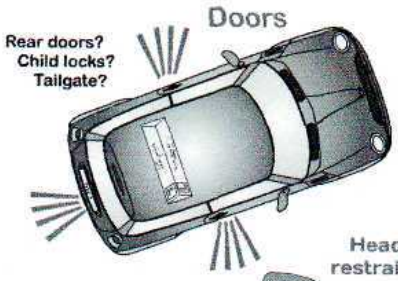
1. Cockpit Drill

As a driver, you are responsible for your vehicle; part of this responsibility is to ensure the safety of yourself and your passengers during every journey.

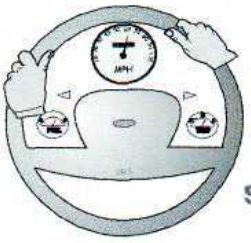
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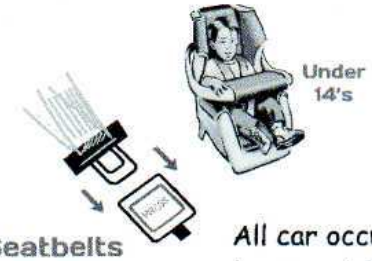
Before you start your engine, check that all the doors are firmly closed, including passenger doors and the hatchback. If you are carrying children, ensure that the child-locks are activated.



The law states that you must be seated in a position from which you can control your vehicle and have a proper view of the road. You should be able to press the clutch pedal down to the floor and comfortably run your hands around the rim of the steering wheel. Correct adjustment of your head-restraint is important in order to minimise 'whiplash' if someone accidentally bumped into your car







All car occupants must wear seatbelts. As a driver (and learner driver) You are legally responsible for all passengers under 14 years of age.

Adjust your mirrors for maximum rear view. Most cars have convex door mirrors; these give a wider angle of view but can distort your perception of distance making vehicles appear further away than they actually are.

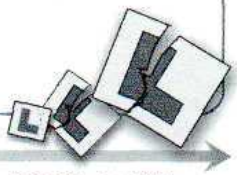


An easy way to remember the cockpit-drill is 'DSSSM' (D triple S, M). The letters stand for Doors, Seat, Steering-reach (& head restraint), Seatbelt and Mirrors.

Completing the cockpit drill before every trip will help to ensure your safety and the safety of your passengers.

D-S-S-S-M
D- 'Triple S' -M

Lesson Notes:



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2. The foot controls

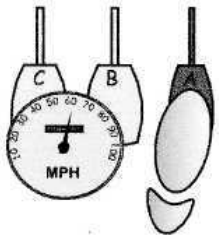
The accelerator or gas pedal (as it is known for easy reference) controls the flow of fuel to the engine.

Pass Your Test with:

To go faster, or climb hills, etc., you will need more power; by (gently) pressing the gas pedal you can increase the power. Releasing the gas pedal reduces the power, however, the car's momentum will keep it moving.

By pressing the footbrake with your right foot you can slow down or stop the car. 'Progressive' braking describes the skill of spreading your braking for smoothness and safety.

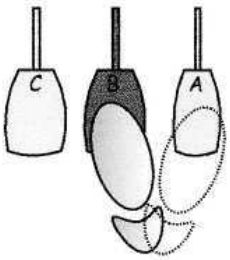
More gas, more power



Progressive braking starts with gentle pressure on the brake which is gradually increased to reduce speed; you then gently release the pressure as you reach your target speed (or just before the car stops).

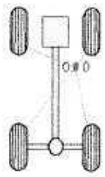
In simple terms, the clutch allows you to separate the engine from the wheels, this enables the engine to keep running when the car is stationary. It is also necessary to press the clutch pedal down when changing gear.

When pressing the clutch down you can use one firm movement; however, when bringing the pedal up (to connect the engine to the wheels) you need a more gentle action. By pausing momentarily as you feel the clutch engage you will have smoother control and a reduced risk of stalling.



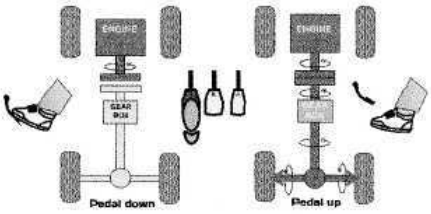


Use mirrors before braking



Footbrake operates on all four wheels

When not operating the clutch it is best to rest your left foot on the floor this will help to reduce fatigue on long journeys and will lessen the risk of premature clutch wear.

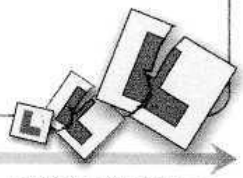


C-B-A As easy as



Biting point

Lesson Notes:



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3. The hand controls

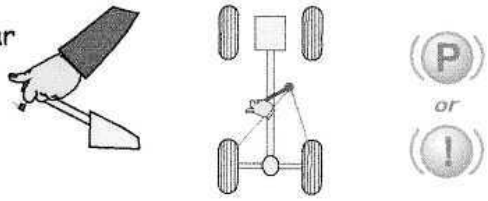
The parking-brake (handbrake) should be used to secure your car when parking or when waiting for a safe gap in the traffic; for example, at junctions, traffic lights, pedestrian crossings or in traffic queues.

Pass Your Test with:

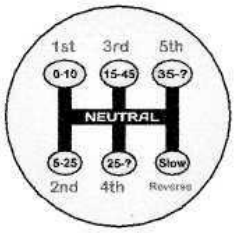
By pressing the ratchet button when applying the handbrake you will prevent unnecessary wear and tear to the mechanism and minimise stretching of the brake cables.

Most modern cars have five forward gears. The gears allow you to make efficient use of the engine power. You will soon get used to the different range of speeds for each gear.

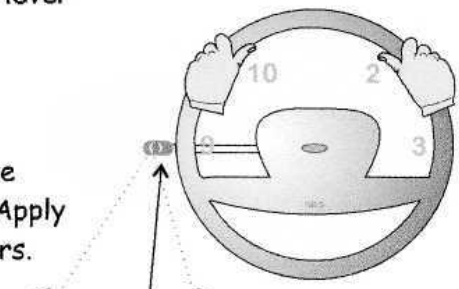
The handbrake only operates on the rear wheels.Never use it while the car is moving!



By using the 'palming method' of gear changing, selecting the correct gear is easy without looking at the gear lever, however, palming is not essential,the most important thing is that you are comfortable with the method you use and always find the gear you want.



The more relaxed your hand is, the easier it will be to make your gear changes. Avoid 'gripping' the gear lever tightly. The speeds shown on this diagram are approximate and may vary from car to car

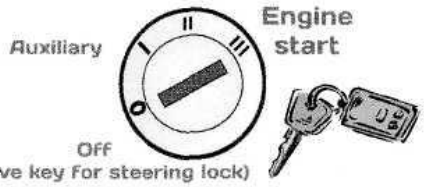


For the best steering control, hold the steering wheel with a light, positive grip placing your hands in the 'ten-to-two' or 'quarter to three; position. Apply pressure with your palms and thumbs rather than gripping with your fingers.

Operate indicator switch with 'fingertip control' by moving it the same way as the steering wheel moves for your intended direction.

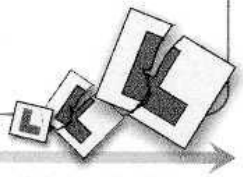
Use fingertip control when operating the indicators

Ignition switch



Turn the ignition key to start the car, but be sure to release it as soon as you hear the engine start, otherwise you risk causing damage to the starter motor.

Lesson Notes:



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4. Mirrors

Pass Your Test with:

Sit in your normal driving position when you adjust your mirrors to ensure that they are set up for the best possible view behind and to the sides. Avoid getting finger marks on the glass; they can reduce your view and cause dazzle at night.

It's important to use your mirrors **well before** any action. This is necessary to ensure that it is safe to proceed with your manoeuvre and that your driving will fit safely with other road users.

Getting into the habit of using the **Mirror-Signal-Manoeuvre** (MSM) routine will help speed your progress towards an early test pass and more importantly to becoming a safe driver. Although mirrors are only mentioned once in the MSM routine, you might need to check your mirrors several times. Use the mirrots at least once and then as often as neccessary for each manoeuvre.

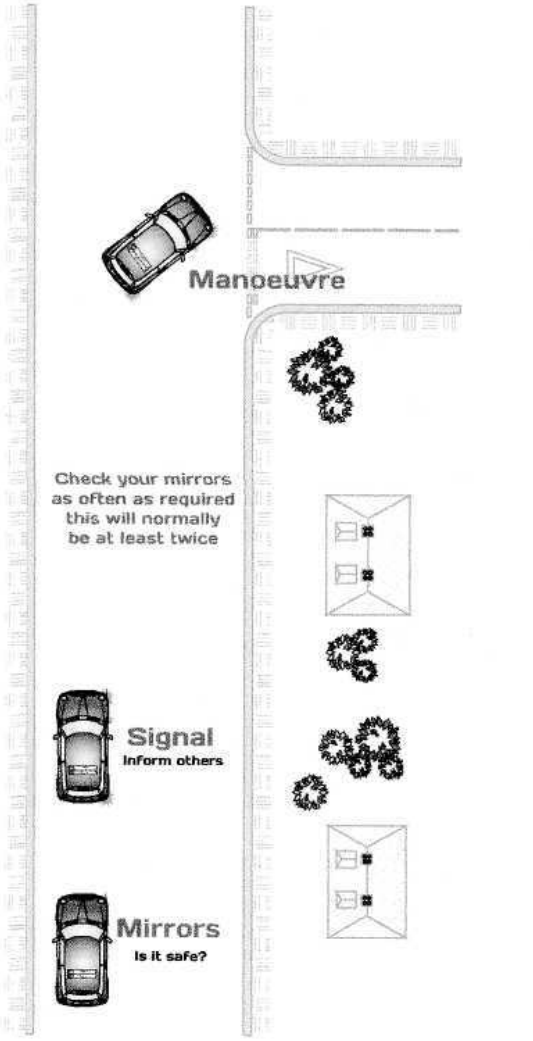
Avoid staring at the mirrors; several quick glances will allow you to build a picture of the traffic situation all around without distracting you from the road ahead. If your mirrors are correctly adjusted, you will be able to check them with minimal head movement.





Another useful tip is to use at least two mirrors before changing speed position or direction, the centre mirror first and then the appropriate door mirrors; doing this will give you a wider field of view.

Even with correctly adjusted mirrors, you cannot see everything to the sides. The hidden areas are called **'blind-spots'**. In some situations, you will need to check your blind-spots by turning your head to the left or right in addition to using your mirrors; this is especially important when moving off from the side of the road and during slow speed manoeuvres.



Lesson Notes:

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5. Signals

In day-to-day life we often have to communicate with other people. For example, we are communicating every time we go into a shop, meet a friend or make a telephone call.

Successful communication requires the clear use of a language that is easily understood by all involved. When driving, the language we use takes the form of signalling with indicators, arm-signals, brake-lights, reversing-lights, vehicle position, headlights, hazard-warning-lights, fog-lights and the horn.

The most common way to signal your intentions is the use of flashing direction indicators. To help others to make sense of your indicators you need to use them early; this will allow enough time for your intentions to be clearly understood.

Flashing headlights and the horn provide a more immediate way of signalling. Use these to warn people of your presence. Some drivers use flashing headlights for other purposes, but this can be confusing. Stay safe by keeping to the rules of the Highway Code! If someone flashes at you always double check the situation to make sure that it's safe for you to proceed.

Use hazard warning lights to let people know that your vehicle is stationary. It is important to remember that you should always park safely - hazard warning lights offer little protection for a dangerously parked vehicle - only use them in emergencies, not as an excuse for bad parking!

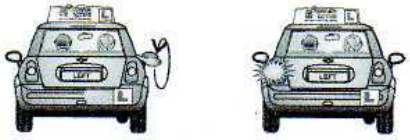
You can also use your hazard lights to warn following drivers of danger on high speed roads in emergency situations where you have to slow down rapidly.

Only use the signals shown in the Highway Code!

