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Cockpit Drill & Controls

Cockpit Drill

Doors
Shut and secure

Seat
Reach the pedals; set the head restraint

Steering
Comfortable reach

Seatbelt
On and not twisted

Mirrors
Interior, then door mirrors

Before starting: parking brake on, neutral (P in an automatic). Check fuel and warning lights.



Right-hand-drive cockpit

Foot Controls

Manual: clutch, brake, accelerator (left to right). Clutch with your **left** foot only.

Automatic: no clutch. Use your **right** foot for brake and accelerator.

Clutch down = link broken. **Biting point** = link starting to make.

Pivot your right foot between accelerator and brake.

Parking Brake

Apply only when stopped: press the button, pull up firmly, release the button.

Release: pull up slightly, press the button, lower fully.

Electronic: lift to apply; footbrake on and push down to release.

Gears



1st is the most powerful: moving off and slow speeds. Higher gears for higher speeds.

Change by speed and engine sound.



Automatic: P Park, R Reverse, N Neutral, D Drive. Footbrake on to select.

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Steering



Ten to two

- Hold at **ten to two** or **quarter to three**.
- **Pull–push:** feed the wheel; don't cross your arms.
- Never take both hands off while moving.

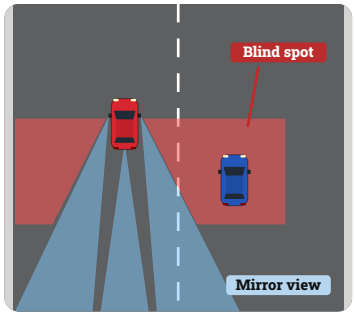
Mirrors

Interior: flat glass, true distance.

Door: curved, wider view; cars look further away.

When? Before signalling, changing direction or speed: **M–S–M.**

Blind spots: look over your shoulder when moving off or changing lanes.



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Moving Off & Stopping

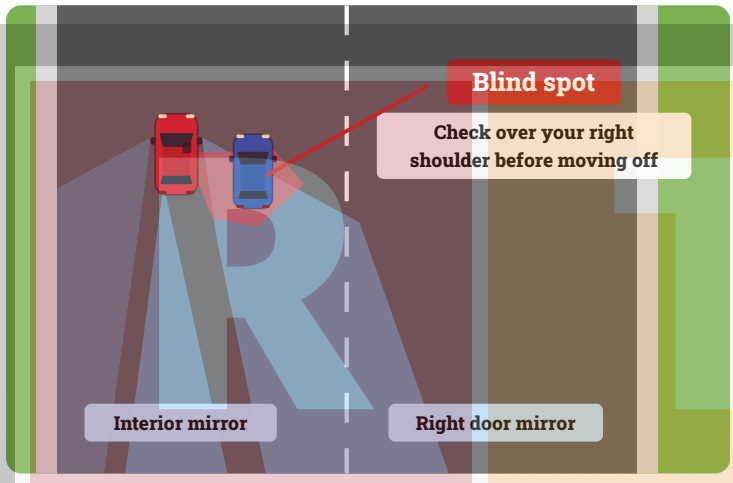
Moving Off: P.O.M.

P **Prepare:** clutch down, 1st gear, set the gas, find the biting point.

O **Observe:** mirrors and right blind spot. Signal only if it helps others.

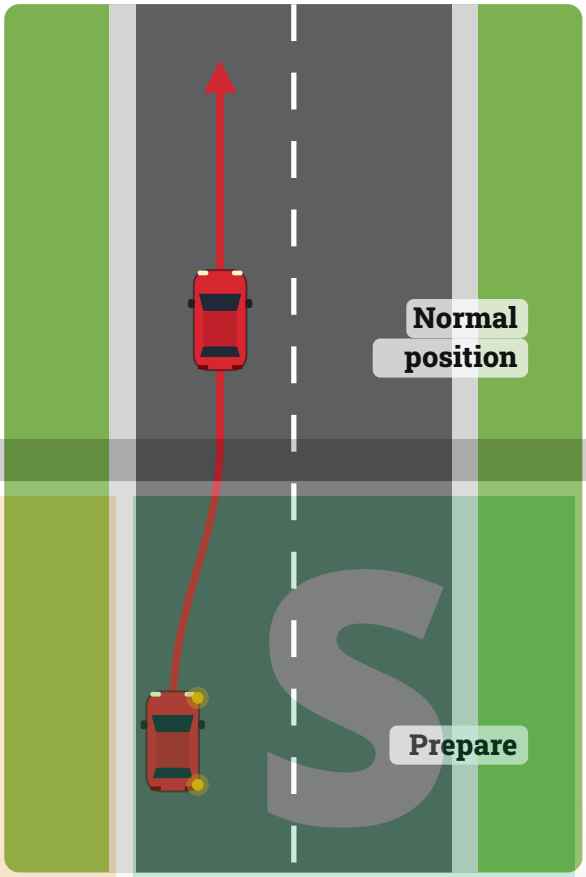
M **Move:** if safe, release the parking brake, ease the clutch up, add gas. Final check over your right shoulder.

