

Chapter 4: Speed Limits, Following Distances and Driving Skills



A driver must not drive a vehicle on a highway at a speed that is greater than is reasonable and prudent according to the conditions and hazards on or near the highway. A driver must exercise due care and attention and reasonable consideration for other people. A driver must control the speed of a vehicle to avoid a collision with people, vehicles, animals or other obstacles on the highway.

A driver of a motor vehicle must, when on a highway and approaching or passing an animal, exercise reasonable caution to avoid injuring the animal.

Speeding is risky, but the safest speed is not always the slowest speed. If you drive much slower than surrounding traffic, other drivers might get frustrated and try to pass you. What you are aiming for is a speed appropriate for the conditions in which you are driving.

The maximum speed limit in Prince Edward Island unless otherwise posted is 80 kilometres per hour (km/h). The basic speed limits are:

- **40 km/h (25 mph) in most municipalities (municipalities may establish the maximum speed limit within their boundaries);**
- **50 km/h (30 mph) in urban areas;**
- **60 km/h (40 mph) in school zones designated as such by the erection of signs at the entrance and the exit, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. when children are present on or near the highway on school days;**
- **80 km/h (50 mph) on most provincial highways; and**
- **90 km/h (55 mph) on the TransCanada and other designated highways.**

Posted speed limits indicate the maximum safe speed under favourable driving conditions.

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A reduction in speed is essential when driving under unfavourable conditions, such as:

- poor visibility, due to darkness, rain, fog or snow, etc;
- wet or slippery road surfaces;
- heavy traffic;
- pedestrians on or near the highway; or
- fatigue, illness or nervous tension on the part of the driver.

SLOW DRIVING

A driver must not drive a vehicle at such a slow speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic. If for some reason you must drive slowly because of mechanical or other problems, it is a matter of common sense and courtesy to:

- move over to the right lane and permit other traffic to pass; or
- pull off the roadway and stop to allow traffic to get by.

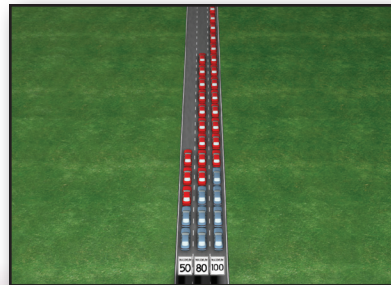
DRAG RACING

It is illegal to race or stunt drive a vehicle or bicycle on any street or highway. This extremely dangerous activity is prohibited. Drivers may lose their driving privileges if convicted of this offence.

FOLLOWING DISTANCES – THE TIME-INTERVAL FORMULA

The “Time-Interval Driving Method” will allow you to calculate a safe following distance between your vehicle and a vehicle ahead.

Under normal conditions, follow at a distance of at least three seconds. When the driver ahead of you passes a fixed marker, begin counting from the back of the vehicle



to the front of yours --- "one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three." If you reach the mark before you've finished counting, you are following too closely. Ease off the accelerator and check yourself again. Under normal conditions, the three-second time-interval will provide you with enough distance to stop.

Here's what to do under other conditions:

When you are pulling a trailer, increase your time interval to four seconds. You will need the extra time and space to stop.

Motorcycles are light and can stop quickly. Allow yourself another second or two of following distance when following a motorcycle.

When driving under adverse weather, road or traffic conditions, add more seconds to your following distance to four or more seconds.

It is sometimes hard to estimate a reasonable distance between your vehicle and the vehicle you are following to be sure of having a safe space in which to stop. The volume of traffic, road conditions and traffic speed constantly demands adjustments in your following distance.

To stop your vehicle, three separate acts are involved. These are actions that involve only you, the driver.

- 1) You must see a reason for stopping. To see the reason for an emergency stop calls for continual close attention to road and traffic conditions.
- 2) You must react. Reaction time varies with individual drivers but the average is about three-quarters of a second. In three-quarters of a second a vehicle traveling at 50 km/h (30 mph) will go 10 metres (33 feet) or about two vehicle lengths before the driver can start to apply the brakes.
- 3) You must then depress the brake pedal and bring the vehicle to a complete stop.

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Remember that the total stopping distance also depends on the efficiency of your brakes and tires and the condition of the road surface.

The distance traveled before the brakes will stop the vehicle depends on:

- the speed the car is being driven;
- the condition of the brakes;
- the condition of the tires;
- the condition of the road surface; or
- whether the vehicle is being driven on a level highway or on a hill.

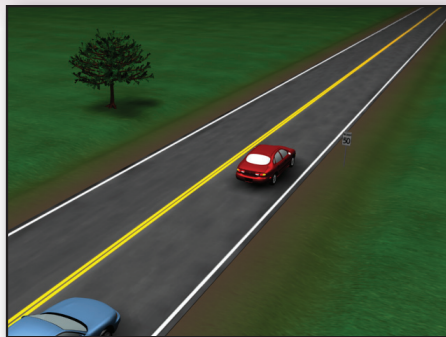
CAUTION: On wet or icy roads your vehicle cannot be stopped as quickly as on dry roads. When slowing or stopping, pump or apply the brakes quickly* (but gently) and as quickly release them. Keep repeating this on and off braking until you come to a full stop or the speed you desire. Do not apply hard, steady brake pressure as this will lock the wheels and start

you skidding. Always drive at a speed which will enable you to stop within the clear, visible distance ahead.

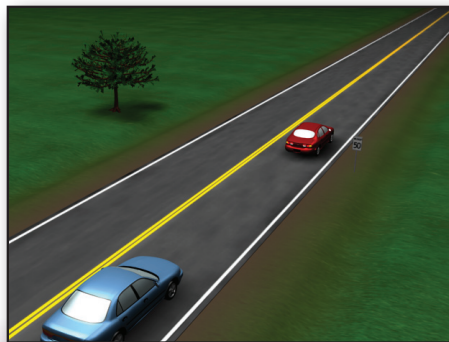
***Note: This does not apply to vehicles with ABS (Antilock Braking Systems)**

Following Distances... continued on next page

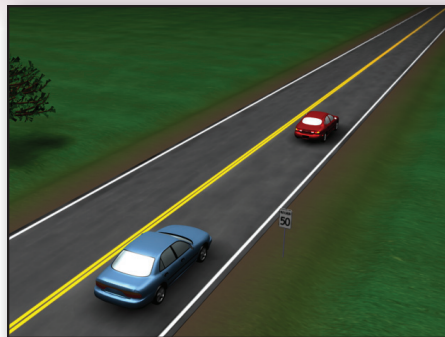
Chapter 4: Speed Limits, Following Distances and Driving Skills



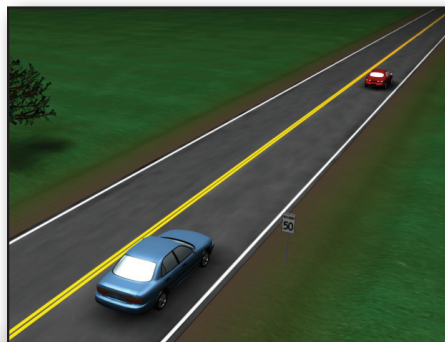
1. The car ahead is about to pass a checkpoint (sign, driveway, pole or other marker.)



2. Begin counting seconds as the rear of the car you are following passes your selected checkpoint.



3. If it takes fewer than three seconds for your car to pass the same checkpoint, your interval is too short to allow you to stop in the assured clear distance ahead.



4. If it takes three seconds or more for your car to pass the same checkpoint you have developed a reasonable interval between your car and the vehicle ahead.