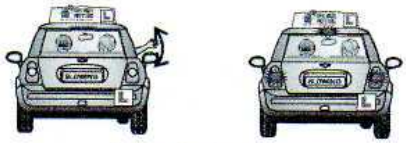
Pass Your Test with:



I intend to turn right



I intend to turn left



I am slowing down



I am here!



I am stationary or slowing down rapidly

I am reversing or intending to reverse

Lesson Notes:

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6. Using the clutch

Smooth operation of the clutch is essential for safe and easy driving, but like all things that are worth doing well, clutch control will take a little practise.

Your aim here is to get silky-smooth, unnoticeable gear changes; balance between the clutch and gas pedal is important to achieve this. You might not get it right first time - but that's OK!

One of the best mistakes that you can make, while mastering the clutch, is to use a bit too much gas rather than too little; this might result in a few jumpy starts (if your clutch release is rushed) but will help to prevent the car from stalling!

When you bring up the clutch pedal , start by sliding your heel backwards along the floor; you will find a natural 'pivot-point' where you can hold your heel still and raise the ball of your foot. When the car starts to move, pause for a moment and then lift your foot off the floor (if necessary) to bring the clutch up gently all the way.

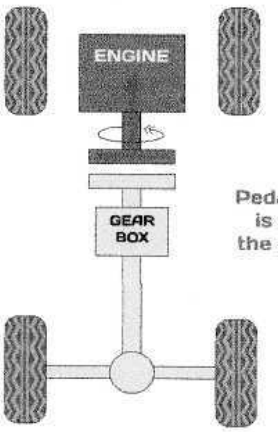
Clutch-control is a method of keeping a very slow (Zimmer frame) speed in first and reverse gears; this is necessary for manoeuvring in car parks and for 'creeping out' at blind junctions.



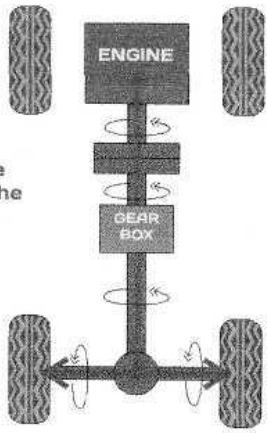
You can achieve clutch-control by holding the gas pedal still and moving the clutch pedal slightly above and below the 'biting-point'. The movement should be no more than about the thickness of a one-pound coin. However, it's OK to press the clutch down further than this, as long as you can find your 'biting-point' easily.

Good clutch control comes naturally after a while, but remember, you will need lots of practise... Occasionally, this might lead to the engine stalling... Remember - that's OK! It's all part of the learning process.

Pass Your Test with:



Pedal down - the engine is disconnected from the gearbox and driving wheels

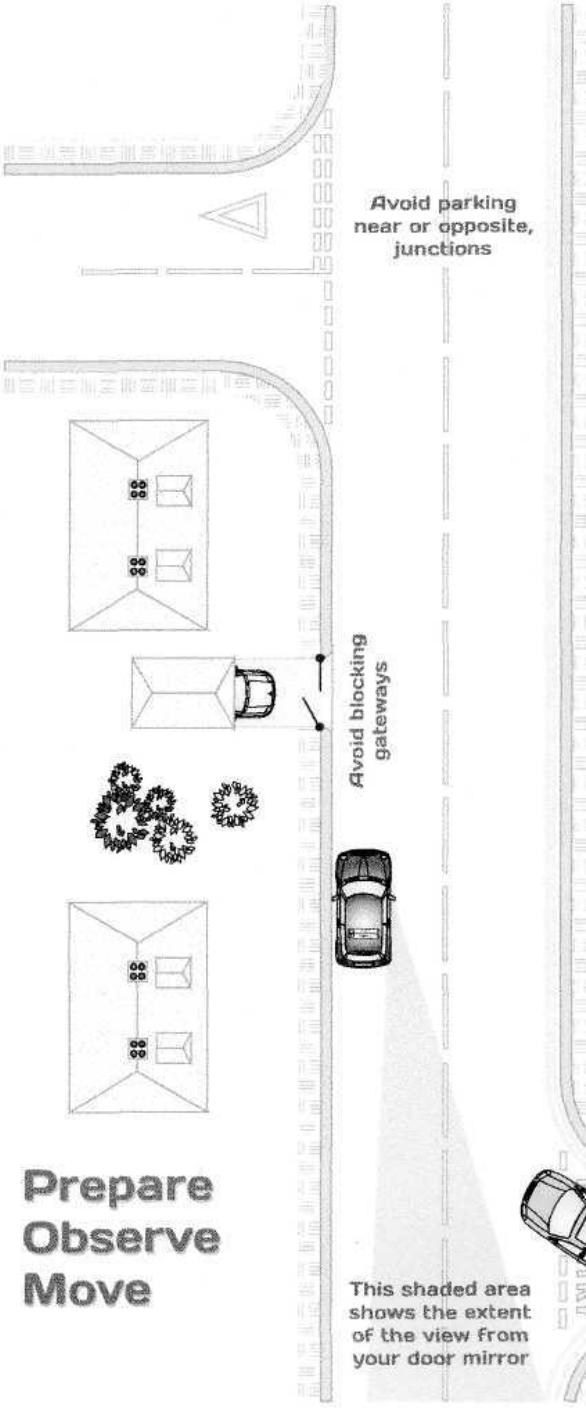


Pedal up - the engine is now connected to the wheels and driving the car

Lesson Notes:

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7. Moving off and stopping



There are simple routines to help you with all aspects of driving. You have already learned about MSM. Moving off also has a simple routine.

Pass Your Test with:

Thi routine can help you to develop a safe moving off method...

'Prepare - Observe - Move'.

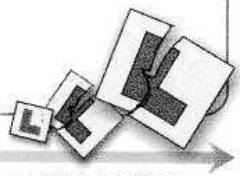
When **preparing** to move, your first job is to check that the handbrake is on and the gear lever is in the neutral position before starting the engine. Next, press the clutch pedal down and select first gear (keep the clutch pedal down at this point!) Set the gas by pressing the accelerator pedal to get a lively hum from the engine (this give the car enough power to move without stalling). Finally, find, and hold, the biting point.

Make all-round **observation** by completing a 'six-point-check' using all your mirrors, checking the road ahead and your blind spots. Consider a signal, and, if it is safe, release the handbrake; bring the clutch up gently and move away steering slightly to the right to take up a safe position in the road.

The routine for stopping begins with observation. Check your mirrors and consider a signal. When it is safe to stop, press the footbrake gently, steer towards the kerb (looking well ahead as you do so) and press the clutch down just before the car stops.

Ideally the car should feel as though it's stopping too soon, ease off the footbrake to make it to the stopping position. Finally, handbrake, neutral - and relax!

Lesson Notes:



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9. Emergency stop

One of the main rules of driving is: 'check your mirrors before every manoeuvre'. The emergency stop is the one (and only) occasion that this rule can be broken.

In an emergency, the most important thing to do is to stop quickly and safely; taking time to check your mirrors could literally mean the difference between life and death. However, this does not mean that you should ignore what's happening behind or that it's OK not to check the mirrors; simply remember that stopping is a higher priority than a mirror check. Brake first - then mirrors.

By keeping both hands firmly on the steering wheel and pressing the brake pedal before the clutch, you will gain maximum stability. Be prepared for the 'rattle' of the anti-lock braking system (ABS) and keep the brake pedal firmly pressed.

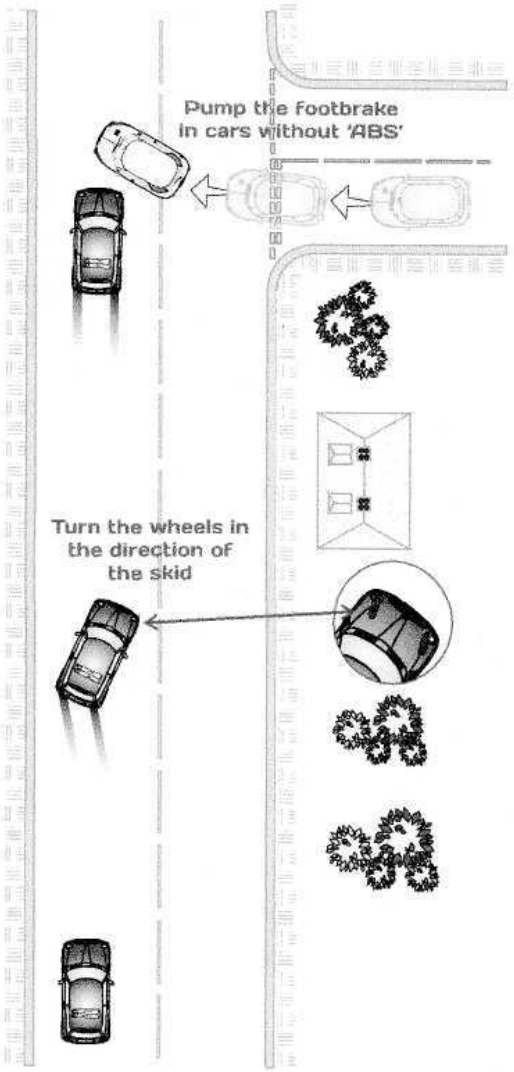
When practising the emergency stop, apply the handbrake and select neutral after the car has stopped. In a real emergency, quickly assess the situation all around (mirrors) after stopping; you might need to move your car in order to avoid further danger.

There is a possibility of skidding in some emergency situations. In a car without ABS you can regain control by releasing and then reapplying the footbrake in quick succession. If the rear of the car slides sideways, turn the steering wheel in the direction of the slide to straighten up; at the same time, look well ahead to keep on course.

In emergency situations it becomes especially important to look for spaces and not obstructions - always look for a gap, a way out. Ultimately, the best advice about emergencies is avoid them! Do this by always maintaing a safe speed and distance from others.

Be prepared for the unexpected!

Pass Your Test with:



Lesson Notes:

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10. Meeting vehicles

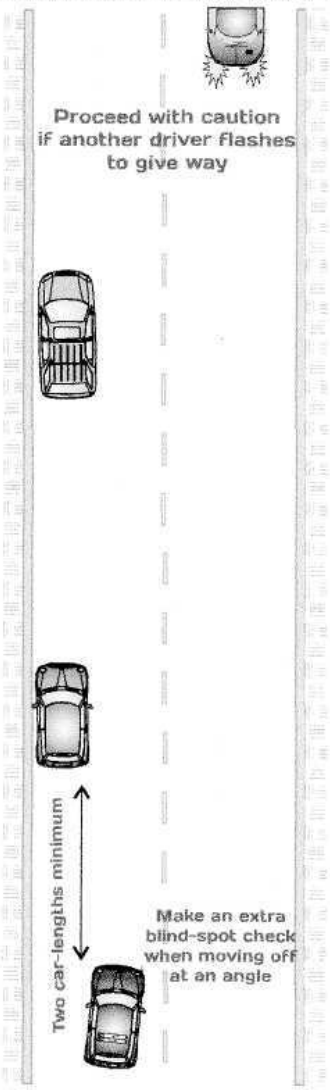
Pass Your Test with:

The term 'meeting vehicles' applies to any situation where the road width is restricted and there is not enough space for two vehicles to pass safely at their normal speed.

You will 'meet' vehicles where there are parked cars, road works, narrow bridges, single-track roads, and in other similar situations.

As you approach a 'meeting' situation, your first job is to decide who has priority. Normally, if the obstruction is on your side of the road, you will need to give way.

Where possible, time your approach by slowing down to arrive when the road is clear. If this is not possible you will need to decide whether there is enough room to proceed with caution, or if it would be better to stop and give way. It is not always easy to make this decision on the move and quite often you won't know. This is perfectly OK! Simply follow the safety rule:



If you don't know - don't go!

When giving way, leave plenty of space between yourself and the obstruction (a **minimum** of two car lengths), this will maximise your forward vision and make it easier to move off when the road is clear, doing this will also help cars behind to realise that you are waiting to give way and not pulling in to park.

