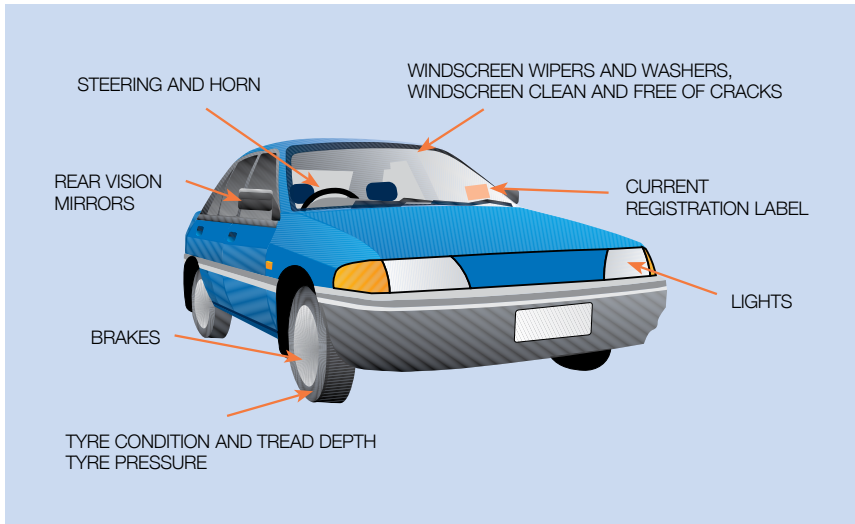


## PART D - Road craft

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- Craft
  - Preparing to drive
  - Getting underway
  - Keeping a lookout
  - Keeping your distance
  - Steering
  - Letting others know
  - Keeping to the left
  - Lane changing
  - Overtaking
  - Braking and stopping
  - ABS - Anti-Lock Braking Systems
  - Reversing
  - Freeways
- Driving under difficult conditions
  - Night driving
  - Fog lights
  - Winter and wet weather driving
  - Snow conditions
  - Steep hills
  - Unsealed roads
- Emergencies and what to do
  - Possible head-on collision
  - Forced off road on to gravel
  - Shattered windscreen
  - Tyre blow-out or rapid puncture
  - Brake failure
  - Car fire
  - Stuck accelerator
  - Breakdowns and accidents
  - Towing
  - What to do after an accident



## Preparing to drive

Before attempting to drive you must:

- know the rules of the road as set out in this handbook;
- know your vehicle and its controls; and
- make sure your vehicle is safe to drive.

### Mechanical checks

- Brakes - do they operate effectively and evenly? Does the handbrake stop the vehicle from rolling on an incline?
- Headlights - are they of even power and focus? Does the low-beam switch work? Do the parking and number plate lights work?
- Tail and stop lights - do the tail lights work and show a red light to the rear? Do the stop lights work when you apply the foot brake?
- Turn indicators - check these frequently. Replace bulbs that have blown.
- Wheels - are they properly aligned and balanced? Unbalanced wheels can cause excessive tyre wear or even loss of control. Do not forget the spare wheel when you check your tyres.
- Steering - does the steering wheel have excessive free movement?
- Windscreen wipers.
- Horn.
- Rear reflectors.

## Pre-drive checks

- Look for obvious faults or damage around the outside of your car before you drive away.
- Make sure there is nothing in the way (especially children, bicycles, tricycles or toys).
- Keep your mirrors, windows and headlights clean.
- Do not place stickers or ornaments where they can distract or block your view of the road.
- Make sure there are no loose items in your car that could prove dangerous.
- Close all doors properly.
- Make sure the driver's seat is properly adjusted.
- Make sure your seating position is high enough to get a clear view of the road.
- Adjust your mirrors after you have adjusted the driver's seat.
- Make sure you and your passengers are wearing seat belts.
- Check the controls. You should know where each of the controls are and how they work.
- Check gauges and warning lights.
- Be sure you have enough fuel for your trip.

## Opening Car Doors

- A person must not cause a hazard to any person or vehicle by opening a door of a vehicle, leaving a door open or getting off or out of a vehicle.

## Getting under-way

### Moving off

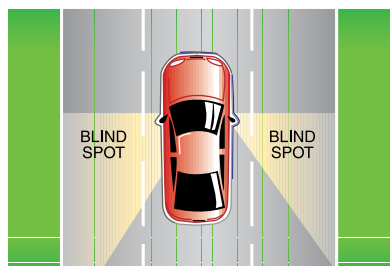
Before entering traffic remember to:

- ensure there will be no danger to pedestrians;
- look both ways for following and oncoming traffic including bicycles;
- clearly signal your intention.