Chapter 4: Changing Lanes

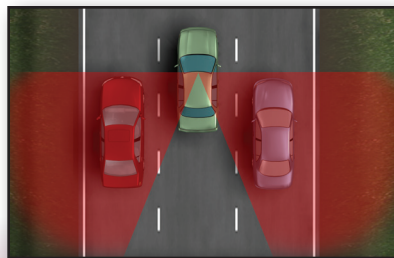
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CHANGING LANES

When you must change lanes always practice these steps:

- make sure that you are not following other traffic too closely;
- look in your rear-view mirror for traffic approaching from the rear;
- look in your side-view mirrors for any traffic;
- signal your intention; and
- turn your head in the direction of your turn, and check over your shoulder for cars that are too close to be visible in your side rear-view mirror.

All vehicles have a “blind spot” in the right and left rear corners. Your inside rearview mirror will not show a vehicle in the lane next to yours,



when the front bumper is about even with, or past your rear bumper.

SIGNALS AND CHANGING LANES

One of the most fundamental principles of safe driving is using reasonable care and signalling before turning, changing lanes or stopping. Giving signals properly and in sufficient time is an important practice. The proper signals are simple and can be easily learned. Moreover, all vehicles made during or after 1971 must be equipped with signal lights, which makes signalling even easier. To be effective, signals must be given in sufficient time to warn other drivers of your intentions; in the city signal 30 metres (100 feet) in advance of a turn or stop. On highways where traffic travels at much higher speeds, signals should be given at least 150 metres (500 feet) before turning or stopping. Even if your vehicle is equipped with a signalling device, know the proper hand signals.

You are required to give a signal before:

- changing from one lane to another;
- turning;
- pulling over to stop;
- pulling out from a parked position; or
- attempting to pass, and after you have passed and are moving back into the right lane.

Make it a practice to give signals at all times. If you misjudge a situation, at least the other driver will be better prepared to avoid a collision.

HAND SIGNALS



left turn



right turn



stop

Chapter 4: Turning

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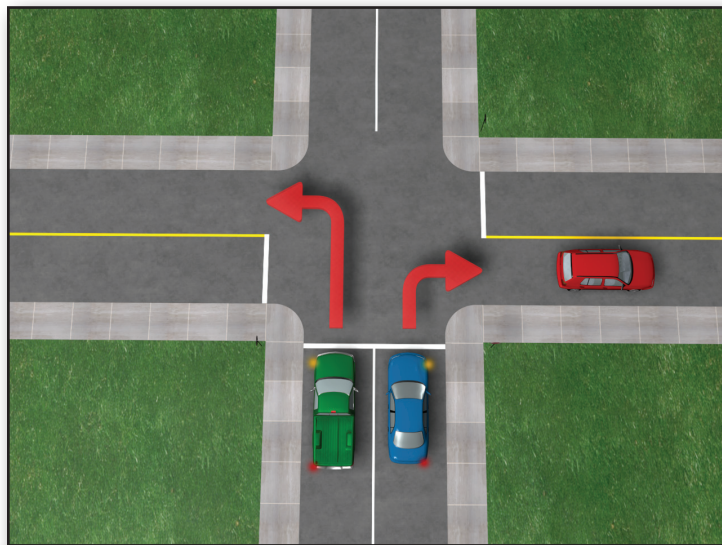
TURNING AT INTERSECTIONS

These are the steps for making safe, courteous and legal turns.

- Prepare for the turn before you get there. Decide well ahead where you want to turn. If you are not sure, drive slowly until you can read the street signs or markers or decide in some other way the direction you desire to turn. Never make last-minute turns; they are dangerous.
- Get into the correct lane as soon as possible. You should get into the proper lane sooner in fast-moving and/or heavy traffic.
- Look behind and on both sides to see where other traffic may be so that you can change lanes and make the turn safely.
- Signal your intention to change lanes and to turn.
- If you are going faster than is safe to make the turn, slow down before you reach the crosswalk and complete the turn at the same speed at which you

enter the intersection. Do not have the brake or clutch pedal pushed down or shift gears while actually turning but be prepared to do so.

- Finish the turn in the proper lane.



LEFT TURNS

Drivers making left turns must be alert for pedestrians and other traffic. Pedestrians in a crosswalk have the right-of-way to proceed across the street. The driver turning left must watch not only for traffic approaching from the opposite direction, but also for any other vehicles that may be entering the intersection.

When turning left into a lane or driveway, make sure that you:

- are in the proper lane for a left turn;
- have given a signal for a sufficient distance; or
- yield to oncoming traffic (oncoming vehicles have the right-of-way even if you have reached the turning point first).

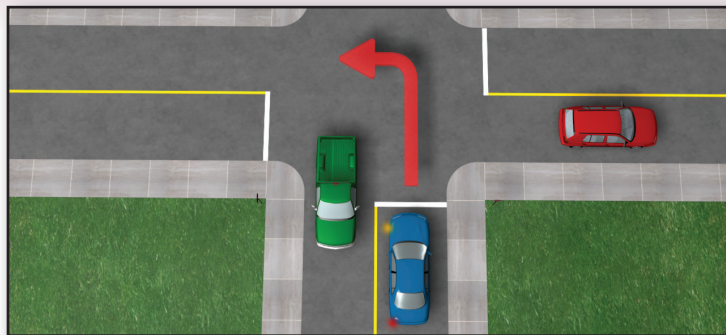
CAUTION: If you have stopped to make a left turn, and must wait for oncoming traffic, do not turn the steering wheel to the left until you are ready to

complete the turn. If you are struck from the rear while stopped with the wheels turned to the left, your car may be pushed into oncoming traffic and cause another collision.

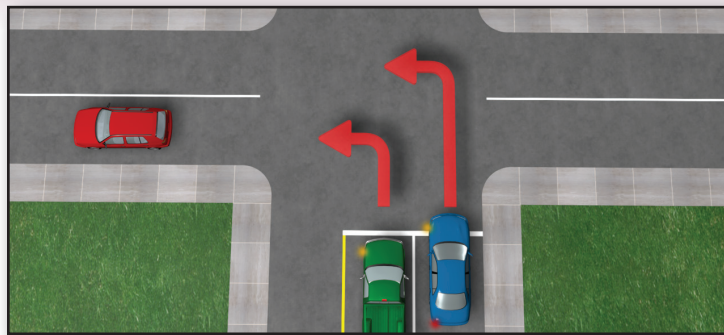
Turning left on highways presents special problems due to the high speeds of other vehicles. When you make a left turn on a highway, remember to stay on your side of the center line until you are ready to begin the turn. Watch for cars that may be passing you, and signal to give other drivers ample warning.

Chapter 4: Vehicle Position While Turning Left

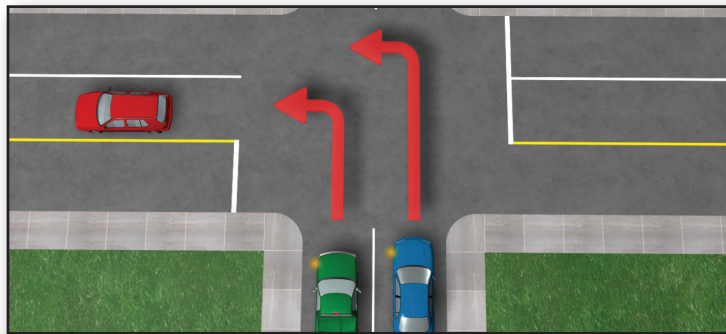
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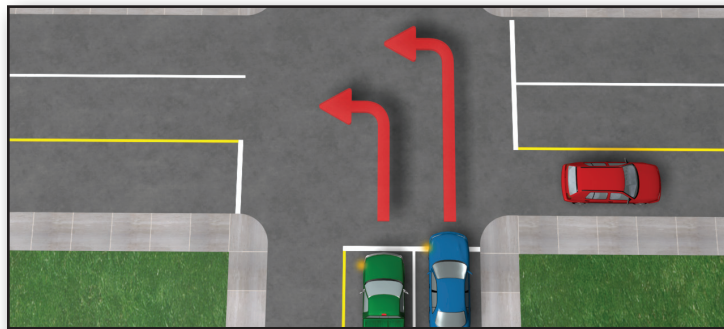
position while turning left



two-way road to a one-way road



one-way road to a two-way road



two-way road to a two-way road

RIGHT TURNS ON A RED LIGHT

Unless forbidden by a sign at the intersection, drivers are permitted to make a right turn on a red light after coming to a complete stop. This procedure, when carried out with certain precautions, contributes to the smooth, orderly and safe movement of traffic in urban areas.