Automatic: footbrake on, select D, release the parking brake, then ease off the footbrake.



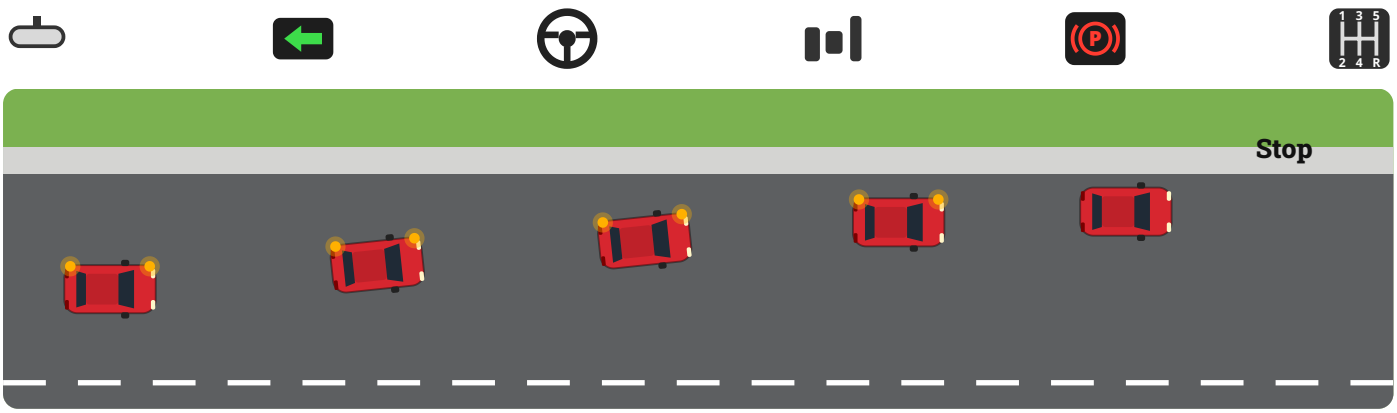
Check over your right shoulder before you move

Road Position



Move out to a normal position, about 1 metre from the kerb

Normal Stops



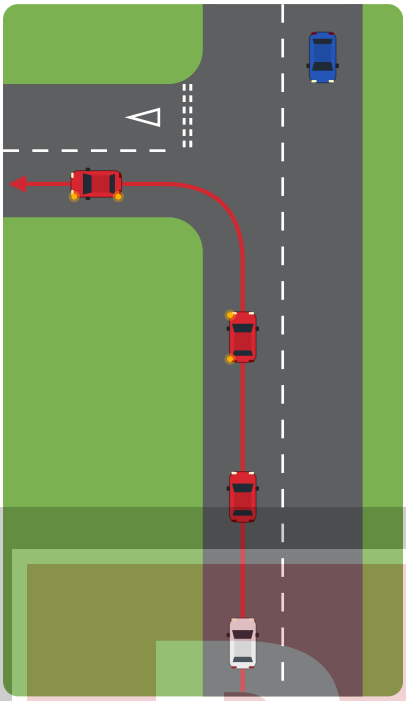
Mirrors, signal if needed, steer gently to the kerb. Brake progressively; clutch down just before you stop. Secure: parking brake on, neutral, cancel the signal.

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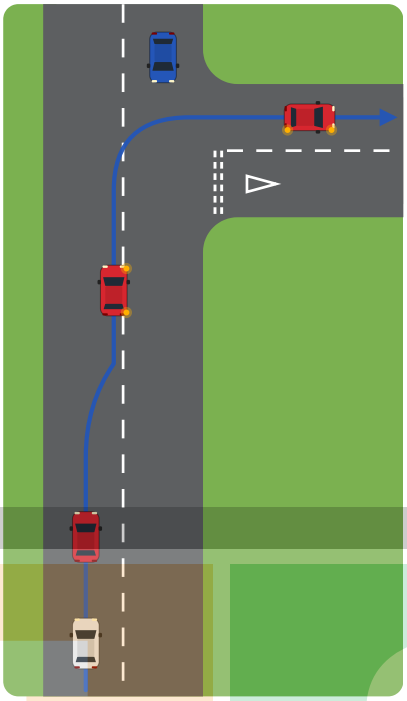
Junctions

Left Turn



- **L** Look into the new road
- **S** Slow in good time (10–15 mph); select the gear
- **P** Keep about 1 m from the kerb
- **S** Signal left
- **M** Interior, then left mirror

Right Turn



- **L** Look ahead and into the side road
- **S** Slow in good time; select the gear
- **P** Just left of the centre line, if safe
- **S** Signal right
- **M** Interior, then right mirror

Read from the bottom up: **M–S–P–S–L** in order of approach. Turning right, wait opposite the centre of the new road; give way to oncoming traffic and pedestrians crossing.

