Maximum speed
Learner	90km/h
Provisional P1	90km/h
Provisional P2	100km/h
Heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes (GVM). This includes LR, MR, HR, HC, MC licence classes	100km/h

Radar detectors and jammers

It's illegal to have a radar detector or jammer in your vehicle.

A radar detector or jammer is anything that detects, interferes with or reduces the effectiveness of speed-measuring devices.

Penalties

Penalties for speeding include:

- fines
- demerit points (including double demerit points)
- loss of licence
- taking away your vehicle or number plates.

The penalty increases the more you're over the speed limit, and if you speed in school zones.

Learner and provisional P1 drivers will go over their demerit point limit for any speeding offence and their licence will be suspended.

See Speeding penalties at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Speed limit signs

Speed limit signs show you the maximum speed you can drive in good conditions. Slow down in poor conditions.

Regulatory speed signs



You must not drive faster than 50km/h.

Regulatory speed limit signs have a white background with the speed limit in a red circle. You must not drive faster than the speed limit shown on the sign.

Variable speed limit signs



These are electronic signs placed in tunnels and on motorways and bridges where the speed limit changes based on the road conditions. You must not go faster than the speed limit shown on the sign.

Local traffic areas



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

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

High pedestrian activity areas

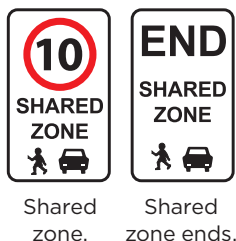


40km/h high pedestrian activity area.

High pedestrian activity areas have a speed limit of 30km/h or 40km/h.

This lower speed limit improves safety in areas with high levels of pedestrian activity, such as busy central business district zones and small suburban shopping strips.

Shared zone



A shared zone is where pedestrians, bicycles and other vehicles can share the road safely.

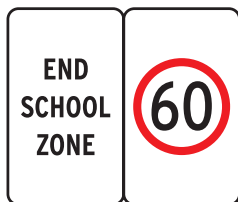
Shared zones have a speed limit of 10km/h. You must not drive faster than this speed limit. You must also give way to any pedestrian in a shared zone. This includes slowing down and stopping, if necessary, to avoid them.

School zone



A school zone is the area around a school between a 'School zone' sign and an 'End school zone' sign.

You must not drive faster than the speed limit in a school zone on school days during the times shown on the sign. School days are published by the NSW Department of Education.



Every school has at least one set of flashing lights, which operate during school zones times. 'Dragon's teeth' are also painted on the road to make school zones more visible.

The school zone ends, the speed limit is now 60km/h.

School bus stop zone



The speed limit in a school bus stop zone is 40km/h when bus lights flash.

A school bus stop zone is the area between a 'School bus stop zone' sign and an 'End school bus stop zone' sign. This area is where school buses stop to drop off or pick up children.

If you're driving in a school bus stop zone and see a bus with flashing lights on the top, you must not pass or overtake it in any direction at more than 40km/h while the lights are flashing.

Buses with flashing lights



Flashing lights on the top of a school bus.

At any time when you are travelling in the same direction as a bus with a '40 when lights flash' sign on the back and the lights on top are flashing, you must not overtake it at more than 40km/h. This is because the bus is picking up or dropping off children who may be crossing or about to cross the road.

Road work speed limit signs



The speed limit is 40km/h for roadworks.

Roadwork signs alert you to the start and end of roadworks and the speed limit for that area. You must not go faster than the speed limit shown on the sign.

Areas without speed signs

Default speed limits apply on roads without speed limit signs or roads with an end speed limit sign.



End speed limit sign.



State limit 100km/h applies, drive to conditions.



Reduce speed to conditions.

Advisory speed signs



Advisory speed signs are not regulatory signs. They show the recommended maximum speed to safely drive when there are hazards, such as curves, bends and crests.

The advisory speed is for average vehicles in good driving conditions. You should drive at a slower speed if the conditions are poor.

Advisory speed signs have a yellow background. An advisory speed sign is usually used with a warning sign.

Safety first

There's no such thing as safe speeding

Speeding means driving over the speed limit or at a speed unsafe for the road conditions.

Some people consider that going over the speed limit by 5 to 10km/h is 'acceptable' speeding. This is a dangerous way to think. Research has shown that even a small increase in speed can lead to a big increase in your chance of a crash.

Even if your passengers encourage you to, do not go over the speed limit.

Speeding increases the risk of death or injury

A small difference in speed can make a large difference to the risk of death or serious injury. If a car collides with a pedestrian at 50km/h, the impact is twice as likely to kill the pedestrian than if the car had been travelling at 40km/h.

Speed cameras reduce the risk and severity of crashes

Speed cameras are proven to change driver behaviour and reduce road trauma.

There are four types of speed cameras in NSW:

1. **Mobile speed cameras** are moved around the road network and can detect speeding anywhere and any time.
2. **Red-light speed cameras** capture both red-light running and speeding at high-risk intersections.
3. **Fixed speed cameras** are in high-risk locations such as tunnels or areas with a history of severe crashes.
4. **Average speed cameras** measure the average speed of heavy vehicles over long distances.

Play your part in keeping our community safe. Slow down to save lives.

See a list of Speed camera locations at roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au

Drive to road conditions

Even if you're driving at or below the speed limit, you may be driving too fast for road conditions such as curves, rain, heavy traffic or night-time. See [Driving in poor conditions](#) on page 180.

Alcohol limits

Alcohol affects your driving. It puts your safety and the safety of your passengers and other road users at risk.

Drink driving is one of the major causes of death on NSW roads.

The rules

Blood alcohol concentration (BAC)

Your blood alcohol concentration (BAC) must be under the legal limit when driving.

The legal limit depends on your driver licence or vehicle type:

Driver licence or vehicle type	BAC
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learner (L)• Provisional P1• Provisional P2	0
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full (unrestricted) licence (C) or (R)• Fully licensed driver from interstate or overseas	Under 0.05
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public passenger vehicles (for example, buses, coaches, taxis, rideshare vehicles and chauffeur-driven hire cars)• Heavy vehicles with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) over 13.9 tonnes• Vehicle and trailer combinations with a gross combined mass (GCM) over 13.9 tonnes• Dangerous goods vehicles	Under 0.02

It's impossible for you to estimate your own BAC, even if you think you know how many drinks you've had. Your size and weight, how tired you are, and variation in alcohol servings can all affect your BAC.

The only way to be sure you're under the limit is to not drink alcohol at all.

Driving under the influence of alcohol

You must not drive under the influence of alcohol.

If you think you might be under the influence, do not drive.

Drinking alcohol while driving

You must not drink alcohol while in your vehicle and driving, even if your BAC stays below your legal limit.

Random breath tests (RBT)

You must not refuse an RBT by the police.

Police can stop you anytime and test your BAC by asking you to speak or blow into a breath-testing device. Police can also breath-test any driver involved in a crash.

Blood and urine tests

You must not refuse a blood or urine test if asked to take one after a crash.

If you're involved in a crash that's fatal (or likely to be fatal), police can arrest you to take blood and urine tests.

If you're admitted to hospital after a crash, medical practitioners can take blood and urine tests for the police.

Penalties

There are severe penalties for driving over the legal alcohol limit or under the influence of alcohol, or refusing a blood or breath test.

Penalties can be fines, loss of licence, prison or an alcohol interlock on your vehicle. The penalty depends on how much you're over the limit and whether it's a first or repeat offence.

If you drink alcohol while driving, you can get a fine and demerit points.

See the Penalties for drink driving at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Safety first

Alcohol affects your ability to drive

Even if you feel unaffected, as few as one or two drinks will affect your reaction, judgement and ability to drive.

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

- slows your brain functions – you cannot respond to situations, make decisions or react quickly
- reduces your ability to judge speed (yours and others) and your distance from other cars, people or objects
- gives you false confidence – you may take greater risks because you think your driving is better than it really is
- makes it harder to do more than one thing at a time – while you concentrate on steering, you could miss things like traffic lights, cars and pedestrians
- makes you drowsy – you could fall asleep at the wheel.

Alcohol increases crash risk

The more alcohol you have in your blood, the higher the risk of being in a crash.

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

It's safest not to drink any alcohol

The simplest way to drive safely is not to drink at all if you intend to drive. After a heavy night of drinking you may still be over your legal alcohol limit for much of the next day. It can take more than 18 hours for your BAC to get back to zero.

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

If you're planning to drink, make sure you organise a way to get home without driving.

Drugs and medicines

Any drugs including illegal drugs, prescription and over-the-counter medicines can affect your driving and put the safety of passengers or other road users at risk. They can also change your behaviour, causing you to take risks you usually would not consider.

If you think you might have illegal drugs in your system or be under the influence of any other drug or medicine, do not drive.

The rules

Presence of illegal drugs

You must not drive with the presence of illegal drugs in your system.

Drugs can remain in your system for a long time after you've taken them. Police can test any driver or supervisor in NSW for four common illegal drugs through Mobile Drug Testing (MDT):

- ecstasy
- cannabis
- cocaine
- methamphetamine (including speed and ice).

If you think you might have illegal drugs in your system, do not drive.

Driving under the influence of drugs or medicine

You must not drive while under the influence of any drug, including illegal drugs, prescription medicines and over-the-counter medicines.

If you think you might be under the influence of a drug or medicine, do not drive.

Drug testing

You must not refuse drug testing by the police.

There are two ways to test for drug driving.

1. Saliva (oral fluid) test

Police can randomly stop and test the saliva of any driver for the presence of illegal drugs. You'll need to wipe a test stick down your tongue to check if you have illegal drugs in your system.

2. Blood and urine test

Police can also stop and test drivers who show signs of being under the influence of a drug, including prescription drugs. Police will do a sobriety assessment – a test to determine if you're affected by drugs. If you fail, you can be arrested and taken to hospital to give samples of blood and urine for drug testing.

If you're involved in a crash that's fatal (or likely to be fatal), police can arrest you to take blood and urine tests. If you're admitted to hospital after a crash, medical practitioners can also take blood and urine tests.

Blood and urine tests cover a large range of drugs and medicines that can impair drivers.

Penalties

Drug driving is a serious offence. If you drive with illegal drugs present in your system, you can get a fine and lose your licence.

Penalties are even heavier if you drive while under the influence of a drug, including illegal and prescription drugs. You can get a fine, lose your licence and even go to prison.

See Penalties for drug driving at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Safety first

Illegal drugs increase your crash risk

Safe driving needs clear judgement and concentration. You have to react quickly to changing situations on the road. Illegal drugs cause changes in the brain that can impair your driving ability and increase your risk of having a crash.

Stimulants such as ecstasy, cocaine or methamphetamine can make you think you're driving better than you actually are. They can also make you drive aggressively and take more risks.

Heroin and other opiates such as morphine, codeine and methadone can make you drowsy and reduce your reaction time.

Cannabis can also reduce your reaction time, alter your perception of distance and time and your ability to make the right decisions.

Other illegal drugs also affect your driving. Do not drive if you've taken any illegal drugs.

See Effects of illegal drugs at roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au

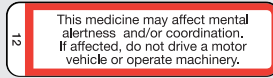
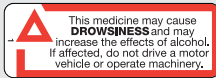
Medicines can affect your ability to drive

Medicines can affect your ability to drive safely. They can cause drowsiness, blurred vision, poor concentration, slower reaction times and changes in behaviour.

Some medicines that can affect driving are:

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

Read the labels on your medication to determine whether it could affect your driving. If there's a warning label that tells you not to drive, follow that advice.



Examples of warning labels on medication.

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Some labels say a medicine may affect your ability to drive. If you're not sure, get advice from your doctor or pharmacist, and do not drive until you've done so.

Do not mix drugs and alcohol

While you should never drink drive or drug drive, it's even more dangerous to take drugs while drinking alcohol, or to combine drugs. This includes prescription and over-the-counter medicines. The effects are unpredictable. Never drive if you've mixed drugs, or if you've taken drugs while drinking alcohol.

Seatbelts

Each year, around 40 people are killed on NSW roads because they were not wearing a seatbelt, and around 350 people are injured. These deaths and injuries can be prevented by wearing a seatbelt properly.

The rules

Wearing a seatbelt

Drivers must wear a seatbelt while driving. Drivers must not have any part of their body outside the vehicle.

Drivers are also responsible for making sure:

- each passenger is sitting in their own seat that's fitted with a seatbelt (they must not share the seat or seatbelt with another passenger)
- each passenger is wearing a properly secured and adjusted seatbelt or is in an approved child car seat suitable for their age and size

- there are not more passengers in the vehicle than it's designed to carry
- no-one travels in an area of the vehicle not designed for passengers, for example, the boot, the floor, the tray of a ute or in a trailer or caravan
- passengers do not travel with any part of their body outside the vehicle.

It's also the responsibility of passengers aged over 16 to:

- sit in their own seat and wear a properly secured and adjusted seatbelt
- not travel in an area of the vehicle not designed for passengers
- not have any part of their body outside the vehicle.

Exemptions

Drivers with a full (unrestricted) licence do not have to wear a seatbelt when they are:

- reversing their vehicle
- driving a garbage or delivery vehicle travelling below 25km/h and need to get out regularly.

Passengers travelling with a driver with a full licence do not have to wear a seatbelt if they are:

- getting or giving urgent and necessary medical treatment
- in a garbage or delivery vehicle travelling below 25km/h and need to get out regularly.

All drivers, including learner, provisional P1 and P2 drivers, and their passengers may be exempt from wearing a seatbelt if they have a medical condition and are carrying an appropriate medical certificate.

Where possible, passengers exempt from wearing a seatbelt, or in a vehicle that does not have seatbelts fitted, should sit in the back seat.

Penalties

If you drive while not wearing a seatbelt, or fail to make sure that your passengers are wearing a seatbelt, you will get a fine and demerit points. Double demerit points also apply.

In addition to the driver, passengers aged over 16 will get a fine for not wearing a seatbelt. They can also get a fine for travelling with any part of their body outside the vehicle.

See a list of Seatbelt-related penalties at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Safety first

Seatbelts save lives

You're much more likely to be killed or seriously injured in a crash if you do not wear a seatbelt. Seatbelts double the chance of survival and reduce the risk of injury in a crash.

During a crash, wearing a seatbelt is the most effective way to prevent the driver and passengers from being thrown around in the vehicle, being thrown out of the vehicle, or hitting each other.

Wear your seatbelt properly

During a crash, wearing a seatbelt slows your body down and puts the crash forces on the stronger parts of your body (pelvis and chest area).

For a seatbelt to work, you should adjust it 'low, flat and firm':

- low – placed below your hips to fully secure your body weight
- flat – no twists, turns or folds
- firm – regularly pull the belt firm to remove any slack.

Child car seats

Children aged under 7 years must use an approved suitable child restraint when travelling in a vehicle. A child restraint is a forward-facing or rear-facing child car seat (also referred to as a baby car seat or baby capsule) or a booster seat.

To be approved, child restraints must meet Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1754.

The rules

Suitable child car restraint

The driver is responsible for children aged under 7 years being secured by an approved child restraint suitable for their age and size.

- Children up to the age of 6 months must use a rear-facing child car seat.
- Children aged between 6 months and 4 years must use either a rear-facing child car seat or a forward-facing child car seat with an inbuilt harness.
- Children aged between 4 and 7 years must use a forward-facing child car seat with an inbuilt harness or an approved booster seat.

Children aged 7 years and over who are too small to use a seatbelt should use an approved booster seat or an anchored safety harness. The suggested minimum height for using a seatbelt is 145cm or taller.



Up to 6 months

Approved rear facing child car seat.



6 months to 4 yrs

Approved rear or forward facing child car seat.



4+ years

Approved forward facing child car seat or booster seat.



145cm or taller

Suggested minimum height to use adult lap-sash seatbelt.

Fitting child car seats

Child car seats must be properly fitted according to the manufacturer's instructions. This includes adjusting the seat tightly and attaching it to an anchorage point designed for a child car seat.

It's recommended that child car seats are fitted by an Authorised Restraint Fitter or at an Authorised Restraint Fitting Station. For more information see Authorised Restraint Fitting Stations at roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au

Fitting booster seats

Booster seats must be used with either a standard lap-and-sash type seatbelt or an approved child safety harness. Never use a booster seat with a lap seatbelt alone.

Booster seats heavier than 2kg must be anchored to an anchorage point.

Children in the front seat

Children aged under 4 years:

- must not sit in the front seat of a vehicle that has two or more rows of seats
- can sit in the front seat of a vehicle with only one row of seats, but must use an approved child car seat suitable for their age and size.

Children aged between 4 and 7 years must not sit in the front seat of a vehicle that has two or more rows of seats, unless the available seats in the back row are occupied by other children aged under 7 years. They must use an approved child car seat suitable for their age and size.

Exemptions

Travelling in a tow truck

After a crash or vehicle breakdown, a child aged under 12 months can travel in a tow truck.

If a suitable child car seat is not available, they can sit on the lap of another passenger. If the tow truck has two or more rows of seats, they must sit in the back seat.

Travelling in a taxi

While travelling in a taxi:

- children up to the age of 6 months must use a rear-facing child car seat
- children aged between 6 and 12 months must use either a rear-facing child car seat or a forward-facing child car seat with an inbuilt harness
- children aged over 12 months must use a booster seat or wear a properly adjusted and fastened seatbelt.

Rules for children in the front seat continue to apply. You can ask the taxi for a child car seat or booster seat when you book, or ask to use your own. All taxis must be fitted with a child restraint anchorage point.

Medical conditions and disability

Children aged under 7 years with a medical condition or disability can use an alternative child restraint designed for them. They must carry a certificate from a doctor saying they can use this restraint.

Penalties

If you drive with children aged under 16 years who are not using an approved suitable child restraint, you can get a fine and demerit points. Double demerit points also apply.

See a list of Penalties related to child restraints at *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au*

Safety first

Children in child car seats are less likely to be injured or killed

A child who is in an approved child car seat suitable for their age and size is less likely to be injured or killed in a car crash than one who is not.

The Child Restraint Evaluation Program independently tests child car seats and rates their level of protection in a crash. See childcarseats.com.au for help choosing a safe child car seat.

You must not put a seatbelt around both yourself and a child on your lap. The child can be easily crushed.

You must not carry a child in your arms in a vehicle. In a crash the child can be crushed, thrown around in the vehicle, or thrown out of the vehicle.

Mobile phones

Using a mobile phone while driving affects your attention and response time. This increases your chance of crashing.

There are strict rules about how and when you can use a mobile phone while driving. These rules depend on whether you have a full (unrestricted) licence, or a learner, provisional P1 or P2 licence.

The rules

Using a mobile phone while driving

Learner, P1 and P2 drivers

You must not use a mobile phone while driving, even when you're stationary, for example, stopped at lights or stuck in traffic.

This includes:

- texting
- phone calls
- music
- emailing
- social media
- using the internet
- maps and navigation
- photography.

This applies to mobile phones that are handheld, in a phone holder or hands-free, for example, via Bluetooth.

Drivers with a full licence

There are only two ways you can use a mobile phone while driving:

1. **Hands-free** – you can only use your phone hands-free (without touching it) to:
 - make or receive voice calls
 - play audio, for example, music and podcasts.
2. **In a phone holder** – you can only use and touch your phone to:
 - make or receive voice calls
 - play audio, for example, music and podcasts
 - use as a driver's aid, for example, maps and navigation apps or dispatch systems.

Phone holders must be commercially manufactured and fixed to your vehicle and must not obscure your vision.

You must not use a mobile phone while driving for any other function. This includes:

- texting
- video calls
- emailing
- social media
- using the internet
- photography.

When driving, you must not hold a mobile phone in your hand. It must not rest on your leg, be between your shoulder and ear or any other part of your body.

Using a mobile phone when parked

All drivers, including learner, P1 and P2 drivers, can use a mobile phone for any function when parked out of the line of traffic. The ignition does not need to be off.

Exemptions

All drivers, including learner, P1 and P2 drivers, can use a mobile phone to:

- show their digital driver licence when instructed by a police officer
- use wallet functions to make a transaction or show a voucher, but only in areas such as a car park, driveway or drive-through, and when the vehicle is stationary.

Penalties

Mobile phone detection cameras target illegal mobile phone use in vehicles anywhere, anytime.

You can get a fine and demerit points for using a mobile phone illegally. Double demerit points also apply.

If you have a learner or P1 licence, you'll go over your demerit point limit and lose your licence.

Safety first

Distractions cause crashes

Being distracted when driving, such as by a mobile phone, increases the risk of a crash. A short lapse in concentration can have devastating consequences.

Research shows that using a mobile phone while driving can increase in the risk of having a casualty crash by four times. Texting, using the internet and social media can take your attention away from the task of driving for longer periods of time and further increase the risk.

Reducing distractions means reducing crash risk. Consider putting your phone on silent, keeping it out of reach or even switching it off. Focus on reaching your destination safely.

Digital screens and GPS

Digital screens, also known as visual display units, include devices such as tablets and laptops, as well as dashboard screens.

The rules

You must not drive with a digital screen on if you can see it, or it could distract another driver, unless you're using it as a driver's aid. In this case, it must be in a holder fixed to the vehicle or built into the vehicle.

Driver's aids include:

- navigation devices, for example, GPS
- dispatch systems
- reversing screens
- CCTV security cameras
- vehicle monitoring devices.

Your passengers can use digital screens, but the screens must not:

- be visible to you from the normal driving position
- distract another driver.

Penalties

You can get a fine and demerit points for using a digital screen illegally while driving.

Fatigue

Fatigue kills. Each year, it accounts for around 20% of road deaths in NSW.

Fatigue is the feeling of being sleepy, tired or exhausted. It's your body's way of telling you that you need to stop and rest or sleep.

Fatigue-related crashes are twice as likely to be fatal. Drivers who are asleep cannot brake. Driver fatigue can be as dangerous as drink driving. It affects your concentration and judgement, and slows your reaction time. Research shows that being awake for about 17 hours has a similar effect on your driving as a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.05.

Fatigue can affect anyone, no matter how experienced a driver they are. Fatigue is not only a problem on long drives or at night. It can affect you on shorter, everyday trips like heading off to work in the morning or driving home after a long day.

Groups at a higher risk of driving tired are shift workers, those who drive for a living, tradies who tend to start work early, students who tend to be up late, and new parents who are sleep-deprived.

While there are no specific road rules to manage fatigue, when you're driving it's your responsibility to make sure you do not put yourself and others at risk.