The following steps will apply:

- come to a complete stop at the intersection;
 - check for other motor vehicles and pedestrians who have a prior right to use the intersection at that time and yield to them; and
 - proceed with caution if the way is completely clear.
- It is both dangerous and illegal to make a right turn on a red light without first coming to a complete stop and yielding to other traffic and pedestrians using the intersection.

MAKING U-TURNS

U-turns are hazardous.

U-turns are permitted:

- between intersections in a municipality if a local bylaw permits them; and
- on a highway if you can be seen by traffic approaching from either direction within 150 metres (500 feet).

U-turns are not permitted:

- in a municipality at an intersection which is controlled by traffic lights;
- at any place or intersection where a sign prohibits them; or
- on a curve, near the crest of a hill or at any point where such a turn would interfere with other traffic.

Chapter 4: Passing Other Vehicles

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LEARN THESE RULES FOR SAFE PASSING AND PRACTICE THEM AT ALL TIMES

You must not pass:

- at an intersection, if it would be necessary to cross over the solid centre line. If the car ahead is signaling for a right or left turn, you may cautiously pass on the side opposite the direction of the turn but you must not cross over a solid yellow line;
- at any crosswalk or any other place where a car has stopped to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian or other vehicle;
- in a school zone;
- on the right side of a vehicle except on a street with two or more lanes in the same direction;
- when you have to drive on the left side of the roadway to pass and there is not sufficient clear road ahead to pass safely; or
- in a posted no passing zone.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF DRIVER BEING PASSED

If you are the driver being passed, you have responsibilities. These responsibilities are:

- whenever the driver behind sounds the horn and signals with lights that he or she wants to pass, move to the right and do not change into a left lane until the vehicle has passed; and
- never speed up when being passed;

To reduce the risk of a head-on collision follow these suggestions:

- when another vehicle is passing you, look ahead to make sure that there will be no danger of collision or being cut off by the passing vehicle;
- in heavy traffic, watch for drivers who insist on passing even at the risk of a collision; and
- check your rear-view mirror regularly.

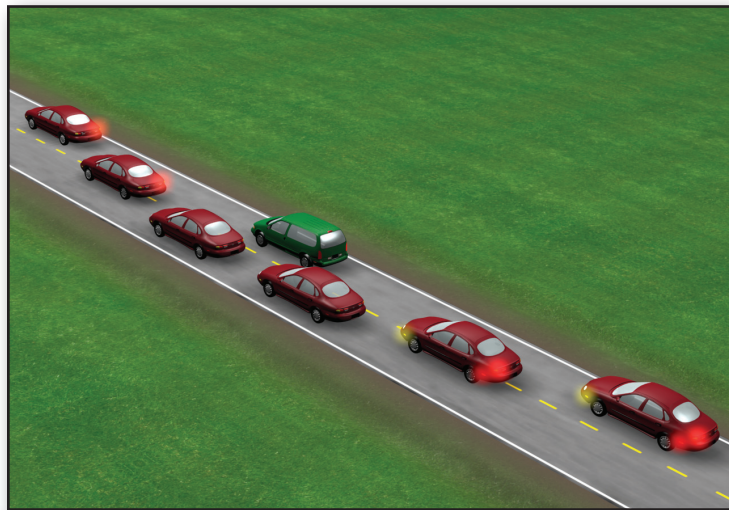
SAFE PASSING PRACTICES

Head-on collisions, sideswiping and rear-end collisions are caused by improper and unsafe passing practices. Develop safe passing practices. These are some suggestions:

- Pay close attention to the distance between you and the vehicle ahead.
- Don't try to pass in heavy traffic.
- Don't take unnecessary risks in an attempt to be "the first in line."
- Keep a safe following distance before passing. Moving up closely behind a vehicle obscures your view of the road ahead and it becomes necessary to pull out sharply to pass.
- Never pull out to pass behind another vehicle that is also passing. The driver ahead may not realize that two cars are passing and may not adjust his or her speed. Wait until the first car has completely passed and your view is unobstructed.

- Check your speed. High speeds and frequent passing go hand-in-hand.

NOTE: Remember, when passing, the law requires that you signal your intention and sound your horn.



Chapter 4: School Buses

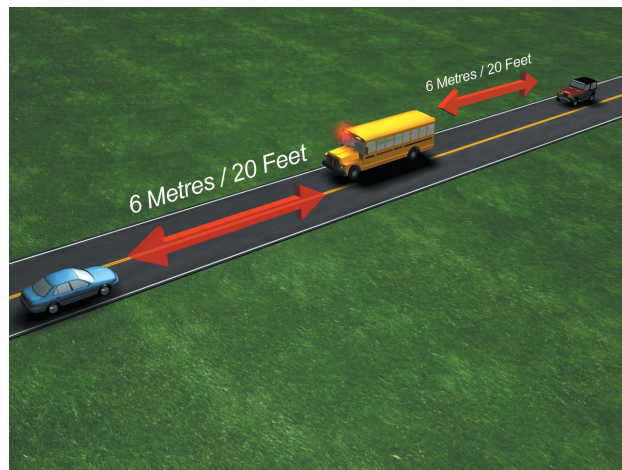
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School buses are specially marked and equipped with alternating amber and red flashing lights.

Alternating flashing **AMBER** lights are displayed before the school bus stops to pick up or let off students. You should be **ALERT** for students when these lights are flashing and be prepared to stop. and you shall reduce speed and proceed with caution and you may pass the bus only with caution.

Alternating flashing **RED** lights are used when the school bus is stopped to pick up or let off students. When you are approaching a school bus with the **FLASHING RED LIGHTS** activated, you must stop your vehicle not less than 6 metres (20 feet) from the front or rear of the bus. Remain stopped until the flashing red lights stop flashing. **IT IS ILLEGAL TO PASS** a school bus when the alternating flashing RED lights are displayed.

Note: Passing a school bus when the red lights are flashing could result in a charge under the *Highway Traffic Act*.



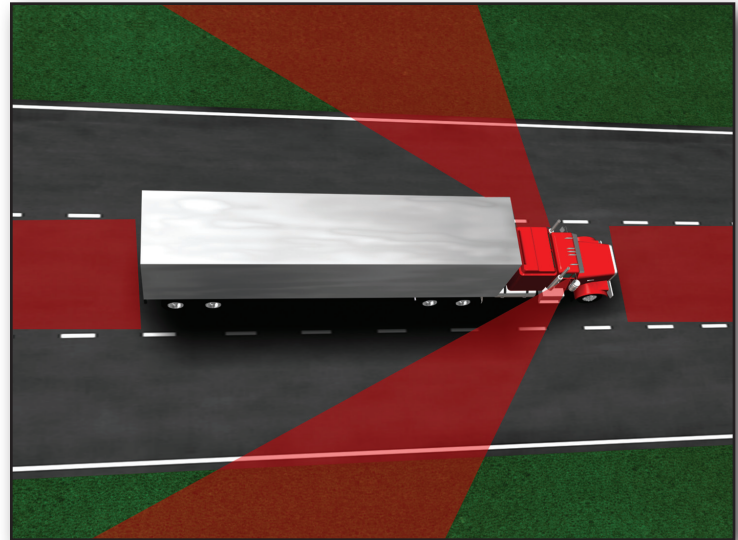
WHAT ARE THE NO-ZONES?

No-Zones are danger areas around trucks and buses where crashes are more likely to occur. Some of these No-Zones are actual blind spots where your car “disappears” from the view of the truck or bus driver.