After giving way, make sure that it is safe to move off by checking your mirrors, blind-spots and the road ahead. You might need an extra blind-spot check if you are waiting at an angle (as shown in the diagram).

Take special care if other drivers flash their headlights. Remember, flashing headlights simply alert you to the other drivers presence - make absolutely sure that the situation is safe before proceeding.

Lesson Notes:

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11. Approaching junctions

As with any other situation where you are changing speed, position or direction you will use your hazard routine (MSM) when approaching junctions, making sure that you are fully aware of how your actions will affect other road users at each step.

Pass Your Test with:

Mirrors: Your first job when approaching any hazard, in this case a junction, is to check your mirrors. You are doing this to make sure that it is safe to slow down and turn (you might quickly change your mind about turning if you realised that there was a large, out of control, lorry following closely behind and unable to stop!).

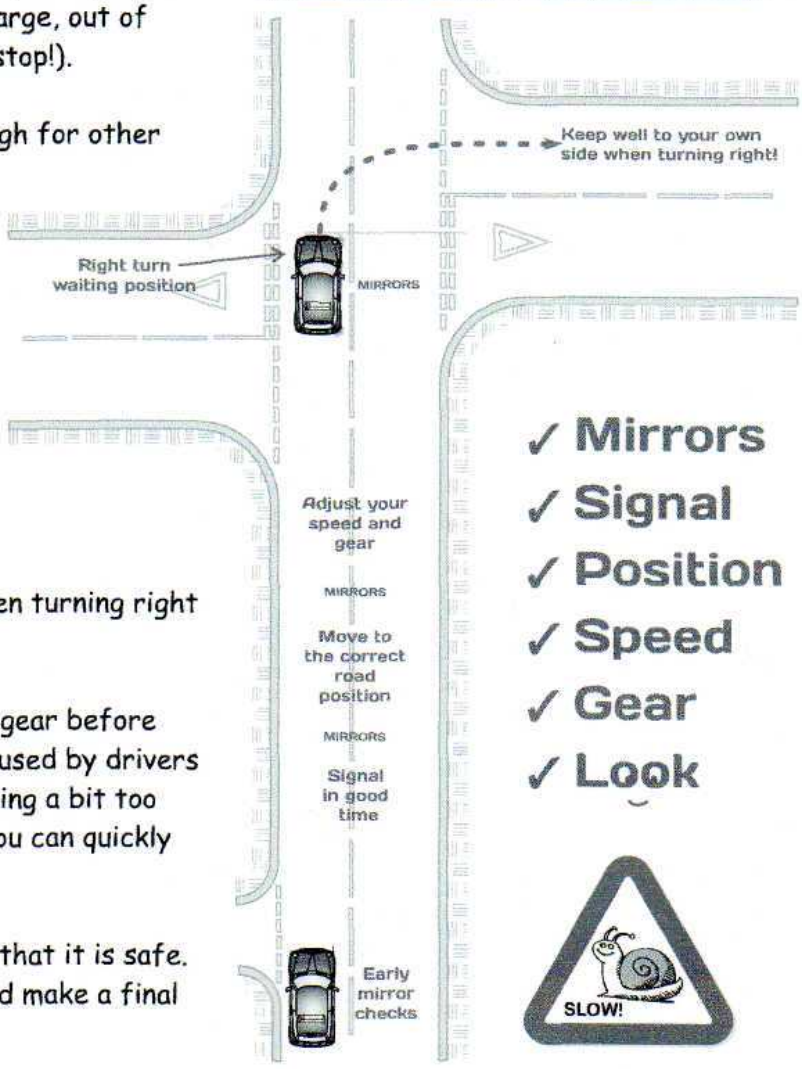
Signal: Remember that you need to signal early enough for other road users to recognise your intentions, making sure that your signals are not misleading. For example, a signal given too early might confuse someone into thinking that you are turning into a driveway, or that you are parking on the left.

Position: Move into position after you have signalled. For left turns you will normally maintain your safe driving line, for right turns it might be necessary to move towards the centre of the road.

Make sure that you do not stop too far forwards when turning right otherwise you will not have enough space to steer.

Speed: Adjust your speed and select an appropriate gear before you start to turn. Most accidents at junctions are caused by drivers who approach too quickly. If you find that you are going a bit too slow it's easy to speed up; if you are going too fast you can quickly run out or road...

Look: Before turning you must make absolutely sure that it is safe. In order to do this you will need to look all around and make a final check in your mirrors (especially the door mirrors).



Lesson Notes:

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12. Crossing traffic

As you gain more driving experience, you will come into contact with more traffic.

There will be lots of places where you will have to 'cross the path' of other vehicles, in other words, drive in front of them. Turning right from a main road to a side road is a common example of 'crossing' (as shown in the diagram) but it is not the only one, you will 'cross' when turning in or out of driveways or other openings on the right, going ahead at crossroads, etc.

When turning right from a main road to a side road you must not get in the way of the cars coming towards you.

Ideally, in many situations you will be able to slow down to time your approach so that you arrive when the road is clear, do this by reading the road well ahead. But a word of warning - never speed up to 'make the gap'; the driver coming the other way could also speed up!

The vehicles that you are turning in front of have priority and shouldn't need to change their speed or direction because of your actions. A useful guide for judging the gap when getting used to crossing the path of traffic is the 'walk across' rule...

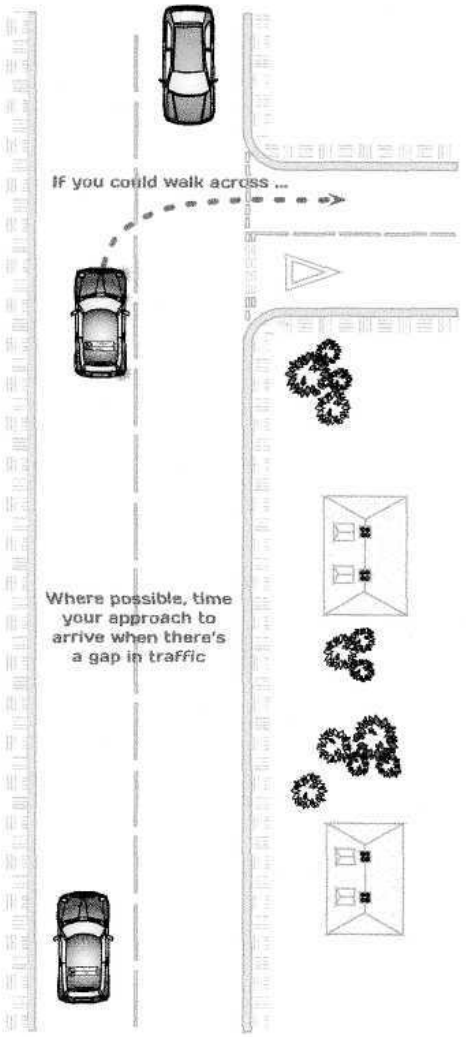
If you think that you could safely walk across the whole width of the road in front of an approaching vehicle, then it is probably safe to drive across (assuming that the 'side' road is clear!).

Crossing traffic requires extra care on fast roads, for example, when crossing dual-carriageways.

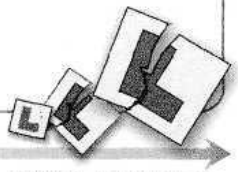
Always wait until you are 100% sure it is safe before making your decision to proceed. Better to be held up for a few minutes than to find yourself waking up in the local hospital!

If you don't know... Don't go!

Pass Your Test with:



Lesson Notes:



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13. Emerging

'Emerging' is the term used to describe the process of leaving a side road to enter, or cross, a main road. When leaving a side road it can be useful to think of the junction as 'open' or 'closed' - these terms relate to the view into the main road.

Pass Your Test with:

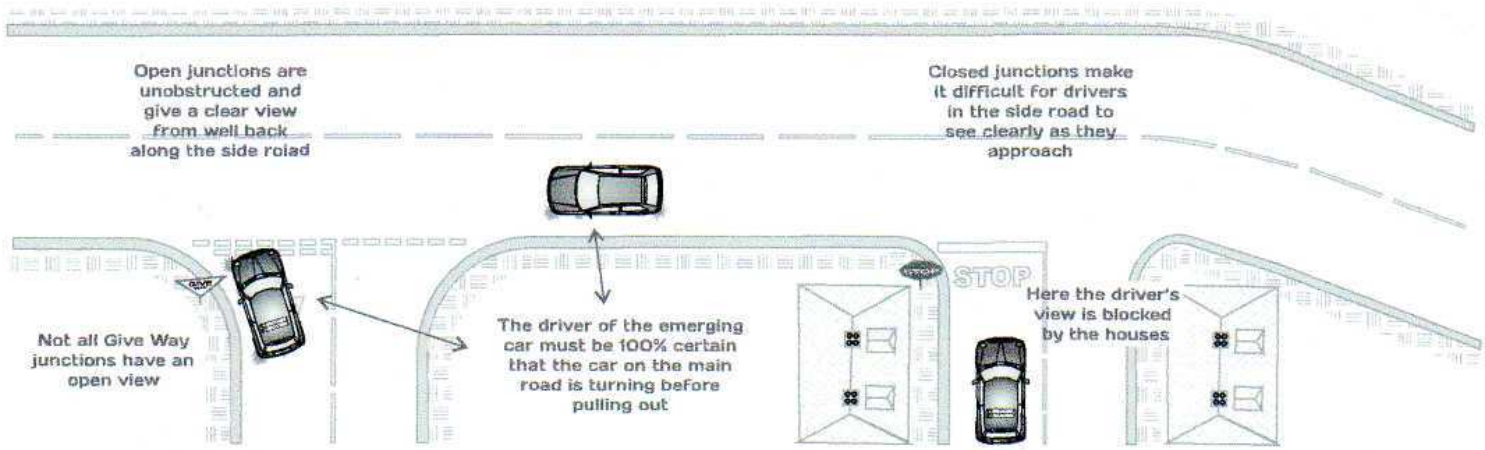
An **open** junction is one where you have a clear view into the main road (both to the left and right) well before you arrive at the 'mouth' of the junction. A **closed** junction is just the opposite, your view is restricted until the very last moment of the approach.

As you approach junctions you need to take early observation to gain information about the road layout. In the case of an open junction, early observation provides information about traffic movement in the new road and will sometimes enable you to carry on without stopping because you will see the road is clear.

Your approach speed must be slow enough to enable 'effective observation' - this means that you need plenty of time to look for traffic in order to decide whether you can emerge safely. Most emerging situations junctions will need first gear (even when you don't stop), especially in town.

Be especially careful if there is a vehicle approaching from your right on the main road that's signalling left to turn into the road from which you are emerging. The signal may have been left on by mistake (see the diagram). Also take special care at unmarked junctions - other drivers might not know who has priority.

Emerging safely takes practise. If you remember that your aim is safety rather than speed you will soon gain success. If in doubt, wait! Remember that the traffic on the main road has priority.