Safety first

Get at least 8 hours of sleep

Make sure you have a good night's sleep. The average person needs about 8 hours each night to function normally. Teenagers need even more. When you get less hours than you need, you get a 'sleep debt'. The only way to treat your sleep debt is by sleeping.

Wait 30 minutes after waking before driving. There's a high risk of fatigue immediately after waking up, when you still feel tired. This is 'sleep inertia' and generally lasts between 15 to 30 minutes.

Avoid driving when you would normally sleep

Avoid driving at night when your body naturally wants to sleep.

The risk of having a fatal fatigue-related crash is four times greater between 10pm and 6am.

Know when it's time to rest

You can avoid fatigue crashes by recognising the early warning signs:

- yawning
- poor concentration
- tired or sore eyes
- restlessness
- drowsiness
- slow reactions
- boredom
- feeling irritable
- making fewer and larger steering corrections
- missing road signs
- having difficulty staying in the lane.

If you show any of these signs, park in a safe place and take a break or nap.

Take a nap

Sleep is the only way to overcome tiredness. As soon as you experience any of the signs of fatigue, park in a safe place and have a nap (20 minutes works best).

Do not wait for a microsleep – by then it's too late.

A microsleep is a brief and unintended loss of consciousness. It happens when you try to stay awake while doing a monotonous task, such as driving. It can last from a few seconds to a few minutes. Signs of microsleep are:

- head snapping
- nodding
- closing your eyes for more than a couple of seconds.

A 4 second microsleep at 100km/h means you'll drive more than 110m with your eyes off the road.

Take regular breaks

Planning ahead is the best way to avoid becoming tired. Plan to take regular breaks from driving, even if you don't feel tired, and share the driving with a friend or family member if you can.

Watch what you eat and drink

Dehydration can cause fatigue. Some kinds of food and drink remove water from your body. Avoid alcohol, fatty foods, too much coffee and sweet soft drinks. Drink plenty of water instead.

Use rest areas where available



You're approaching a rest area.

Rest areas (or rest stops) are places where you can park safely, get out of your vehicle and refresh yourself. They're available 24 hours a day, all year round. You must not camp in rest areas so if you need a longer rest, find a campsite, hotel or motel.

You can also take a break at a:

- petrol station
- park
- country town
- Driver Reviver site.

Driver Reviver sites operate in NSW during peak holiday travel periods. These are places to take a break during a long drive and have a free cup of tea or coffee and a snack.

For the location and operating times of rest areas and Driver Reviver sites, see NSW Rest Areas map at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Hooning and street racing

Hooning and street racing are irresponsible and dangerous. There are severe penalties for this behaviour.

Your vehicle and your driver licence can be taken away on the spot if you take part in these activities.

The rules

You must not organise, take part in or promote (including take photos or film) hooning or street racing.

This includes:

- driving in a way that deliberately loses traction between your vehicle and the road, for example, burnouts or donuts
- racing other vehicles
- speed trials or trying to break a speed record.

Penalties

Penalties for hooning and street racing include:

- large fines
- demerit points
- loss of licence
- impoundment (taking away your vehicle or number plates)
- prison.

Your vehicle can be impounded for up to 3 months and you must pay storage fees to get it back. For a second offence, your vehicle may be sold.

See Street racing and hooning offences at *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au*

Negligent or dangerous driving

Negligent or dangerous driving causes many crashes on NSW roads each year.

Negligent or dangerous means driving without the due care and attention reasonably expected of a driver. It puts you, other drivers and the public at risk and can result in serious injury or death.

The rules

You must not drive a vehicle on a road negligently or at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public.

Penalties

If you drive negligently you can get a fine and demerit points.

If you drive at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public, or cause death or injury due to negligent driving, penalties include:

- large fines
- loss of licence
- prison.

See Penalties for serious driving offences at *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au*

Safe stopping distance

Keeping a safe distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front is essential for safe driving. Your speed affects the distance you need to stop safely. As you increase speed, you should also increase the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front.

The rules

You must keep enough distance between you and the vehicle travelling in front so you can, if necessary, stop safely to avoid colliding with the vehicle.

If you're driving a long vehicle (over 7.5m, including towed vehicles), you must drive at least 60m behind other long vehicles, unless you're:

- driving on a multi-lane road
- driving in a built-up area
- overtaking.

Penalties

You can get a fine and demerit points if you drive too close to another vehicle.

Safety first

Road positioning

Road positioning means keeping enough room around your vehicle to avoid hazards. This is also referred to as buffering.

This can mean keeping to the left at the top of a hill or a sharp corner so oncoming vehicles can drive past you safely. Or it can mean not getting too close to parked cars so you can avoid hitting opening doors.

Always check your mirrors before changing your position on the road.

Crash avoidance space

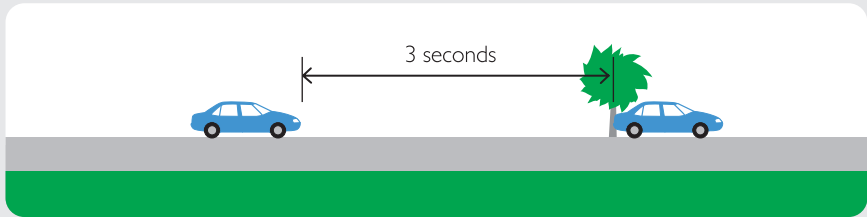
As a driver, you should adjust your speed and position to keep a safe distance from vehicles in front and to the sides of your vehicle. This is called your crash avoidance space.

Many of the crashes that happen each day in NSW could be avoided if drivers kept their crash avoidance space.

To work out the crash avoidance space to the front of your vehicle, you need to take into account two key factors – reaction time and response time:

- **Reaction time** is the time a driver needs to see and understand a situation, decide on a response, and then start to take action. A driver who is fit and alert and not affected by alcohol, drugs or fatigue, needs about 1.5 seconds to react to a hazard.
- **Response time** is the time a driver needs to take action. Most people need at least 1.5 seconds to respond, for example, to brake.

In good driving conditions, most people need a 3-second crash avoidance space (often called the 3-second gap) to react and respond to a situation safely and avoid a crash.



Keep at least 3 seconds' distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you.

You should increase your crash avoidance space to 4 or more seconds when driving in poor conditions, such as on unsealed (dirt or gravel), icy or wet roads, or at night.

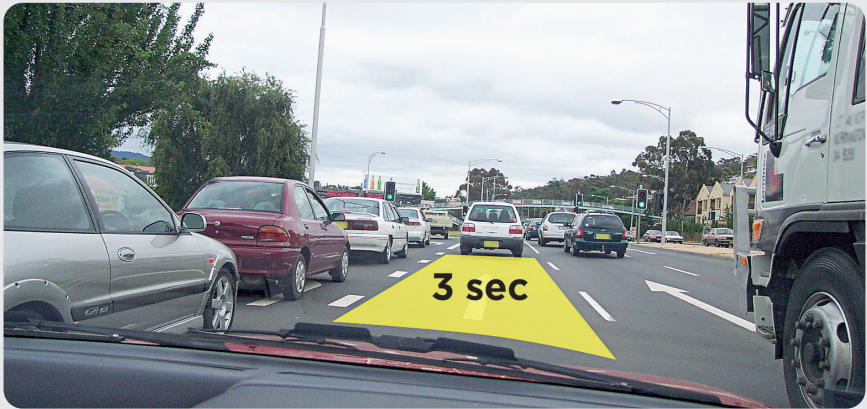
You can help other vehicles, such as trucks and buses, to keep their crash avoidance space by not cutting in front of them.

Working out your crash avoidance space

To calculate your crash avoidance space when driving:

1. Select an object or mark on the left-hand-side of the road, for example, a power pole, tree or sign.
2. As the rear of the vehicle in front of you passes this object, count 3 seconds ('1 thousand and 1, 2 thousand and 2, 3 thousand and 3').
3. If your vehicle passes the object after you've finished counting, this is enough crash avoidance space.

If your vehicle passes the object before you finish counting, you're following too closely. Slow down, and repeat the count until there's a 3-second gap between you and the vehicle in front.



Keep a 3-second gap behind the vehicles in front of you.

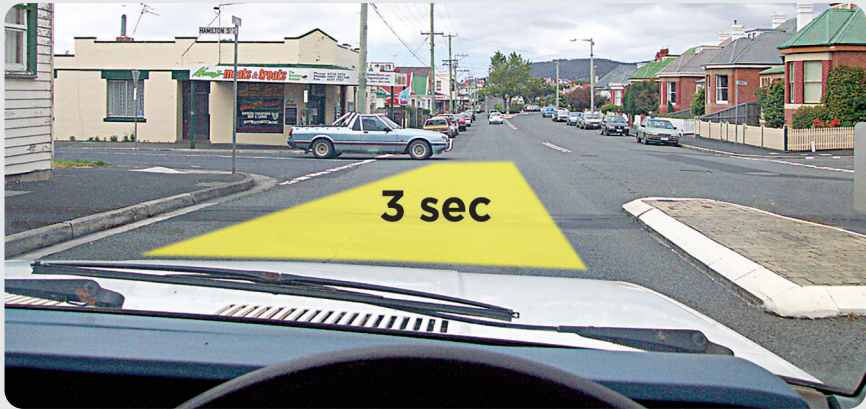
Driving speed and crash avoidance space

The 3-second gap changes depending on your speed. The faster you're going, the longer it takes to stop and avoid a crash.

Driving speed	Space needed to avoid a crash
60km/h	50m
80km/h	67m
100km/h	84m
110km/h	92m

Most drivers underestimate the distance needed to stop their vehicle. When you drive just 5km/h over the speed limit, you need much further to stop, even if you brake hard.

If there's potential for another vehicle or hazard to enter your crash avoidance space, slow down to create a buffer, and prepare to stop if necessary. It's important to keep your crash avoidance space for all potentially hazardous situations, including blind corners and crests.



Be careful and slow down if there's a chance something might enter your crash avoidance space, such as another vehicle turning from a side street.

Braking technique

Correct braking is done in two stages:

1. Put light pressure on the brake pedal and pause (set up the brakes).
2. Progressively apply the necessary braking pressure (squeeze).

Two-stage braking makes braking more effective, reduces the chance of skidding and gives you better control.

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

Scanning

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

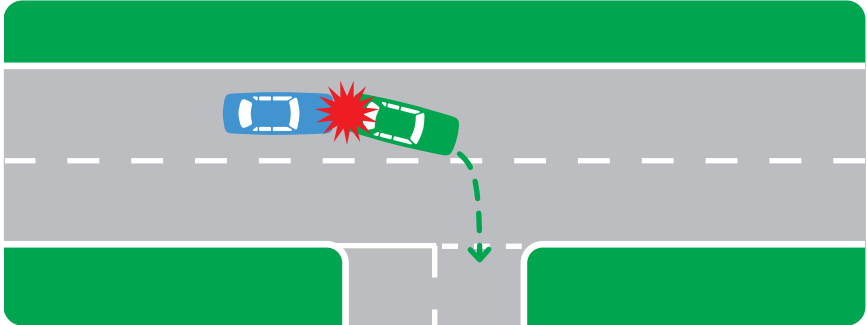
When scanning look:

- in the distance
- at the road surface
- to your left and right
- regularly at your mirrors and instruments.

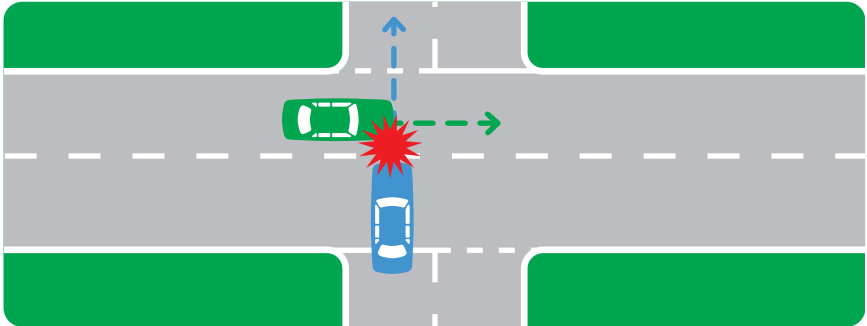
Common crashes in NSW

Almost 80% of all NSW casualty crashes (where a person is killed or injured) fall into five crash types:

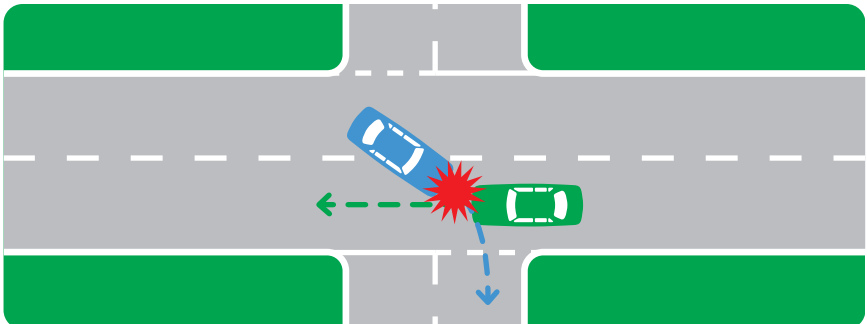
1. Colliding with the rear of another vehicle (rear-end).



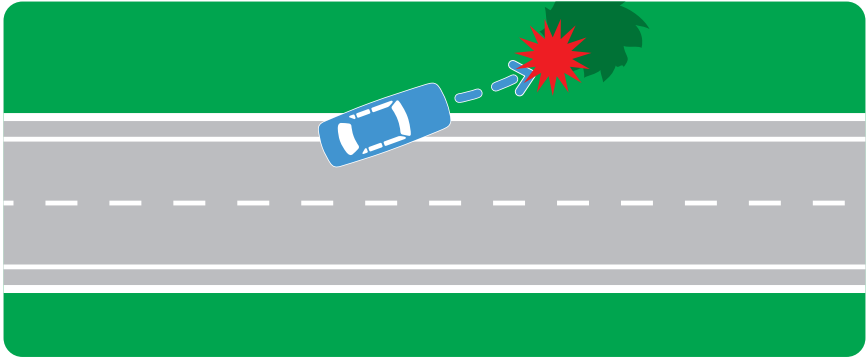
2. Colliding with another vehicle coming from an adjacent direction (the left or right).



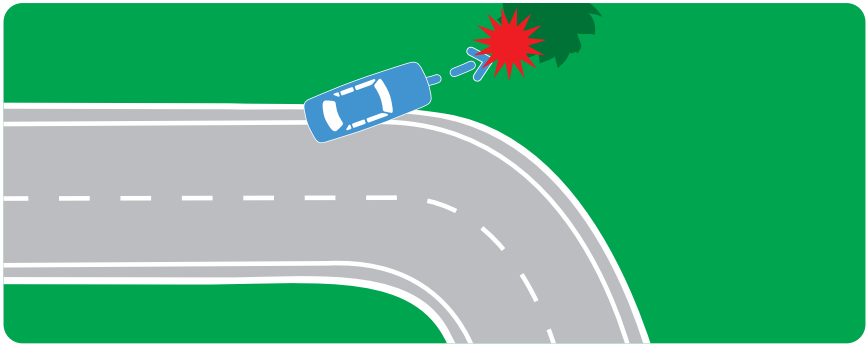
3. Colliding with another vehicle coming from the opposite direction.



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



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



These crashes are also the most common crash types for provisional drivers. They can be avoided if you follow the road rules and:

- manage your speed and fatigue
- keep a safe stopping distance
- take extra care at intersections and when overtaking.

See Crashes on page 174 for what to do if you're involved in a crash.

Sharing with other road users

Everyone who uses the roads to drive, ride or walk has a responsibility to share the road with others.

Be aware of who you're sharing the road with and how you can take care around them. Allow enough time to stop safely for pedestrians. Give other vehicles enough room to stop and turn. Keep an eye out for bicycle and motorcycle riders.

If somebody does something that startles you, or is aggressive, stay calm. You must not respond in a threatening or aggressive manner. This kind of behaviour, often called 'road rage', is dangerous and illegal.

By respecting other road users, you can help make the roads safer for everyone.

Pedestrians

Pedestrians include people who are:

- walking or running
- pushing a bicycle
- in a wheelchair
- using a mobility scooter or motorised wheelchair
- using a skateboard, foot scooter or rollerblades.

Pedestrians are vulnerable road users because they have no protection if a vehicle collides with them. As a driver, it's your responsibility to help keep them safe.

For rules and safety tips for pedestrians, see [Pedestrians at roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au)

Give way to pedestrians

As a driver, you must give way to pedestrians:

- at pedestrian and children's crossings
- when turning at intersections
- when doing a U-turn
- in shared zones
- when entering or leaving a driveway.

Always slow down and be prepared to stop if there's any danger of colliding with a pedestrian even if they do not have right of way or are jaywalking (crossing the road illegally).

Look out for vulnerable pedestrians

Children

Children have not developed the skills to understand and react to danger. They're still learning where to cross safely, and they can find it hard to judge the speed and distance of vehicles. This means they can act unpredictably around traffic.

Take extra care near:

- children playing, walking or riding bikes near the edge of the road
- schools, particularly when children are arriving or leaving
- school buses or school bus zones where children may be getting on or off the bus.

Older people

Older people may be slower than other pedestrians and may not see you until you're very close. Slow down and give them extra time to cross.

People affected by alcohol or drugs

People who have been drinking or taking drugs are one of the most common groups involved in road crashes.

Alcohol and drugs slow brain functions, increase risk-taking and reduce people's ability to judge speed and distance. This also applies to drink or drug affected pedestrians and their ability to cross the road safely.

Take extra care when driving near licensed clubs, hotels, restaurants, festivals and other events.

Slow down and take extra care

Near shopping centres and transport

Pedestrians may not be paying attention around shopping centres and transport hubs, such as bus and tram stops. Slow down and watch out for anyone that might step onto the road.

Watch out for pedestrians walking between parked vehicles or opening car doors.

In poor visibility and conditions

More than half of all pedestrian fatalities occur in darkness or at dusk.

Slow down and prepare to stop when visibility is poor, for example, in rain or fog, or at night, dawn or dusk. Pedestrians are harder to see and they're also more likely to hurry and take risks.

When pedestrians are walking on the road

Pedestrians must use a footpath or nature strip if there's one. If there's not one, or it's not practical to use, they can walk on the road as long as they:

- walk in the direction of oncoming traffic, if practical
- keep to the far side of the road
- do not walk alongside more than one other person, unless overtaking.

People using mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs can do the same.

Watch out for people using skateboards, foot scooters and rollerblades. They can use roads with speed limits up to 50km/h and no white dividing line.

When reversing

Pedestrians, particularly children, are at greater risk when vehicles are reversing. This is because the driver cannot see them as well.

Take extra care when you're reversing, particularly when you're entering or leaving a driveway. Only reverse for the distance that's necessary.

Mobility scooters and motorised wheelchairs

People with a disability who cannot walk or find it difficult to walk may use mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs. They must follow the same rules as pedestrians. To share the footpath safely with other pedestrians, the vehicles must not be able to go faster than 10km/h.

Drivers should look out for mobility scooters or motorised wheelchairs. Take particular care when entering or leaving a driveway, as they can be difficult to see and move faster than other pedestrians.

Skateboards, foot scooters and rollerblades

People who use skateboards, foot scooters and rollerblades have the same rights and responsibilities as pedestrians. They must follow the same road rules, but also have some special rules.

On footpaths, they must keep to the left and give way to other pedestrians.

On bicycle and pedestrian paths, they must use the bicycle section and keep out of the way of bicycles.

They can use the road, but only during daylight hours, if:

- the speed limit is 50km/h or less
- the road has no white dividing line or it's a single-lane, one-way street.

As a driver, you should take care when you see people using skateboards, foot scooters and rollerblades on the road. If the road is uneven or slippery, they may be unstable. Be careful when entering or leaving a driveway, as they can be difficult to see and move faster than other pedestrians.

Skateboards and scooters with a motor must only be used on private land.

Bicycle riders

Bicycle riders have a right to use the road and have the same responsibilities as other road users. They generally follow the same road rules as drivers, but have additional rules they must follow, such as wearing an approved bicycle helmet.

For rules and safety advice for bicycle riders, see the Bicycle Rider Handbook at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Bicycle riders are vulnerable users and do not have the same protections as people in vehicles and can be seriously injured or killed in a crash.

As a driver, it's your responsibility to help keep bicycle riders safe.

Keep a lookout

Bicycles can be harder to see than other vehicles. Watch out for them at all times, especially at dawn and dusk and at night.

Bicycle riders often ride in the far left of the left lane. As a driver, it's your responsibility to check your surroundings. Take extra care and check your blind spots for bicycles when changing lanes or turning left.

Be aware that bicycle riders can:

- overtake on the left of vehicles
- ride to the left of the line that marks the edge of the road (edge line)
- ride in bus lanes, tram lanes, transit lanes and truck lanes (but not in bus-only lanes or tramways)
- ride on motorways and freeways, unless a sign says they must not.

Sometimes bicycle riders can ride as fast as or faster than a car, particularly in slow traffic. Never underestimate their speed.

Allow riders a full lane

Bicycle riders must use bicycle lanes (part of the road dedicated to bicycles) where there's one. If there's not, or it's not practical to use, they have the right to ride on the road. This includes riding in the middle of a lane.

Sometimes they may need the full lane because of rough road edges or gravel. Be prepared to slow down and give them room to ride away from the kerb.

Bicycle riders can ride two abreast (side by side) as long as they're within 1.5m of each other. Another bicycle rider can overtake them.

Keep your distance when overtaking

When overtaking bicycles, you must allow a distance of at least 1m between you and the rider when the speed limit is 60km/h or less, or 1.5m if it's more than 60km/h.

If other drivers beep their horns to pressure you to pass a bicycle, stay calm. Only pass when you're sure it's safe.

You can cross single and double white lines to pass bicycles, but only if you have a clear view of approaching traffic and it's safe to do so.

Take care at intersections

Look out for bicycles before turning at intersections and roundabouts.

Bicycle riders can do hook turns when turning right at intersections, unless a sign says they must not. This means they use the left lane to turn right. Bicycle riders must give way to vehicles leaving the intersection. As a driver, you must take care to avoid colliding with them.

Some intersections have places for bicycle riders to stop at a traffic light when the traffic lights are red. These are called bicycle storage areas and vehicles must not enter them while the traffic lights are red.

Check before opening doors

You must not open your door into the path of a bicycle. Before getting out of your vehicle, check your rear view and side mirrors.

Motorcycle riders

Motorcycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities as other drivers on the road. They generally follow the same road rules, but have additional rules they must follow, such as wearing an approved motorcycle helmet.