Hazard Routine: MSPSL

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A hazard is anything that may make you change speed or direction. Mirrors–Signal–Manoeuvre becomes:

- **M** **Mirrors:** check the speed and position of traffic behind.
- **S** **Signal:** will a signal help others? If so, give it in good time.
- **P** **Position:** move to the correct road position in good time.
- **S** **Speed:** ease off the accelerator or brake; select a suitable gear.
- **L** **Look:** assess what you see, decide, then act: wait or go.

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Emerging at T-Junctions



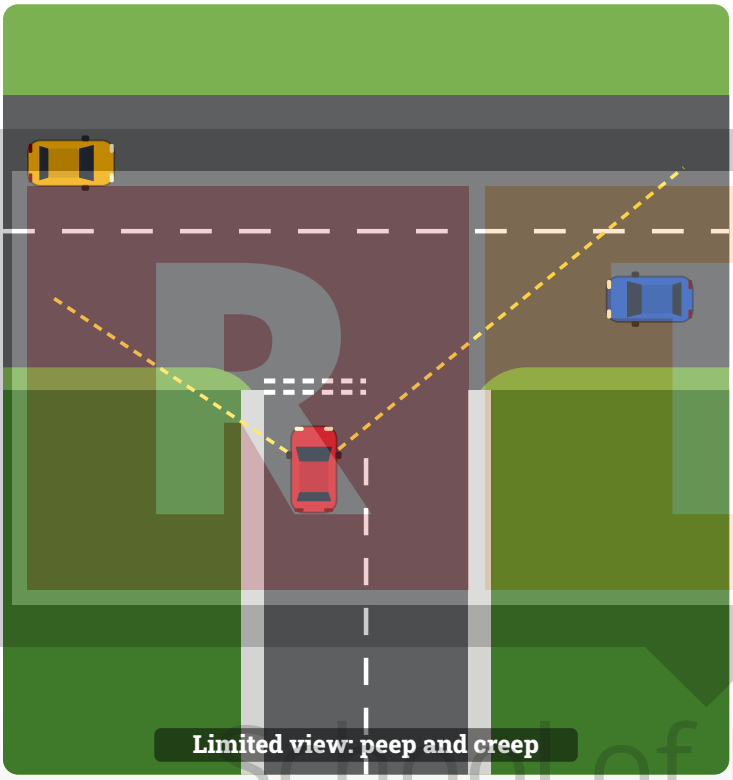
STOP: you must stop at the solid white line, even if the road is clear.



GIVE WAY: give way to traffic on the major road. Stop at the broken lines only if you need to.

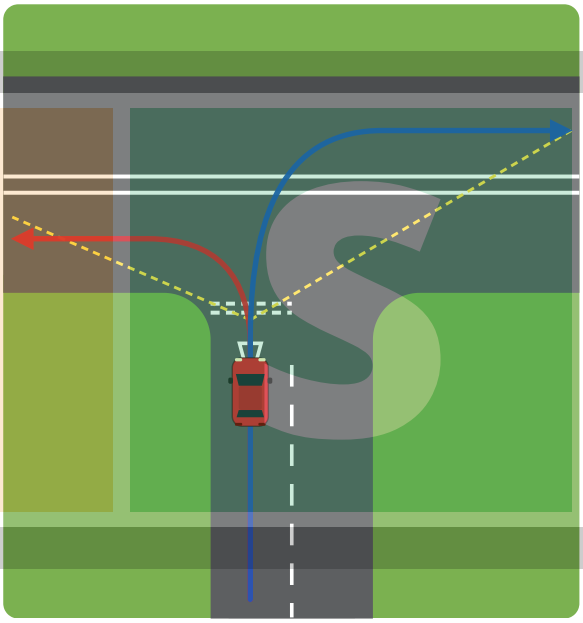
Use **MSPSL** on approach. Is the junction **open** or **closed**? Who has priority?

Closed Junction



Walls or hedges block your view: approach slowly, be ready to stop

Open Junction



Clear view early: you may not need to stop if it is safe

Restricted View

- Your view gets wider as you reach the line. Decide only when your eyes are level with the obstruction.
- **Peep and creep:** edge forward slowly with clutch control.
- Lean forward in your seat so the car doesn't need to stick out so far.
- Look right, left and right again. Don't emerge left while still looking right.