Truck and bus drivers can’t always see certain areas around their vehicles. The size of heavy vehicles increases the risk of collision in those areas. When you are driving your car through a heavy vehicle No-Zone, please drive with care.

SIDE NO-ZONES

Trucks and buses have big blind spots on both sides. If you can’t see the driver’s face in the side-view mirror, he or she can’t see you. If that driver needs to change lanes for any reason, you could have a collision.



Chapter 4: Heavy Vehicles - The No-Zones

REAR NO-ZONES

Unlike cars, trucks and buses have huge No-Zones directly behind them. Truck or bus drivers can't see your car behind them, and you can't see what's going on ahead of you. If the truck or bus drivers brake suddenly, you may collide. Maintain a safe following distance at all times.

FRONT NO-ZONES

Don't cut in front too soon after passing. Truck and bus drivers need nearly twice the time and room to stop as cars. Look for the whole front of the truck in your rear-view mirror before pulling in front, and then don't slow down.

BACKING UP IN NO-ZONES

Never cross behind a truck that is backing up. Truck drivers may not see you cutting in behind them.

WIDE RIGHT TURNS

Truck and bus drivers sometimes need to swing wide to the left in order to safely make a right turn. They can't see cars squeezing in between them and the curb. Watch for their signal lights and give them room to turn.

Remember:

- don't "hang out" on either side of trucks or buses;
- avoid tailgating;
- pass safely;
- never cross behind a truck that is backing up.

Chapter 4: Meeting Oncoming Traffic & Parking Regulations

There are certain rules for drivers going in opposite directions and meeting each other.

- The basic rule is to keep your vehicle in your half of the roadway. Never permit your vehicle to wander into another traffic lane; you should drive in the centre of your lane of traffic except when passing or turning.
- When meeting another vehicle on a narrow street or road, BOTH drivers must slow down or stop, and assist one another to pass safely. On streets that are made narrow by parked vehicles, watch for oncoming vehicles. If the parked vehicles are on your half of the road, move into a gap whenever possible.
- You should not drive in the city with your high beams on unless they are required for safety. On the highway, when meeting other traffic you must dim your lights when you are within 150 metres (500 feet) of the other car.

PARKING REGULATIONS

It is illegal to stop or park a vehicle:

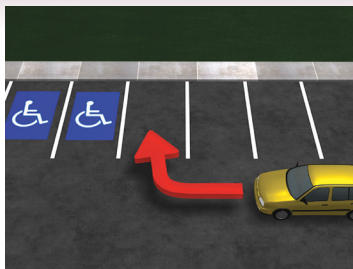
- in front of a private driveway, lane or intersection;
- within 2.5 metres (8 feet) of a fire hydrant;
- on a crosswalk;
- within six metres (20 feet) of the approach to a crosswalk;
- on the roadway side of another vehicle that is already stopped or parked (double parking);
- so that it obstructs traffic or constitutes a hazard to others;



Chapter 4: Parking and Stopping

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- within 15 metres (50 feet) of the nearest rail of a railway crossing;
- within 12 metres (40 feet) of a stop sign or traffic signal; and
- in a space designated for the disabled unless the vehicle has a valid emblem approved by Highway Safety Division and The Council of the Disabled that clearly identifies the vehicle is owned, operated by or used for transportation of a disabled person. Violation of this law will result in a fine.



The following parking rules also apply:

- where parallel parking is permitted, you must have the vehicle's wheels within 0.3 metres (12 inches) of the curb;

- you must set your hand or foot brake, stop the motor and remove the keys from the ignition; and
- when getting out of a vehicle on the left side, or the right side on a one-way street, always look before opening the door. A passing cyclist or another car may strike the door, or pin you against the vehicle.

On a highway never park or stop on a travelled lane unless your vehicle is so disabled that you cannot move it. If for any reason you cannot move your vehicle off the highway, always turn on your parking lights or hazard lights when visibility is poor. But most important, get the vehicle off the highway as soon as possible.

If you have to stop or park at night on the highway, pull over as far to the right as you can. Turn on your parking or hazard lights. Do not stand on the highway if you have to make repairs or change a flat tire. Carry a warning signal light which you can put on the

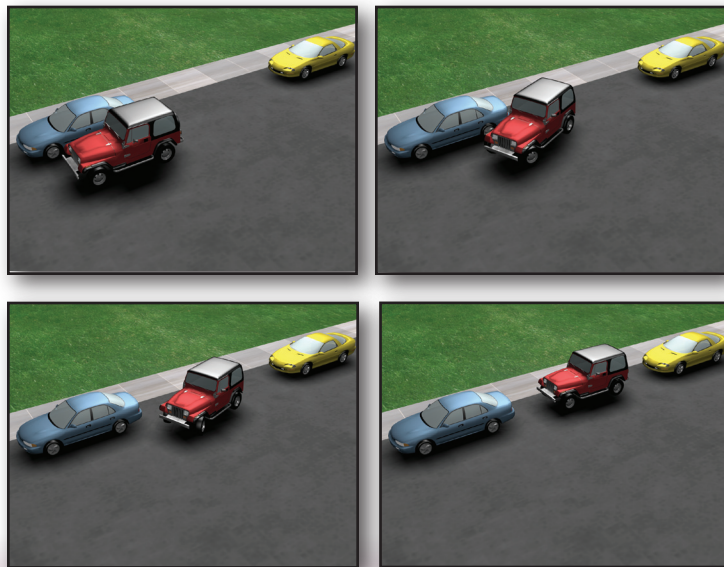
shoulder of the road behind your vehicle. Buses, heavy commercial vehicles and trucks must carry flares or warning lamps, which must be placed at least 60 metres (200 feet) in front of and to the rear of the vehicle.

STEPS IN PARALLEL PARKING

- Stop even with the car ahead about 0.45 metres (1.5 feet) away from it.
- Back slowly, turning the wheel sharply to the right until the car is at a 45-degree angle with the curb, then straighten the wheels.
- Back slowly until the left headlight of the rear car is visible; then turn the wheels sharply to the left and again back slowly.
- Turn wheel sharply to the right and pull forward to the centre of the parking space.

ANGLE PARKING

Drive forward into the space, with equal space on each side between the lines.



Chapter 4: Parking and Stopping

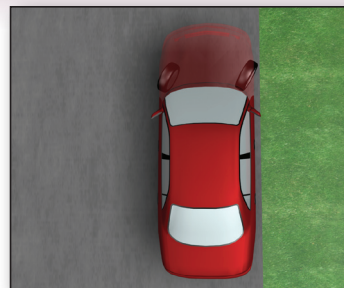
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Follow these steps when moving your car from a parked position:

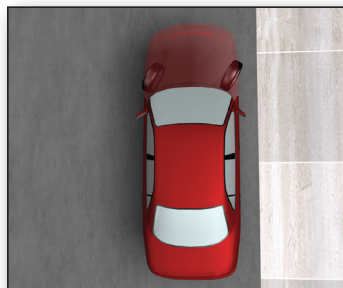
- check for other traffic;
- signal your intention to pull away from the curb; and
- pull away when it is safe to do so and when you do not interfere with other traffic.



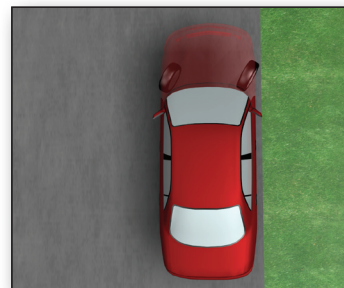
uphill with curb



uphill with no curb



downhill with curb



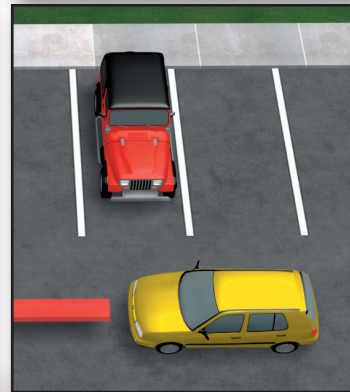
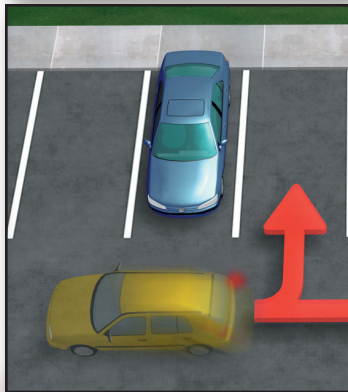
downhill with no curb

Although backing forms a minor portion of driving, it deserves particular attention because it is an especially hazardous movement. A driver's blind spot keeps him or her from being completely aware of everything in the path of his or her vehicle when backing up. The law requires that a driver must not back a vehicle unless the movement can be made safely and without interfering with traffic.