Lesson Notes:

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14. Crossroads

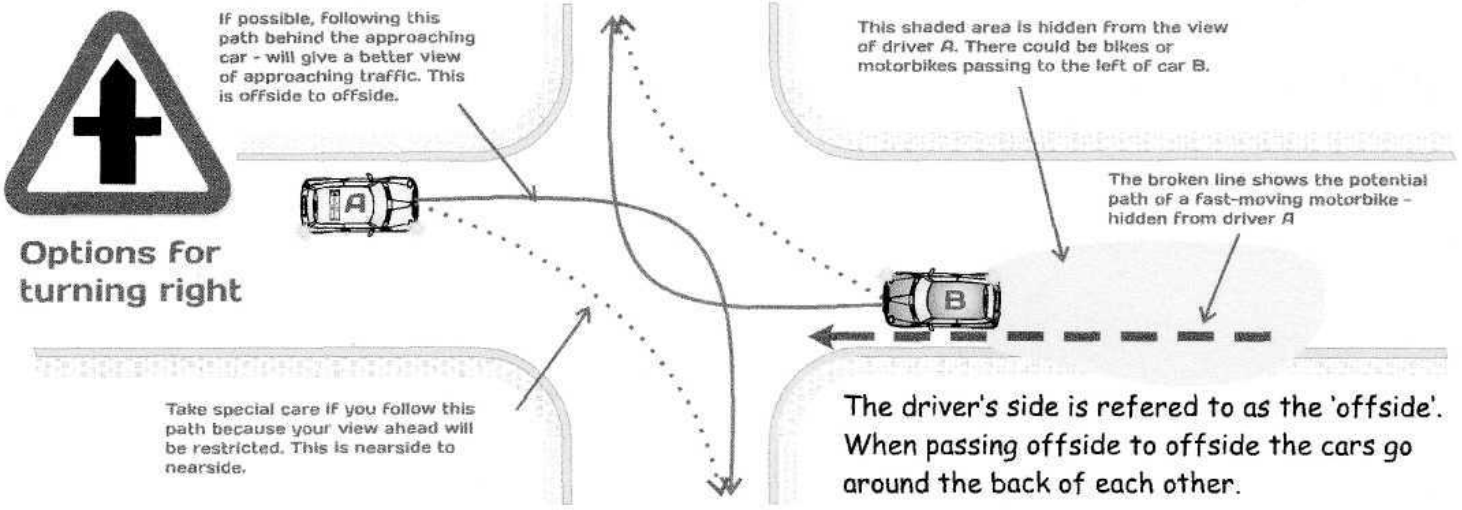
Pass Your Test with:

A crossroad is a junction where one road crosses another. Crossroads can be marked or unmarked.

When approaching on the main road, check to make sure that the roads on the left and right are clear before proceeding - even if you have priority; you will often need to slow down by easing off the gas and perhaps selecting a lower gear. When turning left or right from a main road at crossroads make sure that you check all around - traffic can approach from any direction! (Remember to count to three - see the DriverActive web course)

When approaching from a side road, the crossroad is simply an extension of a T- junction. Make your normal safety checks left and right but this time you also need to check the road ahead. Priority is determined in the same way as when turning from a main road, however, always double check and only proceed when you are absolutely sure that it is safe. Take care when following the road ahead... Make sure that the 'new' road ahead is clear before you start to move..

Take extra care at unmarked crossroads - no one has automatic priority. Be prepared to stop and give way, even if you consider that you are on the main road - other drivers might be strangers to the area, or might genuinely think that they have priority.



Lesson Notes:

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15. Y-Junctions

Y-Junctions are, in many respects, similar to T-junctions. The main difference is that the shape of the junction affects what you can see as you approach; this often misleads people into approaching too fast in the mistaken belief that the road is clear.

Some drivers in the side road might not even see the junction, especially when in a strange area or on unlit roads at night.

When emerging from Y-junctions your view will be restricted by blind-spots created by the 'pillars' of your car - ask your instructor to point these out to you.

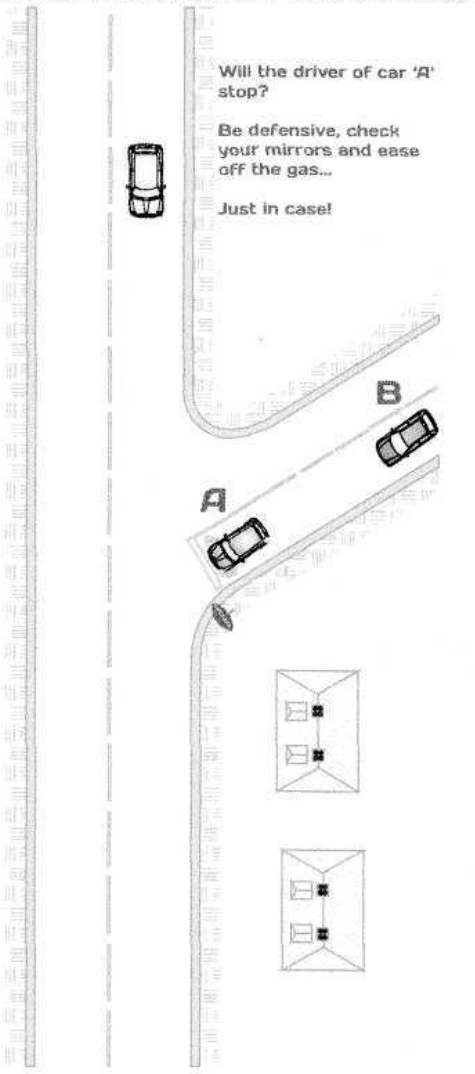
You need to take extra precautions with your observation and will often need to lean forwards and/or backwards to compensate for the extra blind-spots.

If you have an early, open view into the main road, and can see that the road is clear (car B), make sure the driver in front (car A) has moved before you make your move! There is a real risk of rear-end shunts when emerging from this type of junction.

From the main road you can easily spot side roads that enter at an acute angle like the one in the diagram. If you can clearly see the 'Stop' or 'Give-Way' sign in the side road as you drive along the main road, take extra care. Remember that drivers who are approaching or waiting to emerge might not have seen you.

Be especially careful if the side road is unmarked, drivers on that road might not realise that they are joining a main road.

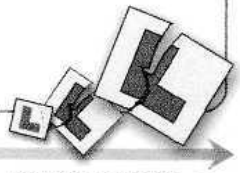
Pass Your Test with:





Be prepared for the unexpected ...

Lesson Notes:



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16. Safety bubble

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your shortcut to test success

Pass Your Test with:

For your own safety and the safety of other road users you must maintain an adequate space around your vehicle at all times - a safety bubble ...

By maintaining a safe space around your car you will have room to react when things take you by surprise. And you can be absolutely certain that things take even the best drivers by surprise from time-to-time!

When passing parked vehicles leave a minimum of one car door's width. This will help to prevent an accident when someone suddenly opens a door or steps out from behind a parked car. If there is not enough space to leave a door's width, slow down, or stop and give way.

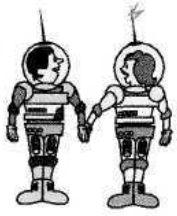
Leave plenty of space when passing cyclists, pedestrians, or animals - these road users are very vulnerable.

Make sure that you understand the 'two-second' rule taught by your instructor, and use it whenever you are driving in free flowing traffic. Remember, you need at least twice as much space to stop in wet weather (this means a gap of four seconds).

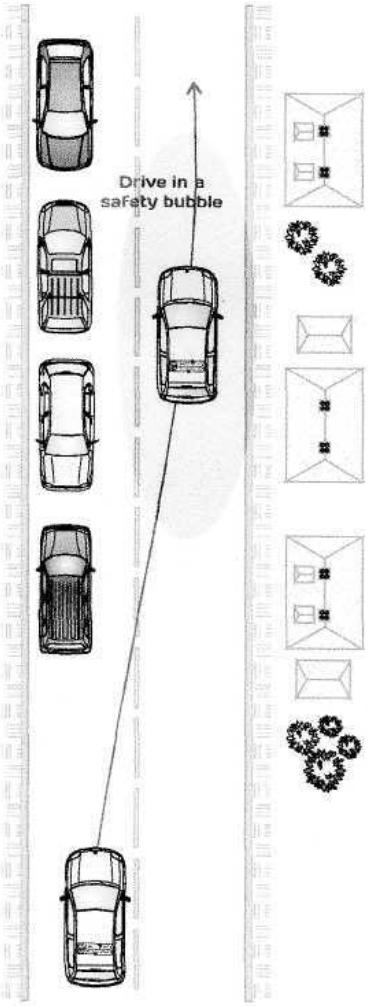
You can control the safety space behind your vehicle by adjusting your speed. If the driver behind is following too closely, gently reduce speed and increase your forward safety gap to allow extra stopping distance.

If closely following vehicles make you feel uncomfortable, simply allow them to overtake - this will make little or no difference to your journey time, but you will be much more likely to arrive safely ...

Be a 'space person' - keep a safe space, a safety bubble around your vehicle all the time.



Less space ... Less speed!



Lesson Notes:

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17. Roundabouts

Pass Your Test with:

The **'12 o'clock' guide** is a simple way to remember the procedure at roundabouts. Look out for signs on the approach to the roundabout and imagine the layout as a clock face. Exits beyond 12 o'clock will usually require use of the right-hand lane and a right turn signal. However, you must be aware that there are local variations to this rule, multi lane roads may also vary - ask your instructor for details.

Slow down early on approach, looking for gaps. In busy traffic make an early decision about which of the cars (already on the roundabout) you intend to follow in order to join the roundabout; adjust your speed to merge into the gap behind that car.

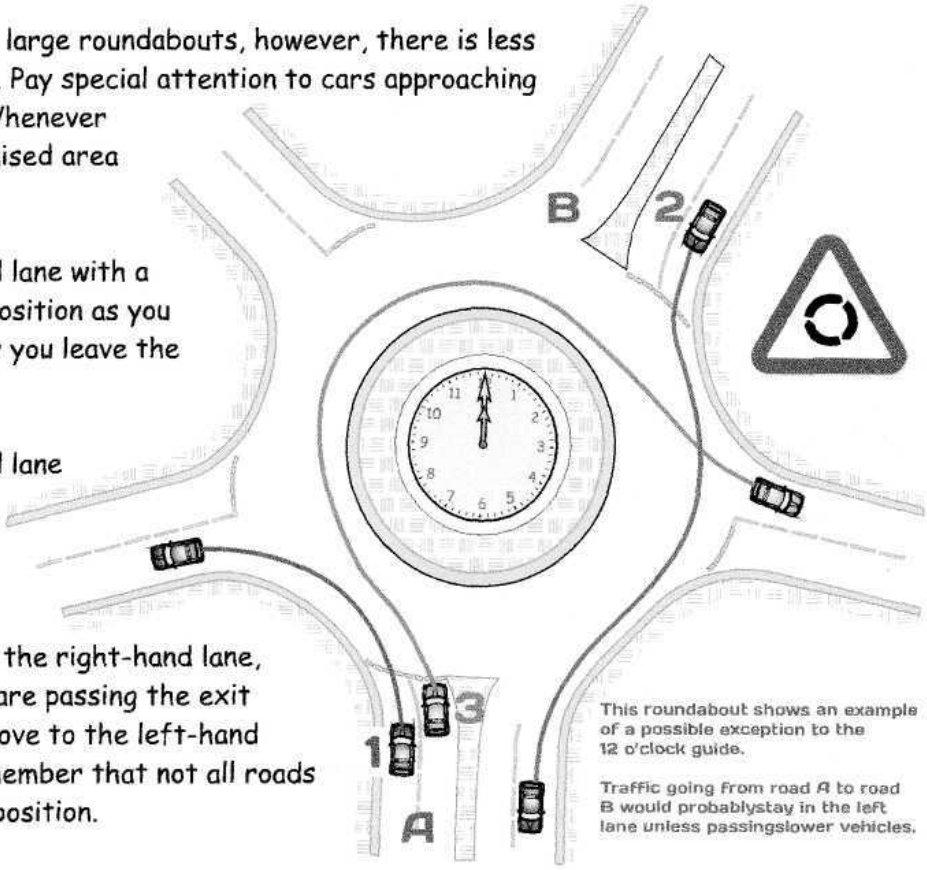
Although roundabouts are 'one-way' systems you must always check that the road is clear to the left as well as to the right. Keep a lookout for pedestrians, cyclists, broken down vehicles, or even people coming the wrong way!

Mini-roundabouts follow the same rules as large roundabouts, however, there is less space so you need to do everything slower. Pay special attention to cars approaching from ahead before deciding to proceed. Whenever possible, avoid driving on the painted or raised area in the centre of the junction.

1 Turning left: Approach in the left-hand lane with a left-turn signal. Maintain your signal and position as you drive to your exit. Cancel your signal after you leave the roundabout.

2 Going ahead: Approach in the left-hand lane without a signal. Keep left as you drive to your exit. Signal left as you pass the exit before the one that you intend to take.