For rules and safety advice for motorcycle riders, see the Motorcycle Riders' Handbook at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Motorcycle riders are much more vulnerable than people in cars. Per kilometre travelled, they're 25 times more likely to be killed in a road crash. They're harder to see and do not have the body of a car to protect them. They're also less stable because they only have two wheels.

Motorcycle riders are most at risk:

- on busy city roads – at intersections and when changing lanes
- on country roads – particularly around bends.

As a driver, it's your responsibility to help keep motorcycle riders safe.

Keep a lookout

Always look out for motorcycles as they're smaller than cars and harder to see. Motorcycles can be hidden behind a truck or car.

Check your side and rear mirrors and your blind spots by looking over your shoulder regularly, especially before:

- merging or changing lanes
- turning at intersections.

Watch out for lane filtering

Lane filtering is when motorcycle riders ride at low speeds between traffic moving in the same direction.

A motorcycle rider can lane filter if:

- they have a full motorcycle rider licence
- they're travelling at less than 30km/h
- the traffic is stopped or moving slowly, and
- it's safe to do so.

Motorcycles riders must not lane filter next to kerbs or parked vehicles, or in school zones.

Leave space when overtaking

When overtaking motorcycles, leave as much space as you would when overtaking a car.

Do not drive alongside

Do not drive alongside and in the same lane as a motorcycle. They have a right to a full-width lane to ride safely.

Motorcycle riders can ride two abreast (side by side) as long as they're within 1.5m of each other. Another motorcycle rider can overtake them.

Keep a safe distance

Drive at a safe distance from motorcycles. They may need to avoid hazards such as flying debris, oil slicks and poor road conditions. They may also need extra time to stop.

Horse riders

Horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles have the right to share our roads.

They have the same rights and responsibilities as other drivers, motorcycle riders and bicycle riders. They follow the same road rules, but also have some special rules.

Horse riders can ride on any road, unless a sign says they must not. They can ride two abreast (side by side) as long as they're within 1.5m of each other. More than two horse riders can ride side by side, but only if one is overtaking the others or they are droving stock.

Drivers should be mindful that horses can be unpredictable. If you're passing a horse, whether it's being ridden or led, or is pulling a vehicle, you should:

- slow down and leave plenty of room
- stop if the rider is having difficulty with their horse
- never use your horn or rev your engine.

Trucks and buses

Trucks and buses are heavy vehicles. A crash involving a heavy vehicle is more likely to cause serious injury or death because of its size, weight and length.

All road users need to take extra care and be aware of heavy vehicles.

For rules and safety advice for heavy vehicles, see the Heavy Vehicle Drivers' Handbook at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

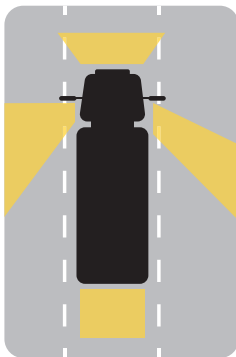
Give them plenty of room to stop

Heavy vehicles such as trucks and buses cannot stop quickly.

In traffic, bus and truck drivers try to keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front. Do not cut in front of a truck or bus. Give them enough room to stop safely.

When a bus or truck is approaching a traffic light that's changing to red, do not pull in front of it. It may not be able to stop in time to avoid a crash.

Be aware of truck and bus blind spots

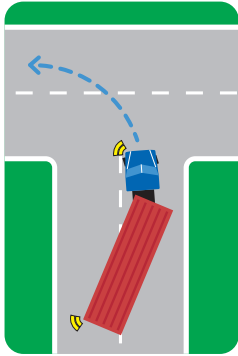


Blind spots in front, beside and behind a truck.

Due to their size and length, trucks and buses have larger blind spots than an average vehicle. This means a truck or bus driver may not be able to see your vehicle. Take care when driving next to or behind them.

Trucks and buses also have a large blind spot at the front of their vehicle. This means the driver may not always see pedestrians, bicycles or motorcycles in front of them.

Give them enough room to turn



A long vehicle can use more than one lane to turn left.

Heavy vehicles may need to take up more than one lane when turning at intersections and roundabouts. Make sure you give them enough room. Do not assume they can stay completely in their own lane.

Do not put your vehicle in the path of a large, heavy vehicle when it's turning – you may be crushed. It's safest to stay behind and wait until the vehicle has completed the turn. There are also rules that must be obeyed. See Overtaking on page 124 for rules about overtaking long vehicles with a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign.

Slow down for buses with flashing lights

If you're travelling in the same direction as a bus with a '40 when lights flash' sign on the back, you must not overtake it at more than 40km/h while the lights on top are flashing. This is because the bus is picking up or dropping off children.

Take extra care around oversize vehicles

Oversize vehicles are longer, wider or heavier than standard trucks. They move slowly, take up more road (sometimes more than one lane) and take longer to stop.

Pilot vehicles with yellow flashing lights and an 'Oversize load ahead' sign may drive with an oversize vehicle. If the vehicle is unusually large, police may also escort it and direct traffic.

When approaching an oversize vehicle:

- take care and reduce speed
- keep to the left of the centre line
- be prepared to move to the left side of the road, if necessary.

Stopping, giving way and turning

Signs, road markings, traffic lights and roundabouts help everyone share the road safely. They make it clear who has right of way.

Signs showing when you must stop, give way or turn are regulatory signs and must be obeyed by law.

Where there are no signs or traffic lights, there are rules for who must give way in different situations.

Stop signs and stop lines

'Stop' signs and 'Stop' lines control traffic at intersections.

A 'Stop' sign is a regulatory sign and must be obeyed by law.



When you approach a 'Stop' sign and 'Stop' line (single unbroken line), you must come to a complete stop. You must stop before the line, and as close as possible to the line.

If there's a 'Stop' sign but no line at an intersection, you must stop before, and as close as possible, to the intersection. At all other places where there's a 'Stop' sign but no line, you must stop before, and as close as possible, to the sign.

There are different rules for giving way at 'Stop' signs and 'Stop' lines at:

- intersections
- railway level crossings
- pedestrian crossings.

At other places with a 'Stop' sign or line, you must give way to any vehicle or pedestrian at or near the sign or line.



You must stop at a 'Stop' sign held by a traffic controller, for example, at roadworks and children's crossings. You must remain at a complete stop until the controller stops showing the sign or signals you can go.



Stop here when traffic lights are not working.



Stop sign ahead.
Slow down.

Some intersections with traffic lights have a 'Stop' sign with three black dots. If the lights are not working or are flashing yellow, you must follow the same rules as for a 'Stop' sign.

The 'Stop sign ahead' sign warns you that you're approaching a 'Stop' sign. You should slow down and prepare to stop.

Give way signs and give way lines

'Give way' signs and 'Give way' lines are used at intersections to control traffic.



A 'Give way' sign is a regulatory sign and must be obeyed by law.

When you approach a 'Give way' sign or 'Give way' line (single broken line), you must slow down and prepare to stop.

There are different rules for giving way at 'Give way' signs and 'Give way' lines at:

- intersections
- narrow bridges and roads
- pedestrian crossings.

At other places with a 'Give way' sign or line, you must give way to any vehicle or pedestrian at or near the sign or line.



Give way sign ahead.
Slow down.

The 'Give way sign ahead' sign warns you that you're approaching a 'Give way' sign. You should slow down and prepare to stop.

Traffic lights

Traffic lights regulate traffic flow and make intersections safer for drivers and pedestrians. You must always obey traffic lights, even when there are no other vehicles on the road or it's late at night.

Stopping at traffic lights



A red light means you must stop. You must stop as close as possible behind the 'Stop' line.



A yellow (amber) light means you must stop. You can only go through a yellow light if you cannot stop safely before the 'Stop' line.

You should not stop suddenly, and you should not speed up to get through a yellow light.



A green light means you can go through the intersection if it's safe to do so.

You must also follow these rules for temporary traffic lights at roadworks.

Turn signals

Some traffic lights have arrows to control traffic turning right or left.



When there's a red right arrow and a green light, you must not turn right. You can go straight ahead or turn left.

A red arrow means you must not turn. You must stop behind the 'Stop' line until the arrow turns green or disappears.



When there's a green right arrow and a red light, you can turn right. You must not go straight ahead or turn left.

A green arrow means you can turn in that direction.



When there's a flashing yellow right arrow, you can turn right as long as you give way to pedestrians.

A yellow (amber) arrow means you must stop. You can only go through a yellow light if you cannot stop safely before the 'Stop' line.

When a yellow (amber) arrow is flashing, this means you can turn in that direction. You must give way to pedestrians crossing the road you're turning into.

See Turning left and right on page 106 for rules for turning when there are no signals.

Turning left on a red light



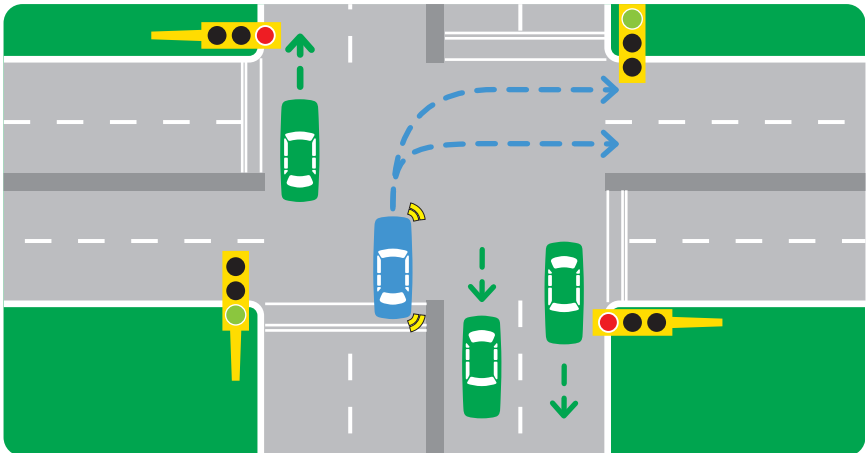
You can turn left on a red light after stopping.

When you see this sign at traffic lights, you must stop at the red light, and then turn left when it's clear. When turning, you must give way to traffic approaching from the right.

Turning right at traffic lights

When there's a green traffic light but no right arrow signal, wait until oncoming traffic clears or breaks, and then turn. If the lights change to yellow or red while you're in the intersection, you must turn right as soon as it's safe to do so.

You must not make a U-turn at traffic lights, unless there's a 'U-turn permitted' sign.



Only turn right at traffic lights when there's a break in the oncoming traffic.

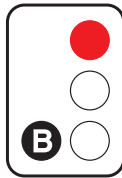
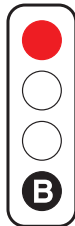
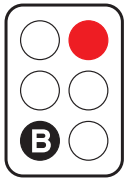
Signals for other vehicles

Buses

Some traffic lights have a 'B' signal for buses driving in a bus lane or bus-only lane. The 'B' signal is usually white on a black background (some traffic lights also have red and yellow 'B' signals).

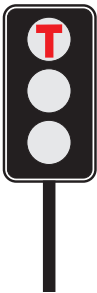
When the 'B' signal lights up, only buses can go through the intersection. This signal lights up shortly before the usual traffic lights change.

When the 'B' signal turns red or yellow, buses must stop at the intersection.



White 'B' means only buses can go through the intersection.

Trams (light rail)



Red 'T' signal means trams must stop at the intersection.

Some traffic lights have a 'T' signal for trams. The 'T' signal is usually white on a black background.

When the 'T' signal lights up, only trams can go through the intersection.

When the 'T' signal turns red or yellow, the tram must stop or prepare to stop.

Bicycle riders



Green bicycle crossing light.

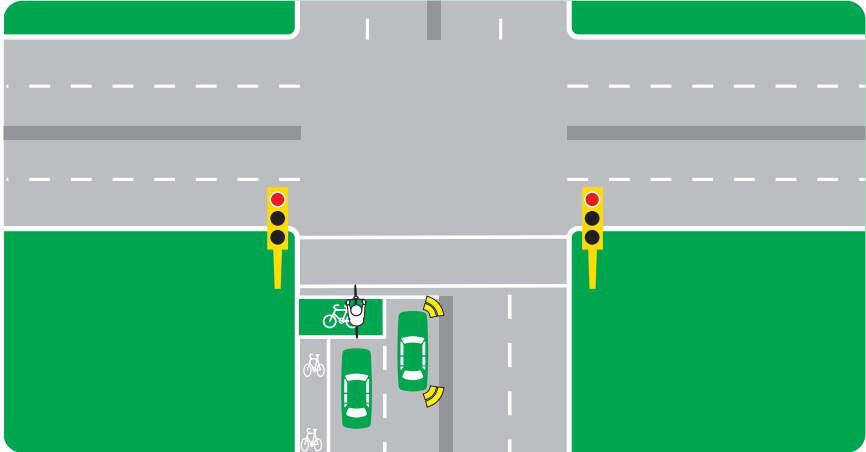


Red bicycle crossing light.

Some traffic lights have bicycle signals for bicycle riders. These signals are used where bicycles are allowed to ride across a pedestrian crossing and also at some intersections.

When the 'Bicycle' symbol turns green, bicycle riders can go through the crossing or intersection. They must stop when the 'Bicycle' symbol turns red.

Vehicles must not stop in the area reserved for bicycles at traffic lights (bicycle storage area).



Bicycle storage area at traffic lights.

Pedestrian signals

Most traffic lights have areas where pedestrians can cross. Red and green pedestrian symbols or lights show them when to cross. Pedestrians must follow these signals.

Some signals have pedestrian countdown timers which show how many seconds a pedestrian has left to cross the road.

When you're turning at an intersection, you must give way to pedestrians crossing the road that you're turning into. Even if the pedestrian symbols or lights are flashing red, you must give way to any pedestrians still crossing.

You must also stop for pedestrians crossing at a pelican crossing.



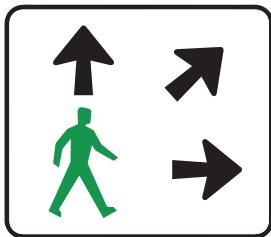
Red pedestrian symbol. Pedestrians must not start to cross.



Flashing red pedestrian symbol. Pedestrians must not start to cross, but can finish crossing.



Green pedestrian symbol. Pedestrians can start to cross.



Pedestrians can walk in any direction when the green pedestrian symbol is showing.



Pedestrian countdown timers show the number of seconds until the lights change.

Red-light speed cameras

Red-light speed cameras detect both red light and speeding offences at high-risk intersections.

The camera detects your vehicle if you cross over the 'Stop' line or enter the intersection after the traffic light has turned red.

The camera also detects your vehicle if you go over the speed limit at any time, whether the traffic light is red, amber or green.

See Speed limits on page 32 to find out more about the rules and penalties for speeding.

Roundabouts

Roundabouts manage the traffic flow at intersections. They move traffic in one direction around a central island. Vehicles can turn left or right, go straight ahead, or make a full turn (U-turn).

When you approach a roundabout, you must slow down or stop to give way to all vehicles already in the roundabout. This means giving way to vehicles already in the roundabout on your right, and vehicles that have entered the roundabout from your left or from directly opposite you.

So other drivers know what you intend to do, you must indicate when turning at a roundabout. Continue to indicate as you turn. When you leave, you must indicate left, if practical. Stop indicating as soon as you have left the roundabout.

On multi-lane roundabouts, you must follow the direction of the arrows or signs on the road.

Roundabout signs

These signs warn you that you're approaching a roundabout.



Roundabout ahead.



Give way to vehicles
on the roundabout.

Turning left

On approach, you must indicate left and turn using the left lane, unless arrows show you can use other lanes to turn left.

You must give way to all vehicles already on the roundabout.

You must continue to indicate left as you turn.



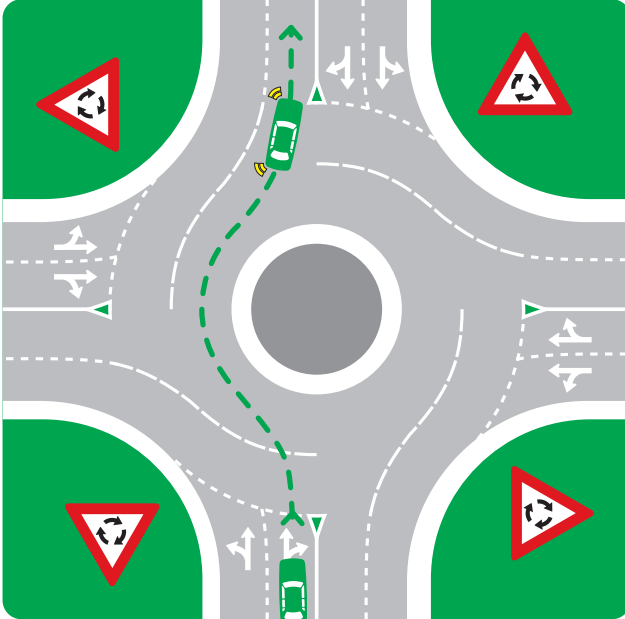
Turning left at a roundabout.

Going straight ahead

On approach, you can use any lane to go straight ahead, unless arrows show the lane is for left or right turns only.

You must give way to all vehicles already on the roundabout.

When you leave, you must indicate left, if practical to do so.



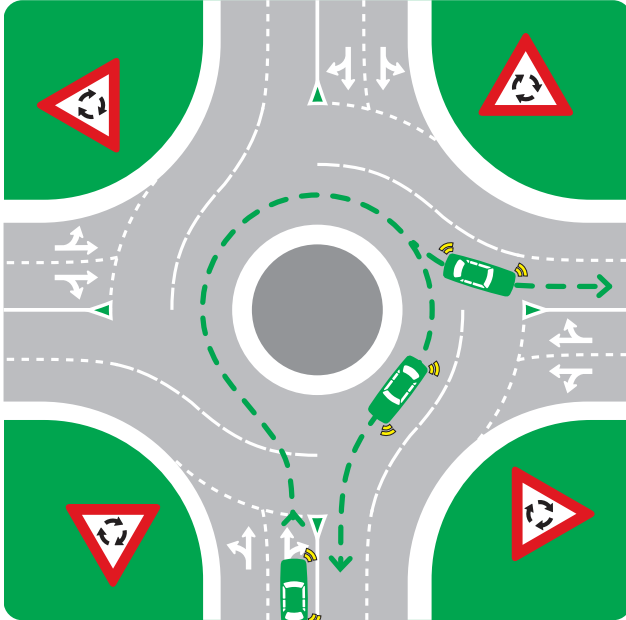
Going straight ahead at a roundabout.

Turning right or making a full turn (U-turn)

On approach, you must indicate right and turn using the right lane, unless arrows show you can use other lanes to turn right.

You must give way to all vehicles already on the roundabout.

You must continue to indicate right as you turn. When you leave, you must indicate left, if practical.



Turning right or making a full turn (U-turn) at a roundabout.

Changing lanes

Plan ahead when approaching a roundabout to avoid changing lanes when you're in the roundabout.

If you need to change lanes, you must indicate and give way to any vehicle in the lane you're moving into.



Changing lanes in a multi-lane roundabout.

You can only change lanes where there's a broken white line. You must not change lanes if the line is unbroken.

Exiting

When exiting a roundabout you must signal left, if it is practical to do so. You must stop indicating as soon as you have exited the roundabout.

When you travel straight ahead on a small single lane roundabout, it may not be practical to indicate left when exiting.



Using a multi-lane roundabout with arrows marked on the road.

Pedestrians and roundabouts

When turning left or right at a roundabout, you do not have to give way to pedestrians unless there's a pedestrian crossing. However, you must always take care to avoid colliding with a pedestrian.

Bicycles and roundabouts

Look out for bicycles on a roundabout. They are entitled to use a full lane.

Bicycle riders must follow the same rules as other drivers on roundabouts. However, on a multi-lane roundabout, they can use the left lane to turn right. When turning, they must give way to vehicles leaving the roundabout.

Look out for bicycles stopped in the left lane who are giving way to vehicles leaving the roundabout.



Bicycle at a roundabout turning right from left lane.

Intersections

Around half of all crashes on NSW roads happen at intersections. You should approach an intersection at a speed that allows you to stop and give way to vehicles in or approaching the intersection.

Look out for motorcycle riders. More than half of all motorcycle crashes involving other vehicles happen at intersections.

Different rules control traffic and make it clear who has right of way at intersections. The rules depend on whether the intersection has:

- 'Stop' signs
- 'Give way' signs
- no signs or lines
- traffic lights
- a roundabout.

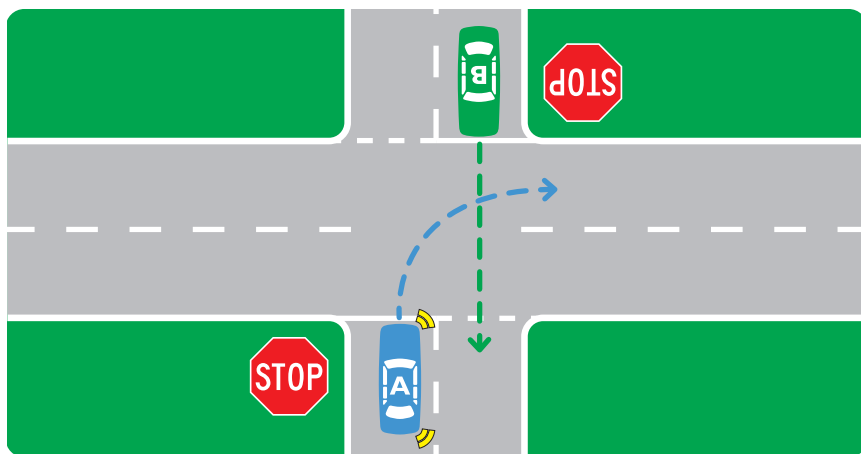
If you see police or a traffic controller at an intersection, you must follow their hand signals and directions.

Stop sign and line at intersections

When you stop at a 'Stop' sign or 'Stop' line, you must give way to vehicles driving in, entering or approaching the intersection except for:

- an oncoming vehicle that's also at a 'Stop' sign or line and is turning right
- an oncoming vehicle that's at a 'Give way' sign or line and is turning right
- a vehicle turning left using a slip lane
- a vehicle making a U-turn.

When you're turning left or right at a 'Stop' sign or line, you must also give way to pedestrians crossing the road that you're turning into.