When leaving a private driveway or an off-street parking area give way to all traffic on the road and pedestrians and cyclists on the footpath.

### Keeping a lookout

- Get the big picture. Do not just look at the road in front of your car. Tunnel vision is dangerous.
- Look well into the distance, keep your eyes moving to both sides and check your mirrors.
- Make head checks to help you get the big picture.

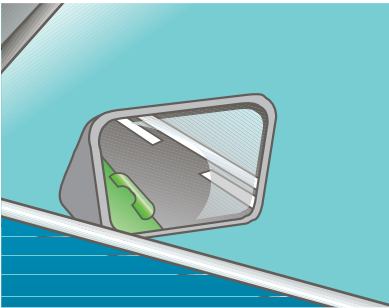


The **shaded** areas are called “blind spots” because you cannot see vehicles travelling there without looking over your shoulder.



Reversing

When reversing, do not rely on your mirrors alone. Turn your head and look over your shoulder.



Adjust your mirrors to give the best possible view

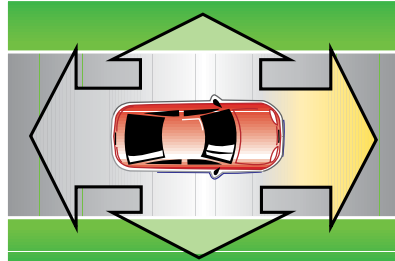
Correctly adjusted mirrors provide the widest rear view possible while keeping the blind spots to a minimum.

## Keeping your distance

It is important that you do not follow another vehicle too closely. Tailgating (following too close to the rear of another vehicle) is the cause of most chain or 'concertina' collisions. If the front vehicle stops suddenly when you are tailgating a crash is inevitable - you will not be able to stop in time.

If you keep plenty of space (a 'buffer zone' or space cushion) around your vehicle, you will be better able to avoid a collision. Stay as far away as driving conditions allow. Most motorists underestimate the distance required to stop their vehicle.

## Space in front



Buffer zone

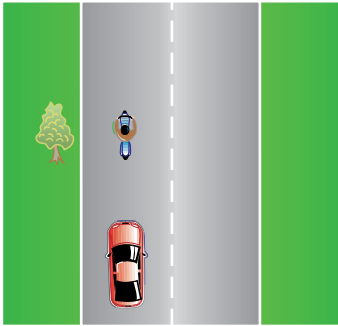
## Safe following distance

When following another vehicle, an estimation of the appropriate following distance can be obtained by using the 'three second rule'.

To use this following distance rule, you should keep a gap of at least three seconds or more between your vehicle and the one ahead. This means that it should take you at least three seconds (minimum time) to get to where the car in front is at any given moment.

The three second rule relies on alert drivers driving vehicles in good mechanical condition, fitted with good tyres and driving on a good road surface in good traffic and weather conditions. Otherwise allow more distance.

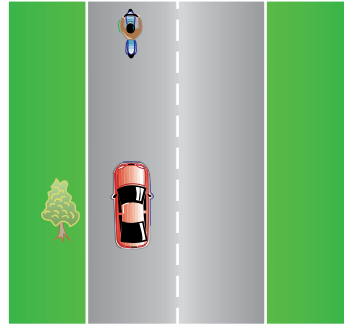
To check that you are at least three seconds back:



Pick an object by the side of the road, such as a tree or post, that will soon be passed by the vehicle ahead.

As soon as the rear of the vehicle ahead passes the object, say to yourself “one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three”.

You should take the full three seconds, or more, that it takes to say this, for the front of your vehicle to reach the same object. If you get there before you finish saying it - you are too close to the other vehicle.



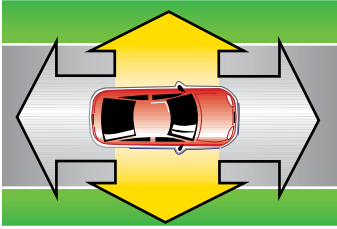
Novice drivers and drivers of larger vehicles such as buses and trucks, and drivers towing trailers or caravans, will need to allow longer following distances.

In poor road and weather conditions (eg. gravel surfaces or frosty/wet conditions), or if you are tired or driving at night, you should also allow a much greater distance from the vehicle in front.