3 Turning right: Signal right, approach in the right-hand lane, maintain your signal and position until you are passing the exit before the one you want, signal left and move to the left-hand lane in order to leave the roundabout. Remember that not all roads beyond 12 o'clock will require a right lane position.



This roundabout shows an example of a possible exception to the 12 o'clock guide.

Traffic going from road A to road B would probablystay in the left lane unless passingslower vehicles.

Lesson Notes:

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18. Pedestrian crossing safety

Pedestrian crossings provide a safe place for people to get from one side of the road to the other.

Pass Your Test with:

Crossings are either 'controlled' or 'uncontrolled'. At controlled crossings, both the drivers and pedestrians are given instructions, either by traffic lights or crossing wardens (for example, 'lollipop ladies'). At uncontrolled crossings pedestrians have to decide for themselves when it is safe to cross, relying on the courtesy and consideration of drivers.



When approaching a pedestrian crossing you must always be on the lookout for pedestrians, especially children and elderly people. Be prepared to slow down and stop if there are pedestrians about. When pedestrians are on the crossing, they always have priority.

Don't instruct pedestrians to cross - allow them to make their own decisions. By waving to a pedestrian you could be inadvertently exposing them to a danger that you have not seen; for example, there may be another vehicle overtaking illegally. The pedestrian normally has a better all round view of the traffic from the footpath than you have from the driving seat.



Zebra crossings are marked by Belisha beacons - black and white poles with an amber flashing globe at the top. You must always be on the look-out for people near the crossing and be prepared to stop to allow them to cross. On the approach to, and after, the crossing there are zig-zag white lines painted on the road surface. It's dangerous and illegal to park or overtake within these lines.

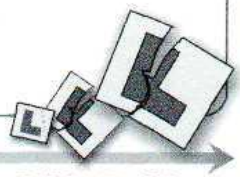


The sequence of pedestrian traffic lights sometimes differs from regular traffic lights; at pelican crossings there is a flashing amber light. When the flashing amber light shows you may proceed if there are no pedestrians on the crossing. (Note: you must stop, as usual, at the steady amber light that shows before red.) Watch out for pedestrians near the crossing who may have pressed the button to activate the lights; use your hazard routine and be prepared to stop.



School crossings often have flashing amber lights under a 'children crossing' sign; these indicate that there is a school crossing patrol ahead. The crossing may be manned by a school warden, traffic warden or by a police officer. You must stop when you are instructed to do so. Wait until all the children have crossed and the warden is back on the footpath before you move off.

Lesson Notes:



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19. Overtaking

Overtaking is potentially one of the most dangerous driving manoeuvres; this is because it puts you in the direct path of other traffic. However, overtaking need not be dangerous if you take care and follow some simple rules.

Pass Your Test with:

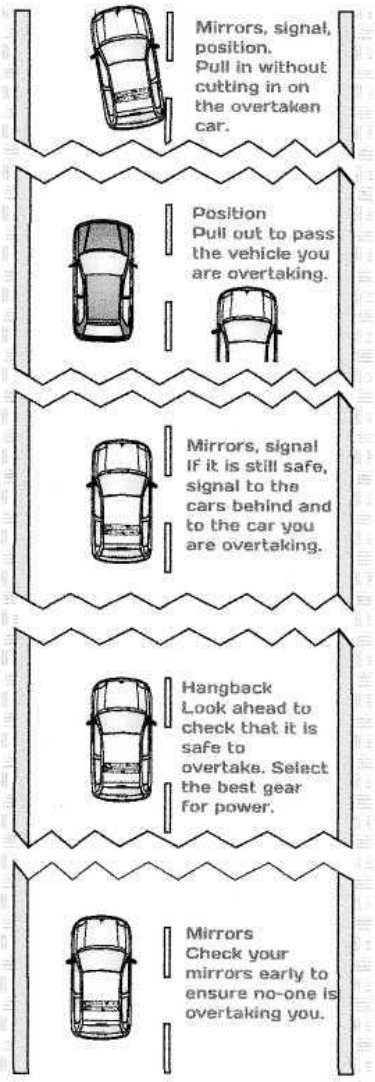
The question to ask yourself is "Will I gain anything by overtaking?". Many people have been killed or injured because their decision to overtake was driven by frustration with a slow-moving vehicle ahead.

Your decision should be based on the effects that overtaking will have on your overall journey time. There is not much point overtaking if you can only pass one or two vehicles in a long slow queue or if you are about to enter a low speed limit area. If there are only one or two slow vehicles it might be worth overtaking, but in today's busy traffic it is often a waste of time - and not worth the risk.

If you have decided that it would be worthwhile to overtake, make sure that the road ahead is clear, be especially careful to check side roads or gateways from which vehicles might emerge, and that there is no dead-ground. (Ask your instructor to explain the term 'dead-ground')

You will often need to change to a lower gear in order to accelerate briskly past the vehicle you are overtaking. Leave plenty of space, especially when moving back in to the left - make sure that you can see the vehicle that you have overtaken in your centre mirror.

Allow others to overtake you... This doesn't mean that you must crawl around at a snail's pace letting everyone pass; it simply means that it is often safer to have someone in front, where you can see them, rather than behind. There are no gold stars for being stubborn and blocking the path of other drivers. In the worst imaginable situation you could end up involved in someone else's accident. Again, concentrate on your journey time - having one or two, or ten, more vehicles ahead is unlikely to make any difference. If you have a sat-nav, get into the habit of checking the estimated arrival time - this will stay much the same regardless of whether you overtake or not.



Lesson Notes:

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21. Road markings

Pass Your Test with:

Road markings are mostly painted white or yellow. White lines separate streams of traffic; yellow lines and markings prohibit waiting and parking.

A notable exception to the white and yellow norm are red lines painted in the place of double yellow lines - these 'red-route' lines mean absolutely no waiting or parking because the route must be kept clear at all times. You can expect to be towed away very quickly if you try to wait on a red-route!

Roads in towns and city centres use the same system of white lines that is found elsewhere: lane lines, hazard lines, stop and give way lines, etcetera. However, in addition to these you will find bus and cycle lanes, and more hatched markings. Whatever markings you encounter there is a general rule to apply: simply, the more paint you see, the more careful you must be.

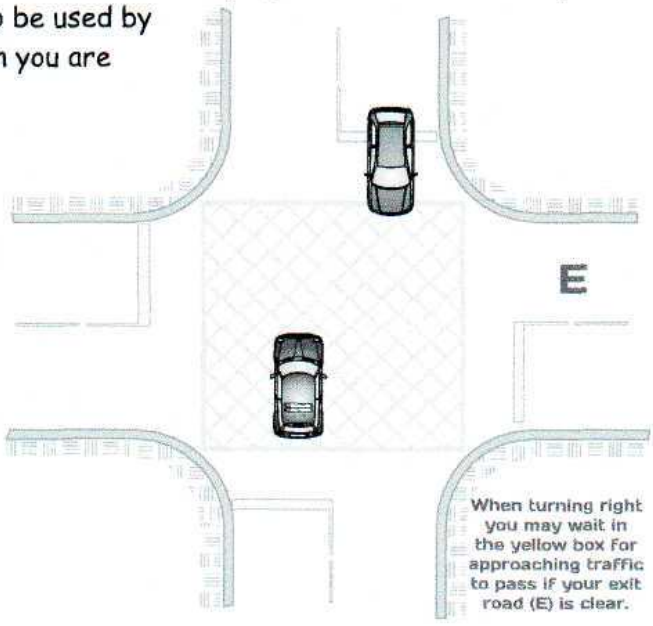


Bus lanes are provided to allow the free passage of public transport during peak traffic periods. They are marked by a broad solid white line and the words 'Bus Lane' painted on the road surface.

You must not drive in a bus lane during its period of operation (indicated on the signs). You must also take special care when turning left across a bus lane. Some bus lanes can also be used by taxis and pedal cyclists who may try to pass you on the left when you are turning.

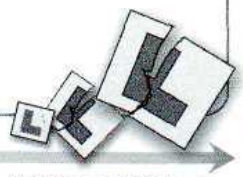
White 'hatched markings' are used to separate traffic streams and increase safety margins. As a general rule, you should avoid driving on the hatched areas edged with broken white lines. You must never cross a solid white line on to a hatched area except in an emergency.

Yellow box junctions (see diagram) are used to help prevent traffic snarl-ups at junctions. The general rule is: do not enter the box unless your exit is clear. If your exit is clear, you may wait in the box when turning right until the road is clear of approaching traffic.



When turning right you may wait in the yellow box for approaching traffic to pass if your exit road (E) is clear.

Lesson Notes:



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22. One-way systems

One-way systems help to smooth the traffic flow around busier central areas of towns and cities.

Pass Your Test with:

For the systems to work well, drivers need to choose the best road position for their intended destination. Stay in the left-hand lane to leave the system via a road to the left; keep right if you want to leave to the right. Always be on the look-out for signs and markings showing the best lane for your destination and move into that lane as soon as possible after entering the system.

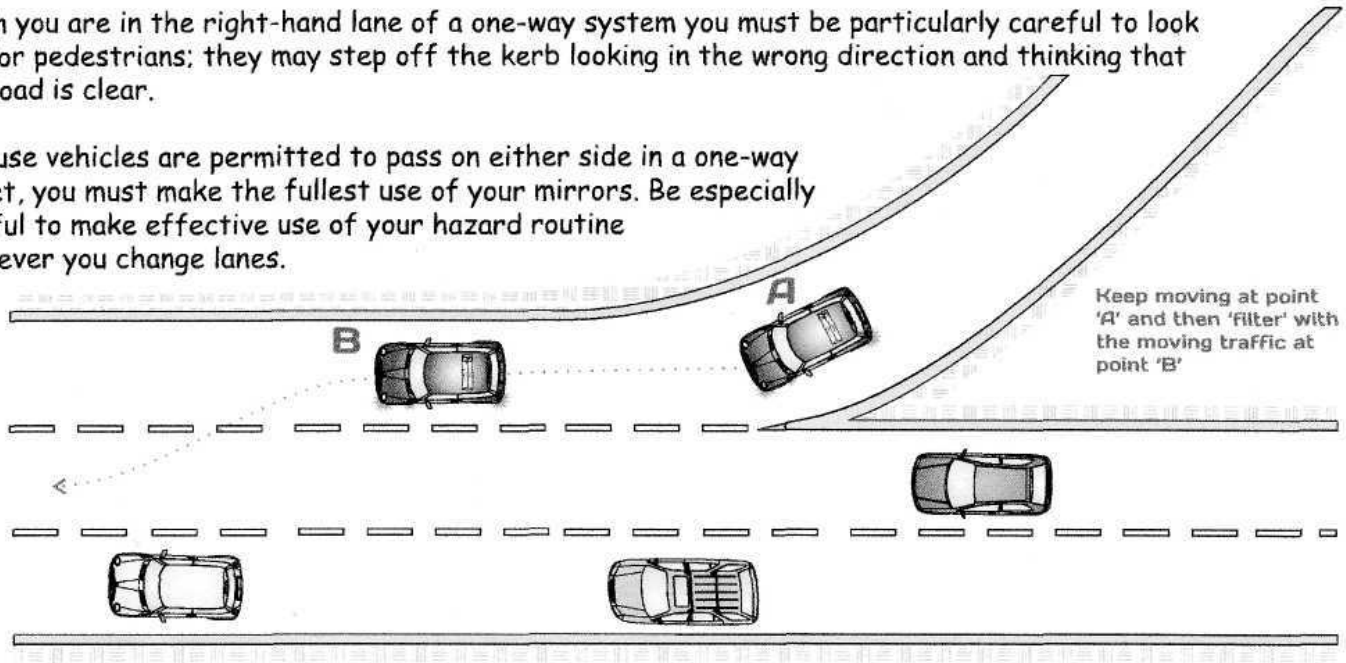


You may occasionally come across a one-way system that has no road markings (perhaps on a recently resurfaced road); in these circumstances you should use your skill and experience to guide you to the best 'imaginary' lane position. In other words, drive as if the lanes were marked.