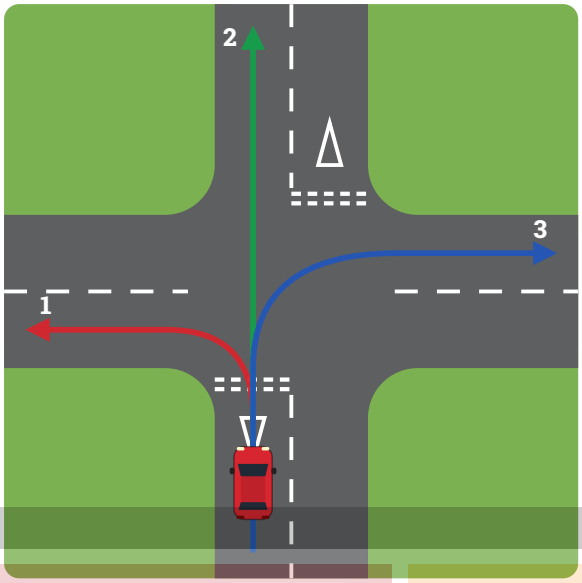
Hedge and wall block the view: creep forward

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Crossroads

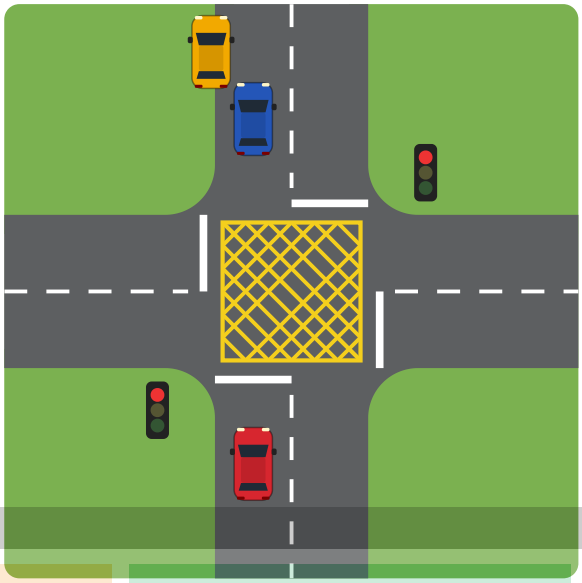
Approach



Spot crossroads early: look for signs, markings and crossing traffic. Use **MSPSL**, assess priority and position as normal.

Traffic from the left or right may not realise it is a crossroads.

Box Junction

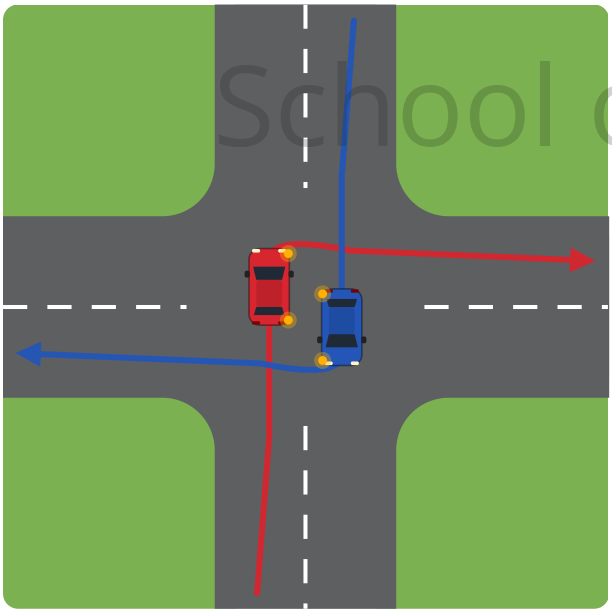


Don't enter the yellow box unless your exit is clear.

You may wait in it when turning right, if only oncoming traffic stops you.

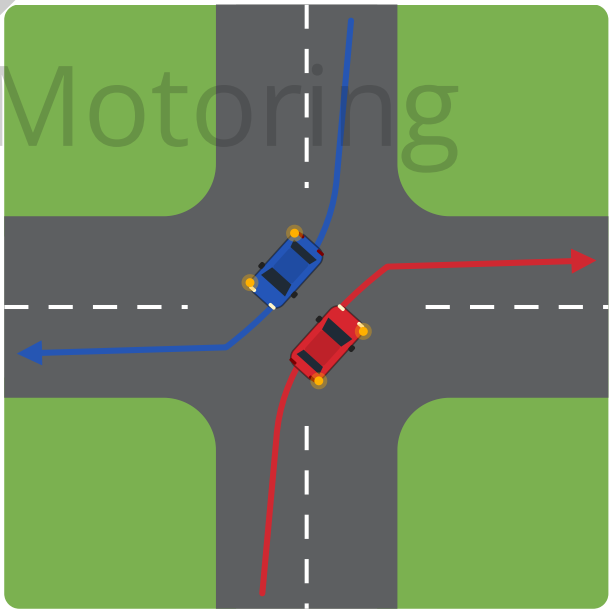
Turning Right: Two Cars Facing

Offside to offside



Pass behind each other. Usually safer: you can see oncoming traffic.