STEPS IN BACKING

- Check all around the vehicle before you get in the vehicle.
- Look out the rear window.
- Sound the horn immediately before backing, to alert any pedestrians you may have missed.
- Back up slowly.
- Check both sides as you back up.
- When backing from a driveway, check for pedestrian and vehicle traffic before crossing the sidewalk and entering the roadway.

- Backing is permitted only when safe to do so.



Chapter 4: Driving in a Village, Town or City

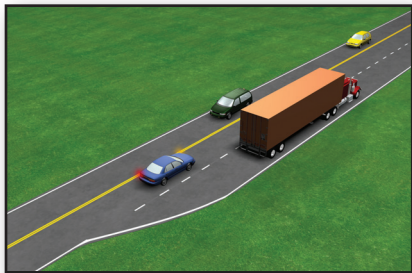
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Things to remember when driving in a village, town or city:

- Watch for pedestrians and other vehicles when approaching any intersection.
 - Obey the speed limits. At a higher speed you may be unable to stop when necessary.
 - Plan your route ahead so that you will be in the proper lane for any turns you may have to make. Signal well in advance.
 - If you are parked at a curb, do not pull away until you have signaled, checked for other traffic and are sure you can do so safely.
 - Be alert for signs and signals.
 - Slow down in residential areas and watch for children and bicyclists.
 - If you must drive at a slower speed than the flow of traffic, keep to the right lane.
 - Keep your speed down in lanes and alleys. Stop before you enter a street from a lane or alley.
- Do not block an intersection. If your lane beyond the intersection is blocked with traffic, stop before entering it and wait until the traffic ahead moves.
 - Do not “weave” in traffic. When you have to change lanes, signal and watch for traffic behind you.
 - Do not follow other vehicles too closely.

ACCELERATION AND DECELERATION LANES

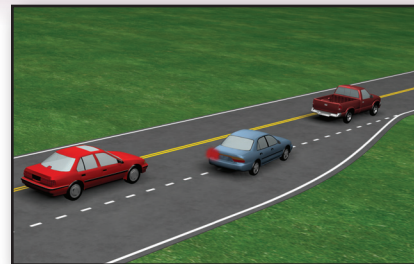
Some highways have speed-up or acceleration lanes. First enter the acceleration lane; then increase your speed, signal and move over to the regular traffic lane when your speed and traffic permits. This will enable you to merge smoothly with the other traffic.



Some highways also have lanes provided for decelerating, or slowing down before turning off the highway. Always signal before entering the deceleration lane, and slow down after you have entered it.

MERGING

Merging requires that you time your approach and smoothly blend in with the other traffic. This may require adjusting your speed so that when you reach the end of the acceleration lane, you have a gap in the traffic which will permit you to enter the flow of traffic safely. Your entry into that flow should be at, or near, the speed of the other traffic.



Do not slow down or come to a stop at the end of the acceleration lane. The acceleration lane is designed for you to bring your vehicle up to the speed of the highway traffic. The drivers behind you are expecting you to continue. Slowing down or stopping may cause your vehicle to be rear-ended.

Here are some tips for safe merging:

- check the traffic flow that is on the highway;
- choose your entry position;
- as your vehicle enters the acceleration lane, signal;
- accelerate to the speed of the highway traffic;
- keep checking the gap and any following vehicles;
- pull into the gap; and
- turn off your signal light.

Drivers already on the highway should, when approaching an acceleration lane, slow down and leave a gap for the merging vehicle or move over to the left-hand lane if there are two or more lanes travelling in the same direction, if it is safe to do so, leaving the right travel lane clear for the merging vehicles. Remember, be courteous and allow the merging driver to enter the highway.

SOFT OR LOW SHOULDERS

If one or more wheels of your vehicle suddenly drops off the edge of the pavement onto a soft or low dirt shoulder, follow these four steps to keep control and return to the pavement safely:

- Steer firmly. Hold the wheel with both hands. Straddle the edge with one side of the vehicle on the pavement and the other side on the shoulder.
- Slow down gradually. Lift your foot from the accelerator, but don't brake.
- Ease to a slower speed.
- Return to the pavement at a 45-degree angle when the vehicle has slowed enough to give you complete control over it. Don't allow the side of the tires to rub against the pavement edge. Returning to the pavement at too high a speed may cause the vehicle to swerve into the lane of oncoming traffic.
- Straighten out the vehicle in the correct lane of traffic.

Note: *You may have to continue on the shoulder of the road until the shoulder and road are at an even level.*

TO REDUCE THE RISK OF A COLLISION

- Stay alert and attentive.
- Stop driving when tired.
- Adjust speed to conditions.
- Maintain a safe following distance.
- Follow proper procedures for passing, turning and changing lanes.
- Drive in the right lane of a four-lane highway when not passing.
- At dusk, turn on your headlights to help other drivers see you.



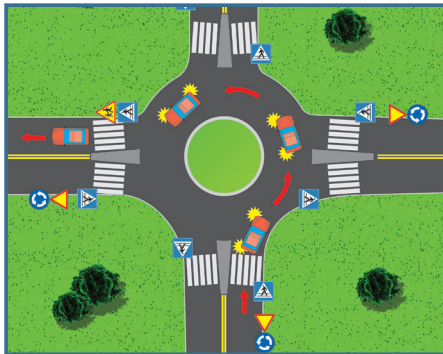
Chapter 4: Roundabouts – How They Work

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SINGLE-LANE ROUNDABOUTS

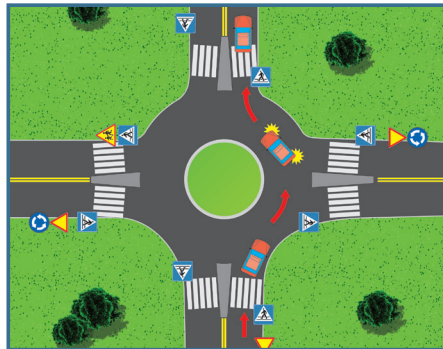
Motorized Vehicles

- Vehicles entering the roundabout **must always yield** to traffic already in the roundabout and to pedestrians.
- All vehicles must travel in a **counterclockwise** direction.



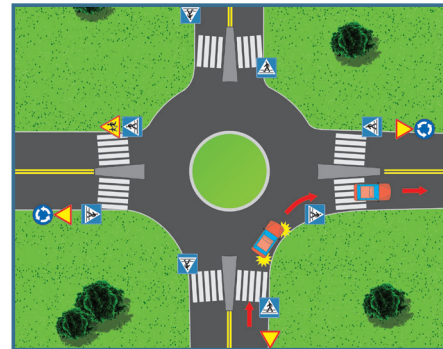
Left Turns:

Vehicles turning left or performing a U-turn must signal left before entering the roundabout and signal right before exiting the roundabout.



Going Straight:

Vehicles going straight must not signal before entering the roundabout. They should signal right before exiting the roundabout.