Driving in the centre of your lane without straddling the white lines will help other drivers recognise your intentions. If you are unsure about which lane to choose, move to the right and drive around the one-way system again; this will give the information needed for you to choose the best lane second time around.

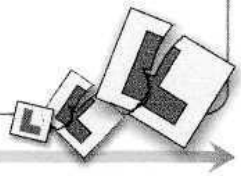
When you are in the right-hand lane of a one-way system you must be particularly careful to look out for pedestrians; they may step off the kerb looking in the wrong direction and thinking that the road is clear.

Because vehicles are permitted to pass on either side in a one-way street, you must make the fullest use of your mirrors. Be especially careful to make effective use of your hazard routine whenever you change lanes.



Finally, get into the habit of filtering (above) by keeping your car moving when you change lanes instead of stopping to wait for a gap in the traffic. Filtering reduces the risk of being hit from behind (by drivers who are not looking where they are going!).

Lesson Notes:



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23. Dual-carriageways

To accommodate this faster-moving traffic, dual- carriageways have two lanes or more in each direction and often have higher speed limits than single-carriageway roads.

Pass Your Test with:

Traffic moving in opposite directions is separated by a central reservation; this sometimes has a crash barrier to further protect the streams of traffic from one another.

Although the average speed on dual-carriageways is higher than on many other roads, you might still encounter pedestrians, cyclists, parked vehicles, entrances to houses and other premises - in fact, anything that you would expect to find on a single carriageway road. The higher speeds on a dual-carriageway mean that you will often have less time to respond to these hazards. To compensate you will probably need to plan your driving 'further ahead' than you may have been in the habit of doing so far.

National Speed Limit



Look out for brake-lights well ahead and ease off the gas when you see them. As a driver, you should be aware of your speed at all times – this becomes especially important when approaching a queue of stationary traffic, or when you are planning to leave a fast dual-carriageway. Getting into the habit of checking your speedometer regularly will help to ensure your continued safety.

Clearway



Although there are many conventional T-junctions and crossroads on dual carriageways, motorway-type slip roads are becoming more common. Slip roads have acceleration and deceleration lanes. The acceleration lane is an extra lane on the left for use when building up your speed before merging with traffic on the main carriageway so that you can join the flow safely. Deceleration lanes are found on exit slip roads; they allow you to slow down without holding up following traffic on the main carriageway. Usually, you shouldn't need to start braking until you enter the deceleration lane.

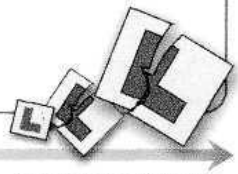
If you join a fast dual carriageway from a T-junction take extra care when judging the speed of traffic already on the main road. If you are turning right, wait until both sides are clear unless there is a large gap in the central reservation

Most dual-carriageways are clearways (but not all clearways are dual carriageways). Clearways are roads on which you are not allowed to stop; this is because stationary vehicles would pose extreme danger to fast-moving traffic.



One of the most impotant signs that you will see on a dual-carriageway is the one shown on the right - when you see this dual-carriageway ends sign ease off and keep to the left lane.

Lesson Notes:



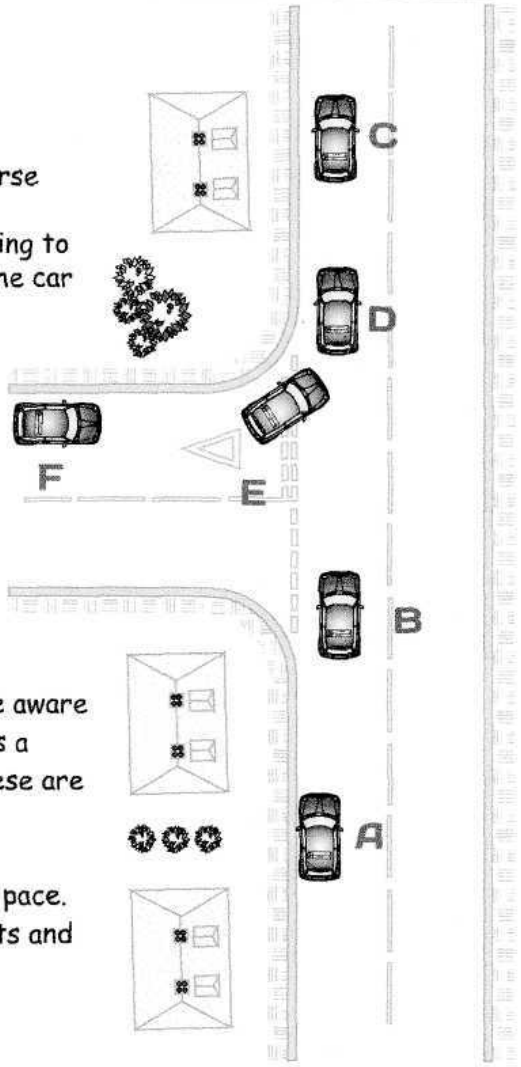
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25. Reversing left

The ability to reverse while steering left or right is essential for safe driving. You might need to reverse into a driveway in order to park outside your home, or you might need to reverse because of a problem on the road ahead, for example, a broken down vehicle, or even a herd of sheep or cows.

Pass Your Test with:

Driving Test Examiners check your ability to drive backwards by asking you to reverse into a road on either the left or right. When reversing to the left you will be asked to stop just before the road that you are going to reverse into. You will then drive past the turning, stop, and reverse around the corner.



A Remember your normal safety checks before you move off .

B Glance into the 'target' road to make sure it is safe and clear to reverse

C Stop about 45 cm (18 in) from the kerb. Look all around before starting to reverse. Glance to the front before starting to steer; the front of the car will 'swing out' and might affect other traffic.

D Check to the front and your right shoulder blind spot frequently.

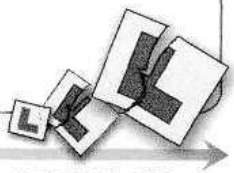
E Look around, at least twice, as you steer round the corner. Then keep looking well back (for accuracy), with occasional glances to the front (for safety), as you reverse in a straight line.

F Remember your normal safety checks before you move off after reversing.

Good **observation** is essential for safe reversing to the left; you must be aware of what is happening all around you throughout the manoeuvre. As well as a general awareness, you must make some specific observation checks; these are shown on the diagram.

Use **clutch control** to keep your speed to a slow (zimmer-frame) walking pace. This will give you plenty of time for observation and steering adjustments and help you to position your car accurately (approx. 45 cm from the kerb).

Lesson Notes:



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26. Turn-in-the-road

This manoeuvre is sometimes called the three-point-turn but this term is a little misleading. The turn doesn't have to be completed in three movements although there are three important points to remember - you must use effective observation, keep the car under control and be reasonably accurate.

The number of moves required to complete the manoeuvre will depend upon the size and steering capabilities of your car, the width of the road and your driving skills.

You may be required to do this manoeuvre as part of your driving test; however, the main reason for learning the turn-in-the-road is to equip you with the skills you will need in car parks, garages, tight driveways, petrol stations, etc., after you have passed your test.

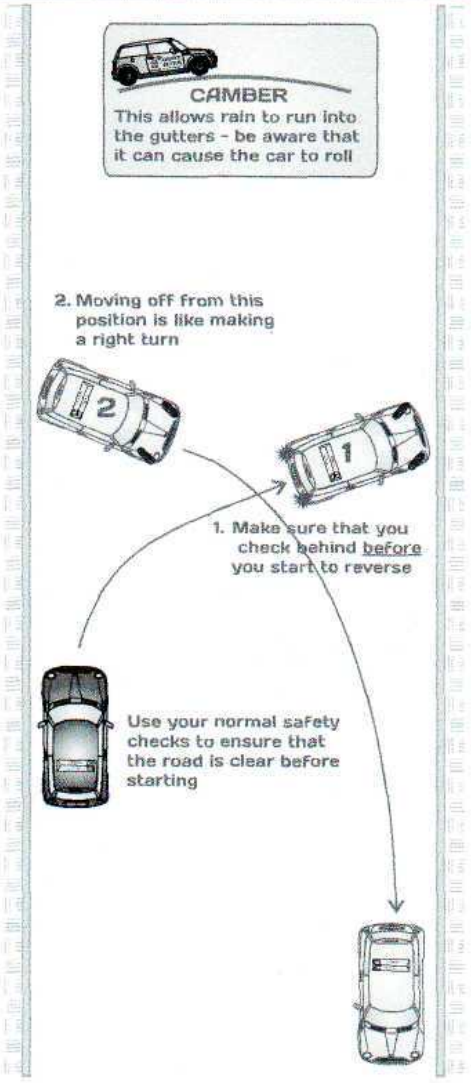
The turn-in-the-road uses some of the driving skills that you have already mastered:

- Angle start
- Clutch control
- Uphill start
- Observation skills
- Reversing skills
- Right turn skills
- Skills for dealing with other traffic
- Reasonable manoeuvring accuracy

While completing this manoeuvre you must be aware of the movement of other traffic, cyclists and pedestrians at all times, which means constant all-around **observation**.

If other vehicles approach during the turn you should make eye-contact with the driver (your instructor will explain this in detail) and be prepared to give way. **Control**, as with all slow-speed manoeuvres, will be accomplished by careful clutch control. **Accuracy** can be achieved by brisk steering; keep the car moving slowly but turn the steering wheel quickly.

Pass Your Test with:



Lesson Notes:

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27. Reverse parking

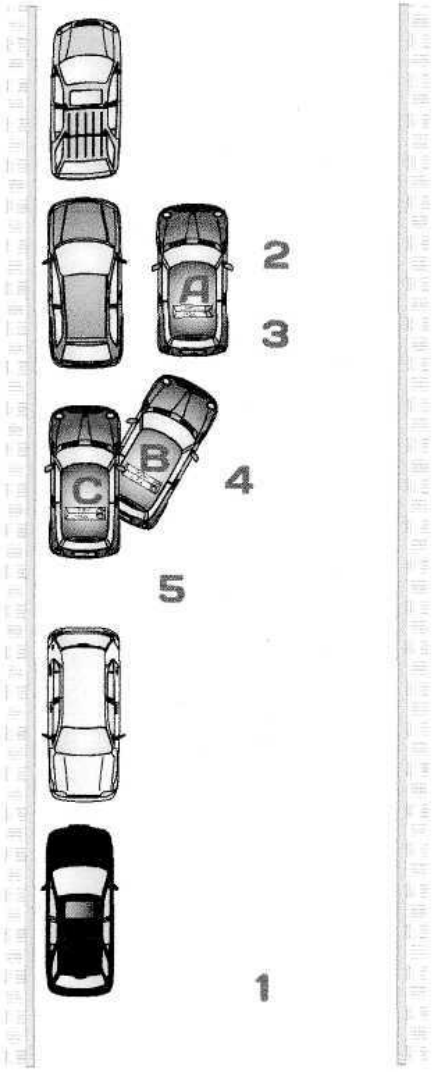
The heavy volume of traffic on our roads sometimes means that parking spaces can be hard to find. Because of this, it's well worth preparing to make the best of every parking opportunity, otherwise you may end up parking a long way from your intended destination.

Pass Your Test with:

Reversing into parking space will enable you to manoeuvre your car into a smaller gap. In order to drive into a space you need a gap of at least three or four car lengths - with practise, reverse parking will enable you to fit into a space of about one-and-a-half car lengths.

Step by step

1. Select a suitable parking position by looking well ahead.
2. Check your mirrors, signal if necessary and stop alongside, and parallel to, the car that you wish to park behind. You should be about a metre away from it with the front of your car approximately level with that of the other car (position A). If for any reason it isn't safe to stop, drive around the block and come back to the space again.
3. Select reverse gear, and if the road is clear all around, drive slowly back, steering into the space. Aim to reverse at an angle of approximately 45° to the centre of the gap (position B); to do this you might need full lock. As you move back, your speed will be slow walking pace or less and you will be keeping a look-out for traffic. If any traffic approaches, take the usual manoeuvring precautions.
4. When the front of your car is clear of the 'target car', steer briskly to the right and continue to reverse slowly.
5. Stop, select first gear and drive slowly forward to straighten up (position C).