Nearside to nearside



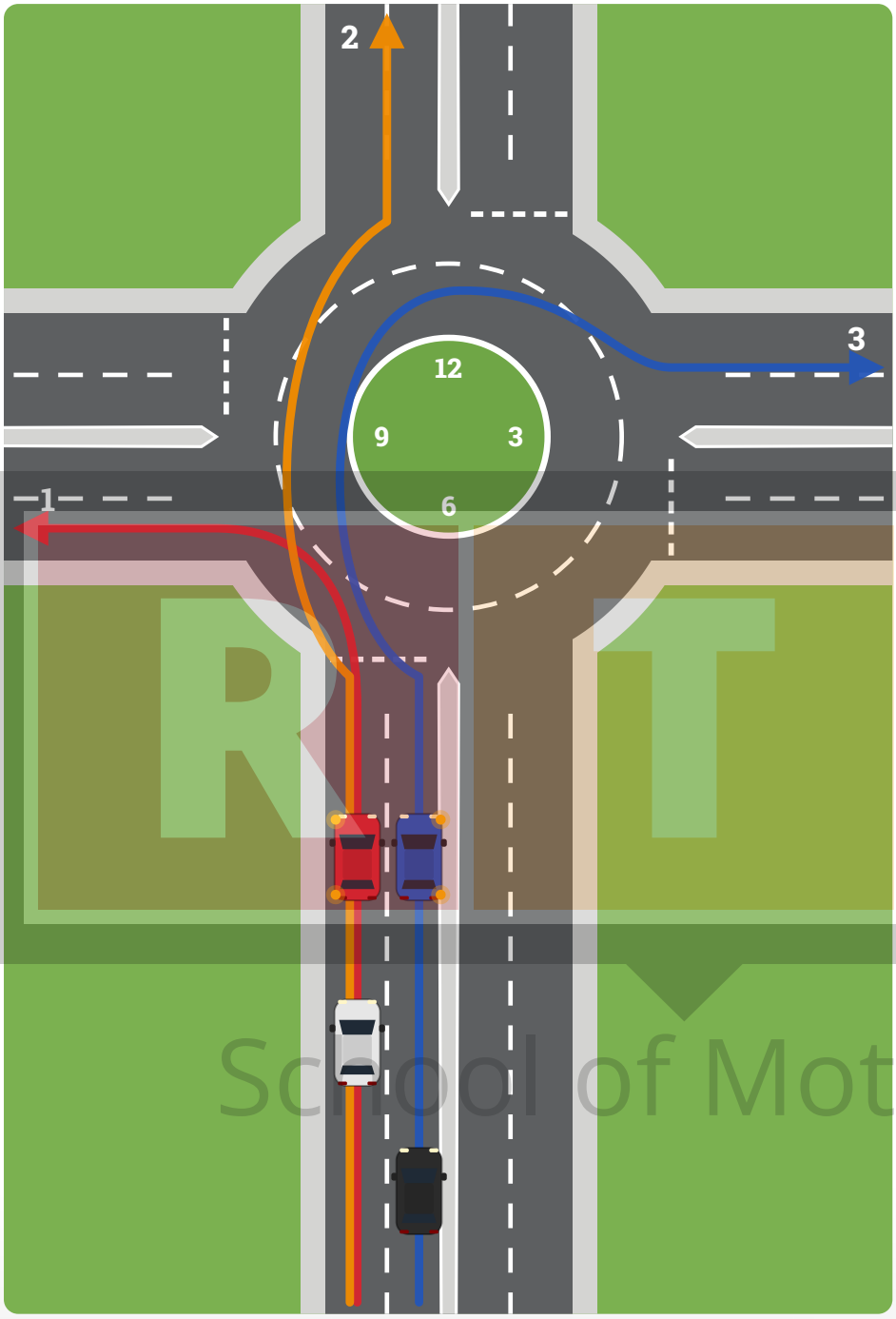
Turn in front of each other when the layout or markings require it. Your view is blocked: take extra care.

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Roundabouts

Give priority to traffic from your right. Follow signs and lane markings first; otherwise:





Roundabout ahead: slow down, look right early and be ready to stop at the give way line.

1 Turning left

Signal left and approach in the left lane. Keep left and keep signalling.

2 Going ahead

No signal on approach. Usually the left lane (follow markings). Signal left after passing the exit before yours.

3 Turning right

Signal right and approach in the right lane. Keep right; signal left after passing the exit before yours.

