

Yukon driver's basic handbook

Cars and light trucks

ISBN 978-1-55362-618-3

Government of Yukon thanks the Government of British Columbia for giving us permission to use material from BC's *Learn to Drive Smart* book.

© 2022 Government of Yukon

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form, whether electronic, mechanical, photocopied or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the Government of Yukon.

For more information contact:

Motor Vehicles Office
Gold Creek Building (Old Rogers Video Building)
Unit A, 2251-2nd Avenue
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 5W1
Phone 867-667-5315, or toll-free in Yukon at 1-800-661-0408, extension 5315
Fax 867-393-6220
Visit Motor Vehicles online at yukon.ca

Statement of Limitation

Yukon has prepared the *Yukon Driver's Basic Handbook: Cars and Light Trucks* from material in the BC *Learn to Drive Smart* book to help you study for a Yukon driver's licence. The handbook is not intended to take the place of professional training. Government of Yukon does not claim that a person who studies the *Yukon Driver's Basic Handbook* will be successful in getting the desired licence. Government of Yukon is not responsible for any consequences that may result from the use of this handbook.

Throughout this guide, references are made to acts and regulations that govern driving in Yukon. These references are written in plain language to help you understand their impact on individual drivers. If there are differences between the material in this handbook and any of these acts or regulations, the acts and regulations apply.

Illustrations © 2007 Insurance Corporation of British Columbia. All rights reserved. Illustrations may not be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form, without the prior written consent of the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

Introduction

This guide is designed for new drivers and for experienced drivers who are new to the Yukon, re-taking a test, or brushing up on their driving skills.

For both new and experienced drivers, this guide will help you develop and apply smart driving skills. It contains the basic information you need to know to help you drive safely. It will also help you prepare for the sign and knowledge tests and for the Class 5 road test.

New drivers

As a new driver, you are part of a high-risk group. This guide provides the Yukon's driving rules, regulations, and driving strategies to help keep you, and others, safe.

Experienced drivers

Use this guide to review the Yukon's driving rules and regulations if you have been licensed to drive in another jurisdiction. If you are re-taking a test, or if you want to brush up on your skills. This guide also provides information on safe driving practices.

Getting the most from this guide

This guide is divided into 10 chapters. Depending on whether you are a new or experienced driver, you may decide to read and study all of it or just parts of it.

On Yukon roads you may not see everything talked about in this guide. You will need to learn additional information, for example, particular road signs, what they mean and what they look like, for when you are driving in other parts of Canada.

Organization

This guide is designed to help you quickly find the information you need. Check the index at the back to find specific topics. Each chapter provides you with useful information to help you become a safe, competent driver.

Chapters 1 to 5:

Developing your smart driving skills

The first five chapters cover the basics to help you develop your smart driving skills. Each chapter provides important information that will help keep you and others safe on the road.

- **Chapter 1:** common choices that every driver makes.
- **Chapter 2:** how your vehicle works and how to keep it running well.
- **Chapter 3:** signs, signals and road markings you'll see while driving.
- **Chapter 4:** rules of the road that you need to know to drive safely.
- **Chapter 5:** driving strategies to help you become a skilled driver and avoid problems on the road.

Chapters 6 to 8:

Applying your smart driving skills

These chapters will help you apply what you've learned.

- **Chapter 6:** how to safely share the road with all road users.
- **Chapter 7:** how to overcome negative influences that affect driving.
- **Chapter 8:** challenging driving conditions and dealing with emergencies.

Chapters 9 and 10:

Yukon references and resources

The last two chapters tell you how to get and keep your Yukon driver's licence, and where you can find more information. You will not be tested on this material.

- **Chapter 9:** how to get your driver's licence through the Graduated Driver Licensing program.
- **Chapter 10:** information about your Yukon driver's licence, including responsibilities and penalties.

You in the driver's seat 1

in this chapter

- **Be a thinking driver**
- **Be fit to drive**
- **Make good decisions**
  - keep learning
  - plan your driving
  - predict the scene
  - think for yourself
- **Take responsibility**
  - you, the driver
  - your passengers
  - other road users

Driving gives you the freedom to get around but it also involves certain risks. When you're in the driver's seat, you need to be well rested and have a clear mind to focus on the task of driving, make good driving decisions and look out for the safety of others. This chapter will help you think about the choices you can make as a driver to help keep yourself and others safe.

Be a thinking driver

You in the driver's seat – part 1

You've had your driver's licence for some time now, and you've become a pretty good driver. This morning you need to take the car in by 9 a.m. for an oil change, and then pick up a friend who lives out of town. You both need to be back in town by noon. You're not sure if you have enough time.

As you were leaving the house, you had an argument with your roommate. Now you're feeling angry and pressed for time.

You have to make many choices as a driver. You have to choose the best route to get to your destination, and decide how much time you need to get there. You have to make decisions about the safety of your passengers, especially if you're caught in a dangerous situation. You have to decide how much risk to take. You also need to make sure you can focus on driving before you get behind the wheel.

A thinking driver puts safety first and smart driving is about making choices that help keep you and others safe. The choices you make determine what kind of driver you will be.

A thinking driver chooses to:

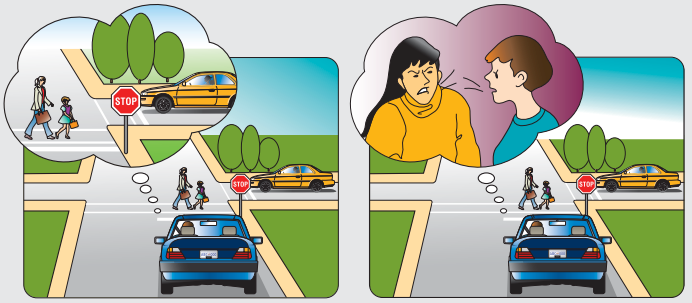
- be fit to drive;
- make good decisions; and
- take responsibility.

Be fit to drive

You in the driver's seat – part 2

It usually takes you 25 minutes to drive across town to the garage. When you leave home, it's 8:45 a.m. To make matters worse, the traffic is heavy, slowing you down even more. You find yourself swearing under your breath. You're also getting angrier about what your roommate said. You feel so frustrated that you notice you're having trouble concentrating on your driving.

What choice would you make?



Focus on your driving? or Focus on the argument?

You need to be in good shape to drive: alert and able to focus. Feeling angry or frustrated can cloud your judgment and slow down your reaction time.

You also need to avoid driving if you have an injury or illness that makes it hard for you to think clearly or quickly. Never drive when you are overtired. Even if you don't fall asleep, it's hard to respond quickly when you feel tired.

A driver who is impaired by drugs or alcohol is one of the worst driving hazards. This is because drugs and alcohol cause mental confusion and slow reaction times. Impaired drivers are much more likely to cause crashes that lead to serious injury or death.

Make good decisions

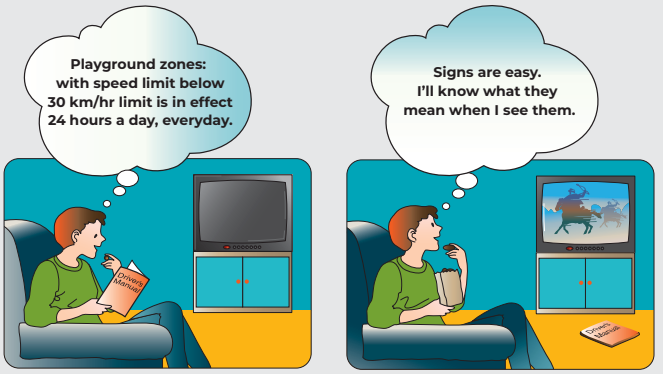
You have to make quick and accurate decisions when you drive. Will you be tempted to run a yellow light because you are in a hurry? Will you take a chance and drive after you've been drinking? Being a safe driver requires learning, planning, predicting and thinking for yourself.

Keep learning

You in the driver's seat – part 3

As you're driving, you spot a playground sign. You know you have to slow down, but you can't remember when the playground speed limits are in effect. The sign doesn't say. Is the playground speed limit in effect today as you are driving through the playground? You can't remember for certain.

What choice would you make next time?



Take the time to learn the rules of the road? **or** Not worry about it?

You're reading this guide to learn about driving. This is the first step in becoming a good driver. You'll also spend time practising your driving skills, and may even take professional driver training to enhance your learning.

It's important to keep on learning even after you have your licence. It will take time for you to gain driving experience. You'll continually learn how to handle new driving situations and conditions, and will need to keep informed about changing vehicle technology. You'll also need to learn about changes that are made to the rules and regulations of the road.

Your skills as a driver will also change. As you gain experience, your skills will increase, but you may become overconfident and too automatic in your driving. Health problems could affect your ability to drive safely. Throughout your driving years, it's important for you to be honest with yourself about your skills and your readiness to drive.