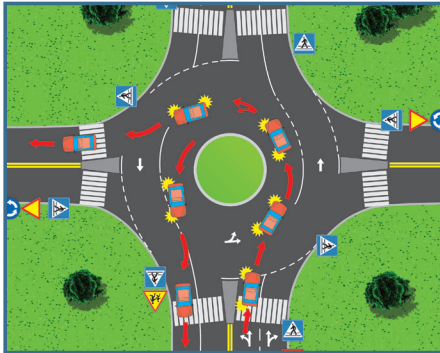
Right Turns:

Vehicles turning right must signal right and maintain the signal until they have exited the roundabout.

DUAL-LANE ROUNDABOUTS

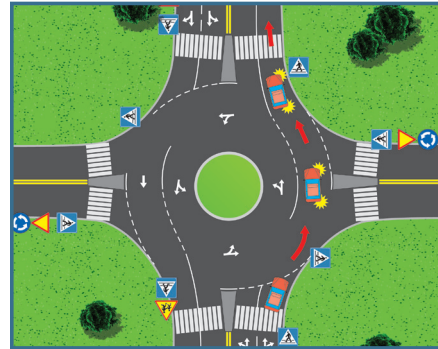
Motorized Vehicles

- Vehicles entering the roundabout must always yield to traffic already in the roundabout and to pedestrians.
- Vehicles should not enter a roundabout alongside another vehicle already in the roundabout.
- Vehicles must remain in their lane until exiting the roundabout and should not change lanes while in the roundabout.
- All vehicles must travel in a counterclockwise direction.



Left Turns:

Vehicles turning left or performing a U-turn must be in the left-hand lane. They must signal left before entering the roundabout and signal right before exiting the roundabout.

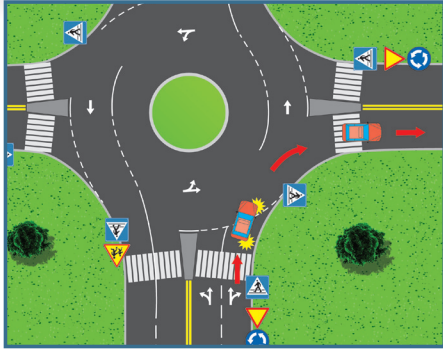


Going Straight:

Vehicles going straight can be in the left- or right-hand lanes. They must not signal before entering the roundabout. They should signal right before exiting the roundabout.

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Right Turns:

Vehicles turning right must be in the right-hand lane. They must signal right and maintain the signal until they have exited the roundabout.

Pedestrians

Rules for pedestrians are the same in a roundabout as they are at all other crosswalks on the road. But there are a few things to keep in mind:

Signal your intention to cross by extending your arm.

- Crosswalks at modern roundabouts have two sections and, in some cases, two lanes to cross at each section. Pedestrians must ensure both lanes of traffic are yielding. Cross the first section to the splitter island, stop, make sure traffic is yielding to you, then cross the second section.
- Always try to make eye contact with drivers to ensure they acknowledge that you are going to cross and that they are yielding to you.

Bicycles

Cyclists have two options:

- First, they can use the roundabout with the same rules as a vehicle and travel in the centre of the appropriate lane.
- Second, they can leave the road at the crosswalk, get off their bicycle and navigate the roundabout as a pedestrian would.

LIGHTS

There are three times as many fatal collisions at night as there are during daylight hours. Night driving is more dangerous because the distance you can see ahead is greatly reduced. Have your lights aimed regularly. Remember, you cannot see as well at night. Reduce your speed so as not to “over-drive” your headlights. If you are travelling at a speed which does not permit you to see an object in time to stop, you are over-driving your headlights.

SPEED

On the highway, if road conditions are poor, or visibility is reduced, you should slow down to a speed that will allow you to stop within the distance you can see. In cities or towns with restricted speed zones, the speed limit does not change at night, but visibility does so you should slow down. When driving in residential areas, slow down and watch for pedestrians

or other road users who may be difficult to see at night.

HIGH AND LOW HEADLIGHT BEAMS

The law requires motor vehicle headlights to be turned on from sunset to sunrise or when visibility is poor. When you need to use lights, use your headlights; parking lights are for parking only. Use LOW beams in city driving, except in areas which are not lighted and where traffic permits.

When meeting an oncoming vehicle DIM your lights when within 150 metres (500 feet), of the other vehicle. Do not wait for the other driver to dim his/her lights first. When switching to low beams, remove your foot from the gas pedal to reduce speed in order to give your eyes a chance to adjust to the change in light. To avoid being blinded watch the right edge of the roadway; if you are blinded, always slow down

Chapter 4: Night Driving

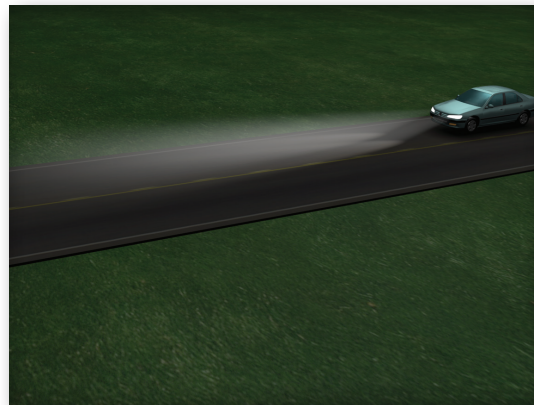
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when meeting another vehicle. When following a vehicle, use your LOW beam when within 60 metres (200 feet) of it. If you do not, your bright lights will reflect from the rear-view mirror and blind the driver in front.

HIGH AND LOW HEADLIGHT BEAMS (EXAMPLE)



low beams



high beams

To prepare for winter driving have these items carefully checked and repaired if necessary:

- **THE RADIATOR**

Check for leaks and put in antifreeze.

- **THE TIRES**

Check tires and replace any damaged or “bald” tires. Studded tires may be used between October 1 and May 31. It is unlawful to use them at any other time. Studded tires greatly improve traction and shorten stopping distance on slippery roads.

- **THE BRAKES**

Have brakes adjusted or relined if necessary. Be sure your four brakes are braking equally. On icy roads poorly adjusted brakes can throw your car into a dangerous skid.

- **THE WINDSHIELD WIPERS AND HEATER DEFROSTER**

Be sure your wiper blades are in good condition at all times. Check your heater defroster unit to be sure it is in good working order.

- **THE MUFFLER**

Have it checked for leaks. A leaking muffler or exhaust system can create a carbon monoxide hazard, particularly if you are stalled in traffic or in a blizzard. Never start your car in a closed garage.

TIPS FOR SAFE WINTER DRIVING

- **SLOW DOWN**

Slow down whenever roads are icy or covered with snow. Keep well back of the vehicle ahead. It takes from three to 12 times more distance to stop on snow and ice than it does on dry pavement.

- **GET THE “FEEL” OF THE ROAD**

The road may be more slippery than you think. When traffic permits, apply your brakes to see how well they hold.

- **BE ALERT**

- a) Watch out for pedestrians. They are cold and in a hurry. Extend every courtesy to them.
- b) In early fall and late spring, shaded spots on the highway retain frost and ice much longer and may be slippery.
- c) Watch for snowdrifts and patches of icy surfaces. Hitting a snow drift or icy patch at high speed can throw your vehicle out of control.

- **BRAKING CAREFULLY**

To stop or slow down on icy roads, gently apply your brakes. Probably no single action causes more skids and collisions than locking the brakes.

By pressing hard on the brakes you simply lock the wheels and turn your vehicle into a “toboggan.” (This does not apply if your car is equipped with an anti-lock brake system.) Once you lock your wheels you lose traction and steering ability. With power brakes you have to be even more careful so as not to lock your wheels on icy roads.

ANTILOCK BRAKE SYSTEMS (ABS)

Antilock brake system is an advanced electronic braking system that will prevent skidding. When you need to stop, don’t pump the brakes. Just hold the brake pedal down. With ABS, you can steer and brake at the same time; however, any type of braking system requires the driver to use good judgment and extra caution to avoid collisions. If your vehicle is equipped with ABS, consult your owner’s manual for more information.