On the Roundabout

- **Check mirrors before changing lanes. Watch for cyclists, motorcyclists and long vehicles.**
- **Miss your exit? Go round again.**

Mini-Roundabouts



Same rules: give way to the right. You must pass round the white circle (unless your vehicle is too large). Avoid U-turns.

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Traffic Lights & Signs

Traffic Lights



Red
Stop



Red + Amber
Stop. Don't go until green



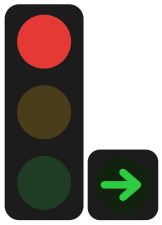
Green
Go if the way is clear



Amber
Stop, unless you're too close to stop safely



Red
Stop



Green filter arrow
Go that way only, even if the main light is red

The Sign System



Circles
give orders



Triangles
warn



Rectangles
inform



Blue
motorways



Green
primary routes



White
local routes



Brown
tourist

Red circle: you must not. **Blue circle:** you must.
Exceptions: the octagonal STOP and the upside-down GIVE WAY triangle.

Blue rectangles also give information on other roads.

Warning Signs



Crossroads



T-junction



Staggered junction



Roundabout



Double bend



Road narrows on right



Dual carriageway ends



Two-way traffic



Traffic signals



Pedestrian crossing



School children



Road works

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Signs Giving Orders



Maximum speed



National speed limit



No entry



Mini-roundabout



Turn left ahead



No motor vehicles



Maximum width



No overtaking



No stopping (clearway)



No U-turns



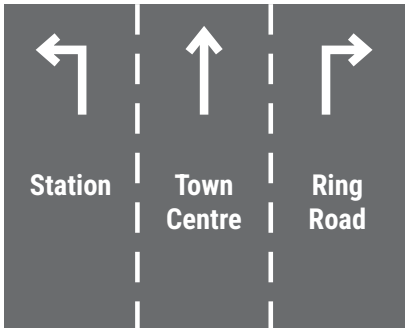
Give way to oncoming



No right turn

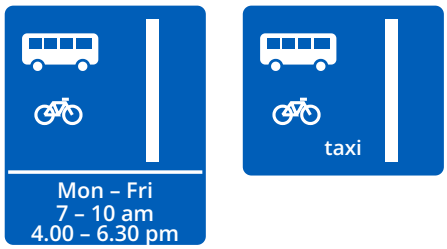
Lanes & Road Markings

Lane Discipline



Get in the correct lane early. Follow the arrows and words on the road.

Bus Lanes



Check the times on the blue sign. Outside those times you may use the lane, unless the sign shows no times.

Road Markings



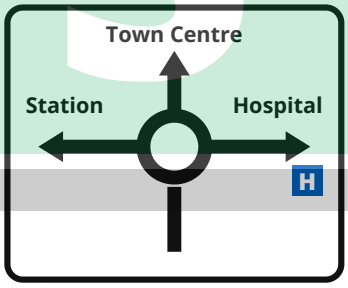
Centre line

Hazard warning line
long dashes

Double white
solid on your side: don't cross

Hatching
keep out if you can

Information



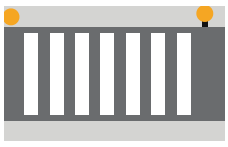
Map-type sign before a roundabout

School Zones



Don't stop on the yellow zig-zags. Slow down and expect children.

Crossings



- **Zebra:** give way to people on the crossing.
- **Pelican:** flashing amber – give way to anyone still crossing.
- **Puffin / toucan:** no flashing amber. Toucans include cyclists.

On the zig-zags: never park, and don't overtake the vehicle nearest the crossing.

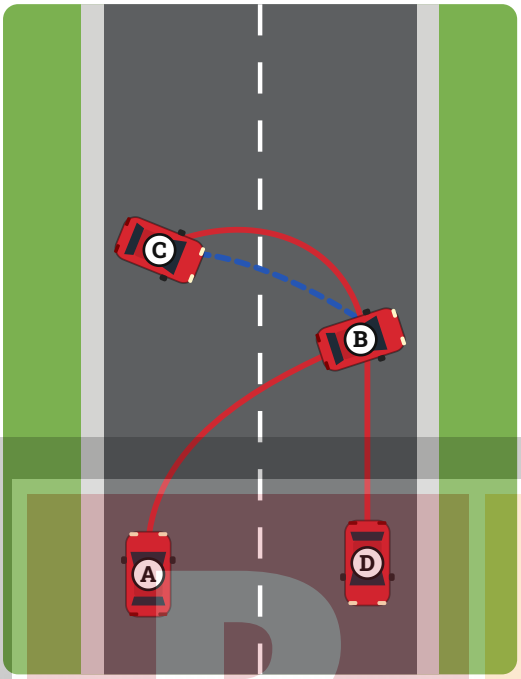
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Manoeuvres

These are older manoeuvres, no longer on the driving test, but still useful skills to know.