Remember that driver education courses are available for beginning and experienced drivers.

Plan your driving

You in the driver's seat – part 4

Now you're definitely going to be late. You start worrying about missing your appointment for the oil change and being late to pick up your friend. You think about going faster.

What choice would you make?

Take a chance and speed? **or** Keep to the speed limit and plan your time better in the future?

Part of good driving is planning ahead. It's always better to arrive safely than to never arrive. This means planning enough time to get to your destination and knowing the shortest and safest route. For example: it may mean equipping your vehicle for winter driving conditions. Can you think of other driving plans you may need to make?

think about

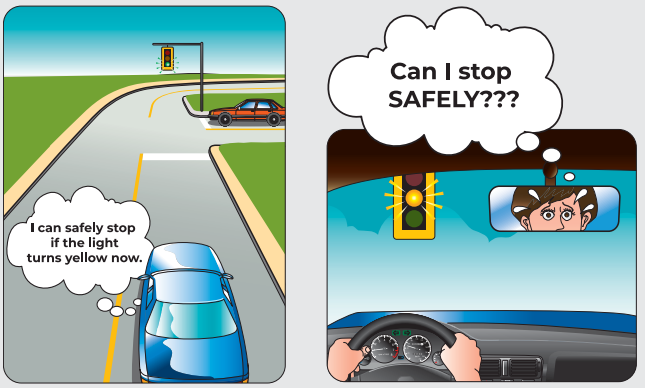
What you would do if a child suddenly ran in front of your car. Could you stop in time?

Predict the scene

You in the driver's seat – part 5

You're driving too fast, and you forget to watch the traffic lights at the next intersection. The light is about to turn yellow.

What choice would you make next time?



Predict the scene well ahead? **ou** Respond in a hurry?

As a driver, you need to be aware of cues in the driving environment: signs, signals and road markings. Paying attention to these cues helps you predict what could happen so you're prepared to respond.

It's also important to predict what other road users – pedestrians, other drivers, motorcycle riders and cyclists – might do. You can predict what might happen by carefully observing the driving scene around you. Being aware of what others around you are doing will help you to make better driving choices.

think about

What you will do when people honk their horn at you? What will you do if someone is tailgating you? Will you be tempted to speed just because other drivers around you are going faster than the speed limit?

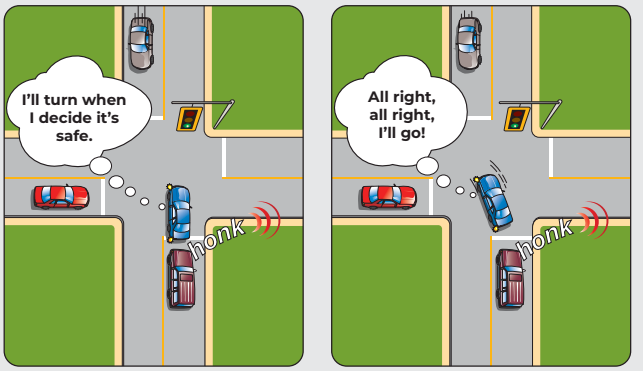
Think for yourself

You in the driver's seat – part 6

There's one more intersection before the garage. You have to turn left and there is no advance green arrow. You've sat through this light at other times because the traffic is always heavy here.

You become more frustrated as you wait to turn. The driver behind is honking at you. You see a space but you're not sure if the gap is big enough for you to make your turn.

What choice would you make?



Wait until you feel there's a safe gap? **or** Turn just to please other drivers?

Another part of making good choices is knowing yourself and understanding the influences that shape your driving.

Influences from other drivers – at times you will feel pressure from other drivers, and you'll have to decide what to do. Will you base your driving decisions on safety or will you allow other drivers to pressure you into doing something that might be unsafe?

Influences from the media – think of the images of cars and driving in ads and movies. Do these images generally promote safe driving?

Influences from peers – other people can influence your driving. Your friends may pressure you to drive faster or to race from stoplights. You may also think it will impress them if you turn up the volume on your car stereo system.

Take responsibility

Becoming licensed to drive means you are taking on new responsibilities for yourself, your passengers and other road users.

You, the driver

You in the driver's seat – part 7

You've been to the garage and now you're on your way to your friend's place. You're relieved because it seems you have enough time after all. Then you notice a large truck ahead that's going pretty slowly.

You hate passing trucks, especially on a narrow road like this one.

What choice would you make?

Slow down and stay behind the truck? **or** Try to pass the truck even though you don't feel comfortable doing so?

It's important to know and accept the limits of your driving abilities and your vehicle. You also need to take responsibility for developing your driving skills and ensuring your own safety.

crash fact

In 2007, more than one out of every three people killed in car crashes were not wearing a seatbelt.

Source: B.C. Traffic Collision Statistics, Police-attended injury and fatal collisions, 2007.

Your passengers

You in the driver's seat – part 8

You greet your friend as he climbs into the car. You're happy to see him, but you're surprised when he doesn't put on his seatbelt.

What choice would you make?



Remind him to buckle up? **or** Don't say anything because you're worried about offending him?

You're responsible for the safety of your passengers.

When you speed or take a chance at an intersection, you are putting your passengers and yourself in danger. Make sure they are all wearing seatbelts. Children under the age of 15 are the driver's responsibility. Younger children need special care and attention. Are they properly restrained with the right safety devices for their size?

Smoking

It's illegal to smoke in any vehicle when there are passengers under 18.

Children are especially vulnerable to second-hand smoke. Its harmful effects are greater in small enclosed places, such as vehicles, and can cause immediate, serious and long-lasting health problems.

Other road users

You in the driver's seat – part 9

You and your friend are almost back in town. As you approach an intersection, you notice a skateboarder heading along the sidewalk but near to a crosswalk.

What choice would you make?

Identify the skateboarder as a potential hazard, be cautious and slow down?

or

Take a chance and keep going?

You share the roadway with many different types of road users. Emergency vehicles need you to move to the side of the road and stop so they can respond to life-threatening situations. Motorcycles and cyclists need to be able to safely move within the lane as needed. Pedestrians and children may be unpredictable and enter your driving path.

Use the information in this guide to help you make responsible driving choices that can help prevent many dangerous situations.

in this chapter

- Adjust for safety
- Hand controls
- Foot pedals
- Dashboard
- Pre-trip check
- Periodic check
- Driving and the environment

crash fact

Each year, on average, just over 70 per cent of people injured in collisions report a soft tissue injury such as whiplash. Many also had other injuries.

A study of seven Canadian provinces found that 53 per cent of the drivers observed had head restraints that were so poorly adjusted that they would not protect the occupant from injury in a rear-end collision.

Source: MSN: Autos: Head Restraints: Saving Your Neck

In chapter 1, you in the driver's seat, you learned how important it is to make good choices when driving. It's also important to learn how your vehicle operates. Mastering the controls is one of the first steps to safe driving.

Adjust for safety

To drive safely, you need to be able to comfortably reach your vehicle's controls and see clearly around you.

Before you drive, make any needed adjustments to your vehicle such as your seat, head restraint, steering wheel and mirrors.

Seat

Your seat should be upright and in a position where you can:

- push the small of your back into the seat;
- sit upright, never with a reclined seat;
- reach the floor behind the pedals with your foot and still have a slight bend in your leg;
- turn the steering wheel and keep your arms slightly bent; and
- reach all the controls.

You should also be at least 25 centimeters (10 inches) away from the driver's airbag, which is located in the centre of the steering wheel.

Head restraints

Head restraints can help prevent soft tissue injuries such as whiplash.

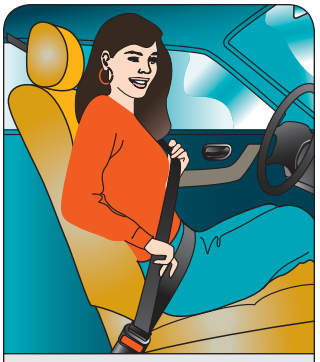
Whiplash is an injury to the neck, head and/or shoulders after a snapping motion. Adjust your head restraint so the top is at least level with the top of your ears. Higher is even better. Your head restraint should be as close as possible to the back of your head. Closer head restraints can be twice as effective at preventing injuries than if they're set too far back.

Make sure your head restraint is adjusted to the height that is right for you.



Injuries can result if you are in a crash and your head restraint is not properly adjusted.





Adjust your seatbelt so that it fits snugly over your chest and low over your hips. Do not wear the shoulder strap under your arm, behind your back or with a reclined seat. Putting this belt over the wrong part of the body could cause serious internal injuries if you are in a collision. Pregnant women should make sure the lap belt is snug and below the baby.