BLACK ICE

Black ice is a very dangerous road condition. It occurs when the road is wet and the temperature drops to or below the freezing level. This can also occur at anytime during the winter months where water may freeze into ice. Black ice is very difficult to see or may not be seen at all. Please be aware that icy conditions may occur without warning or any visible appearance.

BRIDGE FREEZES BEFORE ROAD

During the winter months, bridges will have ice on the road surface before ice forms on the highway. Please use caution when approaching bridges during winter.

WINTER KIT

Here are some helpful things you might carry in your car in winter:

- a blanket and extra clothing;

- a heat source (candle, matches, deep can to hold the candle);
- nonperishable food, candy, nuts;
- shovel;
- hatchet or axe;
- inflated spare tire and jack;
- sand, salt;
- approved warning devices;
- tow rope;
- first aid kit;
- ice scraper, snow brush;
- methyl hydrate (gas line antifreeze);
- tire chains;
- a flashlight with spare batteries;
- jumper cables; and
- if you have a cellular phone, carry it with you.

If your vehicle battery fails, consult your vehicle owner's manual for proper instructions for boosting your vehicle battery.

If you find yourself stranded, stay with your vehicle. Run the engine just often enough to keep yourself warm. Keep the vehicle ventilated by opening a window slightly while the engine is running to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Save your energy and be patient. You are safer and more likely to be found if you stay with the vehicle.

STEERING

Never make any sudden and sharp turns on slippery roads, a dangerous skid could result. Steering becomes very easy during a skid — almost like power steering. Try to anticipate your turns and start slowing down well before you reach the intersection or curve on the highway.

STARTING

Another common cause of collisions is misjudgment

by drivers of the time it will take them to cross an intersection from a complete stop. Often drivers who start from a stop sign or traffic light cannot get across the intersection in time. Never spin your wheels when starting. Spinning tires melt snow, turning it into ice. With standard transmission put your car into second gear when on icy roads. Then gently press the accelerator pedal until your car starts to roll. The first sign of spinning means too much gas, ease off a bit. With automatic transmission, apply gentle pressure on the accelerator, just enough to start your car rolling. You will also have to allow for the longer start by looking for greater gaps in traffic. Remember that just as it will take you longer to start, the other driver will require a longer distance to stop for you.

OTHER CAUSES OF SKIDDING

- Driving too fast on bumpy roads, or when crossing a road crown, railway tracks or icy ruts.

- Driving on the edge of the road. If one wheel drops off the pavement onto the shoulder, a skid may result.
- Changing to lower gear at too fast a speed. The sudden deceleration caused by the compression of your motor may throw you into a skid.

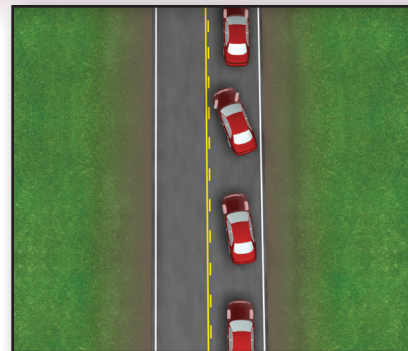
HOW TO RECOVER FROM A SKID

In case your vehicle does go into a skid, learn how to recover from it:

- keep calm and keep control of yourself, but act promptly;
- if the skid was caused by slamming on the brakes, ease off the brakes and steer in the direction in which the rear end is skidding. Do not oversteer;
- if the skid was caused by accelerating too fast, ease up on the gas pedal and steer in the direction of the skid;
- when the skid is caused by driving too fast over a

bumpy road surface or icy ruts, take your foot off the gas pedal, but do not apply brakes, and steer gently but firmly;

- if the skid was caused by gearing down at too fast a speed, shift back into high gear, steering in the direction of the skid at the same time;
- when the skid occurs at slow speeds due to improper braking or steering, moderate acceleration may aid in recovering from it. This should be resorted to only if all else fails; and
- if your tire blows out, make sure that you have a firm grip on the steering wheel. Do not drive with one hand.



FRONT WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES (FWDV)

Experienced FWDV drivers may find that gentle acceleration will help the vehicle pull out of a rear wheel skid. If the front wheels skid, take your foot off the accelerator. The engine braking effect may slow the car to the point where front end traction is regained. If the skid continues, depress the clutch or select neutral. Freely rolling wheels are better able to regain traction.

DRIVING IN THE RAIN

Roads are likely to be especially slippery JUST AFTER IT BEGINS TO RAIN. The first few drops loosen the grease and dirt accumulated on the surface of the road. The loosened grease and dirt mix with the raindrops and the road is quickly covered with a slippery film that makes it extremely dangerous. The first few drops of rain are danger signals telling you to slow down and use extra caution.

HYDROPLANING — “Water Skiing on the Highway”

Hydroplaning takes place on wet roads. As speed increases, your tires start to ride up on a film of water. In a standard passenger car, partial hydroplaning starts at about 60 km/h (35 mph), and increases with speed to about 90 km/h (55 mph), at which point the tires may be totally up on the water. In a severe rainstorm the tires lose all contact with the road at 90 km/h (55 mph). When this is the case, there is no friction available to brake, accelerate or turn. A gust of wind, a change of road conditions or a slight turn can create an unpredictable and uncontrollable skid. The best thing to do is to take your foot off the accelerator and let the car slow down. If you skid while your car is only partially hydroplaning, you should be able to regain control by correcting for the particular type of skid. On the other hand, if you're totally hydroplaning, all you can do is release the accelerator and ride out the skid.

Chapter 4: Highway, Weather and Visibility Conditions

To prevent hydroplaning, it is most helpful to have good tires with deep treads. The treads allow the water to escape from under the tires and tend to prevent complete hydroplaning at normal speeds; however, when the depth of the water exceeds the depth of the treads, complete hydroplaning can be expected at speeds from 80 to 90 km/h (50 to 55 mph).

VISIBILITY

The law requires that the driver have a clear unobstructed line of vision. All windows must be kept free of dirt, condensation, ice and snow. Clean your windows before every trip and stop to clean them whenever conditions require it. It is illegal to drive your vehicle when your vision is completely or partially obstructed. Ornaments or decorations on any part of the vehicle which obstruct the driver's vision or distract his or her attention are prohibited. No more than two adult passengers and the driver

are permitted in the front seat. Any load within the vehicle, including passengers, must not obstruct the driver's vision to the front, sides or rear of the vehicle.

Clear and unobstructed vision is always essential for a driver, but in adverse weather conditions, good vision becomes even more important. In fog, rain or snow, always turn your headlights on low beams. High beams will only reflect off fog or snow and hamper your vision and that of approaching drivers. If your vehicle is equipped with fog lights, use them when driving in fog.

DRIVER DISTRACTIONS

Be familiar with the equipment in your car, such as the stereo system and cell phone. This is especially important if you have a new phone or car, or a rental vehicle. Practice before driving so you can perform basic functions without taking your eyes off the road.

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Program your favourite stations into the radio for easy access. Arrange tapes and CDs in an easy-to-reach spot.

- Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road. If you choose to use your wireless phone, you must use a hands-free device and keep it in its holder.
- Make sure your children are comfortable and properly buckled up. To keep children from distracting the driver, provide them with safe items they may need for the road trip. Teach your children the importance of good behaviour while in a vehicle. Don't underestimate how distracting it can be to tend to them in the car.
- Pull over to eat or drink. By stopping, you can give yourself a break from the traffic and enjoy your refreshments. Children or adults may choke on food while in the vehicle, causing a severe distraction for

the driver. Avoid eating while driving, but if you must, choose easy-to-handle items and make sure all drinks are secured in cup holders.