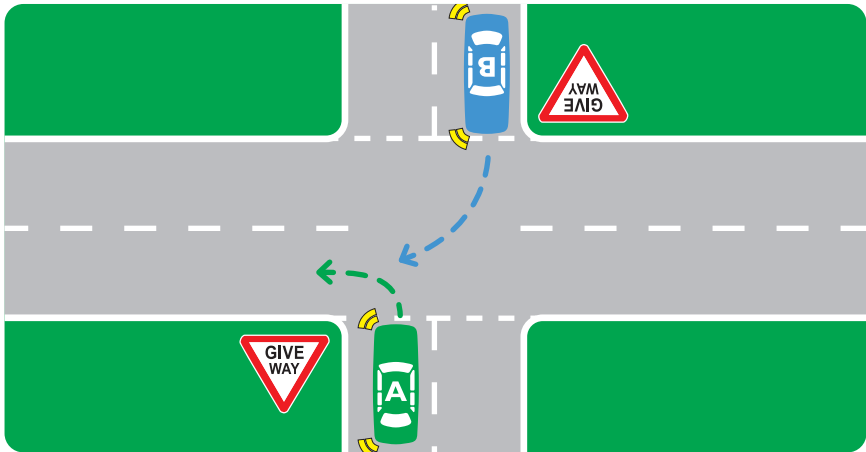
Two cars are at a 'Stop' sign at opposite sides of an intersection. The car turning right (Car A) must give way to the car going straight ahead (Car B).

Give way sign and line at intersections

When you're at a 'Give way' sign or 'Give way' line, you must give way to vehicles driving in, entering or approaching the intersection except for:

- an oncoming vehicle that's also at a 'Give way' sign or line and is turning right
- an oncoming vehicle that's at a 'Stop' sign or line and is turning right
- a vehicle turning left using a slip lane
- a vehicle making a U-turn.

When you're turning left or right at a 'Give way' sign or line, you must also give way to pedestrians crossing the road that you're turning into.



Two cars are at a 'Give way' sign at opposite sides of an intersection. The car turning right (Car B) must give way to the turning left (Car A).

Give way rules at intersections without signs

Some intersections do not have signs, traffic lights or a roundabout. At these intersections, when you turn across another vehicle's path, you must give way to that vehicle.

You must also give way to pedestrians crossing the road that you're turning into.

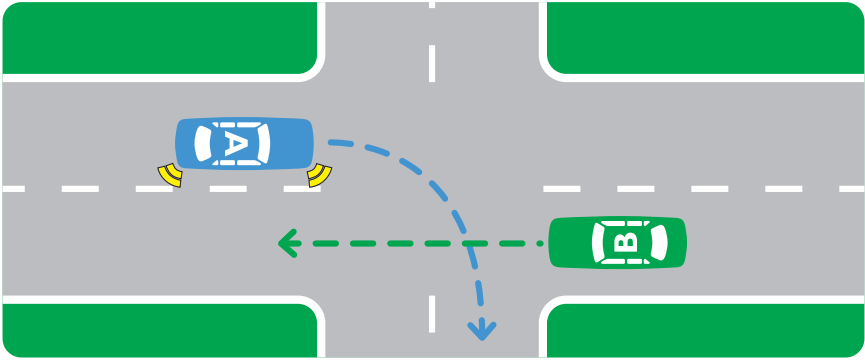
If another driver does not give way to you, do not force them or yourself into a dangerous situation.

Turning right at an intersection

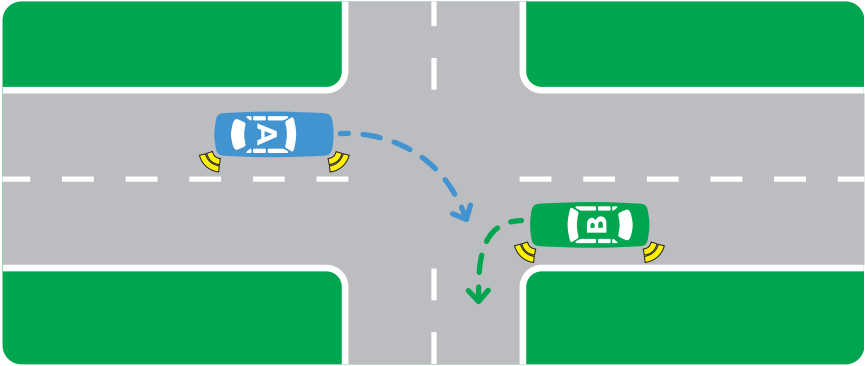
When you're turning right at an intersection without signs, you must give way to:

- a vehicle approaching from the right
- an oncoming vehicle going straight ahead
- an oncoming vehicle turning left
- pedestrians crossing the road you're turning into.

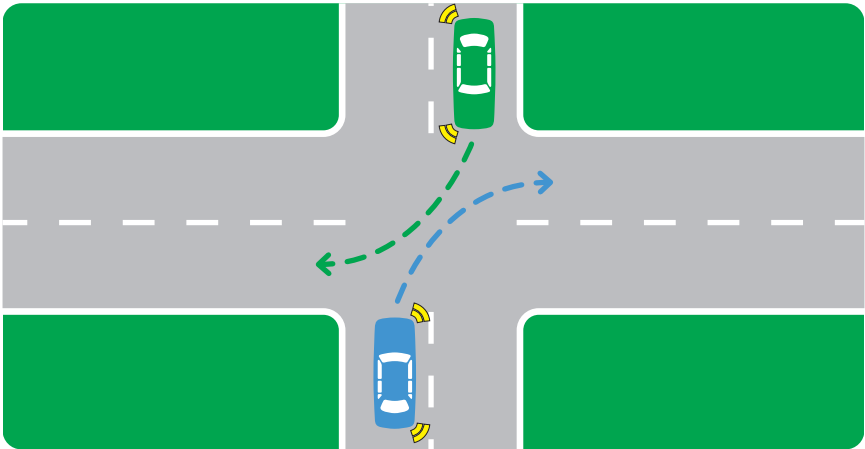
When you and another vehicle are turning right at an intersection, both vehicles can turn at the same time and pass in front of each other.



Two cars are travelling in opposite directions. The car turning right (Car A) must give way to the car going straight ahead (Car B).



Two cars are travelling in opposite directions. The car turning right (Car A) must give way to the car turning left (Car B).

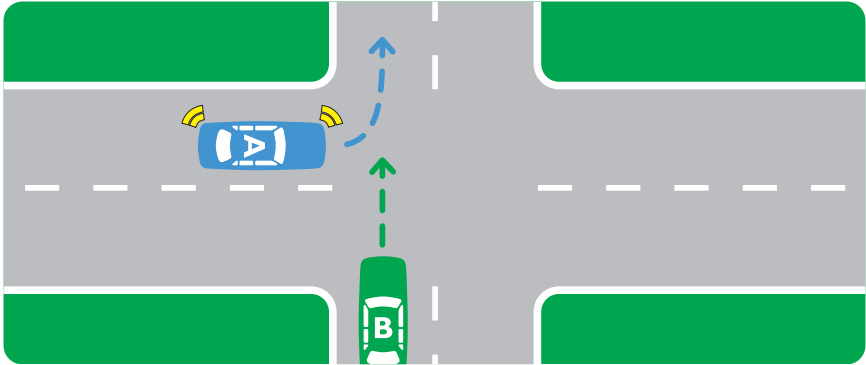


When two cars are at opposite sides of an intersection and are both turning right, they can pass in front of each other while turning.

Turning left at an intersection

When you're turning left at an intersection without signs, you must give way to vehicles on your right. You must also give way to pedestrians crossing the road you're turning into.

See Slip lanes on page 148 for rules for turning left at an intersection with a slip lane.



A car (Car A) is turning left at an intersection and another car (Car B) is travelling straight across the intersection from the right. Car A must give way to Car B.

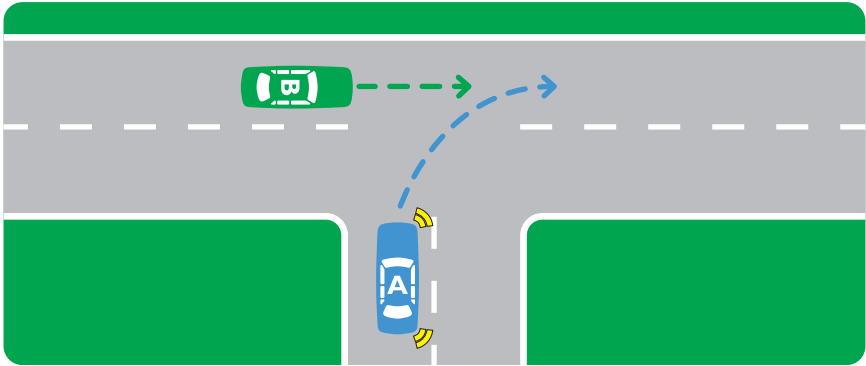
T-intersections



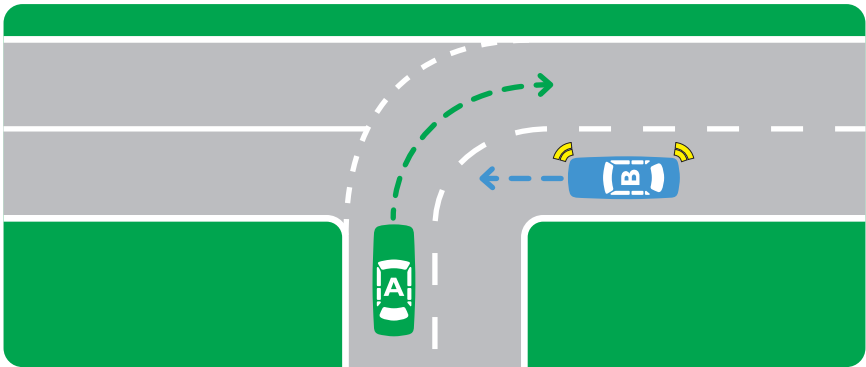
You're approaching a T-intersection.

If you're driving on a road that ends at a T-intersection, you must give way to all vehicles driving on the continuing road, unless a sign says otherwise.

If you're turning right from the continuing road, you must give way to oncoming vehicles on the continuing road going straight ahead or vehicles turning left at the intersection. This is also the rule for T-intersections where the continuing road goes around a corner, rather than straight.



The car turning right from the road ending at a T-intersection (Car A) must give way to the car going straight ahead on the continuing road (Car B).

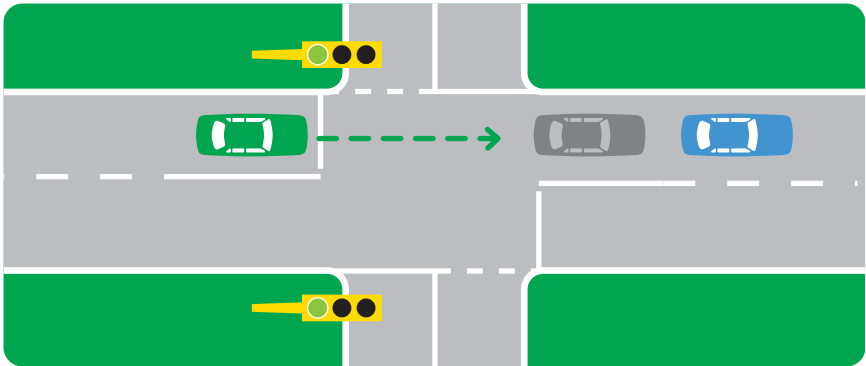


At a T-intersection where the continuing road goes around a corner, the car leaving the continuing road (Car B) must give way to the oncoming car on the continuing road (Car A).

Keeping intersections clear

You must not enter an intersection unless there's space for your vehicle in your lane on the other side of the intersection. This includes all intersections and crossings, including intersections with traffic lights, railway level crossings and pedestrian crossings.

Some intersections and roads have 'Keep clear' markings on the road. You must not stop in a 'Keep clear' area.



Keep intersection clear at all times.

Turning left and right

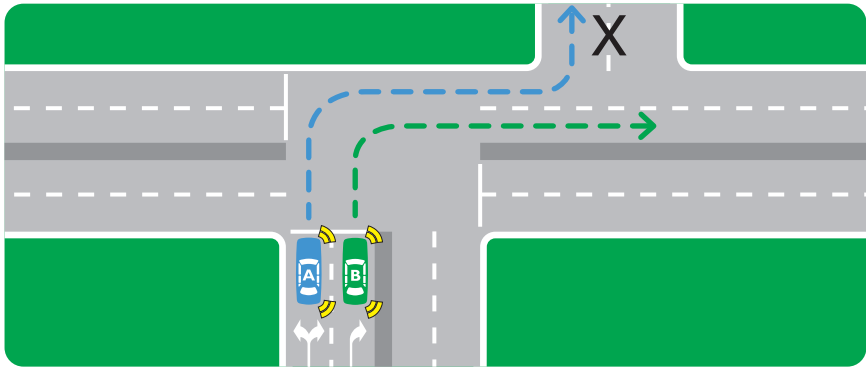
Before turning, you should always check for other vehicles on your left and right. You must always give way to pedestrians crossing the road you're turning into.

Signs showing where you must or must not turn or enter are regulatory signs and must be obeyed by law.

See Intersections on page 98 for the rules for giving way when turning at intersections. See Traffic lights on page 85 for rules when turning at traffic lights.

Plan ahead when turning

Plan your turns early so you're in the correct lane or part of the road and have enough time to indicate.



When a car (Car A) is turning right and then wants to turn immediately left (into the road marked X), it should turn right from the left lane.

If necessary, you can drive on, across, or outside edge lines for up to 100m when turning left or right.

You must follow the lane lines when turning. If there are no lines, you should stay in the same lane while you turn.

Turning left

When making a left turn, you must:

- indicate left
- move close to the left side of the road
- keep to the left side of the road you're turning into
- use a slip lane where there's one.

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



When you see a 'No left turn' sign, you must not turn left.



When you're driving in the left lane and you see a 'Left lane must turn left' sign, you must turn left.



The 'Left only' sign means you must turn left.

Turning right

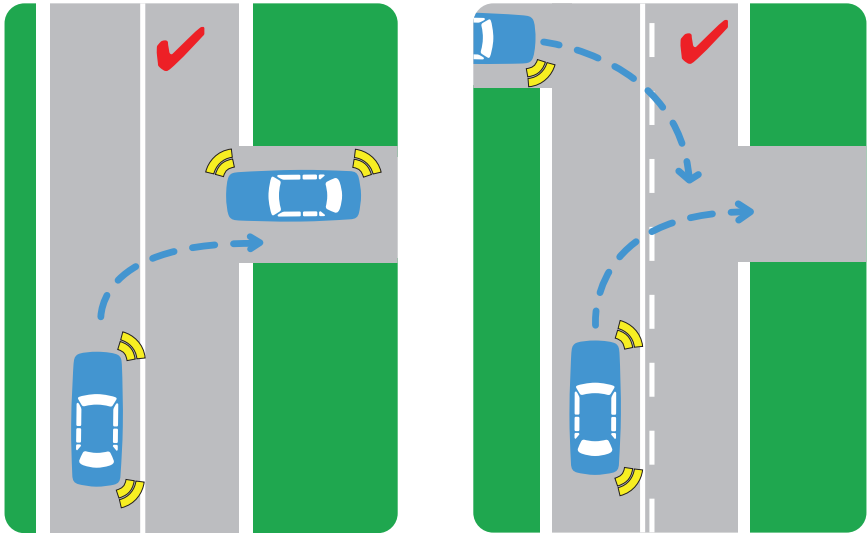
When making a right turn, you must:

- indicate right
- follow any road markings for turning, such as lane lines and painted arrows
- move as close as possible to the dividing line on the road you're turning from
- stay in the same lane as you turn from one road to another.

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

You can turn right across any type of dividing line to enter or leave a road, or a road-related area such as a driveway or car park.

Before you turn right, your front wheels and car should face straight ahead so they do not block oncoming traffic.



You can cross a single or double dividing line when entering or leaving a road.



When you see a 'No right turn' sign, you must not turn right or make a U-turn.

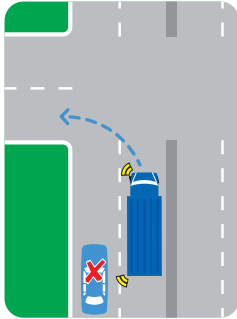


When you're driving in the right lane and you see a 'Right lane must turn right' sign, you must turn right.



The 'Right only' sign means you must turn right.

Long and oversize vehicles



Stay behind heavy vehicles that are turning.

Some oversize or long vehicles have a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign. These vehicles may use more than one lane when turning right or left.

Do not put your vehicle in the path of a large, heavy vehicle when it's turning – you may be crushed. It's safest to stay behind and wait until the vehicle has completed the turn.

See Overtaking on page 124 for rules about overtaking long vehicles with a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign.

No entry

When you see the 'No entry' sign, you must not turn into or enter the road.



You must not drive beyond the sign.

The 'No bicycles' sign means that bicycle riders must not ride beyond the sign.



Bicycles and hook turns



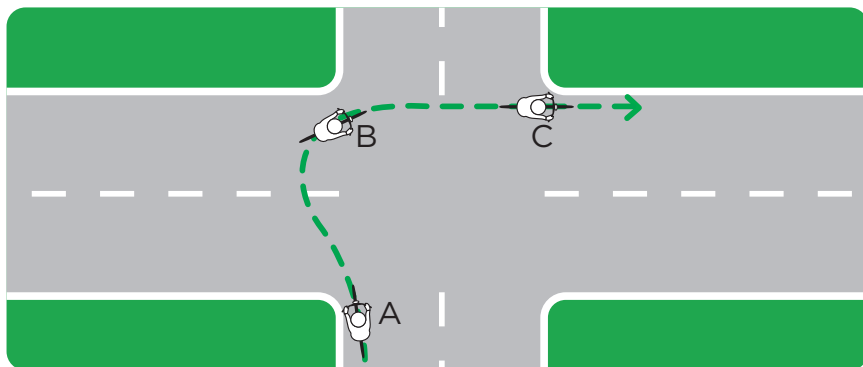
Bicycles can use a hook turn to turn right. This means they use the left lane to turn right.

When doing a hook turn, a bicycle rider must:

- approach the intersection from the far left side
- keep to the far left side while entering the intersection
- keep clear of any marked pedestrian crossing
- give way to vehicles approaching from their right
- if there are traffic lights, stay to the left side and wait until the light changes to green.

As a driver, you must take care to avoid colliding with bicycles turning at intersections.

Bicycle riders must give a hand signal when turning right. However, they do not have to give a hand signal when making a hook turn to turn right.



The bicycle rider waits at the far left side of the road. (A)

The bicycle rider keeps to the far left as they turn. (B)

The bicycle rider turns when it's safe. (C)

U-turns and three-point turns

You should take extra care when making a U-turn or a three-point turn.

Before you turn, indicate and check your mirrors and blind spots to make sure there's no traffic approaching from any direction.

After you turn, check your mirrors and blind spots again, indicate, and only pull out when it's clear and safe.

U-turns

You must not make a U-turn:

- at intersections without traffic lights where there's a 'No U-turn' sign
- at intersections with traffic lights, unless there's a 'U-turn permitted' sign
- across a single unbroken dividing line or double unbroken dividing line
- across double dividing lines with an unbroken line closer to you
- on motorways and freeways.

The 'No U-turn' sign is a regulatory sign and must be obeyed by law.



You must not make a U-turn.



You can make a U-turn at traffic lights where this sign is displayed.

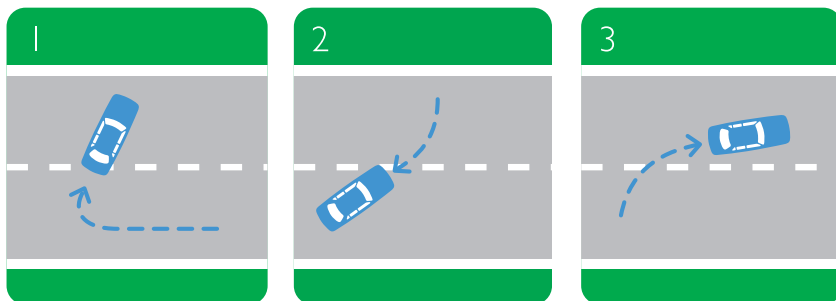
When making a U-turn, you must:

- have a clear view of approaching traffic
- start your U-turn from the marked lane nearest to the centre of the road
- start your U-turn to the left of the centre of the road if there are no lane markings
- make the turn without obstructing traffic
- give way to vehicles and pedestrians
- indicate before you start to turn.

Three-point turn

You can do a three-point turn when a road is not wide enough to do a U-turn. It's called a three-point turn because you usually need to do at least three turns to face the opposite direction.

A three-point turn generally takes longer to do than a U-turn. When you're in heavy traffic or on a busy road, it's safer to drive around the block or use a roundabout to turn around.



A three-point turn usually involves at least three turns.

Indicating

Indicating (also called signalling) is when you use your indicator to warn other drivers that you intend to move left or right, for example, when you turn, overtake or change lanes.

Plan your turns, lane changes and moves early so you're in the correct lane and have enough time to indicate. Always check for other vehicles by looking in your mirrors and checking your blind spots.

When to indicate

You must indicate before you:

- turn right or left
- move to the right or left
- make a U-turn or three-point turn
- change lanes, including when overtaking
- merge with another lane
- pull over to stop or park
- pull out from the side of the road
- turn right or left at a roundabout
- go straight ahead at a T-intersection where the continuing road curves to the right or left
- leave a roundabout, if practical.

Make sure your indicator is turned off after each turn or lane change.

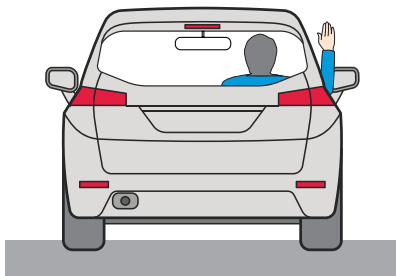
Before pulling out from the side of the road or a parking area, you must indicate for at least 5 seconds.

Hand signals

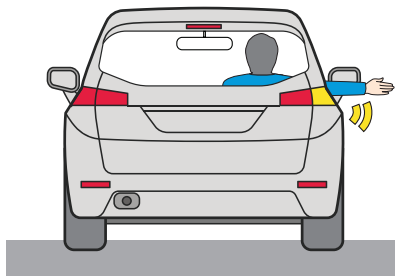
If your vehicle is fitted with indicators, they must be working and clearly visible. If they're not working, you can get a Defect Notice.