Seatbelts

There are two good reasons to wear your seatbelt:

- Wearing your seatbelt significantly reduces your chance of serious injury or death in a crash.
- It's the law – you will be fined for not wearing your seatbelt.

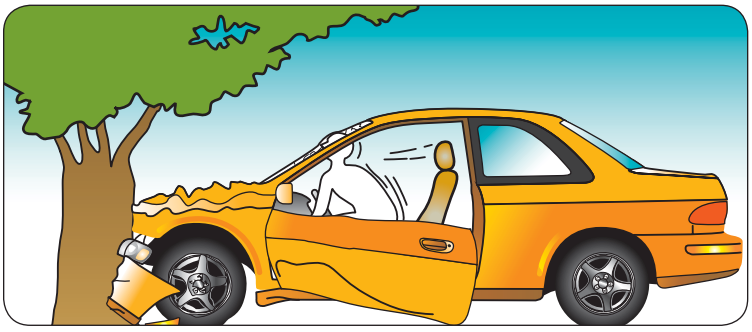
It's also your responsibility as a driver to make sure that all passengers are properly secured with seatbelts or child restraint systems.

Even at low speeds, a crash forces hundreds of kilograms of pressure against your body. If you are wearing a seatbelt, especially one with a lap belt and a shoulder strap, you're much less likely to be injured, knocked unconscious or ejected from the vehicle. Even if your vehicle catches fire or ends up in water, you have a better chance of getting out quickly if you stay conscious.

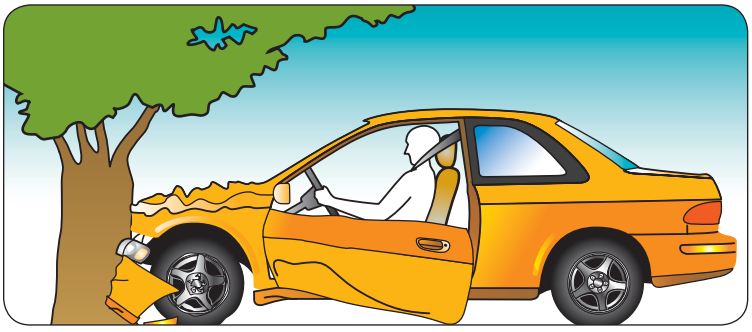
If you're not wearing a seat belt and your vehicle rolls over or you're ejected from the vehicle, it's likely you'll be seriously injured or killed. Wearing your seatbelt can help prevent you from being ejected from the vehicle.

Buckle up even on short trip – since most injuries and deaths occur close to home.

When your car stops suddenly, your body will continue to move at the same speed that your car was travelling. Without a seatbelt, your body will not stop until something stops you. Example: dashboard, windshield or something outside of the car.



Your lap belt holds you down, and your shoulder belt holds you back when your vehicle stops.



crash fact

Children are at risk of being in a collision every time they travel in a motor vehicle. Using child car seats and booster seats properly can reduce the risk of death by 71 per cent and the risk of injury by 67 per cent.





warning!

Do not place rear-facing infant or child restraint systems in a passenger seat equipped with an active frontal airbag. Children in these seats could be killed or seriously injured if the airbag inflates.

Child car seat safety

Car crashes are the leading cause of death and injury for children in Canada.

The correct use of a Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (CMVSS) approved child restraint system or booster seat will:

- ensure a child is properly restrained; and
- significantly reduce their risk of serious injury or death in a crash.

For more information contact the Yukon Child Car Seat Safety Program by phone: at 867-667-5832 or toll free 1-800-661-0408 local 5832.

A child restraint system with five point harness is designed to equally distribute the force of a crash over the infant/child. A booster seat is designed to raise a child up to correctly fit an adult seatbelt. An adult seat belt is designed to spread the force of a crash across the hips and chest.

You must follow the vehicle and child restraint system manufacturer's instructions at all times.

Stage 1 – rear-facing

- Must be used from birth until at least 10 kilograms (22 pounds) and the child is able to walk unassisted.
- Never place a rear-facing child restraint system in front of an active airbag. (Centre of the back seat is the safest seating position in the vehicle.)

Stage 2 – forward-facing with tether

- Child must be over 10 kilograms (22 pounds).
- Must use tether with forward-facing child restraint systems.
- Child may remain rear-facing if allowed by manufacturer's weight limits.

Stage 3 – booster seat

- Child must be over 22 kilograms (48 pounds).
- Must use until your child is 145 cm (4 feet 9 inches) tall or until they weigh at least 45 kilograms (100 pounds).
- Do not use a booster seat with only a lap belt only.
- Must use with a lap/shoulder seatbelt.

Stage 4 – seatbelt only

- The lap belt should fit low over the pelvic bones.
- Shoulder belt should fit over the shoulder and snug across the chest. Never put the shoulder belt under the arm or behind the back. This could cause serious injury in a crash.
- Keep the seat in an upright position, not reclined. Seatbelts are designed for upright seating. A deeply reclined seat can cause a passenger to slide out from under the seatbelt in a crash.
- Transport Canada recommends that you keep children in the back seat until 13 years of age.

Airbags do not replace seatbelts. Always use your seatbelt even if your vehicle is equipped with airbags. Check your owner's manual for instructions about the airbags in your vehicle.

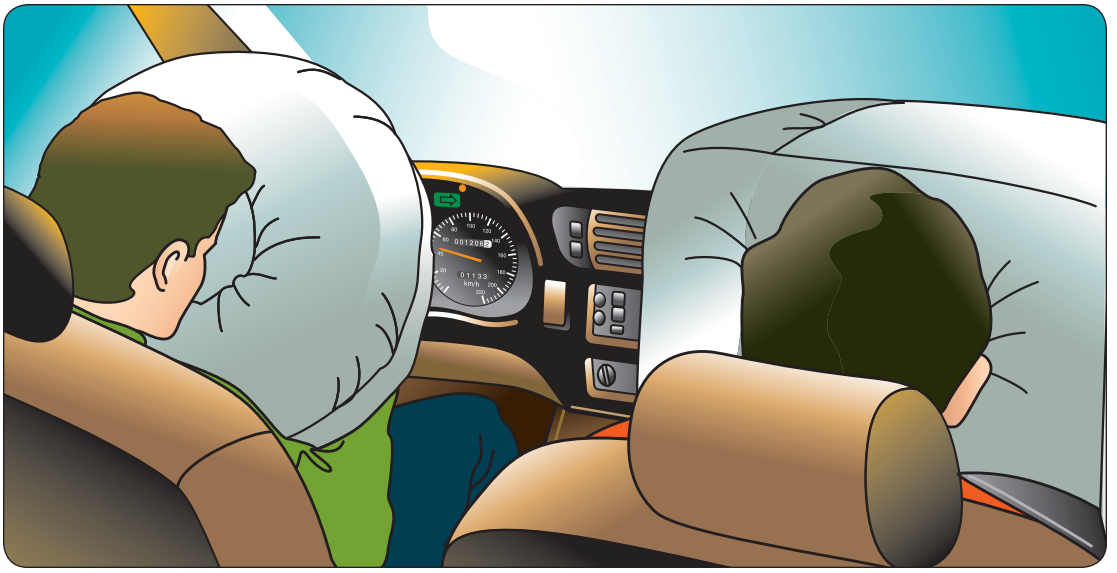
Airbags

All new vehicles are equipped with airbags. They have been shown to reduce injuries and deaths in collisions. Airbags work by inflating and then deflating to reduce the shock of a collision. They do this very quickly; in less than a blink of an eye, an airbag inflates, and then begins to deflate again.

Airbags can be located anywhere in your vehicle. Most commonly they are found in front of the driver and front seat passenger. If your vehicle is equipped with airbags, you should position your seat so you're at least 25 centemeters (10 inches) from the steering wheel. This allows room for the airbag to inflate and protects you from further injury.

Consult your owner's manual for safety precautions. Know the locations of the airbags in your specific vehicle.

In a few instances, you may need to deactivate an airbag. For permission you must contact Transport Canada. For more information, call Transport Canada at 1-800-333-0371.



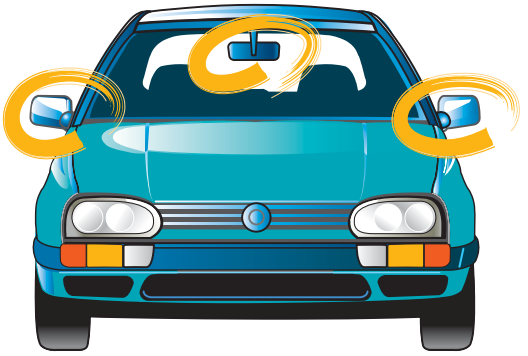
warning

Some cars have convex mirrors. They provide a wider field of view but make things look smaller and farther away than they actually are. Check to see how accurate your vehicle's mirrors are on your pre-trip check.