- Check your route before leaving. If you are unfamiliar with where you're going, study a road map to avoid unnecessary stress and distractions. Do not attempt to read the road map while driving.
- Complete your grooming before leaving. Don't rely on the time in your vehicle to take care of your personal routine such as applying makeup, combing your hair or shaving. Don't try to retrieve items that fall to the floor while driving. Wait until your vehicle is parked.
- Do not engage in emotionally charged conversations either with the passengers or on your mobile phone. Such discussions can result in aggressive or erratic driving behaviour.

- Never take notes while driving. Always find a safe place to stop before writing things down. Designate a front-seat passenger to serve as “co-pilot” rather than fumble with maps or unfamiliar navigation systems.
- Drive defensively. Be prepared for the unsafe actions of other motorists or for poor driving conditions. If you find yourself ‘lost in thought’ while driving, take a break.
- Tired driving. Don’t begin your trip unless you are well rested. Dozing off behind the wheel for just two to three seconds can be deadly. If you’re driving 90 km per hour, your car can travel the length of a football field in three seconds.
- Heavy traffic. Plan your drive times to avoid the “rush hours” of people leaving the city. Agitation can lead to aggressive driving behaviours like tailgating and speeding. Remember, every other driver on the road is subject to the same stress, fatigue, anger and distractions that you are.
- Oncoming traffic. Be alert for unanticipated movements like a car drifting across the centre line or cutting into your lane. Be prepared to drive calmly into the ditch if necessary to avoid a crash. Don’t panic and try to oversteer – this can lead to a rollover. Approach intersections with caution. Just because you have the right-of-way doesn’t mean the other drivers will stop.
- Breaks. Schedule frequent rest breaks for your passengers as well as yourself. If children are bored and restless, they can be distracting. Driver distraction is a leading cause of motor vehicle crashes.

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- Stopping. Always stop at stop signs – whether or not you can see there are any vehicles coming. Fatal crashes can happen because someone didn't stop because they were certain the "coast was clear."

BAN ON HAND HELD CELL PHONES FOR DRIVERS

- It's now the law – it is illegal to text, dial, chat, email or search using a hand-held communication device while driving in Prince Edward Island.
- Fines will range from \$250 to \$400 and three demerit points upon conviction.
- Under the new cell phone law, no one shall drive a motor vehicle on a highway while holding or using a hand-held wireless communication device that is capable of receiving or transmitting telephone communications, electronic data, email or text messages.
- Such devices include cellular phones, BlackBerrys, iPhones, 10-4 phones, GPS systems or laptops.

- Drivers can use hands-free technology activated by a single touch to a button, or when it is safe to do so, drivers can pull over and stop the vehicle to talk or email.
- Calls to 911 are exempt as are calls from the driver of an ambulance, fire department vehicle or police vehicle.



DRUGS

It is essential to understand the effects of any drug you are taking before operating a motor vehicle. Mood-altering (psychoactive) drugs are of particular concern because they can change the way you think, behave and physically respond. The following is a partial list of mood-altering drugs:

Depressants:

- Alcohol
- Sedatives (Halcion)
- Minor tranquillizers (Valium, Ativan)
- Narcotic analgesics (heroin, morphine, codeine, Talwin)

Stimulants:

- Amphetamines
- Cocaine

Other:

- Hallucinogens (LSD, MDA, mescaline)
- Cannabis (marijuana, hashish)

Some prescription mood-altering drugs include antidepressants such as Prozac and other medications for depression, manic depression and psychosis. For information on the effects and potential side effects of a mood-altering drug ask your pharmacist or doctor.

ALCOHOL

Alcohol abuse is the most common type of drug problem in Canada and North America. Alcohol impairment continues to be a leading cause of traffic fatalities.

It is important that all drivers understand the danger of drinking and driving and the laws and penalties involved.

Driving after drinking is an irresponsible act. It disregards the safety of others. Many people do not understand the effects of alcohol on the mind and body.

There has been a lot of research on the effect of alcohol on people. All of these studies have demonstrated that even in small amounts, alcohol has a deteriorating effect on people. Despite the scientific evidence that alcohol impairs the ability of all drivers, drinking and driving is still a major safety problem.

THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

Reduced vision

Experiments show that alcohol has the same effect on vision as a grey glass in front of the eyes, or driving with sun glasses at dusk or in darkness. These tests show a person who had the equivalent of four ounces of alcohol needs a stronger light to see objects clearly.

Dimly lit objects are not seen at all. Drivers who have been drinking and who are blinded by glaring light take longer to recover their normal vision than drivers who have not been drinking.

Slower reaction time

After seeing an object, such as a child running into the path of a car, the average reaction time for taking the foot off the gas pedal and putting it on the brake is about three quarters of a second. Tests show that a driver who is alcohol impaired, but not drunk, has his or her reaction slowed down by 20%.

At a speed of 50 km/h (30 mph) a car travels approximately 14 metres per second (44 feet per second). In three-quarters of a second the car will travel about 10.5 metres (33 feet). It will take a drinking driver nearly one second to apply the brakes

and in that time the car will travel 3.5 metres (11 feet) farther – perhaps enough to cause an accident. At a speed of 100 km/h (60 mph), a vehicle will travel about six metres (22 feet) farther before the impaired driver applies the brakes.

Alcohol and collisions

Drinking and driving is one of the major causes of traffic collisions. Studies conclusively prove that drivers who drink and drive are involved in 10 times as many collisions as drivers who are sober. Collisions involving a drinking driver are more likely to be serious. This is understandable, since a drinking driver tends to drive faster and has impaired vision, judgment and reaction time.

The result is that he or she may strike a pedestrian, other vehicles or lose control of the vehicle even at slower speeds.

A conviction for impaired driving in Prince Edward Island with a blood alcohol count (BAC) in excess of .08 or refusal to take a blood/alcohol test will result in the cancellation and a disqualification from holding or obtaining a licence for a period of:

- one year for a first offence;
- three years for a second offence; and
- five years for a third or subsequent offence.

THE EFFECT OF MIXING ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS

Mixing alcohol with other drugs can cause a serious reaction. This is especially dangerous when the use of a motor vehicle is involved.

For example:

Two drinks of an alcoholic beverage in combination with one normal dose of a common tranquilizer

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equals the impairment level produced by six drinks. Remember that one bottle of beer is equal to 1¼ ounces of liquor or four ounces of wine.

Two drinks of an alcoholic beverage and one light dose of marijuana can equal the impairment produced by five drinks.

If you are taking medication or a drug, know what the results of “mixing” will be before drinking. This advice is true whether the drug is by a doctor’s prescription, “off the shelf” or “off the street.”

You must not drive while impaired. Your life, and the lives of others, depend on you.

WHAT CAN YOU “GAIN” BY DRIVING WHILE IMPAIRED?

- heavy fines
- a criminal record
- the loss of your licence
- loss of employment (if driving is required)
- reduced social life (no Driver’s Licence)
- higher automobile insurance costs
- time in jail
- damage to property
- serious injuries
- death

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS

All drivers whose BAC exceeds .05 but not .08, is subject to a period of suspension of twenty-four hours for the first offence, thirty days for a second offence within 24 months, and ninety days for a third and subsequent offence within 24 months.

PENALTIES FOR IMPAIRED DRIVING

ADMINISTRATION DRIVING PROHIBITION (ADP)

A police officer has the authority to issue a 90-day suspension of a Driver's Licence (ADP) at the time of an impaired driving charge. This administrative suspension becomes effective seven days after the date of the charge. The conviction for this offence later results in a cancellation of your driving privileges for one, three or five years.

UNDER THE AGE OF 19 – “ZERO TOLERANCE”

In the case of a driver who is less than 19, or is in the GDL Program and a valid Driver's Licence for less than two years, and a roadside screening device registers a blood alcohol content (BAC) reading, a police officer has the authority to impose a 24-hour driving suspension in addition to the 90-day administrative driving prohibition.

HABITUAL OFFENDERS

Habitual offenders are drivers with two or more convictions of impaired driving. They must undergo an alcohol/drug assessment and possible treatment before reinstatement of their driving privileges.