If your indicators are not working or not clearly visible or your vehicle is not fitted with them, you must give a hand signal when turning right or stopping.

Bicycle riders must give a hand signal when turning right.



Extend your arm to the right and bend at the elbow to signal you're stopping.



Extend your arm to the right to signal you're turning right.

Pedestrian crossings

You must give way to pedestrians crossing at a pedestrian crossing.

Pedestrian crossings are marked by signs and lines on the road. There are different types of pedestrian crossings, each with different rules for drivers.

When approaching a pedestrian crossing, you should drive at a speed that allows you to slow down and stop before the crossing.

If children or elderly people are crossing, you may need to give them extra time to cross.

Always slow down and prepare to give way to pedestrians.

Pedestrian crossing lines and signs



Pedestrian crossing.

Pedestrian crossings are usually marked by white parallel stripes on the road. They can also have a yellow sign showing a pair of legs.

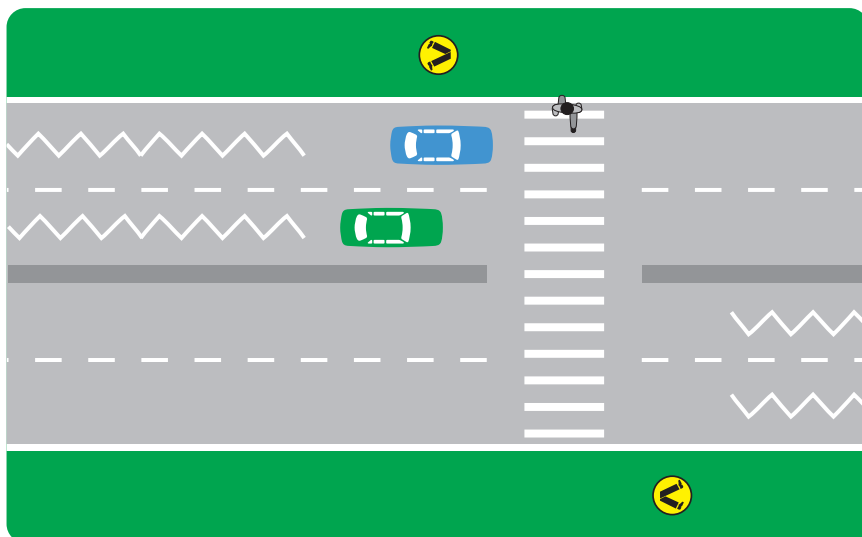
Pedestrian crossings are also called zebra crossings.



Pedestrian crossing ahead.

Some pedestrian crossings have signs warning you that you're approaching a crossing.

Zig-zag lines are sometimes marked on the road leading up to pedestrian crossings. These lines increase visibility and warn you that you're approaching a crossing.



Pedestrian crossing with zig-zag lines.

At a pedestrian crossing:

- you must give way to pedestrians crossing
- you must not overtake a vehicle that's stopping or has stopped to give way to pedestrians who are crossing
- you must not drive onto the crossing if the road ahead is blocked.

If there's a 'Stop' sign close to the crossing, you must stop at the sign, even if you just stopped at the crossing.

Pelican crossings

A pelican crossing is a pedestrian crossing with traffic lights. Pedestrians push the button when they want to cross.

Most pelican crossings have the same lights and pedestrian signals as normal traffic lights. You must stop at a red light and give way to pedestrians crossing the road.

Some pelican crossings have a different colour sequence for the traffic lights. After the red light, a yellow (amber) light flashes for vehicles and a red pedestrian signal flashes for pedestrians.

When the yellow light starts flashing, you can drive through the crossing if there are no pedestrians.

Children's crossings

Children's crossings are part-time crossings. They usually operate during school zone hours, and at other approved times and locations.

When a children's crossing is operating it's marked by red-orange flags at both sides. When you see the flags, you must slow down and stop before the white stripes or 'Stop' line to give way to pedestrians. You must remain at a complete stop until all pedestrians have left the crossing.

If the flags are not displayed, it's not operating as a children's crossing.

Some children's crossings are combined with a pedestrian crossing. When the flags are displayed, children's crossing rules apply. When the flags are removed, pedestrian crossing rules apply.



Flag at a children's crossing.

School Crossing Supervisors

Some children's crossings are controlled by School Crossing Supervisors. When you see a supervisor holding a 'Stop – children crossing' sign, you must slow down and stop.

You must remain at a complete stop until:

- all pedestrians have left the crossing, and
- the School Crossing Supervisor is no longer showing the sign.

High pedestrian activity areas



Children may be crossing ahead.

Some areas have more pedestrians than others, such as shopping strips and near schools, parks or swimming pools.

These areas may have a lower speed limit and signs warning you to look out for pedestrians.

When you see these signs, you should prepare to slow down.

Pedestrian refuges



Pedestrians may be crossing ahead.

A pedestrian refuge is an island in the middle of the road. The island allows pedestrians to cross the road in two stages.

Pedestrian refuges have signs to warn you to slow down and look out for pedestrians.

Railway level crossings

Railway level crossings can be dangerous. Trains are fast and heavy and cannot stop quickly.



Level crossing sign.

When approaching a level crossing, always slow down and look and listen for trains. You must not drive onto a level crossing while a train is approaching or if the road on the other side of the crossing is blocked.

Level crossing warning signs

Most level crossings have signs to warn you that you're approaching a crossing.



Level crossing with flashing lights ahead.



Level crossing ahead.



Level crossing on side road.

Queuing on level crossings

You must not block a level crossing. Know the length of your vehicle and never cross unless your vehicle can clear the track completely.

Parking near level crossings

You must not stop or park on a level crossing or within 20m of either side of a crossing.

Stopping at level crossings

You must stop at a level crossing when:

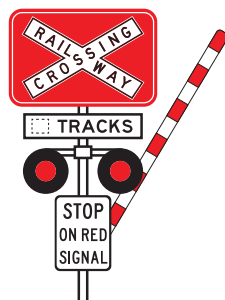
- there's a 'Stop' sign
- a gate is closed or boom gate is down
- red lights are flashing
- a railway employee signals you to stop.



Level crossing sign with stop sign.



Stop if the red lights are flashing.



Stop if the boom gate is closed or is opening or closing.



Give way at the level crossing, be prepared to stop.

When there's a 'Give way' sign at a level crossing, you must slow down, look both ways and stop if a train is coming.

You must not drive through a level crossing until the signals have stopped flashing and the gates or boom gates are fully open. If you have stopped at a 'Stop' or 'Give way' sign at the crossing, do not drive through until it's safe.

Level crossings without signals

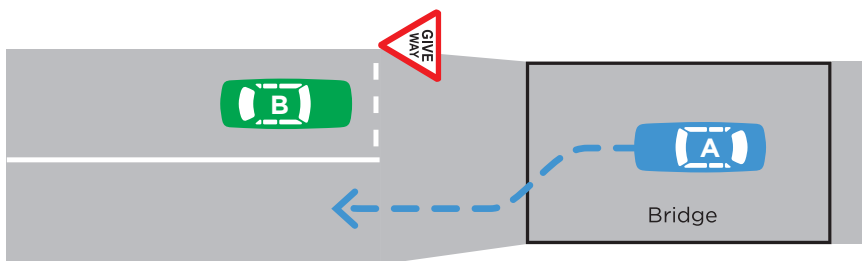
Take extra care where there are no gates, boom gates or flashing lights at a crossing, particularly in the country.

When you see a warning sign, slow down and look and listen for trains in both directions.

If you stop for one train, always check that another one is not approaching before you drive through.

Narrow bridges and roads

When you approach a narrow bridge or a narrow road with a 'Give way' sign, you must slow down and prepare to stop. You must give way to vehicles approaching from the opposite direction.



Car B must give way to Car A on a bridge.

If there's no 'Give way' sign, you should still give way to approaching vehicles.

Look out for oversize vehicles as they may drive down the centre of a bridge and take up more than one lane. Be prepared to stop and wait for the vehicle to exit the bridge.



Narrow bridge.



Narrow bridge ahead.



Road narrows ahead.

One-way streets

'One way' and 'Two way' signs are regulatory signs and must be obeyed by law.

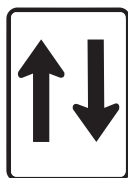
When you see a 'One way' sign, you must only drive in the direction shown by the arrow on the sign.

When turning right from a one-way street, you must turn from the far right side of the road.

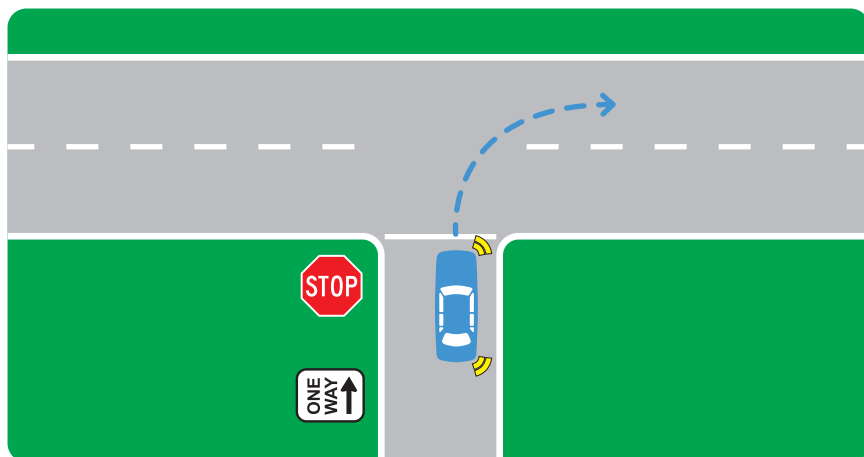
When you see a 'Two way' sign, the road has lanes travelling in both directions and you can drive in either direction.



You can only travel in the direction of the arrow.



Lanes travelling in opposite directions.



Keep to the right when turning right from a one-way street.

Overtaking and merging

Take care when overtaking, changing lanes and merging. If you have any doubts, wait until it's safer.

Before overtaking, changing lanes or merging, always check your mirrors and blind spots. Especially look out for motorcycle riders, bicycle riders and large vehicles. Make sure you indicate to let others know your intention.

Always give other vehicles enough room to overtake, merge or change lanes.

Overtaking

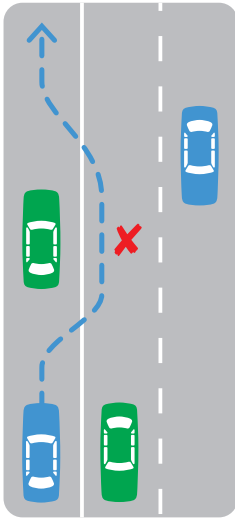
Be careful when overtaking. You need to accurately judge the space you need to pass another vehicle safely. If you have any doubts, wait until it's safer.

Before overtaking, always check your mirrors and blind spots. Motorcycles and bicycles can also be easily hidden behind another vehicle.

When you must not overtake

You must not overtake another vehicle:

- across an unbroken dividing line (single or double)
- when you do not have a clear view of approaching traffic, for example, before a crest or curve or if you have limited visibility
- when a vehicle is stopping or has stopped at a pedestrian crossing, intersection or railway crossing
- where a road narrows.



You must not cross a single unbroken line to overtake.



You must not cross double unbroken lines to overtake.

Overtaking safely

The faster a vehicle is travelling, the more distance and time you need to overtake.

Before overtaking another vehicle:

- Check the road ahead is clear, with enough distance for you to safely overtake.
- Check side streets and other lanes to make sure nothing will enter your overtaking space.
- Check mirrors and blind spots for motorcycles and other vehicles.
- Indicate to warn other drivers you intend to overtake.

When overtaking:

- Stay under the speed limit.
- Make sure there's room to move back into the lane (you should be able to see the vehicle in your rear vision mirror).
- Indicate when you move back into your lane.



You can cross a single broken line to overtake if the road ahead is clear.



You can cross a double line with a broken line closer to you to overtake if the road ahead is clear.



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

When you're being overtaken

You must not increase your speed when the other vehicle is crossing a dividing line or the centre of the road to overtake you.

When being overtaken, you should:

- stay in your lane
- keep left
- allow room for the overtaking vehicle to pass and move back into the lane.

Overtaking on the left

The only time you can overtake on the left is when the vehicle you're overtaking is:

- waiting to turn right or make a U-turn from the centre of the road
- stopped
- travelling on a multi-lane road.

To overtake a vehicle turning right or making a U-turn from the centre of the road, you can:

- use the left lane
- drive on, across or outside edge lines for up to 100m
- drive in a bus lane, transit lane or truck lane for a maximum of 100m
- drive in a bicycle lane or tram lane for a maximum of 50m.

Keep left unless overtaking

KEEP LEFT UNLESS OVERTAKING

On a road where there's a 'Keep left unless overtaking' sign or a speed limit of 80km/h or more, you must not drive in the right lane, unless you're:

- overtaking
- turning right
- making a U-turn
- not turning left and there's a 'Left lane must turn left' sign or traffic lights with a left arrow signal
- avoiding an obstruction
- driving in traffic that's stopped or travelling slowly in the left lane
- driving a bus or a truck and the right lane is for buses or trucks only
- overtaking a slow vehicle making a left turn.

Overtaking long vehicles

LONG VEHICLE

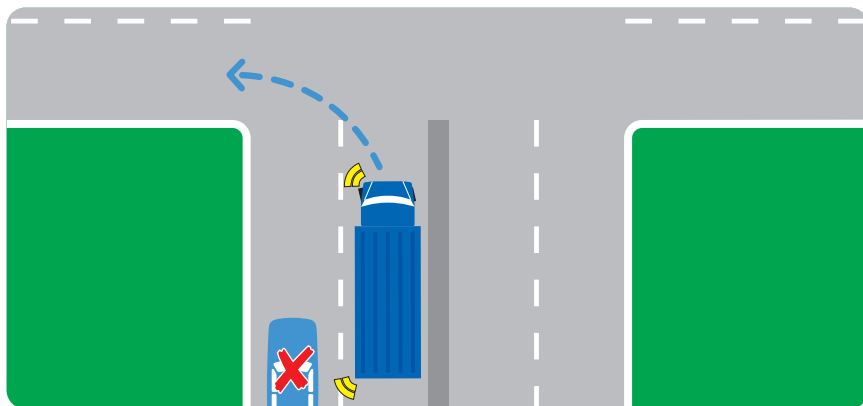
A long vehicle is longer than a normal vehicle.

OVERSIZE

An oversize vehicle is wider, longer and/or higher than a normal vehicle.

You should take extreme care when overtaking long or oversize vehicles such as a truck or bus or a vehicle towing a caravan or trailer. You should allow more time to pass and make sure you can see the road ahead.

Some long vehicles have a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign. These vehicles may use more than one lane when turning right or left.



Do not overtake to the left of a long vehicle which is turning left.

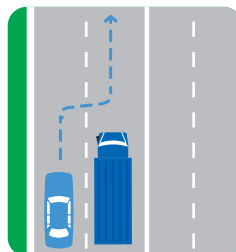
When a vehicle displays a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign, you must not:

- overtake on the left when the vehicle is turning left
- overtake on the right when the vehicle is turning right, unless it's safe to do so.

When a vehicle displays a 'Do not overtake turning vehicle' sign, you must not overtake on the left, unless it's safe to do so and:

- you're driving on a multi-lane road
- the vehicle is stationary
- the vehicle is turning right or making a U-turn.

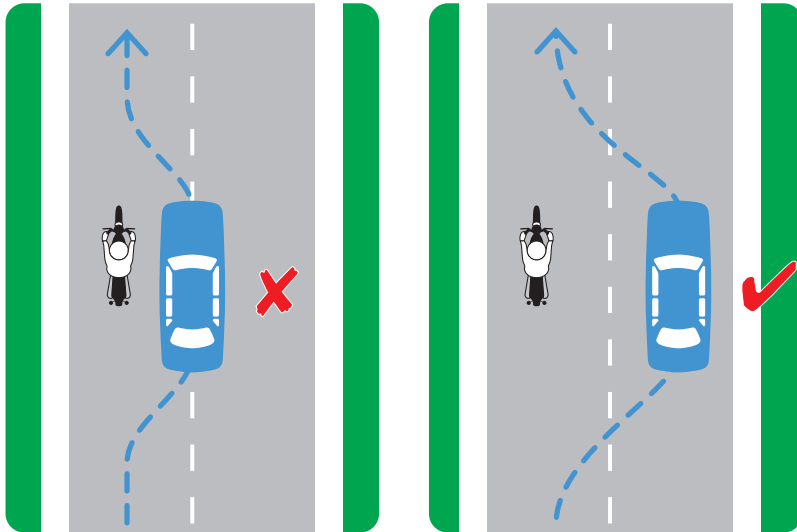
DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE



Overtake a long vehicle on the left when it's safe to do so and when on a multi-lane road.

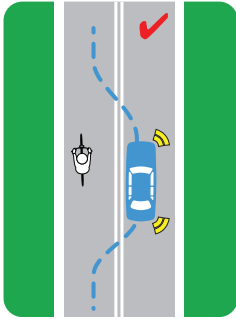
Overtaking motorcycles

When overtaking a motorcycle, follow the same rules and give them as much space as a car.



Give motorcycles plenty of room when overtaking.

Overtaking bicycles



You can cross double dividing lines when overtaking a bicycle.

When overtaking bicycles, you must allow a distance between you and the rider of at least:

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

To overtake a bicycle, you should have a clear view of approaching traffic. Only overtake if it's safe to do so. If necessary, when overtaking a bicycle you can:

- drive to the right of the centre of the road
- cross or straddle dividing lines (broken or unbroken, single or double)
- drive on flat painted islands and median strips.

Bicycles can overtake a vehicle on the left.

Overtaking on bridges



When there's a 'No overtaking or passing' sign on a bridge, you:

- must give way to vehicles approaching in the opposite direction
- must not overtake any vehicle travelling in the same direction.

Merging and changing lanes

Always check your mirrors and blind spots when changing or merging lanes. Especially look out for motorcycles and bicycles.

You must indicate to let others know when you plan to move into another lane. Make sure your indicator is off after you've merged or changed lanes.

Changing lanes

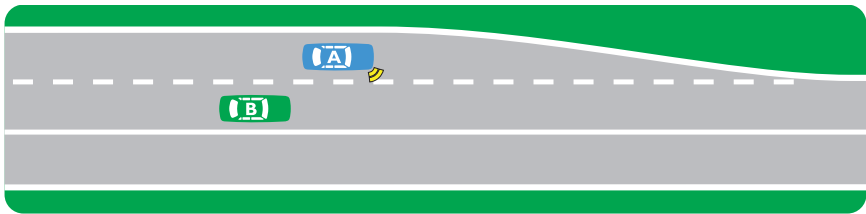
When changing lanes, you must give way to vehicles in the lane you're moving into.

Changing lanes when a lane ends

When the lane you're driving in is ending and you need to cross a broken line to move into another lane, you must give way to vehicles already in that lane – for example, when you're joining a motorway.

Slow down and look for a suitable gap so you can change lanes safely.

If a vehicle is moving into your lane, you should leave a suitable gap.



When a car is crossing a broken line to change into another lane (Car A), it must give way to vehicles already in that lane (Car B).

When a bus changes lanes

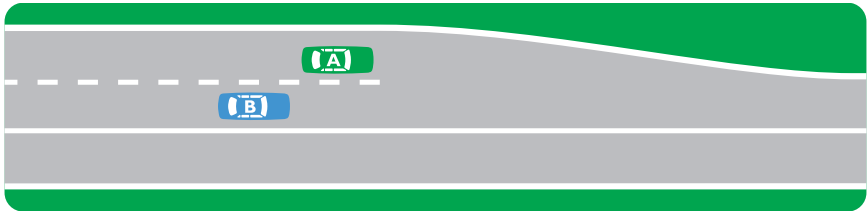


You must give way to a bus displaying a 'Give way to buses' sign when you're driving in the left lane or line of traffic and the bus:

- has stopped or is moving slowly at the far left side of the road
- is indicating right, and
- is about to move in front of you.

Merging lanes

When you're driving on a road and the number of lanes or lines of traffic reduces and there are no longer any road markings, you must give way to the vehicle that's ahead of you. This is called a zipper merge.



When two lanes reduce to one lane, the car trailing behind (Car B) must give way to the car ahead (Car A).

Motorways and freeways

A motorway (also referred to as a freeway or expressway) is usually a high-speed road with more than one lane in each direction.

Bicycles can travel on motorways, unless a sign says they must not.

Before driving on a freeway, make sure your vehicle has enough fuel, oil and water and the correct tyre pressure.

Joining a motorway



This sign shows the start of a motorway.

Generally, when you join a motorway, the lane you're driving in ends and you need to cross a broken line to move into a lane on the motorway.

You must give way to vehicles already in that lane.

Slow down, check your mirrors and blind spots, and look for a suitable gap so you can change lanes safely.

Ramp metering signals



Sign at ramp metering signals on a motorway.

Some motorways have ramp metering signals to help you join the motorway. These are quick-change traffic lights that manage the flow of vehicles entering the motorway. A sign at the start of the ramp shows if the signals are on.

The green signal only stays green long enough for the first vehicle in each lane to join the motorway. When the signal is red, you must stop behind the 'Stop' line.



You must stop at a red ramp metering signal on a motorway.

Driving on a motorway

When driving on a motorway with a speed limit of 80km/h or more and two or more lanes, you must not drive in the right lane, unless:

- overtaking
- avoiding an obstruction
- the traffic in each lane is congested
- a sign says you can.

You must not make a U-turn or reverse your vehicle on a motorway.

Always keep a safe stopping distance between you and the vehicle in front. Take extra care when vehicles are joining the motorway as this can change your crash avoidance space.

Some motorways have overhead signals that show the speed limit or direct you to change lanes. These signals improve traffic flow, ease congestion, manage incident response and improve road safety.

Speed limit signals



Some motorways have overhead electronic speed limit signs (called variable speed limit signs) that show the speed limit. You must not drive over the speed limit shown.

Lane-use signals

Some motorways have overhead lane-use signals. You must follow these signals.



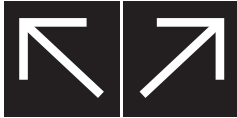
Left and right
lane-merge signals.

A lane-merge signal shows a white arrow pointing to the bottom left or right of the signal. This warns you that you're approaching a hazard. You must change lanes in the direction of the arrow.