Mirrors

Make sure you can see all around your vehicle when driving:

- Adjust the rear-view mirror so you can see as much as possible behind you.
- Adjust your side-view mirrors to reduce the blind spots as much as possible. (Blind spots are areas behind and beside the vehicle that you cannot see in the mirrors.) Usually this means that only a slight part of the side of your vehicle is visible. See chapter 5, see-think-do, for more information about blind spots.



Make sure you know how to operate all the controls in each vehicle you drive. You may need to check the owner's manual.

Hand controls

Now that your vehicle is adjusted to fit you, think about all the controls that your hands operate. Get to know how each control operates before you try to drive. Even when you are an experienced driver, you will need to get used to these controls each time you drive a different vehicle.





Steering wheel

The steering wheel controls the direction of the vehicle by turning the front wheels.

If your steering wheel is adjustable, make sure it's in the right position for you before you begin to drive.



Starting system

Getting to know how your vehicle starts.

Ignition switch

Get to know all the positions of the ignition switch in your vehicle. They may include:

- **Lock** – steering is locked and ignition is off.
- **Off** – ignition is off but the steering is not locked.
- **Acc.** – ignition is off but some electrical parts such as the radio may be used.
- **On** – ignition is on.
- **Start** – turn to this position to start the engine, then release the switch so that it returns to the On position.

warning

Don't turn your vehicle's ignition switch to the "lock" position while it is still in motion. When you to turn the steering wheel, the steering will lock and you could lose control.

Push button

Read your owner's manual for instructions.

Transmission

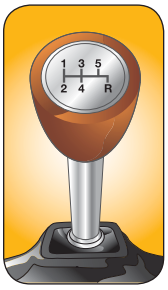
The gearshift lever lets you control the vehicle's transmission.

There are two types of transmissions: automatic and standard. Both control the connection between the engine and the wheels.

An automatic transmission chooses the most efficient gear to operate the vehicle. There are different types of gearshifts for automatic transmissions and they can be located at various places in your vehicle. Read your owner's manual.

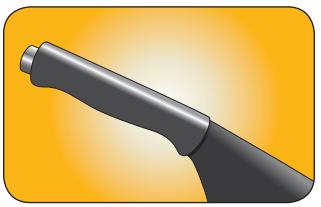
In a vehicle with a standard transmission, the driver chooses the best gear. A standard transmission works with a clutch. Read your owner's manual.





P	**Park** Use when starting the vehicle and when parked. Locks transmission.
R	**Reverse** Use when backing up. Turns on reverse (white) lights.
N	**Neutral** If vehicle stalls while moving, use to restart the engine.
D	**Drive** Use for normal forward driving on automatic transmissions. (there maybe an option to manually select your gears – refer to owner's manual).
1	The lowest gear. Use it from a stopped position. Use when pulling heavy loads or when going up or down very steep hills.
2	Use when pulling heavy loads or when going up or down very steep hills.
Other Gears	Use as required.

Your vehicle may be equipped with an overdrive option. Do not use when pulling heavy loads, when passing or when going up or down steep hills – refer to your owner's manual for operation.

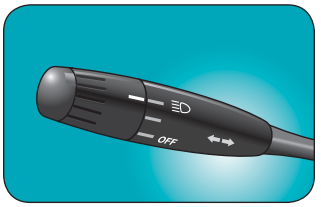


Parking brake/emergency brake

This brake keeps the vehicle from moving when it's parked.

Make sure you fully apply the parking brake when parking and fully release it before moving.

The parking brake is sometimes called an emergency brake. It may be used to slow the vehicle if the foot brake fails. See chapter 8, preventing and handling emergencies, for more information on these situations.



Turn signal lever

This lever turns the left and right turn signals on and off.

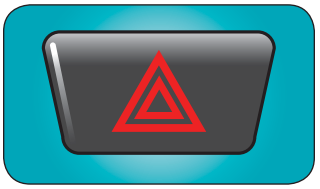
You use your turn signals to communicate to other road users that you want to change direction or position.

driving tip

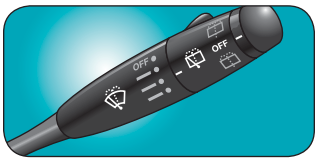
On Yukon roadways, you must drive with the low beam headlights on during the day if your car does not have automatic daytime running lights.

On Yukon roadways, you must have your headlights and taillights on at night or when there is insufficient lighting or weather conditions.

Daytime running lights do not activate the tail lights. Do not use them for nighttime driving or for low visibility conditions. Use the low or high beam lights instead.









Lights

In your vehicle there will be a variety of different options to control various types of lights, including: tail lights; parking lights and side-marker lights; headlights; fog lights; automatic light option; as well as, the dashboard and licence plate lights.

Your vehicle will have another switch position or separate switch or auto dim function that controls the two brightness settings of the headlights: low beam and high beam. Use the high beam setting only on unlit roads at night when there aren't any vehicles approaching or in front of you.

Refer to your owner's manual for additional information.

Use the parking lights when you are stopped and want to make sure your vehicle is visible. Don't use these lights when your vehicle is moving; put the headlights on instead.

Hazard light switch

The hazard light switch activates both turn signals at the same time. These flashing lights tell other road users to be careful near your vehicle because you have stopped for an emergency.

Cruise control

Cruise control lets you pre-set a speed that will stay the same. Use it only under ideal highway driving conditions. Never use the cruise control feature:

- on wet, slippery, snowy or icy surfaces;
- in urban traffic;
- when you are tired;
- on winding roads or hills;
- when towing or hauling heavy loads; and
- when passing another vehicle.

Wipers and washer control

Practise finding the different wiper speed settings. Make sure you know how to turn on the windshield washer. The wipers should always be in top working condition to give you a clear view during rainy and snowy weather conditions.

Horn

Your horn is an important way to communicate warnings to other road users. Be sure to use it wisely.

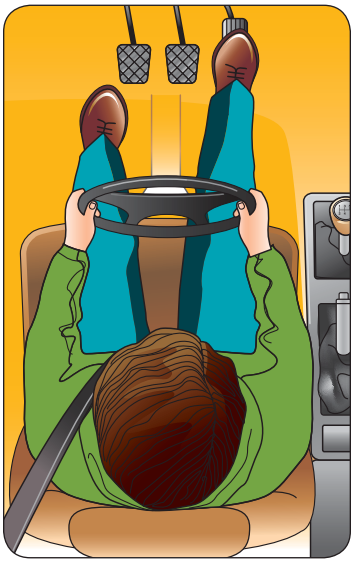


Heater, defroster and air conditioning controls

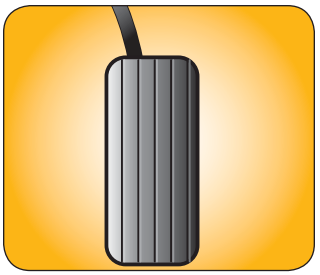
The controls for the defroster, incoming air and air conditioning are located within easy reach of the driver. Check your owner's manual to see how they work.

Foot pedals

Use your right foot to operate the brake and gas pedals, and your left foot to operate the clutch. Practise doing this until you can find each pedal easily. This will help you react quickly in an emergency.



You will operate two or three controls with your feet, depending on whether your vehicle has an automatic or a standard transmission.



Accelerator

The accelerator (gas pedal, throttle) controls the amount of fuel/power going to the engine/motor. The more fuel/power the engine/motor gets, the faster the vehicle will go. You need to practise putting the right amount of pressure on the pedal so you keep control over the speed of your vehicle.

Always operate the accelerator with your right foot.



Brake

The brake pedal is located to the left of the accelerator and is used to slow down and stop the vehicle.

Always use your right foot to operate the brake

You need to learn to apply the right amount of pressure on the brake so that you can stop the vehicle smoothly and precisely.

Be familiar with the braking system of your vehicle.

warning

Always wear shoes when driving so you have good contact with the brake and the accelerator. Avoid driving in shoes that have high heels or platform soles.

Anti-lock brakes/braking system

Your vehicle may have an anti-lock braking system (ABS). Look for an indicator light on the dash. This electronic system keeps the wheels from locking.

Vehicles with ABS also have regular braking systems. The ABS is activated only when you press heavily on the brake pedal, such as during an emergency stop. Also see chapter 8, preventing and handling emergencies, for more information on ABS braking.

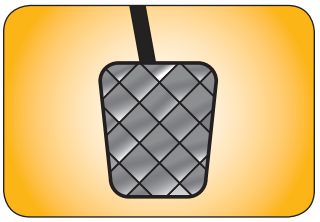
If your ABS indicator light stays on after you start the vehicle, the system may be malfunctioning. Take the vehicle in for repair.

Electronic stability control

Electronic stability control (ESC) is a computerized system that detects loss of traction/control. It can apply the brakes to help direct the vehicle and improves a vehicle's stability.