Turn in the Road

No longer on the test



Choose a safe, legal place. Look all round before each move and give way to others. Clutch control: move slowly, steer briskly.

A–B: 1st gear. Steer briskly to full right lock. About 1 m from the kerb, steer left. Stop; parking brake if needed.

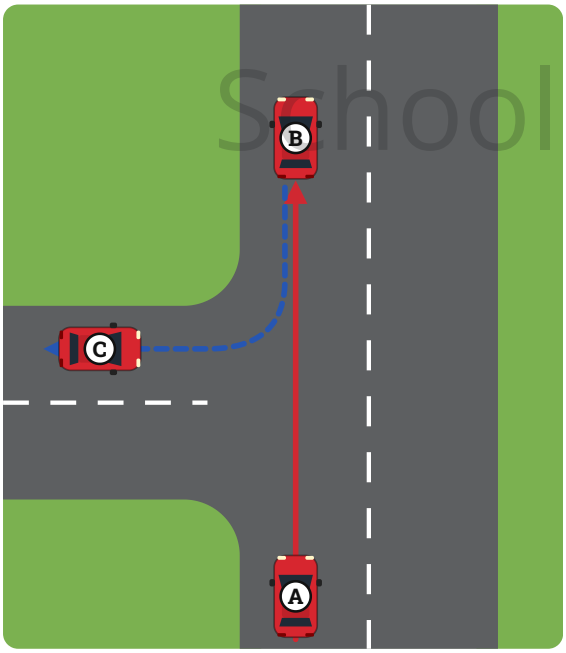
B–C: Reverse gear. Look all round, mainly out of the rear window. Steer briskly left. About 1 m from the kerb, steer right. Stop.

C–D: 1st gear. Look all round. Drive on, straighten up on the left.

Avoid touching the kerbs.

Reversing Round a Corner (Left)

No longer on the test



A–B: Use MSPSL. Look into the side road. Stop close to the kerb, 2–3 car lengths past it.

B–C: Reverse gear. Look all round. Reverse slowly to the point of turn, look again, then steer left to follow the kerb. The front swings out: check the road.

Look well back into the side road. Stop close to the kerb, far enough back to rejoin safely.

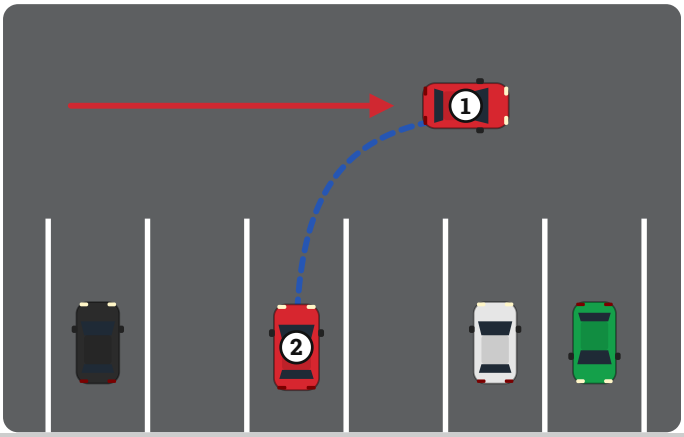
Bump the kerb? Stop, pull forward and correct. If traffic appears, stop and let it go first.

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Parking

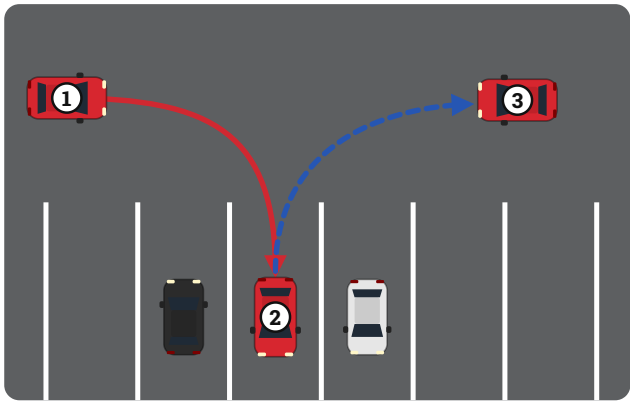
Reverse Bay Parking



1 Drive past the bay, look all round, reverse slowly.

2 Steer when the bay lines line up; straighten and park centrally between the lines.

Forward Bay Parking



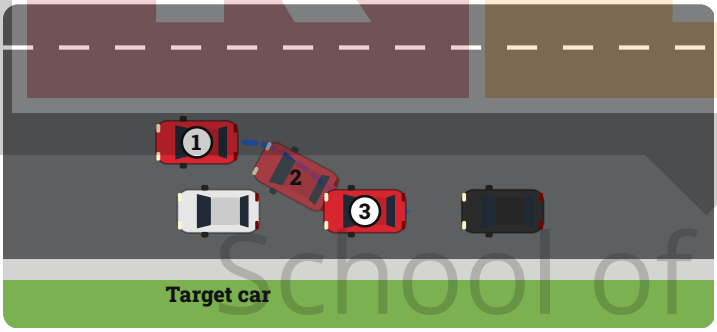
1 MSPSL. Pick a bay; leave room to turn in.