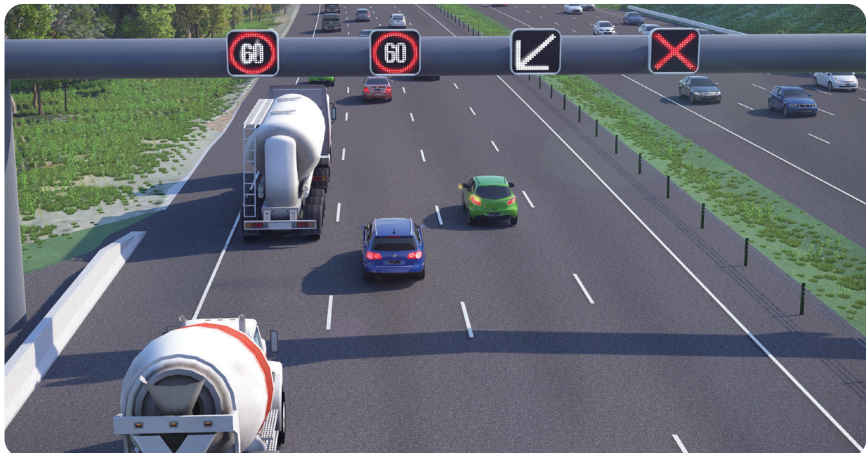
Closed-lane signals
on a motorway.

A closed-lane signal shows a red cross. This signal is a warning that the lane is closed and you're approaching a hazard. You must not drive in this lane.



Left and right
lane-exit signals.

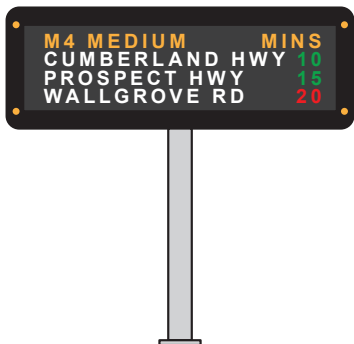
A lane-exit signal shows a white arrow pointing to the upper left or right of the signal. This warns you that the road ahead is closed and the next exit is a detour. You must change lanes in the direction of the arrow.



Left lane merge and closed-lane signals. You must not drive in the right lane. If you're in the second lane from the right, you must change lanes to the left.

Driver information signs

Some roads have large electronic information signs (called variable message signs). These signs show information such as travel times and changes to traffic conditions – for example, ramp closures and road conditions.



Variable message sign showing travel times.

Stopping on a motorway

You must not stop or park on a motorway, unless in an emergency – for example, to avoid a crash or if you’ve broken down.

If you have to stop, move to the emergency stopping lane.

Leaving a motorway



The motorway is ending.



Exit from a motorway.



An exit to the motorway is coming.

Signs show you when you can exit a motorway and when it's ending.

When exiting a motorway, you should:

- move to the lane closest to the exit in plenty of time
- reduce your speed
- indicate before you exit.

If you miss your exit, continue driving and take the next exit.

Motorway signs show the alpha-numeric numbering for significant national and interstate routes:

- 'M' – motorways of national significance, for example, M2.
- 'A' – routes of national significance.
- 'B' – routes of state significance.

Toll roads



You can pay the toll by electronic tag or electronic pass.

You must pay a toll to drive on some motorways. If you do not pay, you get sent a toll notice. Signs warn you when there's a toll.

Road lanes, lines and markings

Road lanes, lines and other markings guide traffic and help keep road users safe. You need to know what these lanes, lines and markings mean to drive safely.

They help you understand where you can and cannot go on the road. For example, where to stop, keep left or turn right, or which lane you should be in.

Road lanes separate the traffic. You should keep in the middle of the lane when you're driving. Where there are no lanes marked or if you're approaching the top of a hill, keep to the left side of the road. Look out for lanes dedicated to bicycles, buses, trams and trucks.

Road lines and markings

White dividing lines

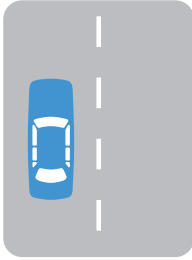
White dividing lines separate vehicles travelling in opposite directions.

Generally, you must always drive to the left of dividing lines, whether they're single or double, broken or unbroken.

You can cross a white dividing line to avoid an obstruction if:

- you have a clear view of approaching traffic
- it's necessary and reasonable
- you can do so safely.

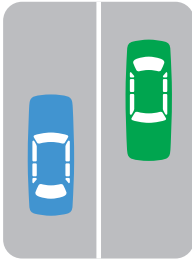
Single dividing line



Single broken dividing line.

You can cross a single broken dividing line to:

- overtake another vehicle
- make a U-turn
- enter or leave the road
- angle park on the opposite side of the road (without making a U-turn).

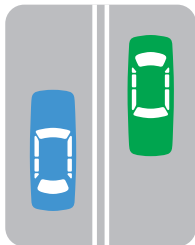


Single unbroken dividing line.

You can cross a single unbroken dividing line to:

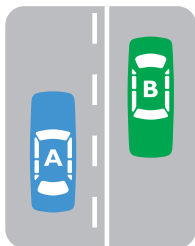
- enter or leave the road
- angle park on the opposite side of the road (without making a U-turn).

Double dividing line



Double unbroken dividing line.

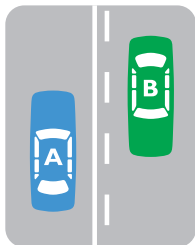
You can cross double unbroken lines to enter or leave the road by the shortest route.



Double line with a broken line closer to Car A.

You can cross double lines with a broken line close to you to:

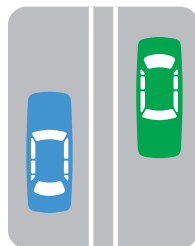
- overtake another vehicle
- make a U-turn
- enter or leave the road
- angle park on the opposite side of the road (without making a U-turn).



Double line with an unbroken line closer to Car B.

You can cross double lines with an unbroken line closer to you to:

- enter or leave the road
- angle park on the opposite side of the road (without making a U-turn).



Wide centrelines.

Some roads have wide centrelines that are up to 1.5m apart. They increase the distance between oncoming lanes of traffic to help prevent head-on crashes. The road rules for wide centrelines are the same as for other dividing lines.

Edge lines

Edge lines mark the edge of the road to help you see where you're going. They also help to keep vehicles off soft road edges and out of breakdown lanes.

Edge lines can be broken or unbroken.

There are rules for overtaking and turning near edge lines.



Unbroken edge line.

Rumble strips

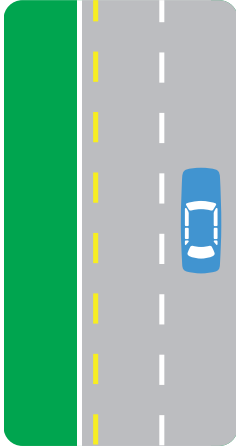
Rumble strips are raised pieces of material on or near edge lines or dividing lines. When you drive over them they make a rumbling sound and your vehicle vibrates to warn you that you're leaving your lane.

When your wheels run over edge lines or rumble strips, slow down and ease back onto the road.

Yellow kerb lines

Yellow kerb lines painted near the edge of the road show there are stopping restrictions.

Broken kerb line (clearway)

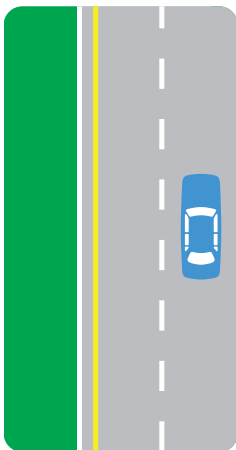


Clearway kerb lines.

A broken kerb line marks a clearway. You must not stop in a clearway between the hours shown on the sign, except in an emergency.

See Restricted parking on page 160 for clearway parking rules.

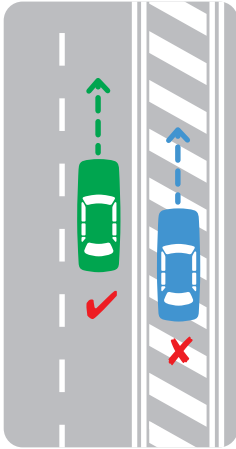
Unbroken kerb line (no stopping)



No stopping
kerb lines.

An unbroken kerb line means you must not stop here, except in an emergency.

Painted islands



You must not drive or stop on a painted island that's surrounded by double lines.

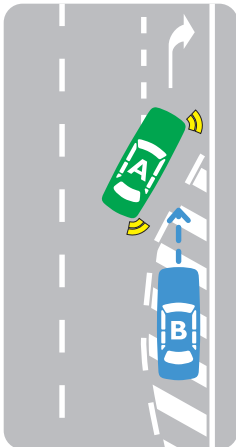
A painted island is a striped section of road surrounded by double or single lines.

You can drive on a painted island surrounded by single broken or unbroken lines for up to 50m to:

- enter or leave the road
- enter a turning lane that begins immediately after the painted island
- angle park on the opposite side of the road (without making a U-turn).

You must not drive on a painted island that:

- separates 2 lines of traffic travelling in the same direction,
- is surrounded by double lines, or
- separates the road from a slip lane.



The car entering a turning lane from a painted island (Car B) must give way to the car already in the turning lane (Car A).

When you enter a turning lane from a painted island, you must give way to any vehicle:

- already in the turning lane, or
- entering the turning lane from another lane.

Traffic islands

A traffic island is a raised area on a road to direct traffic.

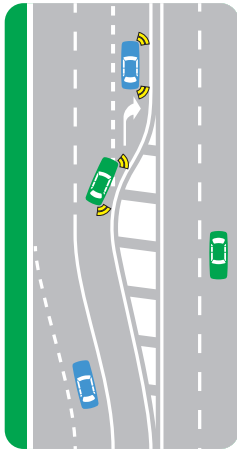
You must not drive on a traffic island, unless it's designed for vehicles to drive on it.

Median strips

A median strip is an area that separates vehicles travelling in opposite directions. It can be raised, painted or covered in grass and/or trees.

You must not stop or park on a median strip, unless a sign says it's a median strip parking area.

S-lanes



An S-lane creates a right-turn lane by making the other lanes follow an S-shape and merge with the kerb-side lane.

A single unbroken white line separates the S-shaped lanes. You must not cross this line when turning into an S-lane.

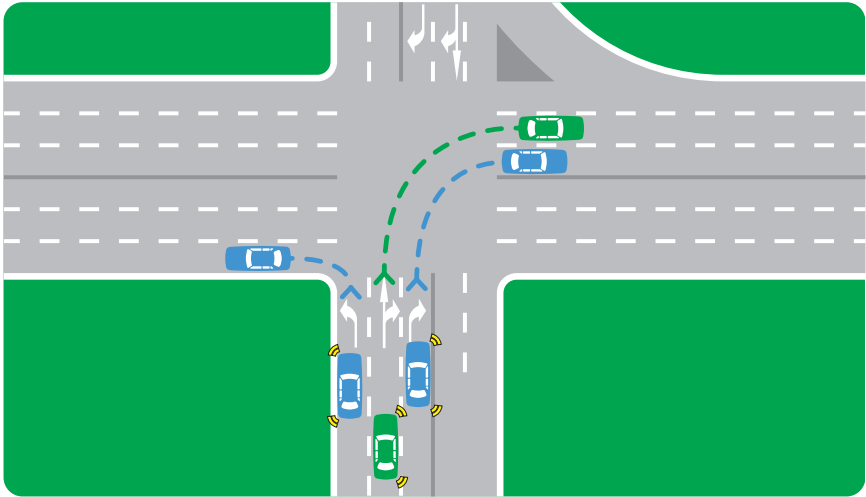
You must not cross the unbroken line to turn into an S-lane.

Painted arrows

Painted arrows show you which direction you can take in a lane. When the arrows show more than one direction, you can go in any of those directions.

You must always indicate when you're turning, even when there's a painted arrow.

As you turn from one road into the other, stay in the same lane.



Follow the painted arrows and stay in your lane when turning.

Keep clear



Area with 'Keep clear' marked on the road.

'Keep clear' markings are used to keep the road clear outside particular areas so vehicles can enter or exit – for example, at hospitals, fire stations and car parks.

'Keep clear' markings are also used at intersections to:

- stop vehicles blocking the intersection
- make it easier for vehicles to exit or enter a side road.

You must not stop in a 'Keep clear' area.

Dragon's teeth



Dragon's teeth road markings in a school zone.

Dragon's teeth are painted triangles arranged in pairs on each side of a lane or road.

They help to make school zones more visible and alert drivers to the 40km/h speed limit.

Slip lanes

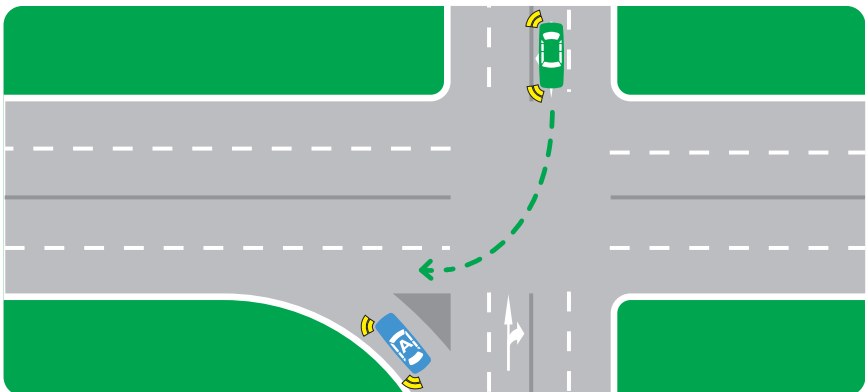
Slip lanes improve safety and traffic flow for vehicles turning left. Slip lanes are marked by a painted island or traffic island.

You must use a slip lane to turn where one is provided.

When you're turning left in a slip lane (with or without a 'Give way' sign), you must give way to:

- vehicles on the road you're turning into
- oncoming vehicles turning right into the road you're turning into
- any other vehicle or pedestrian in the slip lane.

You must not stop in a slip lane, unless a parking sign says you can.



When a car is turning left in a slip lane (Car A), they must give way to vehicles turning right into the road they're turning into.

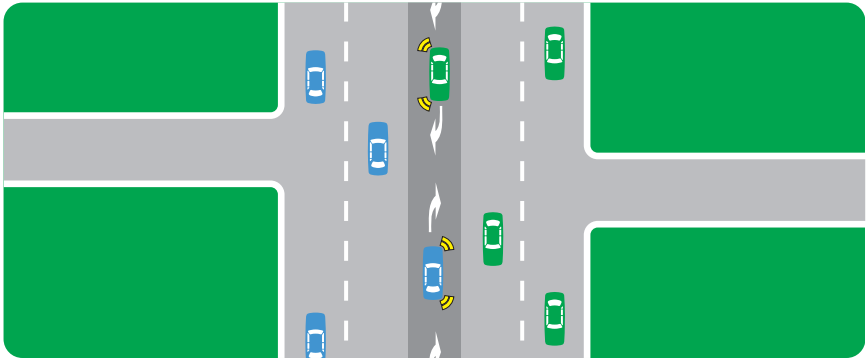
Median turning lanes



A median turning lane is a shared lane for vehicles driving in either direction to turn right into a side road (or a driveway or property access).

It's usually in the middle of the road and is marked by signs or arrows on the road.

If there's an oncoming vehicle already in a median turning lane, you can enter the lane, but you must give way to that vehicle by slowing down and, if necessary, stopping.



You can enter and share a median turning lane with an oncoming vehicle.

Bicycle lanes



Bicycle lanes are designed for bicycles. Signs and road markings show you where they are.

When a bicycle lane is marked on the road, bicycle riders must use it, unless it's not practical to do so.

Bicycle lanes start with either a sign or a road marking with both a picture of a bicycle and the word 'Lane'.

Bicycle road markings are displayed along the bike lane to remind drivers and bicycle riders.



A bicycle lane ends with a sign or a road marking with a picture of a bicycle and the words 'Lane end'. A bicycle lane also ends at an intersection (unless it's at the unbroken side of the continuing road or continued across the intersection by broken lines) or at a dead end.

You can drive in a bicycle lane to avoid an obstruction. You can also drive in a bicycle lane for up to 50m to:

- enter or leave the road
- overtake another vehicle turning right or making a U-turn
- enter a lane from the side of the road.

If you need to drive in a bicycle lane, take extra care and check your surroundings for bicycles.

Bicycle paths



Bicycle paths are different from bicycle lanes. It's optional for bicycle riders to use a bicycle path.

Bicycle paths start with a 'Bicycle path' sign or a road marking. They run alongside a road or on off-road areas.



Bicycle paths can also be used by:

- people using skateboards, foot scooters and rollerblades
- people who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters
- postal workers on motorcycles.

Other vehicles can only drive on a bicycle path if they're entering or leaving a road, or if there's a sign saying they can. When driving on a bicycle path, you must give way to all other road users on the path.

Bus lanes



Bus lanes are for buses but can also be used by:

- taxis (but not rideshare vehicles)
- hire cars with HC number plates
- special purpose vehicles (operated by or under the direction of Transport for NSW) responding to an emergency
- bicycles and motorcycles.

You must not stop in a bus lane. The only vehicles that can stop in a bus lane are buses at a bus stop, or taxis and chauffeur-driven hire cars picking up or dropping off passengers.

Other vehicles can drive in bus lanes to avoid an obstruction or if there's a sign saying they can. They can also drive in a bus lane for a maximum of 100m to:

- enter or leave the road
- overtake another vehicle turning right or making a U-turn
- enter a lane from the side of the road.

Bus-only lanes



When a sign or lane markings show 'Bus only' or 'Buses only', only buses can drive in these lanes.

T-way lanes



T-way lanes are special lanes for authorised buses and service vehicles.

You must not drive in a T-way lane.

Tramways and tram lanes

Tramways



Only trams (light rail vehicles), tram recovery vehicles, some buses, and special purpose vehicles can drive in tramways.

These lanes are marked with a 'Tramway' sign, and two unbroken yellow lines alongside the tracks, or by a structure such as a traffic island, pedestrian refuge, or bollards.

Other vehicles can drive in a tramway to avoid an obstruction, but only if they do not move into the path of an approaching tram or bus.

Tram lanes



Only trams, tram recovery vehicles and some buses can travel in lanes marked with a 'Tram lane' sign.

Other vehicles can drive in tram lanes to avoid an obstruction, or if there's a sign saying they can. They can also drive in a tram lane for a maximum of 50m to:

- enter or leave the road
- overtake another vehicle turning right or making a U-turn
- enter a lane from the side of the road.

You must not move into the path of a tram travelling in a tram lane.

Truck lanes



Truck lanes are for vehicles over 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass (GVM) but can also be used by:

- bicycles
- special purpose vehicles
- Transport for NSW vehicles doing road and traffic surveys

Other vehicles can drive in a truck lane to avoid an obstruction, or if there's a sign saying they can.

They can also drive in a truck lane for a maximum of 100m to:

- enter or leave the road
- overtake another vehicle turning right or making a U-turn
- enter a lane from the side of the road.

Trucks use left lane



Where a sign says 'Trucks must use left lane', trucks must use the left lane until a sign says they must not.

Trucks must also do this when a sign says 'Buses' or 'Trucks & buses'. All other vehicles can also use this lane.

Transit lanes

Transit lanes can be used by vehicles containing a certain number of people.

Public buses and minibuses, taxis, hire cars with HC number plates, motorcycles and bicycles, as well as emergency, special purpose and breakdown vehicles, can also use transit lanes, regardless of the number of people in their vehicles.



Only vehicles with two or more people during the specified day or time.

You can only drive in this lane during the times and days specified on the sign when there are two or more people in your vehicle, including the driver.



Only vehicles with three or more people during the specified day or time.

You can only drive in this lane during the times and days specified on the sign when there are three or more people in your vehicle, including the driver.

If you have less than the required number of people in your vehicle, you can only enter a transit lane for a maximum of 100m to:

- enter or leave the road
- overtake another vehicle turning right or making a U-turn
- enter a lane from the side of the road.

Any vehicle can drive in a transit lane to avoid an obstruction, or if a sign says you can.

Shared paths



Shared paths can only be used by bicycle riders and pedestrians.

On shared paths, bicycle riders must:

- keep to the left (unless it's not practical).
- give way to pedestrians. This means slowing down and even coming to a stop if necessary.
- keep to the left of any oncoming bicycle rider.

Riders of skateboards, foot scooters and rollerblades must:

- keep to the left (unless it's not practical)
- give way to all other pedestrians.

Keep left or right



Drive to the left of the sign.

When you see a 'Keep left' sign, you must stay to the left of the sign.

'Keep right' and 'Keep left' signs are regulatory signs and must be obeyed by law.

When you see a 'Keep right' sign, you must stay to the right of the sign.



Drive to the right of the sign.

Parking

Parking rules help you park where it's safe and convenient for others.

There are different ways to park, as well as safe places to stop or park. There are times and places where you can stop for short periods but you must not park. Read parking signs carefully to check restrictions.

You can get a fine and, in some situations, demerit points for parking illegally.

You must never leave children or animals alone in a vehicle. They're in danger of:

- dehydration and burns in a hot vehicle
- playing with controls, such as the handbrake, gears and power windows
- being harmed if the vehicle is stolen.

No parking

You must not stop or park your vehicle:

- alongside another parked vehicle (double park)
- across a driveway, unless you're picking up or dropping off passengers
- on a median strip, unless a sign says you can
- on a traffic island
- within an intersection
- on a children's crossing or pedestrian crossing
- on a railway level crossing
- on footpaths and nature strips, unless a sign says you can
- in a slip lane, unless a sign says you can.

Your parked vehicle must not block the flow of traffic or become a danger to other road users.

In some places, you must not park at certain times or under certain conditions.

No parking signs



Do not park to the left of this sign.

You must not park on a road or in an area where there's a 'No parking' sign. This may be all the time or at certain times, as shown on the sign.

You can stop for less than 2 minutes if you stay within 3m of your vehicle, if you're:

- dropping off or picking up passengers
- loading or unloading items.

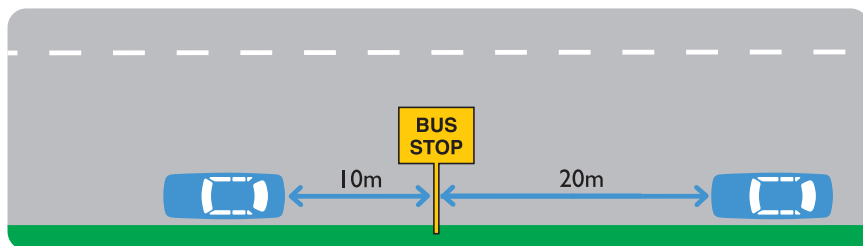
If you have a Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS) permit, you can stop for up to 5 minutes.