Some ESC systems also reduce engine power until control is regained.

Read your owner's manual for more information about your vehicle's anti-lock braking or electronic stability control system and how to use it properly.



Clutch

In a vehicle with a standard transmission, pressing the clutch pedal disconnects the engine from the transmission so you can shift gears. You use your left foot to press the pedal when changing gears.

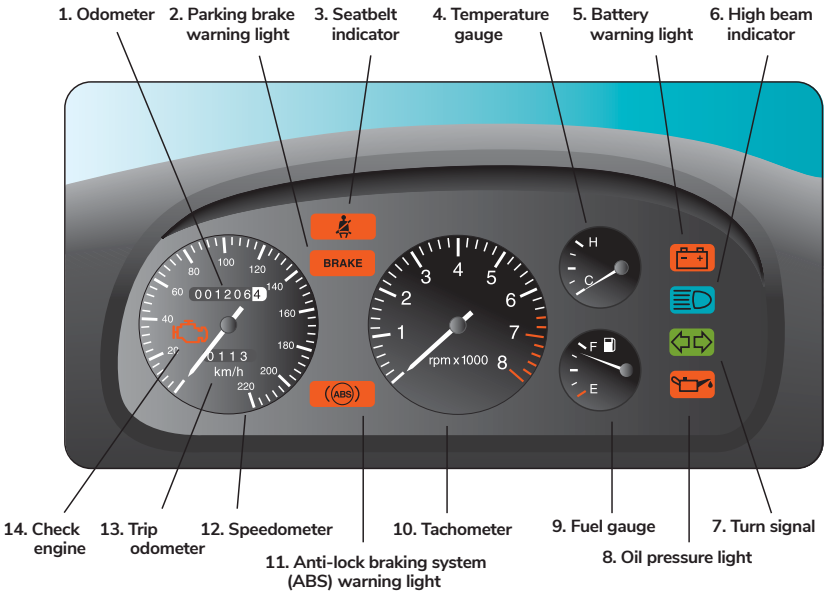
Do not keep the clutch pedal pressed part-way down, called "riding the clutch," when the vehicle is moving because this causes unnecessary wear to the clutch.

Dashboard

When you sit in the driver's seat, you'll see the dashboard display directly in front of you.

On the next page, match the numbers in the chart to the numbers in the illustration to find out what each item does. Remember that dashboard displays are different in each vehicle.

Be sure you can find each item on vehicles you drive.

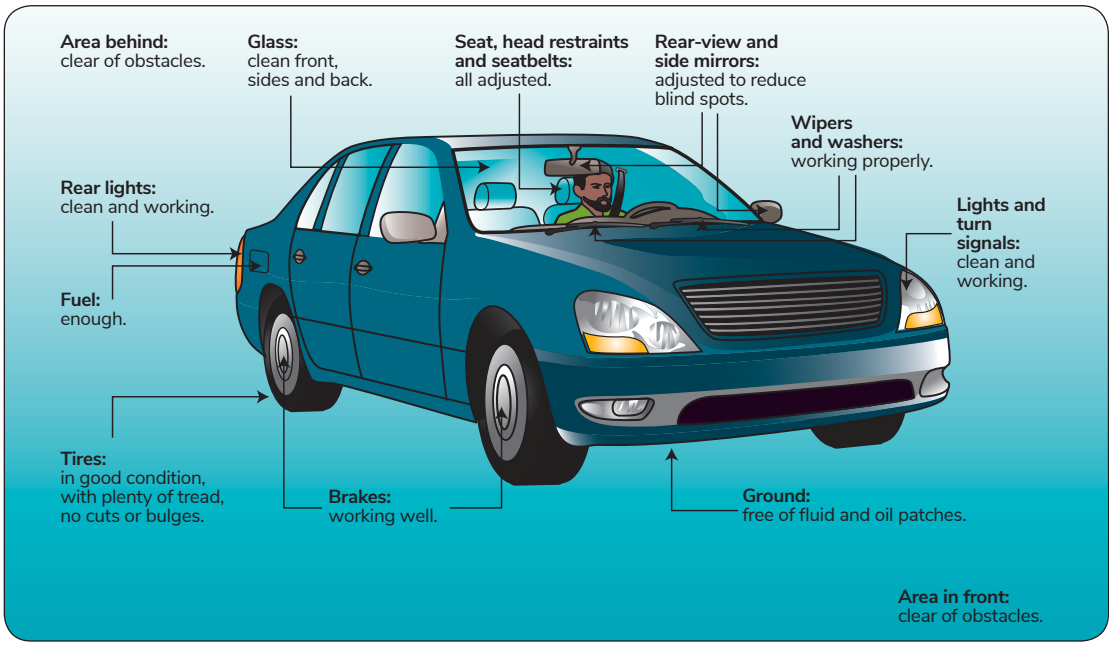


#	Indicator/Gauge	Function
1	Odometer	Displays the number of kilometres/miles that the vehicle has travelled since manufacture.
2	Brake warning light	Reminds you to release the parking brake before moving. If the light comes on while using the foot brake, it means the brake system is not working properly. Have it checked by a mechanic.
3	Seatbelt indicator	Reminds you to fasten your seatbelt.
4	Temperature light/gauge	Shows the temperature of the engine coolant and whether the engine is overheating.
5	Battery warning light	Shows whether the battery is charging.
6	High beam indicator	Usually a blue light that indicates the high beam headlights are on.
7	Turn signal indicator	Shows whether a turn signal is on. Both will flash when the hazard lights are on.
8	Oil pressure warning light/gauge	Indicates the oil pressure in the engine. It does not tell you how much oil is in the engine. Typically comes on when there is a problem with your oil pressure.
9	Fuel gauge	Indicates the amount of fuel in the gas tank.
10	Tachometer	Displays the engine speed in revolutions per minute (rpm).
11	Anti-lock brake system warning light	Indicates if the anti-lock brake system is working properly. It will come on for a few seconds when you start the car and when the anti-lock brake system is activated while stopping. If the light stays on after starting the car, it means the brake system may not be working properly.
12	Speedometer	Shows the speed the vehicle is travelling in kilometres per hour.
13	Trip odometer	Shows the distance travelled since it was reset to zero.
14	Check Engine	Indicates a problem with your vehicle. Have it checked by a mechanic.

Pre-trip check

Even if you're in a hurry, you should always check your vehicle to make sure it's safe to drive.

The pre-trip check doesn't take long and will soon become a habit. Always check the following:



driving tip

Just as you check the safety of your vehicle before starting out, check your trip planning:

- Do you know your route? Use a map if necessary.
- Do you have enough time? Plan extra minutes in your trip to allow for potential delays.d'imprévus

Periodic check

Your pre-trip check will help you feel confident that your vehicle is safe as you set out for your destination.

To ensure good maintenance, you also need to do a more thorough check every few weeks. How often you do the periodic check will depend on how much you drive.

Checklist

Use the following checklist to keep your vehicle in good running order:

- ☐ Is the engine oil at the proper level? Is it clean?
- ☐ Is the radiator coolant topped up?
- ☐ Do you have enough washer fluid?
- ☐ Is the brake fluid level okay?
- ☐ Are the engine hoses cracked or leaking?

- ☐ Is the fan belt in good condition?
- ☐ Are all the lights working?
  (Remember to check both the brake and backup lights too.)
- ☐ Are the wipers in good condition?
- ☐ Do you have enough fuel?
- ☐ Are the tires in good condition properly inflated?

driving tip

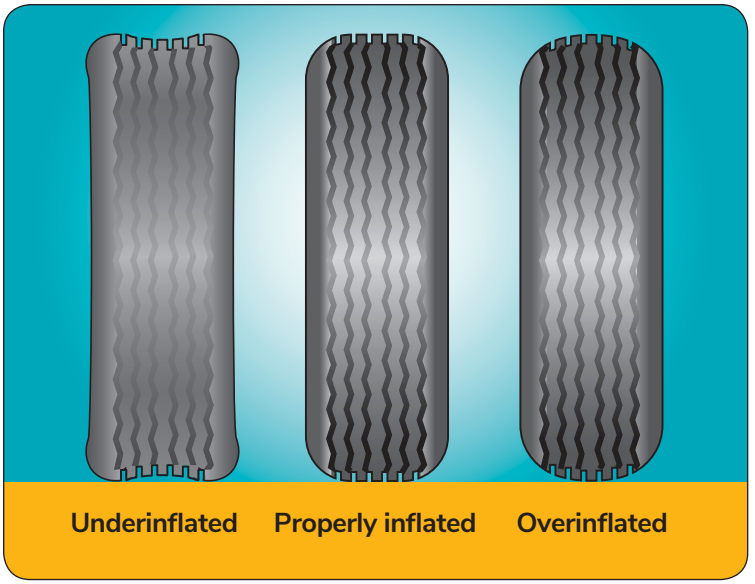
Check tire inflation when the tires are cold. Refer to the owner's manual or the tire manufacturer's instruction for proper inflation levels.