In these circumstances, you should at least double the time elapsed, ie from three seconds to at least six or seven seconds, and even more to be certain.

If another vehicle moves between you and the vehicle in front, slow down briefly to allow your vehicle to fall back to a safe following distance.

## Space to the sides



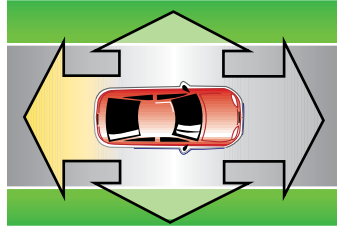
### Buffer zone

Just as you need a buffer zone/space cushion in front, you also need space to the sides to protect you from mistakes. You need to keep sufficient space from vehicles that are:

- **alongside** - if you have a choice, do not drive next to another vehicle for too long;
- **oncoming** - by keeping to the left you make sure that you reduce the danger of being sideswiped by oncoming vehicles;
- **parked** - keep a space between you and parked vehicles. Someone may get out of a parked car suddenly, a pedestrian may step from between cars, or a driver may pull out without looking.

Where possible allow a minimum of 1 metre between your vehicle and the parked vehicle.

## Space behind



### Buffer zone

Rear-end collisions are fairly common and are in fact, the fourth most common injury producing accident.

The driver behind has more control over the space cushion than you do.

However, there is plenty you can do to protect yourself.

When you are driving:

- keep a steady speed;
- signal in advance when you have to slow down;
- do NOT stop suddenly;
- do NOT feel you have to go faster when you are being tailgated (followed too closely);
- let the other driver overtake as soon as possible;
- gradually increase the buffer zone/space cushion in front to give you more room if a dangerous situation arises.

## Steering

A good steering method is fundamental to good driving. Remember the following:

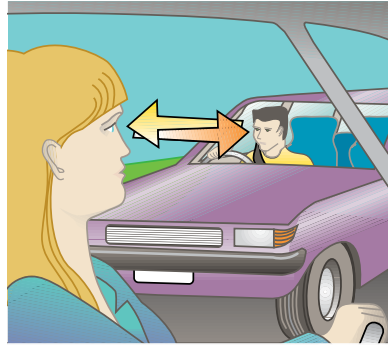
- position your hands on the steering wheel in the '10 to 2' or '1/4 to 3' position - as on a clock;
- do not allow your hands to drop to the bottom of the wheel or to hang loosely on the steering wheel;
- turning movements should be made smoothly using the push-pull method or in certain circumstances, the hand-over-hand method;
- do not rest your elbow on the window frame or grip the roof gutter;
- do not release your grip of the steering wheel to allow the steering to self centre;
- keep both hands on the wheel at all times unless operating vehicle controls;

**NOTE: One hand or the other MUST have a firm grip of the steering wheel at ALL TIMES when the vehicle is in motion - otherwise your vehicle is not under safe and proper control.**

## Letting others know

When a crash happens, it is usually because:

- one driver does something unexpected;
- one driver does not know the other is there;
- one driver does not 'tune-in' to others around him or her.

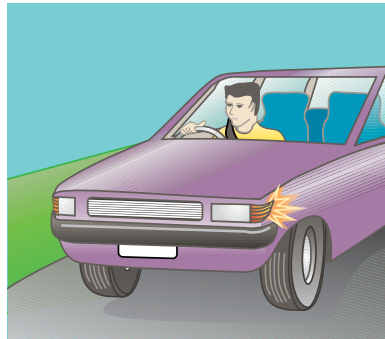


Driver communication is important

Let others know what you are doing by indicating well in advance.

Eye contact between drivers is important. It can allow you to anticipate and avoid mistakes by other drivers or pedestrians.

Tune into the messages that other drivers are giving you. Look and listen and be prepared to react as required to another driver's communications.



Signalling

When you signal your intention to change lanes or turn, you are giving other drivers advanced warning of your intended movements.

You are required by law to give ample warning when signalling your intentions to turn into or from an intersection or driveway. Usually five seconds prior to changing direction would be sufficient warning.

You **MUST** also give adequate indication **BEFORE YOU START** to diverge or change lanes. You **MUST** give a minimum five seconds indication before pulling out from the kerb.

**NOTE: Make sure that your indicators are cancelled after you have completed the manoeuvre.**

### Horn use



Only use your horn or warning device to warn other road users of danger.