Parked vehicles

You must not park within 1m of another vehicle parked in front or behind (but not when angle parking).

Bus stops

You must not park within 20m before and 10m after a bus stop unless a sign says you can.

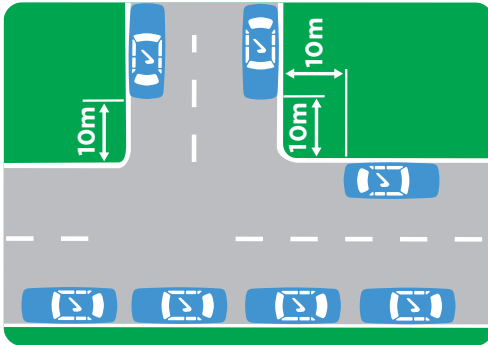


Intersections

You must not park within 20m of an intersection with traffic lights, unless a sign says you can.

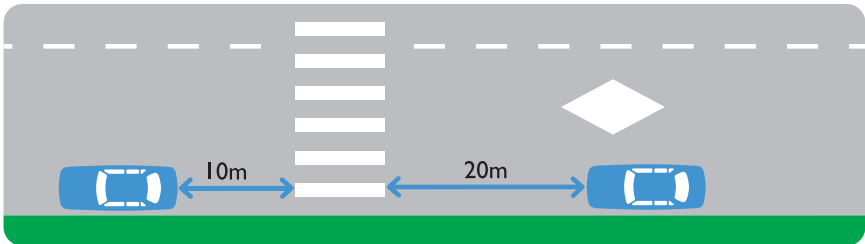
You must not park within 10m of an intersection without traffic lights, unless:

- a sign says you can
- it's a T-intersection and you park along the continuous side of the continuing road.



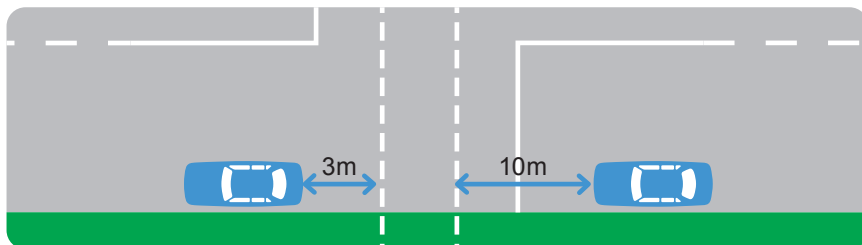
Crossings

You must not stop or park within 20m before and 10m after a children's crossing or pedestrian crossing unless a sign says you can.

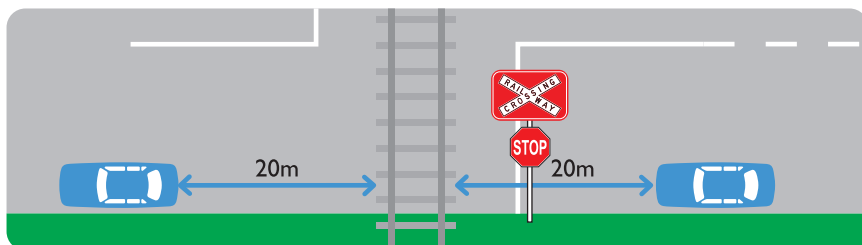


You must not stop or park within 10m before and 3m after traffic lights that aren't at an intersection but have:

- pedestrian signals unless a sign says you can
- bicycle crossing lights unless a sign says you can.



You must not stop or park within 20m before and after a railway level crossing unless a sign says you can.



Double dividing lines

You must not park within 3m of any double dividing lines.

Fire hydrants

You must not park within 1m of a fire hydrant, fire hydrant indicator or fire plug indicator.

On or near a crest or curve

You must not stop or park on a hill or a curve outside a built-up area, unless drivers are able to see your vehicle from at least 100m away. If there's a parking sign, follow the instructions shown.

Restricted parking

You can stop or park in some places that have restricted times or conditions.

Restrictions may be on a sign or marked on the road. Check carefully to avoid a parking fine or having your vehicle towed.

No stopping



The 'No stopping' sign means you must not stop at any point on the road or kerb in the direction of the arrow, unless in an emergency.

'No stopping' areas are sometimes marked by an unbroken yellow edge line.

Restrictions may apply at certain times only, as shown on the sign.

Clearway and special event clearway



You must not park between a 'Clearway' and 'End clearway' sign.

A broken yellow line can also be used to show a clearway.

Clearways improve traffic flow and safety during busy periods or at special events. You must not stop or park between these signs during the times shown, unless in an emergency.

Buses and taxis (but not rideshare vehicles) can stop in a clearway to pick up or drop off passengers.



You must not park in a special event clearway during the times and dates shown on the sign.

Restricted parking areas

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

You must not stop or park between the 'Restricted parking area' and 'End restricted parking area' signs, except where a sign says you can. You can stop to pick up or drop off goods or passengers.



Hourly parking

You can park on the days of the week and during the hours shown on the sign.



Accessible parking

You can park in an area reserved for people with disability if you have a current Mobility Parking Scheme (MPS) permit, or if you're driving a person with the permit. The permit must be displayed in the vehicle.

MPS permit holders can also park for longer in areas with time restrictions. See Special parking conditions at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au



Resident parking

You can park without charge or time restrictions if you have a valid parking permit for that area. You must display your parking permit at all times.

Special event parking

Special event parking areas are used near major sporting or entertainment venues. You must not park for longer than the period on the signs, unless you have a parking permit.



You must not park for more than the time shown in the special event parking area during the period shown on the sign, unless you have a parking permit.

Motorcycle parking

You must not park between these signs, unless you're a motorcycle rider. You can stop to drop off or pick up passengers.



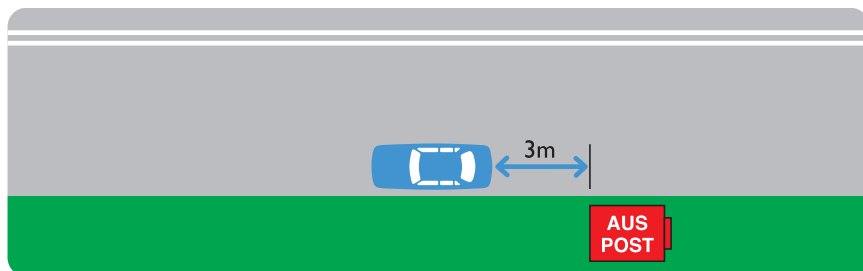
Pay parking

You must pay for parking if a sign reads 'Meter', 'Ticket', 'Phone' or 'Coupon' parking. You can park for the length of time shown on the sign.

For example, a '2P meter' sign means you can park for up to 2 hours and you must pay using the meter.

Australia Post box

You must not park within 3m of an Australia Post letter box.
You can stop to post mail or drop off or pick up passengers.



Taxi zone



Taxi zone on both sides of the sign.

You must not stop in the direction of the arrow or arrows on the sign, unless driving a taxi. Some taxi zones have times shown. You can stop or park your vehicle outside those times.

Bus zone



Bus zone on both sides of the sign.

You must not stop in the direction of the arrow or arrows on the sign, unless you're driving a public bus. Some bus zones have times shown. You can stop or park your vehicle outside those times.

Loading zone



Loading zone to the left of the sign.

Vehicles primarily designed to carry goods can stop in a loading zone to drop off or pick up goods. Goods do not include personal items or shopping.

Time limits are:

- 15 minutes for station wagons and motorcycles with three wheels
- 30 minutes for trucks and other vehicles primarily designed to carry goods.

Public buses can stop for up to 30 minutes to pick up or drop off passengers.

Any vehicle can stop briefly to pick up or drop off passengers.

Restrictions may apply for certain times only as shown on the sign.

Works zone



Works zone to the left of the sign.

You must not park in a works zone, unless your vehicle is being used in construction work in or near the zone.

Any vehicle can stop to pick up or drop off passengers.

Restrictions may apply at certain times only, as shown on the sign.

Truck zone



Truck zone to the left of the sign.

You must not stop or park during the hours shown on the sign, unless dropping off or picking up goods in a truck over 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass (GVM).

Any vehicle can stop to pick up or drop off passengers.

Restrictions may apply for certain times, as shown on the sign.

Ways to park

There are two main ways to park – parallel and angle. Once you’ve parked, follow the parking checks to stay safe.

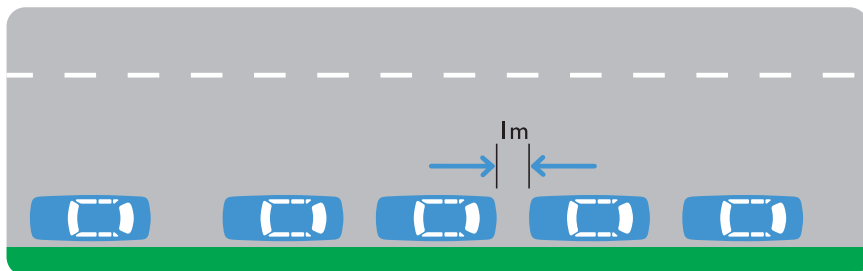
Parallel parking

This is the usual way to park, unless a sign says otherwise.

You must park:

- in the same direction as traffic
- parallel and as close as possible to the kerb
- within any line markings
- at least 1m in front of and back from any other parked vehicle.

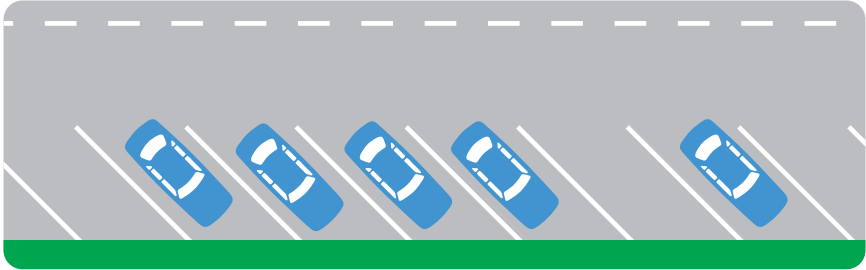
On a one-way street, you can also park on the right side of the road.



Angle parking

You can angle park where signs or line markings show you can. Unless a sign or road marking says otherwise, you must park:

- at a 45-degree angle
- with the front of the vehicle to the kerb.



Parking checks

Before leaving your vehicle, make sure the parking brake is on.

If you move more than 3m away from your vehicle you must also:

- remove the key from the ignition
- lock all doors and windows (if there's no-one in the vehicle).

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

Before pulling out from the side of the road or a parking area, you must:

- indicate for at least 5 seconds
- check mirrors
- look over your shoulder to check blind spots.

Warnings and road hazards

While driving, look out for potential hazards. A hazard is any possible danger that might lead to a crash. It could be a pedestrian waiting to cross, a wet road, or something blocking your view of oncoming vehicles. Also look out for approaching vehicles and parked vehicles pulling out.

If you cannot see at least 5 seconds ahead, you should slow down. When you see a potential hazard, slow down and prepare to stop.

Scanning helps you see what's happening on the road and any potential hazards.

Look out for warning signs alerting you to dangers or changed road conditions ahead.

Warning signs

Warning signs alert you that there may be dangers or changed road conditions ahead. The signs are usually diamond-shaped with pictures, diagrams, symbols or words in black on a yellow background.

These are some of the most common warning signs.



Crossroads ahead.



You're approaching a T-intersection where the road you're driving on ends. You must give way to all vehicles.



Road conditions are changing to two lanes of oncoming traffic.



Side road ahead. A side road meets the road you're driving on.



Road ahead curves to the right.



Sharp right turn ahead.



Sharp bend to the left ahead.



Winding road ahead.



Road divides ahead.



Divided road ends ahead.



Road narrows ahead.



'Give way' sign ahead.



'Stop' sign ahead.



Pedestrian crossing ahead.



Pedestrians may be crossing ahead.



Children may be crossing ahead.



Look out for bicycles.



Road is slippery when wet.



Steep descent (down grade) ahead.



Beware of slow moving vehicles crossing or entering traffic.



Temporary emergency situation ahead, such as an oil spill, fallen tree, snow or landslide.



Narrow bridge.



You're approaching a narrow bridge – slow down and prepare to stop.



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



Hump ahead (a sudden slope up, then down).



Look out for kangaroos.



As you approach the top of the hill ahead, you cannot see a safe distance in front of you. Drive carefully.



Livestock may be crossing ahead.



Road ahead is under water (for example, a stream).



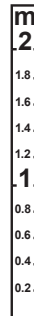
Grid ahead (a row of metal bars across the road).



Causeway ahead may be covered in water (a causeway is a raised road across a low or wet area or a body of water).



Road ahead may be covered by floodwater.



A measure showing the depth of floodwater across a road.



Road ahead curves to the right. 55km/h maximum speed in good conditions.

Sometimes an advisory speed sign is used with a warning sign. For example, to show the maximum speed that's safe in good conditions, or how long you should look out for a particular hazard.

Some roads have large electronic signs (called variable message signs). These signs warn you of changes in traffic conditions ahead – for example, fog, a crash, roadworks, congestion, road closures or police operations.



Variable message sign on a motorway.

Roadworks

Temporary signs warn you that roadworks are ahead. When approaching roadworks, slow down, look out for any hazards and be prepared to stop.

You must obey the regulatory signs and traffic lights at roadworks. Look out for road workers on the road and obey signals from traffic controllers.



Temporary traffic lights on a road. You must stop on a red signal.

'Stop' and 'Slow' signs are used at roadworks to control traffic. You must stop before reaching a handheld 'Stop' sign.



'Stop' and 'Slow' signs are held by traffic controllers. You must obey these signs.

Speed signs are regulatory signs. You must not drive faster than the speed limit shown on the sign.



40km/h speed limit for roadworks. This speed limit must be obeyed.



Slow down and be prepared to stop.



Traffic controller ahead. Be prepared to stop.



Road workers ahead. Slow down.



Approaching roadworks. Slow down and be prepared to stop.



Roadworks have ended.



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



Closed lane ahead. Merge to the right.



Watch for loose stones. Slow down.



A temporary arrow on a roadwork vehicle warns you that a road hazard is ahead. Change lanes.

Wildlife and livestock



Stock may be crossing ahead.



Look out for kangaroos ahead.

On country roads, look out for unfenced livestock and wildlife. Animals on the road can be dangerous and can cause serious crashes. They can move quickly and can be unpredictable.

When you see a stock warning sign, you may be approaching farm animals on or near the road.

Slow down when you see animal warning signs. Animals are more active near waterholes and creeks, and are harder to see at sunrise and sunset.

If you see an animal on the road, slow down and apply your brakes in a controlled way. Never swerve to avoid an animal. This may cause you to lose control of your vehicle or to collide with oncoming traffic.

If you collide with an animal, only stop if it's safe to do so.

If the animal is injured:

- For a native or wild animal, contact the Wildlife and Information Rescue Service (WIRES) at wires.org.au
- For a domestic pet, contact the owner, police or the RSPCA at rspca.org.au

Crashes

If you're involved in a crash you must always stop and give as much help as possible. You must provide your details to the other people involved or to police.

If you're involved in a crash that causes death or injury and you do not stop and help, you can get a fine and be sent to prison.

Driving safely reduces your chances of being involved in a crash.

What to do after a crash

If you have a crash:

- Turn off your ignition to reduce the risk of fire.
- Turn on your hazard lights.
- If safe to do so, check whether there's anything on the road from the crash that could be dangerous or cause another crash, such as debris or broken glass. Move it off the road if it's safe to do so.

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

- Call the police or fire brigade on triple zero (000).
- Warn people away from the crash.
- Avoid touching spilled chemicals or breathing the fumes or dust.
- Look for an Emergency Procedures Guide attached to the truck driver's door. Follow these procedures, if it's safe to do so.

Exchanging details

If you're involved in a crash you must give the other person or people involved:

- your name and address
- your vehicle registration number
- the name and address of the owner of the vehicle, if you're not the owner.

When to call an ambulance and police

If anyone is injured or killed in a crash, call an ambulance and then the police on triple zero (000).

The police attend and investigate crashes when:

- a person is trapped, killed or injured
- any driver is believed to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- a person fails to stop or exchange information
- they need to direct traffic or deal with hazards
- a bus or truck needs to be towed away.

You must always give police at a crash scene:

- your driver licence
- details of the crash and vehicles involved
- your name and address
- information about any witnesses and other drivers involved.

When not to call the police

You do not need to call the police to attend a crash when:

- there are no injuries
- vehicles do not need to be towed.

If someone involved in the crash is later treated for an injury, call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444.

If police do not attend the crash scene, you must report the crash soon as possible (within 24 hours) if:

- a vehicle is towed away
- property is damaged or animals are injured
- you're unable to provide your details to the other driver.

Report the crash to the nearest police station or the Police Assistance Line on 131 444.

First aid after a crash

First aid is a skill that everyone should learn. For details on first aid courses contact:

- St John Ambulance Association at stjohnnsw.com.au
- Australian Red Cross at redcross.org.au
- National Safety Council of Australia at training.nasca.org.au

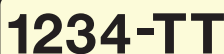
Calling a tow truck

If your vehicle needs to be towed after a crash, you have the right to decide:

- who will tow your vehicle
- where your vehicle will be towed to.

To be authorised, NSW tow trucks attending an accident scene must:

- have a number plate with four numbers and ending in 'TT'
- be driven by a driver with a valid driver certificate.



1234-TT

Do not use a tow truck that does not meet these requirements. It's your responsibility to check the tow truck is authorised.

Before a tow truck tows your vehicle, you (as the owner and/or driver) must sign a Towing Authorisation Form. This gives the tow truck driver permission to tow your vehicle.

You have the right to:

- contact someone before you sign the Towing Authorisation Form for assistance – for example, a mechanic, so you know where to tow your vehicle
- get a copy of the Towing Authorisation Form.

If you're unable to organise a tow truck or sign the form, a police officer or authorised officer can organise a tow truck for you.

If you have comprehensive car insurance, the towing fee may be covered. Check with your insurer.

Breakdowns

To reduce the risk of a breakdown, plan ahead. Check your fuel, oil, water and tyre pressure (including the spare) regularly. Carry a high-visibility vest and a torch inside your vehicle.

When you break down

When you break down:

- Find a safe spot to pull over such as the side of the road (shoulder), an emergency stopping lane, or a breakdown lane.
- Park your vehicle as far to the left and away from other traffic as possible.
- Turn on your hazard lights (and parking lights, if there's poor visibility).
- Stay in your vehicle with your seatbelt on and call roadside assistance.
- If you have a flat tyre, drive to a safe spot away from the traffic, if possible.



Emergency stopping lane only.

If you have to get out of your vehicle:

- Check for traffic before getting out.
- Get out on the safest side of the road, away from the traffic.
- Stand clear of the road and move behind a safety barrier, if it's safe to do so.
- Avoid crossing the road.
- Do not change a tyre unless it's safe to do so.

If you break down in a tunnel:

- Pull over to the breakdown bay or the side of the lane.
- Turn on your hazard lights.
- Stay in your vehicle.
- Wait for help to arrive (major tunnels are constantly monitored).

When you see a breakdown

Take extra care when you see a vehicle that has broken down. Slow down and keep a safe distance.

When passing a stopped tow truck or breakdown assistance vehicle with flashing lights:

- If the speed limit is 80km/h or less, you must slow down to 40km/h.
- If the speed limit is over 80km/h, you must slow down safely and move over. This includes changing lanes on a multi-lane road, if it's safe to do so.

You must not increase your speed until you've passed all vehicles and people involved.

If you stop to help, find a safe spot to pull over and check for traffic before getting out.

Some heavy vehicles use warning triangles when they break down. If you see these on the road, slow down.



Warning triangle on the road. Slow down.

Police and emergency vehicles

Look out for emergency vehicles on the road, such as police cars, fire trucks and ambulances. You can get a fine and demerit points for not giving way to an emergency vehicle.

You must obey directions given by police on the road, including police signs and hand signals. If the police direct you to pull over, you must stop in a safe place as soon as you can.

Passing a stopped emergency vehicle

When passing a stopped emergency vehicle with flashing blue or red lights:

- If the speed limit is 80km/h or less, you must slow down to 40km/h.
- If the speed limit is over 80km/h, you must slow down safely and move over. This includes changing lanes on a multi-lane road, if it's safe to do so.

You must not increase your speed until you've passed all vehicles and people involved.

Giving way to an approaching emergency vehicle

When you hear a siren or see the flashing blue or red lights of an emergency vehicle, you must give way so it can pass.

You may need to move to the left, stop or pull over out of the line of traffic.

Funeral processions

When you see a funeral or an official procession, you must not interrupt it. You can get a fine if you interfere with the procession.

Slow down and stay behind it.

Driving in poor conditions

You should avoid driving during unpredictable and severe weather events and conditions. Before you drive, check for storms, bushfires, hail, snow, dust storms and heavy fog.

If you're driving and conditions get worse, pull over to a safe place. Wait until conditions improve.

When you cannot avoid driving in poor conditions, slow down, drive carefully and increase your visibility by using your day running lights or headlights. Stay informed about the weather by listening to the radio. You may need to change your route to avoid driving into danger.

Stay alert by taking regular rest breaks.

Driving in wet weather

When driving in wet weather, the road can become slippery and your vehicle takes longer to stop.

If it starts to rain, you should turn on your day running lights (or headlights if your vehicle is not fitted with these), break gently to slow down, and increase the gap between you and the vehicle in front (crash avoidance space).

Driving on unsealed roads

Take extra care and slow down when driving on unsealed roads (dirt or gravel). Your vehicle takes longer to stop and is harder to control. If you drive too fast, your vehicle may skid, slide or roll over.

Driving through water

You should avoid driving through water. It can be very risky. There's a limit to the depth of water that your vehicle can drive through safely.

It's difficult to assess how deep and fast water is when it's moving over a road. The road surface under the water may be damaged or there may be debris, or the water level may be rising.

Floodwater is extremely dangerous. Find another way or wait until the road is clear. It's safer to turn around than to drive in floodwater.

Driving distractions

Distractions take your attention away from driving. They can significantly increase your risk of crashing.

A distraction is anything that takes your eyes off the road, your hands off the wheel, or your mind off driving. Distractions can come from both inside and outside your vehicle.

Taking your eyes off the road for 2 seconds doubles the risk of a crash or near crash. For example, when driving at 50km/h, if you take your eyes off the road for 2 seconds, you'll travel 28m.