Tire tips

Tires are key pieces of safety equipment that must be maintained.

- Keep your tires inflated to the recommended pressure level.
- Tires must have at least 1.6 millimeters (1/16 inches) of tire tread.
- Replace any tires that show bumps, bulges, cuts, cracks or exposed belts.
- Use only tires that match the specifications for your vehicle.
- Make sure all four tires are similar so they work together.
- Keep the spare tire at the required air pressure. A space-saver spare tire has the correct air pressure marked on its side. When you use this type of spare tire, never drive faster than 80 kilometers per hour.
- Rotate tires regularly for even wear.
- Avoid sudden starts and stops as they reduce the life of your tires.

Properly inflated tires help keep you safe by increasing your vehicle's traction on the roadway.



driving tip

Using chains on icy roads is a good idea. Make sure you are familiar with how to mount chains on tires. Practise putting them on your vehicle before you need to use them.

driving tip

In extremely bad conditions, it may be safer to park your vehicle than to continue driving.

Prepare for winter driving

It's important to make sure we prepare our vehicles and ourselves for winter driving conditions.

Prepare your vehicle:

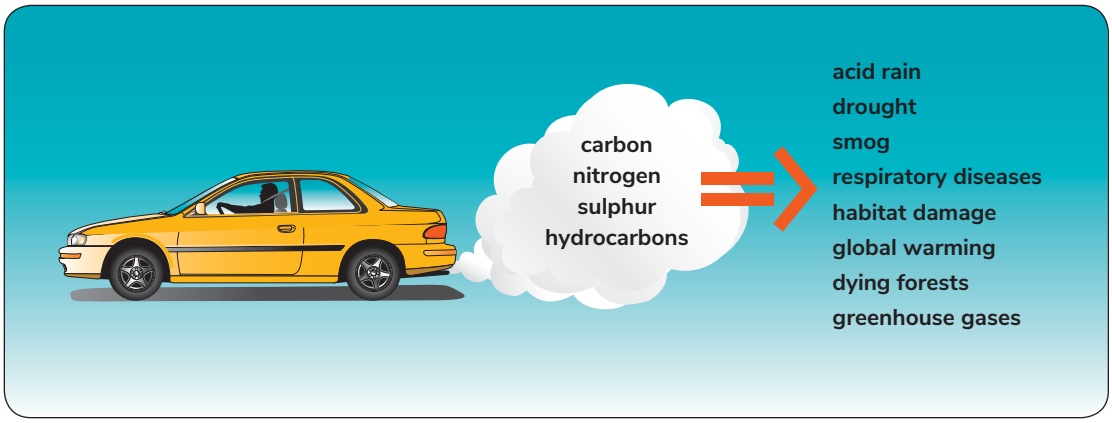
- Make sure all vehicle lights are working.
- Replace vehicle fluids, such as oil, washer fluid and anti-freeze, with winter-grade products.
- Check brakes and battery.
- Tune up engine.
- Install winter tires.
- Inspect belts and hoses.
- Install windshield wiper blades made for winter use.
- Confirm heater and defrost are working properly.
- Check the exhaust system.
- Carry an emergency winter driving kit.

Adjust your driving habits:

- Allow more time to reach your destination.
- Increase following and stopping distance.
- Decrease travelling speed.
- Brake and accelerate slowly.
- Steer smoothly and gradually.
- Know your weather and road conditions.

Driving and the environment

Cars and trucks use over half the world's annual oil supply. We know there is a limited supply of oil. Automobiles and light-duty trucks emit almost two-thirds of the common air pollutants.



One out of every two Canadians owns a car or trucks and drives about 19,800 kilometres per year, according to Environment Canada statistics. Exhaust emissions from cars and trucks are one of the leading causes of climate change, urban smog and acid rain. On average, each vehicle releases over four metric tonnes of air pollutants per year.

driving tip

Safe driving habits can reduce your fuel consumption by as much as 30 per cent, save wear and tear on your car and reduce emissions.

For more smart ways to be fuel-efficient, visit the Natural Resources Canada Office of Energy Efficiency website at oee.nrcan.gc.ca or call 1-800-387-2000.

For more tips on how to drive smart and save money, go to drivesmartsavegreen.com.

There are some things you can do to help protect the environment and save money too.

Use other forms of transportation:

- Walk, cycle or take public transit whenever possible.
- Arrange carpools.
- Instead of driving children to school, walk or cycle with them.

Reduce fuel consumption

Driving safely reduces fuel consumption and saves money.

- Drive smoothly and at a steady speed. Avoid "jackrabbit" starting and stopping.
- Slow down and save. Keep to posted speeds or below.
- Plan your route. Combine several errands into one trip, and plan the route so that you go to the destination that is farthest away first. This will allow your vehicle to warm up to its normal operating temperature which helps reduce fuel consumption.
- Avoid idling. Turn the motor off if stopped for more than 60 seconds, such as when stopped at the side of the road. This only applies if you are not actively driving.

TAKING ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

- Check tire pressure at least monthly. Under-inflated tires increase fuel consumption.
- Avoid excess weight. Remove any items in the car and trunk that you don't need.
- Roll down your windows. Refrain from using air conditioning under 50 kilometers per hour. Use your vehicle's flow-through ventilation rather than air conditioning on the highway.
- Remove roof racks and roof boxes to reduce drag.

Reduce emissions

Choose a fuel-efficient vehicle.

- Keep your vehicle tuned up to reduce emissions.
- Change the oil regularly and use the right grade.
- Keep the air filter clean.
- Make sure your air conditioning system doesn't have any leaks.

Signs, signals and road markings 3

in this chapter

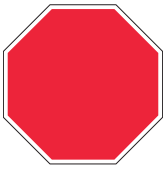
- **Signs**
  - regulatory signs
  - crosswalk, school and playground signs
  - lane use signs
  - turn control signs
  - parking signs
  - reserved lane signs
  - warning signs
  - object markers
  - construction signs
  - information and destination signs
  - railway signs
- **Signals**
  - lane control signals
  - traffic lights
- **Road markings**
  - yellow lines
  - white lines
  - reserved lane markings
  - other markings

In chapter 2, you and your vehicle, you learned about some of the controls in your vehicle. Chapter 3 is a reference section for the most common signs, signals and road markings that keep traffic organized and flowing smoothly.

Signs

There are three ways to read signs: by their shape, their colour and the messages printed on them.

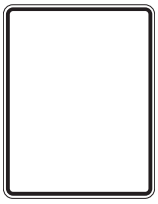
Understanding these three ways of reading signs will help you figure out the meaning of signs that are new to you.



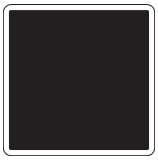
Stop



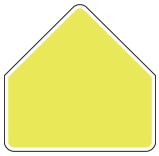
Yield the right-of-way



Shows driving regulations



Explains lane use



School zone signs are fluorescent yellow-green



Tells about motorist services



Shows a permitted action



Shows an action that is not permitted



Railway crossing



Warns of hazards ahead



Warns of construction zones



Shows distance and direction

Regulatory signs

These signs tell you about driving laws and regulations. It is an offence under the *Yukon Motor Vehicles Act* to disregard them. Drivers who do not follow the instructions on these signs will receive penalties.



Stop completely, continue only when safe



Give the right-of-way to other vehicles and crossing pedestrians



The fastest you may drive in good conditions



Indicates a speed limit change ahead



Do not enter



Do not go this way



One way, gives direction of traffic on cross street



Winter tires or chains must be used when sign is displayed



Stay off this road during major disasters; road may be used only by emergency vehicles



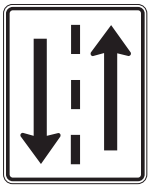
Move into right lane if driving slower than regular traffic



Keep right unless passing



Do not pass



Two-way traffic, keep right unless passing



Keep right of the divider



No stopping between here and the next no-stopping sign



No stopping during posted times between here and the next sign



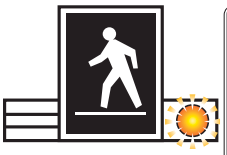
No bicycle riding beyond this point



No right turn on red light

Crosswalk, school and playground signs

These signs tell you the rules to follow in areas where you need to be extra cautious.