## Lane positioning

If lanes are not marked on the roadway, drivers should drive their vehicles as near to the left-hand side of the road as is practicable.

If lanes are marked, stay within the line markings.

If you are driving on a multi-lane road it is advisable to drive in the left hand lane, leaving other lanes available for overtaking vehicles.

Once in a lane it is best to stay there unless:

- you wish to overtake a slower moving vehicle, which is in the same lane as your vehicle; or
- you need to change lanes in order to make a turn.

Drive in the centre of the lane and don't wander from side to side.

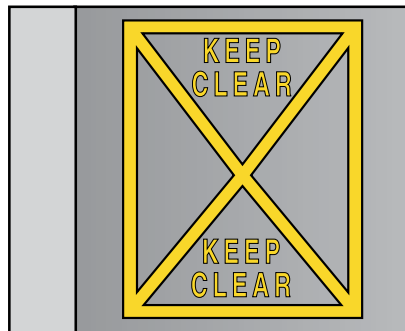
## Bus lanes

A driver driving a private vehicle can only travel in a bus lane when he or she is within 100 metres of making a turn.

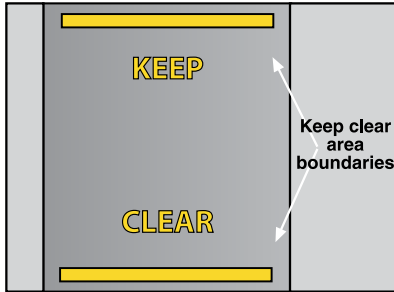
## Keep clear markings

A driver must not stop on an area of a road marked with a keep clear marking.

Keep clear marking means the words "keep clear" marked across all or part of a road, with or without continuous lines marked across all or part of the road.



Example 1 - Keep clear marking bounded by line road markings



Example 2  
Keep clear marking without internal line markings

## Keeping to the left on a multi-lane road

This rule applies on a multi-lane road where:

- the speed-limit is over 80 km/h; or
- a keep left unless overtaking sign applies.

You must not drive in the right lane unless:

- you are turning right, or making a U–turn from the centre of the road, and are giving a right turn signal;
- you are overtaking;
- a left lane must turn left sign or left traffic lane arrows apply to any other lane and you are not turning left;
- you are required to drive in the right lane;
- you are avoiding an obstruction;
- the traffic in the other lanes is congested; or
- the traffic in every lane is congested.

A keep left unless overtaking sign on a multi-lane road applies to the length of road beginning at the sign and ending at the nearest of the following:

- an end keep left unless overtaking sign on the road;
- a traffic sign or road marking on the road indicating that it is no longer a multi-lane road;
- if the road ends at a T–intersection or dead end — the end of the road.

**KEEP LEFT  
UNLESS  
OVERTAKING**

Keep left unless overtaking sign

**KEEP LEFT  
UNLESS  
OVERTAKING**

**END**

End keep left unless overtaking sign

If there are three or more available lanes, use the left lane. Move with care to the centre lanes if you need to pass slower vehicles. Move back to the left lane once it is again clear. The right lane is normally reserved for overtaking and you must move out of it as soon as it is safe to do so.

## Lane changing

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If you don't need to change lanes, DON'T.

Changing lanes can be dangerous if you do not follow safe, set guidelines.

The basic steps to a safe lane change are:

- check your rear vision mirrors for closely following, fast approaching or overtaking traffic;
- use your indicators to advise other road users of your intentions (this **MUST** be done **BEFORE** you turn your steering wheel);
- now do a quick head check over your shoulder to make sure that no other motorist is in the lane where you wish to go - if there is, cancel your indicator and be prepared to drive straight ahead until that lane is clear to move into. Adjust your speed slightly up or down, to improve your opportunity of finding a safe gap.

Now and only now is it safe for you to turn your steering wheel to steer into that lane.

## Overtaking

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Overtake only when you have a clear view of the road ahead, and you can do so safely.

When overtaking, remember to allow for the speed of the vehicle you are overtaking, and also the speed of oncoming traffic. Remember, two vehicles travelling in opposite directions at 80 km/h are approaching each other at a combined speed of 160 km/h, or 45 metres per second.

It is an offence to exceed the speed limit when you are overtaking.