When you're distracted or your attention is divided, you're more likely to make mistakes. A short lapse in concentration can have lifelong consequences.

Passengers

Passengers can be helpful when you're driving, by identifying hazards and risky situations. They can also help with other activities such as changing music and navigating.

However, the noise and behaviour of passengers can distract you while driving. Some passengers may encourage you to take risks, such as speeding or breaking road rules.

Young drivers have a higher risk of crashing when driving with passengers of a similar age. See Licence restrictions on page 19 for Provisional P1 drivers aged under 25.

Animals in your vehicle

Animals in your vehicle can be distracting when you're driving. They should travel in an appropriate area of your vehicle.

You must not drive:

- with an animal in your lap
- while an animal is being led from the vehicle, including being led by you or a passenger
- while an animal is tied to the outside of the vehicle.

Reducing distractions

Avoiding or reducing distractions when you drive can reduce your risk of crashing.

To reduce distraction:

- Turn off the radio or music, particularly in new or challenging traffic situations.
- Put loose items in a bag or box or in the boot.
- Ask your passengers not to distract you.
- Do not adjust the radio or music when driving.
- Limit the number of passengers and animals you carry.
- If you have a learner or provisional P1 or P2 licence, put your mobile phone on silent or out of reach, or switch it off.
- If you have a full (unrestricted) licence, avoid using your mobile phone. See Mobile phones on page 54 for rules for using your phone legally while driving.

Lights and horns

Lights

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

At night or when there's not enough daylight to see a person wearing dark clothing at a distance of 100m, your vehicle must have clearly visible:

- headlights
- tail lights
- number plates
- clearance lights and side marker lights, if fitted to your vehicle.

Headlights

Using your vehicle's day running lights improves the likelihood of other road users seeing you. If your vehicle is not fitted with day running lights, you can use your headlights on low beam.

Your headlights must be on:

- when driving between sunset and sunrise
- at any other time where there's not enough daylight to see a person wearing dark clothing at a distance of 100m.

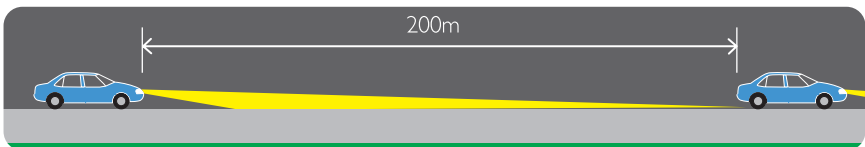
High beam lights

You can use your headlights on high beam if you need to see further ahead, even if there are street lights.

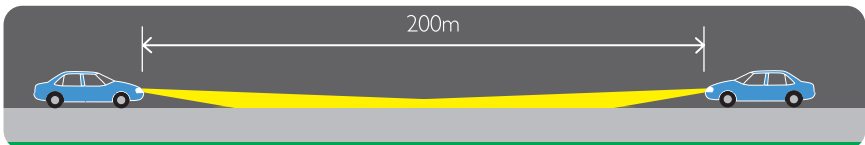
You must turn your headlights from high beam to low beam:

- when a vehicle coming towards you is within 200m
- when driving 200m or less behind another vehicle.

You can also flash your high beam lights before you overtake another vehicle.



Turn your headlights to low beam when driving behind another vehicle.



Turn your headlights to low beam when a vehicle is coming towards you.

Fog lights

You must only use your fog lights in fog or rain, or when other conditions limit your vision, such as smoke or dust.

Once conditions improve and you can see more clearly, you must switch the fog lights off.

If your vehicle does not have fog lights, you can use your low beam headlights and hazard lights in fog or rain.

Hazard lights

Hazard lights (or hazard warning lights) are flashing orange or red lights on a vehicle.

You must only use your hazard lights when your vehicle is stopped in a hazardous position, for example, when obstructing other vehicles or pedestrians, or when you're driving in hazardous conditions such as fog or rain.

Avoid lights that dazzle

Do not use or fit lights to your vehicle that could dazzle or distract other road users.

Avoid looking straight at the headlights of oncoming vehicles. If you're dazzled or your vision is blurred by the glare of high beam lights, look to the left side of the road and drive to the left of your lane. Slow down or stop out of the line of traffic until your eyes recover.

Horns and other warning devices

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

- you need to warn other road users about the position of your vehicle
- you need to warn others that you are approaching
- you need to warn animals to get off the road
- it's part of an anti-theft or alcohol interlock device.

Never use your horn to scare or intimidate other road users, particularly bicycle riders, pedestrians and horse riders.

Vehicle safety and compliance

The age and condition of your vehicle contribute to road safety. There are checks and rules in place to keep every vehicle on the road as safe as possible.

Your vehicle must be safe to drive and registered. Keep your vehicle well maintained by regularly checking everything is working correctly.

Adjust your seat and controls so you're comfortable and can drive with confidence.

Think about the environment when driving. Do not throw rubbish or lit cigarettes from your vehicle. When towing, make sure your load is secure.

Vehicle registration

All vehicles must be registered to drive in NSW.

All vehicles (except trailers and caravans) must have CTP insurance (a green slip) to be registered. See Compulsory Third Party (CTP) insurance at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Driving a vehicle that's not registered and not insured is illegal. You can get a fine and demerit points. See Penalties for unregistered vehicle offences at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

If you're driving a vehicle that's not registered and have a crash, you're not covered by CTP insurance and there are severe penalties.

There are penalties for parking a vehicle that's not registered on a road.

You can only drive a vehicle that's not registered if you're getting or renewing your registration, or if you have an unregistered vehicle permit. See Unregistered vehicles at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Getting a new registration

What you must do to register your vehicle in NSW depends on its age and whether it's currently registered. See [Get a vehicle registration at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au)

Transferring registration

When you buy a vehicle that's currently registered, you must transfer the registration into your name within 14 days to avoid a late surcharge. See [Transfer your registration at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au)

Renewing registration

You must renew your vehicle registration on or before the due date. It's important to renew on time to avoid driving a vehicle that's not registered and getting a fine and demerit points. See [Renew your registration at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au)

If you do not renew your registration within 3 months of the due date, it's automatically cancelled. To drive your vehicle again, you must get a new registration.

Generally, vehicles older than 5 years must have a safety check to renew the registration. See [Safety checks and inspections at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au](https://roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au)

If your vehicle fails the safety check, you must not drive it unless you're getting it repaired or inspected. You must not drive it again until it passes the inspection and is registered.

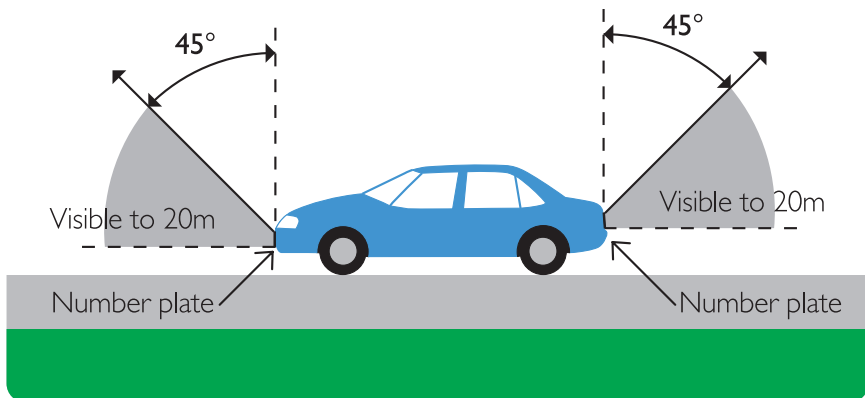
Number plates

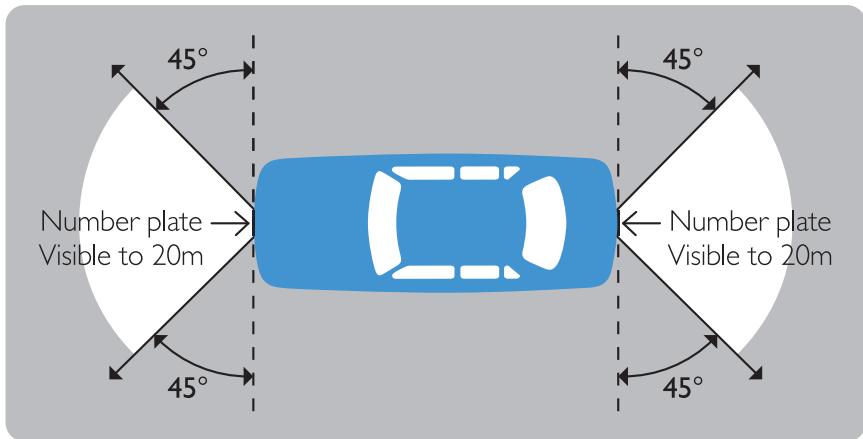
Your vehicle must have number plates permanently attached to the front and back. Motorcycles only need a number plate on the back.

The plates must be issued by Transport for NSW. The numbers must match the numbers on the vehicle's Certificate of Registration. You must not attach your number plates to another vehicle.

You must not change or deface the number plates in any way. You must not obscure them, for example, with L plates or P plates. Number plate covers must be clear, clean, untinted, non reflective and flat.

The number plates must be clean and not damaged. The numbers must be readable from a distance (at least 20m), from above and from the side (within a 45-degree arc from the centre of the vehicle).





All rear number plates must have a light so they can be seen at night.

If you're towing a trailer, the trailer must also have a number plate on the back.

If your vehicle has a bicycle rack or tow bar, the rear number plate must be clearly visible. See the Vehicle Standards Information on carrying bicycles on motor vehicles at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

You can buy a smaller copy of your number plate (with the same letters and numbers) from a service centre. See Order auxiliary plates at service.nsw.gov.au

There are penalties for hiding any part of a number plate.

Roadworthiness

To be registered, your vehicle must be suitable for safe use (roadworthy) and meet the standards required by law.

Defect Notices

Police can stop your vehicle and inspect it at any time. If your vehicle is not safe to drive, they can give you a Defect Notice. For example, you can get a Defect Notice if your vehicle:

- is too noisy, drips oil or blows too much smoke
- has a bull bar that's not safe or does not meet standards – for example, if it has pointed corners or sharp edges
- has an accessory that is not fitted correctly – for example, a fishing rod holder, spotlight mount, or winch.

See Protrusions on vehicles at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

If you get a Defect Notice, you must repair your vehicle by the due date on the notice. Some repairs must be cleared by an authorised person, such as a vehicle inspector. Find an authorised inspection station (AIS) at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Your registration can be suspended if you do not repair the defect by the due date.

Modifications

A vehicle with a significant modification must be assessed and certified before it can be registered. This must be done by a licensed certifier under the Vehicle Safety Compliance Certification Scheme (VSCCS). They'll make sure the modification and vehicle meet the standards and do not cause a safety risk.

Modifications may also affect your vehicle insurance and warranty cover. Some modifications can make your vehicle less stable and affect its performance. See Modified and non-standard vehicles at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Provisional P1 and P2 drivers must not drive vehicles with modifications that increase engine performance. See Licence restrictions on page 19.

Checking your vehicle

Regularly check that your windscreen wipers and washers, horn and seatbelts are working.

Check your lights are working, including headlights, brake lights and indicators. You must not drive at night if your lights are not working.

Your tyres (including the spare) must be in good condition. They must not be smooth and must have a tread at least 1.5mm deep. They must be inflated to the recommended pressure, and must not have any cracks or bumps or be worn unevenly.

Vehicle safety features

Vehicle safety features can significantly improve safety and are becoming more widely available. Technologies like autonomous emergency braking (AEB) and lane support systems can reduce the risk of a crash. Side curtain airbags can reduce the severity of an injury if a crash cannot be avoided.

Whether you're looking for a new or used car, consider safety features and look for cars that are rated highly by the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) or the Used Car Safety Ratings Buyer's Guide. See Safety ratings at *roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au*

Airbags

Airbags are a supplementary restraining system (SRS). They are designed to work together with seatbelts. For the driver's airbag to work best, adjust your steering wheel low, facing your chest.

It's important that your airbags work and comply with the regulations. A faulty airbag is a defect, which means your vehicle is not safe to drive.

Electronic driver assist systems

Electronic driver assist systems are standard on most vehicles. While these systems improve safety, they do not prevent you from losing control or crashing if you drive dangerously.

Electronic stability control (ESC)

ESC systems help you keep your intended direction by detecting if your vehicle is not responding correctly to your steering. The system selectively applies the brakes to individual wheels or changes engine power.

Anti-lock braking systems (ABS)

ABS is an ESC system that controls braking force to prevent your tyres from skidding – for example, when you break heavily or in slippery conditions. An ABS may cause the brake pedal to pulse or shudder when in use.

Traction control systems (TCS)

TCS is an ESC system that stops your wheels spinning by reducing engine power or temporarily applying the brakes. TCS lets the vehicle speed up smoothly, even on slippery surfaces.

Emergency brake assist (EBA)

EBA detects sudden braking. It automatically increases the force being applied to the brakes to minimise your stopping distance. It's also known as a brake assist system (BAS).

Autonomous emergency braking (AEB)

AEB warns you of close objects in your vehicle's path. It automatically reduces the speed of your vehicle if you do not respond to the warning.

Lane support systems (LSS)

An LSS recognises lane markings. The system either alerts you when you're close to a lane boundary, or takes over the steering to guide your vehicle away from the boundary.

Reverse collision avoidance (RCA)

RCA uses cameras to improve your view when reversing. If sensors are fitted, it alerts you when a person or object crosses your path as you reverse.

Blind spot monitoring (BSM)

BSM alerts you to other vehicles in your blind spots when you change lanes.

Towing

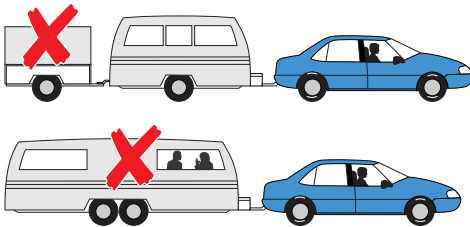
Be careful when towing a trailer or caravan. You need more knowledge and skill than for normal driving.

When towing:

- you must not tow more than one trailer at a time
- you must not have any person travelling in a trailer or caravan you're towing
- you must secure and cover your load, making sure it does not overhang.

Learner and provisional P1 drivers have restrictions on what they can tow. See Licence restrictions on page 19.

You can get a fine and demerit points for towing illegally.



Driving posture

Good driving posture reduces fatigue and improves comfort, control and safety. It's important to adjust the driver's seat and controls to suit your height and build.

For good driving posture:

- Adjust your seat so you have a clear view of the road and can easily reach the controls.
- Adjust the steering wheel low, facing your chest.
- Adjust the head restraint for your height.
- Adjust your seatbelt below your hips and with no twists.
- Adjust the mirrors so you have a good view of the rear and sides of the vehicle.
- Have the seat upright to support your back and shoulders.
- Keep your arms bent; thumbs should be on the rim of the steering wheel.
- Keep your knees slightly bent.
- Sit back in your seat.
- Brace your body using your left foot.



Use your left foot to brace your body when driving.

Your vehicle and the environment

Littering

You must not throw any rubbish out of your vehicle. You're responsible for anything that's thrown or dropped and anything that falls from your vehicle or from a trailer you're towing. If somebody reports you, you can get a heavy fine.

If it's possible that the item could injure a person, or obstruct or damage a vehicle or the road surface, you must remove it from the road as soon as it's safe to do so. If you do not, you can get a fine and demerit points.

Cigarette butts

You must not throw cigarette butts out of your vehicle. Lit cigarettes are especially dangerous. You can get demerit points and a heavy fine if you throw a lit cigarette from a vehicle.

Fuel consumption and emissions

Things you can do to reduce fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions (ecodriving) include:

- Do not overfill your petrol tank. Leaving room for the fuel to expand to reduces emissions.
- Only use air conditioning when necessary. It's most efficient when you're driving above 60km/h.
- Check the tyre pressures regularly. Under-inflated tyres increase rolling resistance and fuel consumption.
- Turn the engine off when you stop for long periods.
- Avoid carrying unnecessary weight. Remove things like roof racks, bike racks and golf clubs when you're not using them.
- Service your vehicle regularly and use the correct amount of engine oil and coolant.
- When driving a manual car, change gears at a lower engine speed (revs).
- Avoid over-revving when you take off.
- Maintain a steady speed.

Penalties

Road laws and road rules help keep our roads safe for everyone. If you break them, you put yourself and other road users at risk. That's why penalties apply – to encourage drivers to follow the rules and keep driving safely.

Penalties range from fines and demerit points to losing your licence and going to prison. The penalty reflects the safety risk of the offence. For example, offences that can cause serious injury or death, such as speeding or drink driving, have more severe penalties.

Fines

There are fines for every type of driving offence – for example, parking illegally, speeding, not wearing a seatbelt, driving a vehicle that's not registered, or not complying with your licence restrictions.

You can get a penalty notice on the spot or in the post and you have to pay a fine. The fine amount depends on the offence. If it's a serious offence, you may have to go to court.

See Pay your fine at revenue.nsw.gov.au

Unpaid fines

If you do not pay a fine by the due date, your driver licence can be suspended and/or your vehicle registration can be cancelled.

If you cannot pay the full amount, you may be able to set up a payment plan at revenue.nsw.gov.au

Once you've paid, the suspension ends and you get your licence back.

If you do not pay or set up a payment plan within 6 months of your suspension, your licence can be cancelled and you will have to apply to have your licence reissued. You can only do this when you've paid all outstanding fines. Any demerit points are carried over when your suspension ends or you get a new licence.

See Fines and fees at revenue.nsw.gov.au

Demerit points

Demerit points are penalty points that you get if you commit certain driving offences.

All drivers start with zero demerit points. If you drive safely and do not break any rules, you continue to have zero demerit points.

Each time you commit an offence that carries demerit points, the points are added to your driving record.

Your licence is suspended when you reach a certain point limit. The limit depends on your driver licence type.

Driver licence type	Demerit point limit (3-year period)	Suspension time
Learner licence	4 points	3 months
Provisional P1 licence	4 points	3 months
Provisional P2 licence	7 points	3 months
Full (unrestricted) licence	13 points	3 months (13–15 points)
		4 months (16–19 points)
		5 months (20 or more points)

Suspension for exceeding your demerit point limit applies in addition to any other suspensions you get for committing an offence.

Some driving offences attract double demerit points during holiday periods. These offences include:

- driving over the speed limit
- not wearing a seatbelt (you or your passengers)
- not using an approved and suitable child car seat
- using a mobile phone illegally.

See Demerit points at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Loss of licence

There are two main ways you can lose your driver licence – suspension and disqualification.

Driving when you've lost your licence is a serious offence.

Suspension

When your licence is suspended, you must not drive at all for a period of time.

Your licence can be suspended for offences such as:

- going over the demerit point limit within a 3-year period
- driving more than 30km/h over the speed limit
- driving over the alcohol limit (under 0.08, first offence)
- not paying a fine
- being medically unfit to drive.

For some offences, police can suspend and take away your licence immediately. These include:

- driving without a supervisor (learner licence)
- driving more than 30km/h over the speed limit (learner and provisional P1 and P2 licence)
- driving more than 45km/h over the speed limit (all licences)
- driving over the alcohol limit
- hooning or street racing.

When your suspension ends, you can drive again. If your licence was taken away by police, you have to apply for a replacement at a service centre before you can drive. If you go to court, your suspension might end and be replaced by a disqualification.

See Licence suspension and cancellation at *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au*

Disqualification

If a court convicts you of an offence and disqualifies you from driving, your licence is cancelled. This means you must not drive at all.

The court will decide how long you'll be disqualified. Offences often have minimum and maximum disqualification periods.

Once the disqualification ends, you can apply to have your licence reissued at a service centre. Depending on the length of disqualification, you may have to re-sit the Driver Knowledge Test (DKT) and/or the Driving Test.

All drivers, including learner, P1 and P2 drivers, can have their licence disqualified. You will be disqualified if you're convicted of:

- driving with a suspended licence
- driving over the alcohol limit
- driving under the influence of alcohol
- driving with illegal drugs in your system
- driving under the influence of drugs or medicines
- driving more than 30km/h over the speed limit

- negligent or dangerous driving causing injury or death
- hooning or street racing
- not stopping after a crash in which someone was injured or killed.

See Licence disqualification at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Alcohol interlocks

If you're convicted of a drink-driving offence, you may have to have an alcohol interlock fitted to your vehicle. This is an electronic breath-testing device linked to your vehicle's ignition. It prevents the vehicle from starting if it detects alcohol on your breath.

Drink-driving offences that can result in an interlock include:

- driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 or over
- any repeat drink-driving offence
- driving under the influence of alcohol
- refusing blood or urine tests.

See Alcohol Interlock Program at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Driver education courses

You can be required to complete a driver education course such as the Traffic Offender Intervention Program if you exceed the demerit point limit for your licence twice within 5 years. The course aims to ensure that drivers understand the road rules and the risks of unsafe driving, and change their behaviour.

The Sober Driver Program is a program that aims to change the attitudes and behaviours of drink drive offenders. You may be required to complete the Sober Driver Program if a court convicts you of driving over the alcohol limit but does not require you to get an alcohol interlock.

Vehicle impoundment

Police can impound (take away) your vehicle, or remove the number plates if you commit a high-risk offence, such as:

- driving more than 45km/h over the speed limit
- driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 or over (repeat offences)
- hooning or street racing
- driving when you do not have a licence (2 or more offences)
- driving while your licence is disqualified (2 or more offences)
- driving to get away from police.

Combined with loss of licence, taking away your vehicle or number plates aims to keep high-risk drivers off the road.

Prison

You can be sent to prison if a court finds you guilty of a high-risk driving offence, such as:

- driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 or over
- driving under the influence of alcohol
- driving under the influence of drugs or medicines
- refusing blood or urine tests
- negligent or dangerous driving causing injury or death
- driving while your licence is suspended or disqualified
- hooning or street racing.

The prison term can increase for repeat offences.

See Alcohol and drug offences and Other serious driving offences at roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au

Toll notices

If you use a road with a toll and you do not have an electronic tag or pass, you must pay a fee. If you do not pay within 3 days, you get a toll notice. You must pay the toll plus an administration fee.

If you do not pay the toll notice, you get a reminder notice with extra administration fees or overdue fees.

If you still do not pay, you get a final notice with overdue fees. If you do not pay this by the due date, you may have to go court.

See Toll notices at *roads-maritime.transport.nsw.gov.au*

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