2 Drive in slowly; finish straight and central.

3 Reverse out: look all round, especially behind. Give way to people and cars.

4 Reverse slowly so the front clears; stop, then drive away.

Parallel Parking



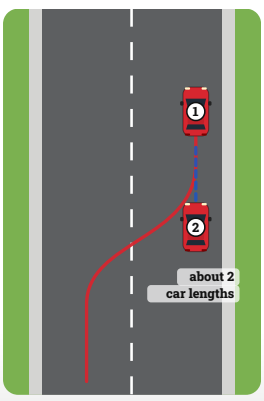
Steer: left – straighten – right – straighten

1 MSPSL. Stop alongside and slightly ahead of the parked car.

2 Reverse gear, look all round. When your rear is level with the start of the gap, look again and steer left. At a good angle, straighten.

3 As the front clears the car ahead, steer briskly right, then straighten as you become parallel. Finish close to the kerb; parking brake on.

Pull Up on the Right



1 Mirrors, signal right, cross when safe. Stop close to the right kerb.

2 Reverse about two car lengths, looking all round.

3 Rejoin: look all round, including your left blind spot. Move off only when safe.

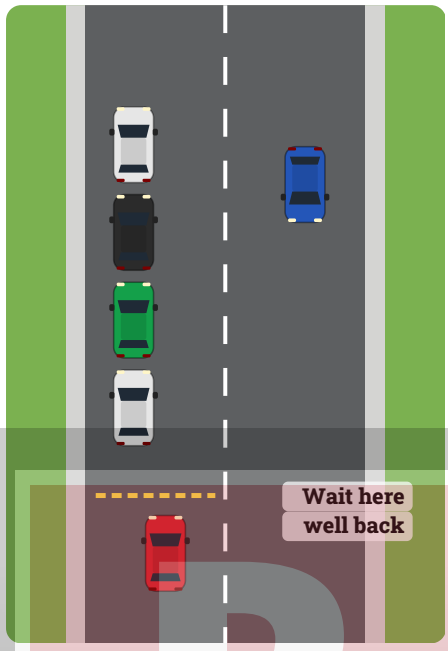


Park centrally between the lines

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Meeting & Overtaking

Meeting Traffic



When parked cars or an obstruction narrow the road, use **MSPSL** and plan ahead.

- **Obstruction on your side?** Give way to oncoming traffic.
- Allow room: about a car door's width when passing parked cars.
- Stop well back so the other driver can get through and you can still see.
- Check mirrors: warn traffic behind if you slow or stop.



Parked cars on your side: be ready to give way

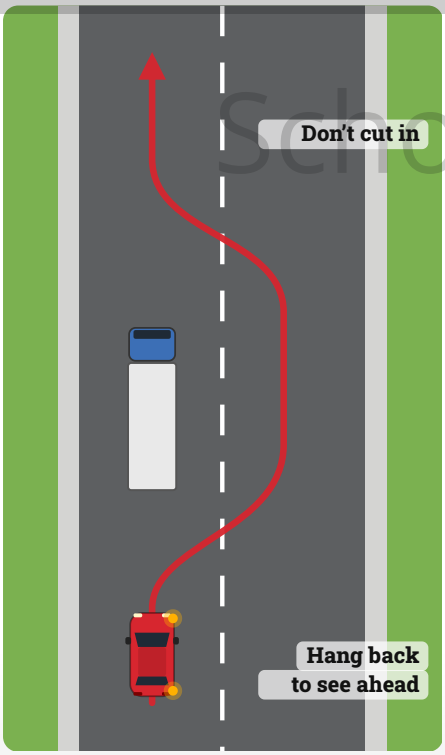


Give way to oncoming



You have priority

Overtaking



Ask: is it necessary, safe and legal? If in doubt, don't.

- Hang back so you can see well ahead.
- Select a lower gear for extra power.
- Use MSPSL, more than once. Check no one behind is already overtaking you.
- Signal right, move out, pass briskly with plenty of room.
- Return to the left in good time. Don't cut in.

Don't overtake near:



Junctions Bends Crossings No overtaking

Also on the brow of a hill, by solid white lines on your side, or where you would force anyone to swerve or slow.

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