Be careful to avoid hitting the kerb with your tyres or rubbing them along the kerb edge. This can weaken the sidewalls and cause them to 'blow out' at a later date, possibly when travelling at high speed!

See the DriverActive web site for an easy way to learn this manoeuvre.

Lesson Notes:

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28. Using car parks

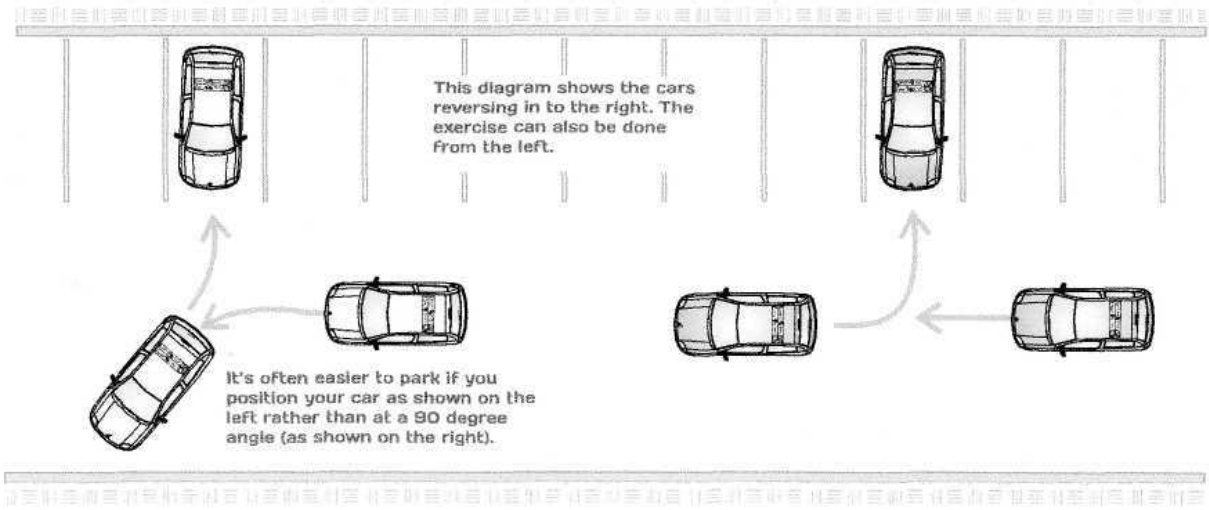
If you were to check insurance company statistics you would find that many claims are made after accidents in car parks. Drivers are often thinking about other things, apart from driving, for example, shopping or collecting the kids; this can be a real problem with other vehicles and pedestrians in close proximity and it's one of the reasons why the ability to reverse safely into a parking bay is checked during the driving test.

Pass Your Test with:

With a little practice you will soon become competent and confident at reversing into bays. The benefits of reversing in, as opposed to driving in, include the fact that it's usually easier, and it's much safer to drive out forwards rather than reverse out. There is also the added security benefit that in the unlikely event of being threatened by someone with malicious intent in a car park, driving out forwards will offer a quicker and safer exit.

You can choose to reverse from a 90 degree angle into the parking space or alternatively drive into a position where you can reverse into the bay from an 'almost straight line' (see the diagram). Use clutch control to maintain a very slow speed and aim at the back of the space. If, at any time, you are unsure about your position, simply drive forward (straightening the car as you do so) - doing this will give you a better view of the space.

Finally, make sure that you park in the centre of the available space to leave yourself, and the drivers and passengers of the cars on either side, sufficient room to open the doors and get in and out easily; doing this will also help to protect your paintwork if other drivers open their doors carelessly.



Lesson Notes:

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29. Driving at night

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In some respects, driving at night can be easier than driving in daylight; for example, there is often less traffic at night and you can usually see approaching headlights early.

Pass Your Test with:

However, there are a lot of things that you can't see at night, cyclists, pedestrians, animals, unlit vehicles, obstuctions in the road and so on. Also, the things that you do see will not be seen as early as in the daylight and so you will have less time to react. Because of these things it's really important to remember that you must be able to stop safely well within the clear space that you can see ahead - generally this will mean driving more slowly at night than you do in daylight, especially on unlit roads.



Brake lights can dazzle, especially in the rain. Use the handbrake when waiting in queues and at junctions!

The first night driving 'must' is to maximise what you can see and reduce dazzle by keeping your windows and mirrors clean; next, help other drivers to see you by keeping your lights, reflectors and indicators clean.

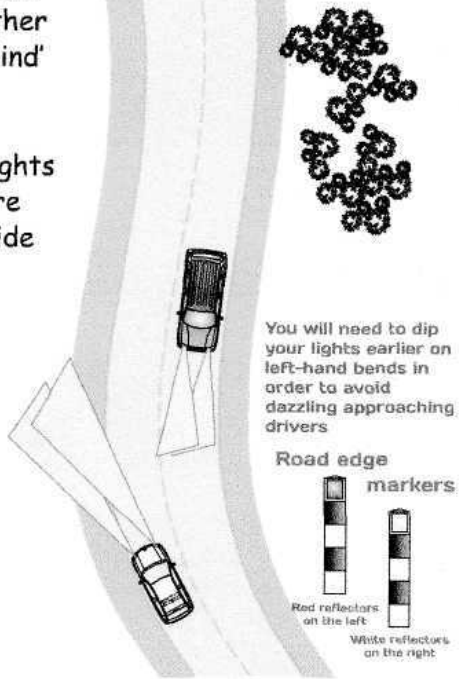
If you are dazzled by approaching headlights, slow down and look away from the source of the light, the best way to do this is often to look down at the left kerb or road edge. If necessary, stop your car. Whatever you don't try to dazzle other drivers in retaliation if they don't dip their lights - that would result in two 'blind' drivers, a sure recipe for disater!

Use the 'dip' lever on the interior mirror to reduce glare from following headlights (some cars have electronic systems to dim the mirrors automatically. If you are dazzled by lights in your door mirrors simply move your head slightly to one side to avoid dazzle.

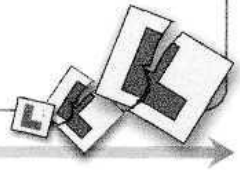
Avoid dazzling drivers in front by keeping well back. If you can see the colour of the car in front on an unlit road you are probably following too closely.

It takes time for your eyes to get used to the lower light levels when leaving brightly lit places, for example, supermarkets. Because of this, it's a good idea to allow a couple of minutes for your eyes to adjust to the darkness before you start to drive.

Finally, keep plenty of fresh air in your car at night to avoid drowsiness, if you feel tired, stop and take a break.



Lesson Notes:



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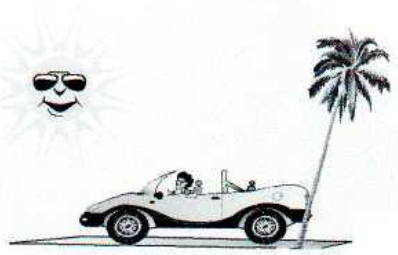
30. Sun & Fog

Drivers in the British Isles have a wide range of different weather to cope with. During the course of a single journey you might encounter rain, snow, bright sunlight, fog, ice, wind - just about anything that you can imagine.

Pass Your Test with:

Bright sunlight

Although sunshine is normally welcome it can cause severe problems for drivers when it reflects off snow or wet roads. Bright sunlight can reduce visibility as much as thick fog when it shines onto a dirty windscreen.

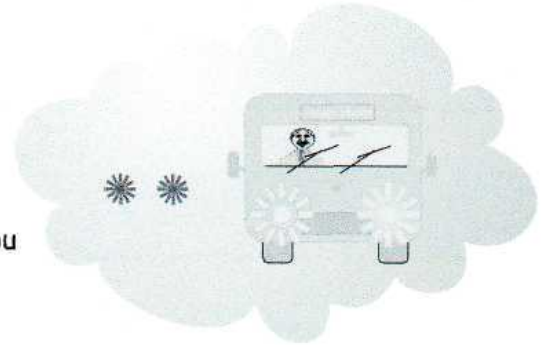


Be especially careful when driving into morning and evening sun in the Spring and Autumn.

Keep your speed down and be prepared to stop if you can't see the road ahead. Take extra care when entering tunnels or tree-shaded areas on bright summer days. Sunglasses provide the best solution to prevent sunshine dazzle. You can choose from polarised lenses which reduce reflected glare (good for winter sun and bright wet roads), photochromic lenses that get darker as the light gets brighter, or simple tinted lenses.

F-O-G - Foot Off the Gas

Fog is caused by droplets of moisture in the air. At its worst you can barely see the bonnet of your car. In these conditions it would be extremely unwise to drive. Always use dipped headlights (or front fog lights) and high-intensity rear lights when visibility is seriously reduced. You must remember, however, that rear fog lights should not be used simply because it is dark, raining, or misty.



Never 'hang on' to the tail lights of another vehicle in fog as this would reduce your available stopping distance in an emergency.

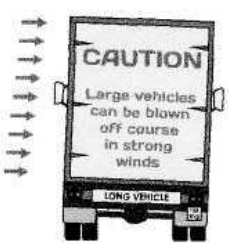
Holding your foot on the brake pedal at foggy junctions will keep the brake lights on; this will help drivers approaching from behind to see you sooner. Open your window at junctions to listen for other traffic, then use your horn and listen for a reply before emerging.

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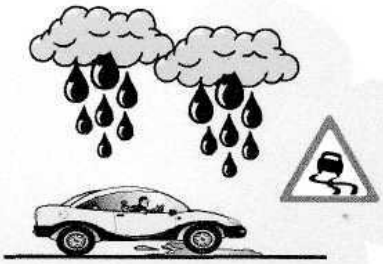
31. Wind, Rain & Snow

Wind... The wind can cause severe problems for road users. Be especially careful when passing gaps on sheltered roads. A gap in the shelter that is offered by walls or hedges can affect cyclists, who may be blown into your path, and people, especially the elderly, who may lose their balance. Strong wind can also affect lorries and vehicles with trailers (for example, caravans).Cars travelling at speed can also be unstable in high wind.



Pass Your Test with:

Rain... Rain affects what you can hear, what you can see and your grip on the road. In wet weather, windows are more likely to mist up. You can avoid this by using the heater fan to keep air circulating. Windscreen wipers can be overloaded in heavy rain but leave smears on the screen in light rain. Other vehicles are harder to see in the wet. Dipped headlamps can help you to be seen (this is compulsory if visibility drops below 100 metres).



Aquaplaning

Other vehicles will be harder to hear in the rain. This is because of the noise from the rain and from your heater fan. You will have to make more visual checks to the sides of the car to compensate for lost imformation because of what you can't here.

You must be sure that your tyres comply with the legal tread depth requirements in order to maintain your grip in wet weather. The tread will allow the water to be displaced and lessen the chance of skidding. A light shower after a long dry spell in the summer can leave the road as slippery as ice. You will expect to encounter icein the winter; you are less likely to expect an ice-like surface in the summer. Remember the weather rule: 'Slow Down for Safety'.

Snow and ice... Perhaps this is the most obvious weather hazard of all. Despite this, many people have accidents in winter conditions every year. Get ready for winter by ensuring that both you and your car are fully prepared. Prepare your car by having it serviced at the start of the cold weather and keep a winter emergency kit in the boot. Prepare yourself by attending a skid training or winter driving course (your instructor will advise on this).



Lesson Notes:

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32. Out of town

Stay on the road! Out-of-town roads and country lanes have fewer junctions per mile than roads in town. This means there is less likelihood of conflict with other traffic.

Pass Your Test with:

However, single-car accidents are more likely on these roads if you don't concentrate fully. This is due to higher speeds, road surface condition, sharper bends, mud and grit on the road and a whole host of other reasons.

The key to staying on the road is good observation and anticipation. This will have been emphasised again and again by your instructor, simply because it is so important. The principle is the same in the countryside as in the town, but because your speed will probably be higher on country roads, you will need to look further ahead. The hazards you might encounter will be quite different as well. When did you last see a sheep in your local town centre?