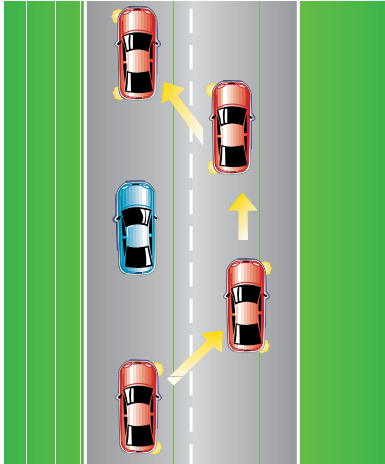
Before overtaking:

- look in the rear vision mirror and check that you are not about to be overtaken yourself;
- don't be too close to the vehicle in front. Give yourself enough room to manoeuvre by leaving a three second gap;
- signal your intention, complete a head check, then pull out smoothly and accelerate past;
- do not cut in too soon. Look in the rear vision mirror and when you can clearly see the front of the overtaken vehicle; indicate that you are moving back to the same lane; do a head check to make sure that it is safe for you to move;
- steer back into your original lane.

If you are driving a vehicle that is being overtaken, show consideration by moving as far to the left as practicable. Do NOT increase speed - it is dangerous and against the law.

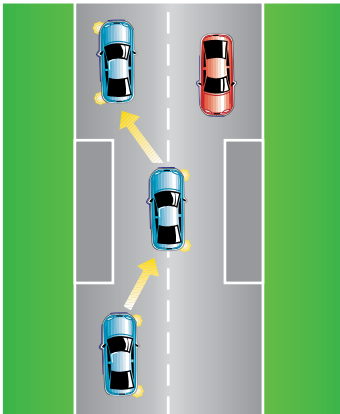
Leave enough room between your vehicle and the one in front of you so other drivers do not have to overtake two vehicles at once.

It is unwise to pull out blindly and follow another vehicle which is overtaking a line of vehicles further ahead. Its driver may be a poor judge of distances or speed, or there may be no space for you to pull back into.



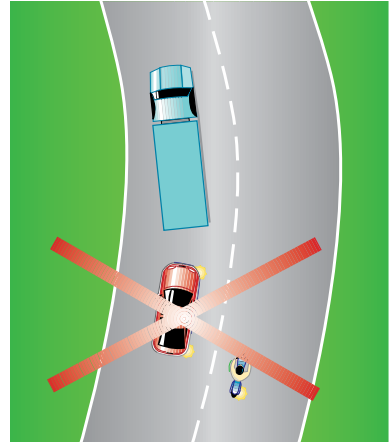
### OVERTAKING

Overtaking refers to two vehicles travelling in the same direction.



### PASSING

Passing refers to two vehicles approaching each other from opposite directions.



Neither vehicle should be attempting to overtake in this situation

Never overtake in these situations:

- approaching the crest of a hill or a curve if you do not have a clear view for at least 150 metres;
- where there are double unbroken lines or an unbroken line on your side of the centre line;
- there is insufficient room, or you are unsure what is ahead;
- approaching a pedestrian or school crossing;
- where there is an intersection or the road narrows (eg at a bridge);
- where you would have to exceed the speed limit.

Remember to glance over your shoulder before you move out and signal for a reasonable time.

You must give way to traffic already in the stream you are moving into.

Vehicles should normally be overtaken in the right lane. However, in certain circumstances you may pass a vehicle on the left hand side.

For example:

- on multi-lane roads you may pass to the left of a vehicle which is in another lane proceeding in the same direction;
- on single lane roads, you may pass a vehicle on the left hand side if the driver of the vehicle has signalled an intention to make a right hand turn and has moved across to the centre of the road to allow other drivers sufficient room to pass on the left.

### Passing or overtaking a vehicle displaying a 'Do Not Overtake Turning Vehicle' sign

Long vehicles can take up more than one lane when they are turning. You must not overtake any vehicle displaying a do not overtake turning vehicle sign that is turning and giving the relevant turn signal, unless it is safe to do so.



**DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE**

These signs are displayed on certain long vehicles.

### Coasting, freewheeling and clutch control

NEVER coast or freewheel your vehicle with the clutch depressed or the gear lever in neutral.

Driving in gear helps your car to remain stable and keep a good grip on the road surface. When travelling downhill your engine can act as a brake if you drive in gear.

If you drive without the engine in gear you lose stability and control of your car's speed, particularly while cornering. You may lose control and run off the road or roll over.

It is an offence to drive a vehicle unless you have proper control of it. If you drive with the clutch depressed for any distance (other than the last 2 or 3 metres when coming to a stop) you do not have proper control of your vehicle.