Pedestrian-activated crosswalk, prepare to stop if the light are flashing



Pedestrian crosswalk, yield to people crossing



School crosswalk, yield to pedestrians. If there is a crossing guard, follow directions



School zone, reduce speed when children are present



Playground nearby, be prepared to slow down



Playground zone. 30 km/h limit is in effect 24 hours a day, every day



School zone. 50 km/h limit is in effect from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on school days when children are on the roadway or shoulder



School zone. 30 km/h limit is in effect



School zone. The tab underneath indicates the speed limit and the hours that it is in effect (in this case, the 30 km/h limit is in effect from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on school days)

Lane use signs

Signs showing which lanes may be used to turn or go straight are mounted above the lane or at the side of the lane before the intersection. If you are in a lane controlled by a lane use sign, you must follow the direction indicated by the arrows. You may not move into or out of the lane while you are in an intersection.



Turn left only



Continue straight only



Continue straight or turn left



Continue straight or turn right



Vehicles from both directions must turn left, no through traffic allowed



Vehicles in both of these lanes must turn left

Turn control signs

Turn control signs are mounted directly above the intersection. You must follow the direction of the arrow.



Left turn only



Go straight only, no turns



Turn right or left only



No right turns during posted times

Reserved lane signs

Parking signs let you know where and when you are allowed to park. You may receive fines or your vehicle may be towed (or both) if you park illegally.



Time-limited parking during posted times



Parking is not allowed, between here and the next sign or intersection



Parking is not allowed, between here and the next sign or intersection, during posted times



Parking only for vehicles displaying the disabled parking sign and carrying a person with disabilities

Reserved lane signs

A white diamond painted on the road surface marks reserved lanes. Reserved lane signs are also placed over or beside lanes that are reserved for certain vehicles such as buses or high occupancy vehicles (HOVs). Other HOV signs may give additional information on who may use the HOV lane



Only buses in this lane



Only buses and HOVs in this lane: may show how many people must be in the HOV



Curb lane of cross street ahead is a reserved lane

Warning signs

Most warning signs are yellow and diamond-shaped. They warn of possible hazards ahead.



Winding road ahead.



Hidden side road ahead.



Sharp curve ahead, slow to suggested speed.



Curve ahead, slow down.



Merging traffic ahead.



Right lane ends ahead



Divided highway ends ahead, keep right



Two-way traffic ahead



Road narrows ahead



Narrow structure ahead, often a bridge



Bump or rough road ahead



Road may be slippery ahead



Steep hill ahead, slow down



Stop sign ahead



Roundabout ahead



Signal lights ahead



Signal lights ahead, prepare to stop when lights are flashing



Pedestrian crosswalk ahead



School crosswalk ahead. This sign is fluorescent yellow-green



School bus stop ahead



Cyclists may be on roadway



Underpass ahead clearance



Truck crossing ahead



Recommended exit speed. Drive slower in poor conditions



Pavement ends ahead



Hazard or danger ahead, turn right or left



Watch for deer ahead



Opening bridge ahead



Beware of falling rocks and watch for rocks on the road ahead

Object markers

Pay special attention to object markers – they are mounted on obstructions.



Obstruction, keep right or left



Obstruction, keep right



Obstruction, keep left

Construction signs

These signs warn of construction and maintenance work. You must pay attention to the warnings and obey the instructions on these signs. Obey traffic control persons, travel within the posted speed, stay well back from all equipment and pass only when it is safe.



Detour ahead



Soft shoulder ahead, stay off



Construction ahead



Traffic control person ahead



Crew working. Obey posted speed limit



Survey crew. Obey posted speed limit



End of construction zone



Blasting ahead. Follow instructions on sign



Follow the lighted arrow

Information and destination signs

These signs give information about destinations, route numbers and facilities, such as:



Hospital nearby



Gas available ahead



Accomodation ahead



Wildlife viewing with interpretive panel



Alaska Highway route marker



Directional sign



Trans-Canada Highway route marker

Railway signs

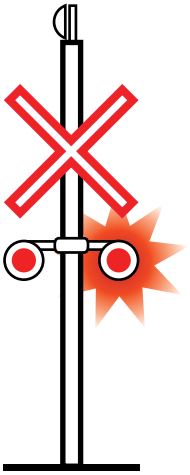
Public railway and highway crossings are indicated with signs or pavement markings and may also have mechanical or electrical warning devices for your protection. Watch for them and remember you must always yield to trains.



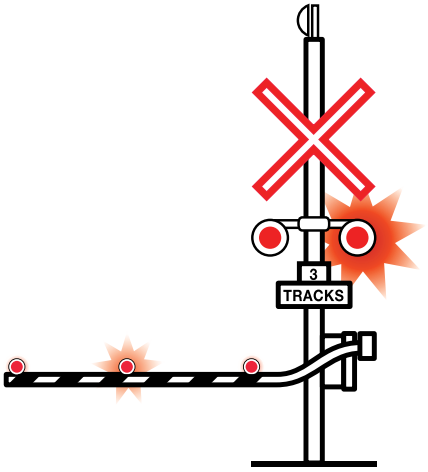
Railway crossing ahead. Be prepared to stop.



Railway crossing on side road ahead. Be prepared to stop.



Railway crossing. Stop, then proceed when it is safe.



Railway crossing. Stay stopped until the gate is fully raised.

Signals

Lighted signals are a way of controlling traffic flow.

Lane control signals

Lane control signals are placed over lanes to indicate which ones are open for driving.



Do not drive in this lane



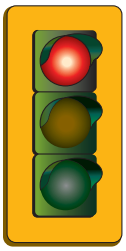
Move out of this lane and into a lane with a green arrow. If the lane control signals over all of the lanes are flashing yellow, slow down and proceed with caution.



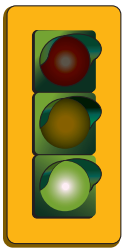
Drive in this lane

Traffic lights

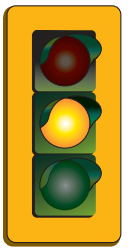
Traffic lights are used to help organize the flow of traffic. A red light means "stop," a yellow light means "caution" and a green light means "go." These signals can have slightly different meanings if they are flashing or if they are shaped as arrows rather than circles. In some places green arrows may flash; in others they may not.



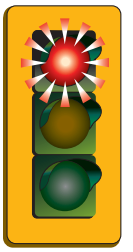
Steady red. Stop, then after coming to a full stop, you may turn right. Rules may vary by jurisdiction.



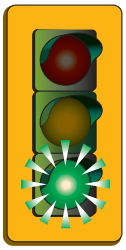
Steady green. Continue if the intersection is clear.



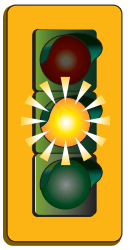
Steady yellow. Slow down and stop before the intersection unless you can't safely stop in time.



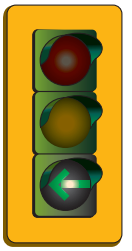
Flashing red. Stop, then continue only when it is safe. Treat as a stop sign.



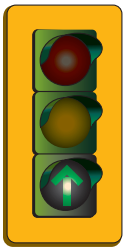
Flashing green. Pedestrian-controlled light, go only if the intersection is clear in your lane of travel.



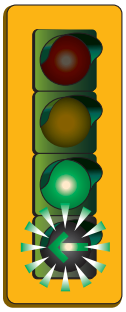
Flashing yellow. Slow down and proceed with caution.



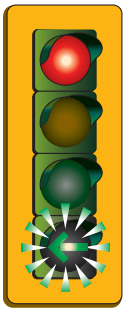
Green arrow. Turn in the direction of the arrow.



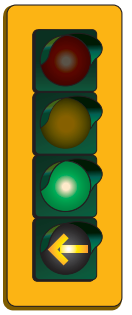
Green arrow. No turn permitted; go straight through only.



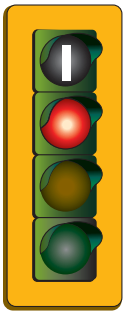
Flashing green arrow with a steady green light. You may turn in the direction of the arrow or proceed.



Flashing green arrow with a steady red light. Left turn allowed; through traffic must stop for red light.



Yellow arrow. Advance left turn signal is about to change, slow down and stop before the intersection unless you can't safely stop in time.



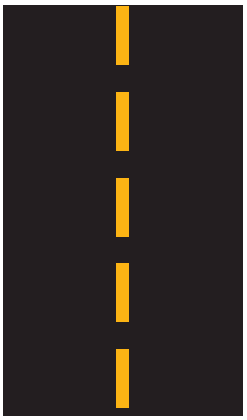
Transit priority signal, steady white rectangular light. Only buses may go on this signal.

Road markings

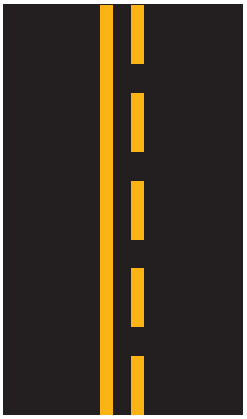
Road markings give you warnings or direction. They are painted on the roadway, curbs or other surfaces. It is illegal to drive over freshly painted, wet pavement markings.