Drive defensively. When driving on rural roads you need to think carefully about every bit of information you receive. You will see several official road signs – bend ahead, cattle crossing, etcetera. However, the unofficial signs can give just as much information, sometimes more, and can help you to drive defensively if you use a bit of detective work ...

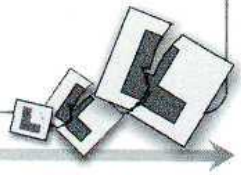


The sign shown here is for bed and breakfast, but to a 'driving detective' it means a lot more. A truly experienced driver will see this sign and consider the fact that there's a farm ahead, which means that there could be animals on the road, children playing, farm vehicles turning and so on.

Care will be needed if overtaking near the farm in case something pulls out of the driveway. There may be mud on the road or (depending upon the time of year and the location) water spraying from an irrigation system. Last but not least, there may be a few newly qualified drivers! How do they drive?

Driving in the countryside, like driving in town, requires concentration and anticipation ,it's just that the hazards you meet will be different. Thinking about the B&B sign, play the 'guess what's ahead' game to help maintain your concentration every time you drive in the countryside.

Lesson Notes:



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36. Joining the motorway

Before you start: It is important to have a well maintained vehicle in order to drive safely. This becomes especially important before setting out on a motorway journey.

Pass Your Test with:

High speeds for prolonged periods can test a car, and its driver, to their limits. Before starting out on a long motorway journey make sure that both you and your car are up to the task by carrying out your weekly car checks.

Joining: You will sometimes join a motorway at its start, this will usually be a roundabout, however, more often than not you will be joining via a slip-road and acceleration-lane.

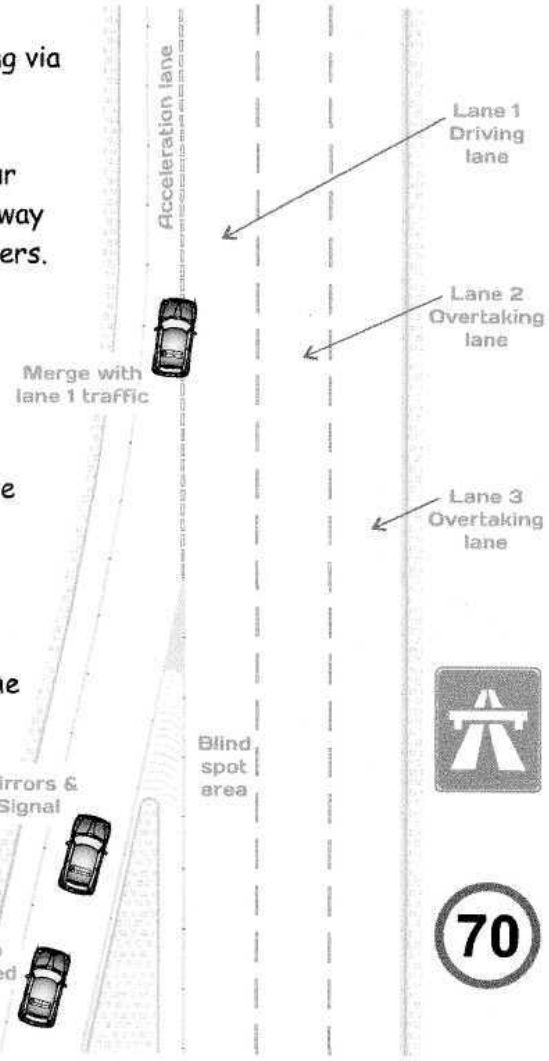
The slip-road and acceleration-lane are provided for you to build up your speed so that you can match the speed of traffic already on the motorway and merge into lane-one without causing inconvenience or danger to others.

As you are driving along the slip-road, make frequent glances across to the motorway to gauge the speed and position of traffic in lane-one (the lane that you will be joining).

Give an early signal to alert the drivers behind, and those already on the motorway, of your intentions. Once you are on the slip road you have to enter the motorway and so your intentions should be obvious to others at this point, however, some drivers need a wake-up call!

The acceleration lane is the part of the slip-road that runs alongside the main carriageway - it is separated from the main carriageway by a single white 'give-way' line -you should never need to stop at this line (except when there is a traffic jam). As you enter the acceleration-lane, adjust your speed to match the speed of the traffic that you are joining in lane one.

Be particularly careful if there are large vehicles that block your view of traffic in lanes two and three.



Lesson Notes:

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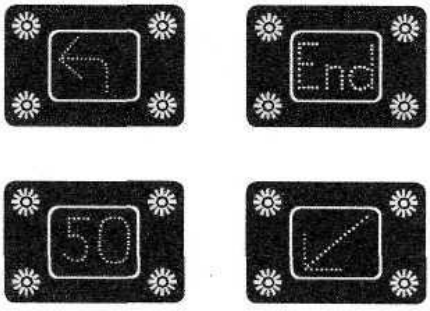
37. Driving on the motorway

On the whole, motorways are safer than other roads. They don't have many of the hazards found on other roads; things like, cyclists, pedestrians, crossroads, traffic lights, parked cars, etc. However motorways do have their own 'hazards'. In the same way as dual-carriageways, the higher speeds on motorways can cause things to happen very quickly. In order to cope with varying traffic conditions or emergencies you must stay alert and look well ahead (at times you might spot brake-lights as far as a mile or more ahead!).

Pass Your Test with:

The normal rule is to use the left-hand lane unless you are overtaking, however, keep a look out for road signs and markings; sometimes (especially in places where motorways merge) the left-hand lane might lead away from your intended destination.

Matrix signs



Allow plenty of time for your actions on the motorway. Consider every move carefully making full use of your mirrors and giving other drivers plenty of time to see your signals before starting any manoeuvre. Generally, your signals should flash four or five times before you start to move. It is also important to check your mirrors again after signalling to ensure that other drivers are reacting.



One of the most common motorway problems is driving too close to the cars ahead. Always use the 'two-second rule'; double this in poor weather conditions. When doing this you might find that other drivers pull into your safety space ahead ... This is OK, just drop back ... You will still be travelling at high speed (allowing for the conditions) and it won't affect your journey time.

If you are unlucky enough to break down, move to the hard-shoulder. Marker posts on the side of the road will direct you to the nearest phone (**never** cross to a telephone on the opposite carriageway!); the phones are numbered and connect directly to the police control centre. When you return to your car (or while using a mobile phone) stay on the grass verge, or behind a crash barrier well away from the traffic whenever possible - statistics about collisions on the hard-shoulder suggest that you will be safer out there than sitting in your car.







Lesson Notes:

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38. Leaving the motorway

Pass Your Test with:

You will normally leave the motorway via a deceleration-lane and slip-road although sometimes you may encounter the end of a motorway - this can be at a roundabout or simply a place where the motorway narrows and becomes a dual-carriageway or even a single-carriageway (two-way traffic) road.

Using the deceleration lane and slip road you effectively do the opposite of what you do when joining the motorway. This time, instead of speeding up, you'll be slowing down.

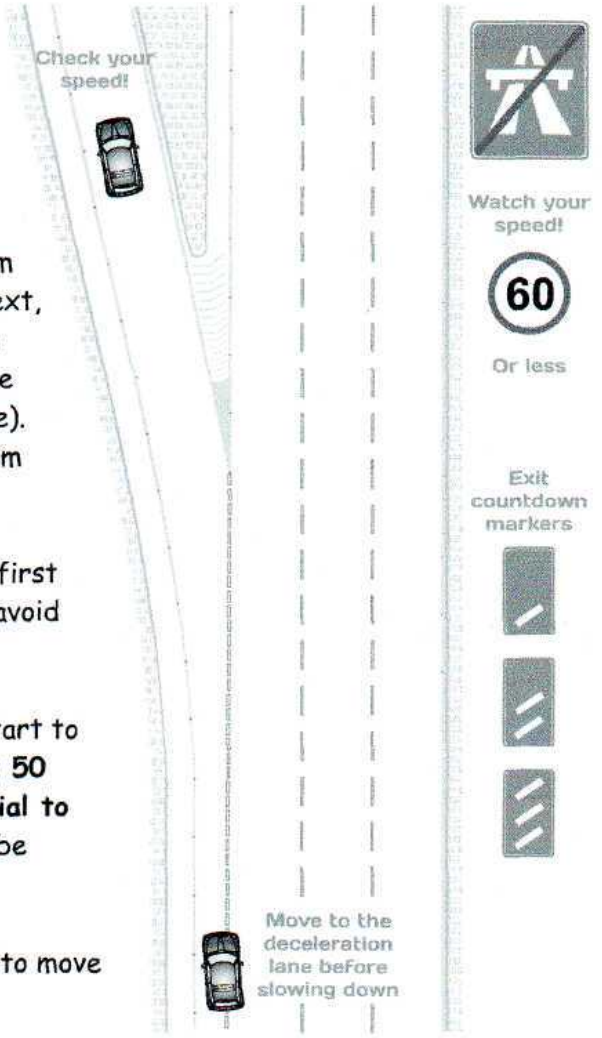
When leaving the motorway, it is important to pay special attention to your speed and to make good use of your mirrors. Remember that the traffic behind you may not be leaving and will catch up rapidly if you start to slow down too soon.

Look out for motorway exit signs, the first one will be one mile from your exit and clearly marked with the road and junction number. Next, you will see the half-mile exit sign, this has destination information (town/city names) and repeats the junction number. At the half mile sign you should be moving into lane-one (if you are not already there). Match your speed to fit in with the lane-one traffic flow; apart from this, it is not necessary to slow down yet.

Watch for the exit marker boards; check your mirrors before the first board and signal left as you are passing it - maintain your speed to avoid holding up traffic behind.

As you enter the deceleration-lane, check your mirrors again and start to slow down. At this point **your speed may be higher than you think 50 mph can feel like 30 mph after cruising at speed so it is essential to glance at your speedometer**. Some slip roads have bends that can be dangerous if your speed is too high.

Finally, continue to make good use of your mirrors and be prepared to move out of the way if the driver behind has not been as careful as you!



Lesson Notes:

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39. Fit state to drive?

Pass Your Test with:

Most people agree that alcohol and driving do not mix. the same goes for drugs (including some prescription and 'over the counter' medicines).

With drivers, cyclists and pedestrians killed and injured every week in accidents where alcohol or drugs have been a factor, the least of your worries as a drink-driver is a large fine, possible prison sentence, a long driving ban and criminal record. To put it bluntly - you could be killed or kill someone else.

Driving unfit wrecks lives

It's not just the lives of the innocent victims and their families and friends that are wrecked... Can you imagine how it might feel to be the driver who killed a mother and toddler; the driver who put a young athlete in a wheelchair for life; the driver who wiped out a whole family?

Drunk and drugged drivers don't maim and kill people on purpose, but it's not an accident either! As a driver you must accept that you have a responsibility towards everyone else on the road, and of course, to yourself and your family.

It isn't only drinking and driving that wrecks live, drivers who are simply tired, perhaps after a long night out, or feeling ill with a cold or flu bug have accidents because they are not in a fit physical state to maintain control and concentration. Other drivers involved in fatal accidents lose control because of a moment's anger - road-rage. Road-rage can be triggered by a moment's loss of concentration while a driver is thinking about someone else's actions rather than his or her own.

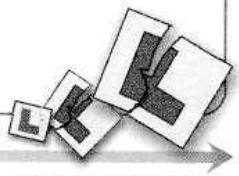


Sooner or later you will be faced with drivers who cut in front of you, slow you up, overtake on the left, swear at you whether or not you have made a mistake, and who indulge in other anti-social behaviour.

Often, however, the person committing the road rage is acting totally out of character. Some drivers describe the 'red mist' which clouds their judgement. They get so angry they only concentrate on getting even with another driver. Sadly, drivers can all too easily be killed or injured when at the wheel in this state.

Remember, some people out there are just plain stupid, it's nothing personal, they don't even know you! Stay cool... Just let it go...

Lesson Notes:



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