Yellow lines

Yellow lines divide traffic moving in opposite directions. If there is a yellow line to your left, there will be traffic coming towards you on the other side of that yellow line.



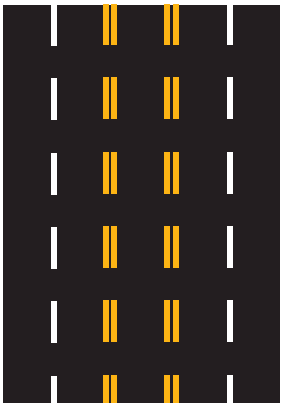
Broken line. Passing is allowed when safe.



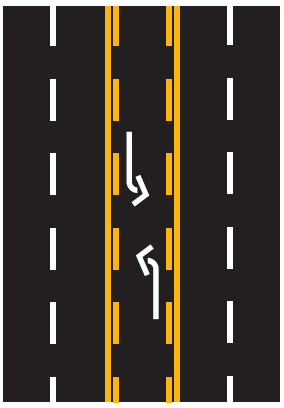
Broken line and solid line. You may pass only when it is safe and the broken line is on your side.



Double solid line. No passing allowed.



Double broken yellow line. Lane is reversible. Lane control signal will show whether you may use this lane.

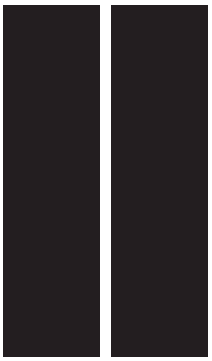


Two-way left-turn lane. Drivers travelling in opposite directions share this lane for left turns; markings may be reversed (solid lines inside the broken lines). These are not merge lanes.

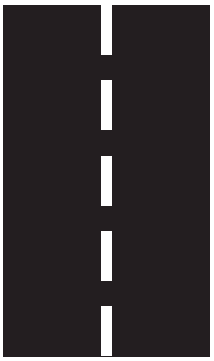
When parking, you are not allowed to cross a yellow line to access or exit a parking spot. You must park and exit on your side of the center line.

White lines

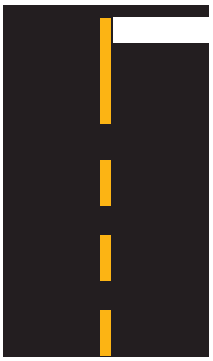
White lines are used to separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction. White lines also mark crosswalks, stopping positions and the right shoulders of highways.



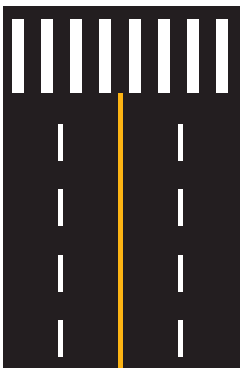
Solid line. Do not change lanes.



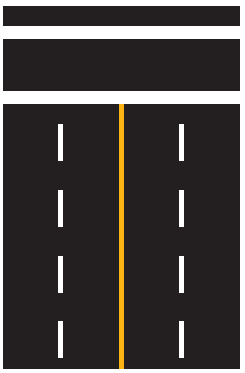
Broken line. Lane changing is allowed when safe.



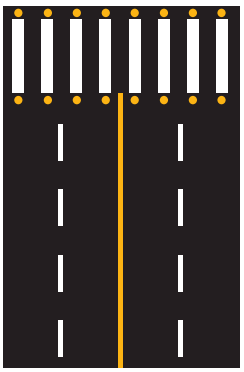
Stop line. Stop before this line.



Pedestrian crosswalk. Stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.



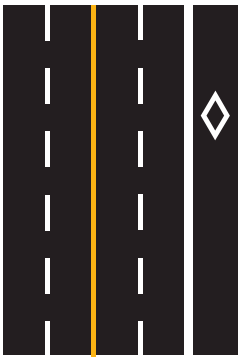
Pedestrian crosswalk. Stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.



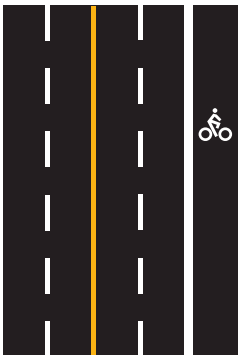
Pedestrian-activated crosswalk with illuminating lights in pavement. Stop for pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Reserved lane markings

These markings set off lanes for high occupancy vehicles, buses and bicycles. High occupancy vehicle lanes are marked with thick solid or broken lines and white diamond symbols.

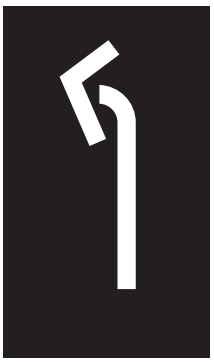


Reserved lane. Additional signs or markings state which vehicles are allowed.

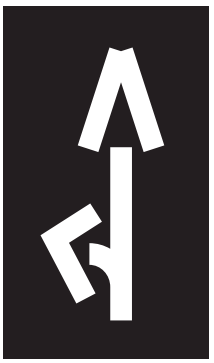


Bicycle lane, for cyclists only. Cyclists must travel in the same direction as the traffic beside them. The lane is marked with an outline of a bicycle and sometimes with a diamond.

Other markings



Vehicles in this lane must turn left.



Vehicles in this lane must go straight or turn left.



Painted island. Keep to the right and do not drive on or over.

Rules of the road 4

in this chapter

- **Understanding intersections**
  - signalling
  - types of intersections
  - stopping at intersections
  - right-of-way at intersections
- **Using lanes correctly**
  - which lane should you use
  - turns
  - turning lanes
  - reserved lanes
  - entering or changing lanes
  - passing
  - merging
  - highway or freeway entrances/exits
  - cul-de-sacs
  - turning around
  - Parking tips and rules

driving tip

Treat an unmarked T-intersection the same as any other uncontrolled intersection.

Chapter 3, signs, signals and road markings, gave you some information about the most common signs, signals and road markings you will see when driving. This chapter gives you the information you'll need to help you drive safely at intersections, use lanes correctly and park legally.

Understanding intersections

Intersections are places where a number of road users cross paths. There is often a lot of activity in intersections, so it's important to be alert. Remember that other road users may want to move into the same space where you are planning on moving.

Signalling

Signals are important. They let other traffic know where you plan to go. You must signal when you're preparing to:

- turn left or right;
- change lanes;
- park; or
- move toward, or away from, the side of the road.

Types of intersections

Controlled intersections

A controlled intersection is one that has signs or traffic lights telling you what to do. To drive safely in these intersections, you need to know what the signals and signs mean and the right-of-way rules. Always be cautious. Other drivers may not be paying attention to the signs and signals.

Uncontrolled intersections

Uncontrolled intersections have no signs or traffic lights. They are usually found in areas where there isn't much traffic. They can be dangerous places because drivers might not be expecting cross traffic or pedestrians.

As you approach, slow down and look out for other road users. Scan the intersection from left to right. If another vehicle has arrived at the intersection before you, slow down and yield. If two vehicles arrive at the same time, the vehicle on the left must yield to the vehicle on the right.

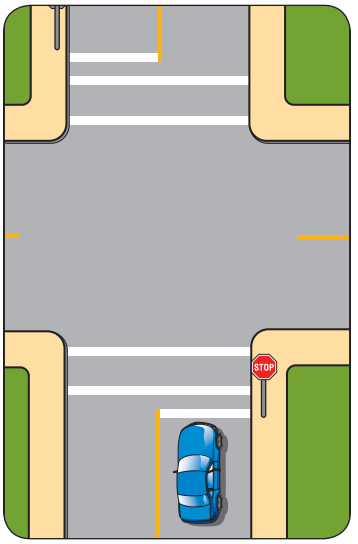
driving tip

If a traffic control person is directing traffic, you must follow that person's directions.å

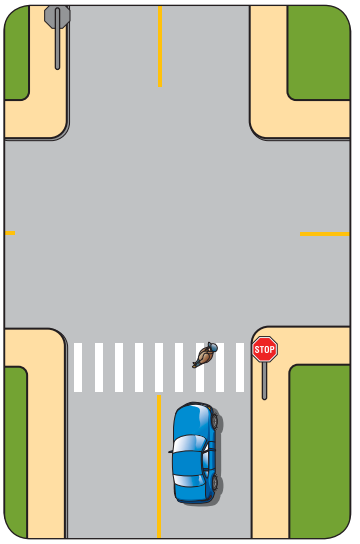
Be careful when you want to turn left where other traffic is approaching from the opposite direction. Yield to traffic that is in or near the intersection. If you intend to go straight through and a vehicle is already in the intersection turning left, you should yield.

Stopping at intersections

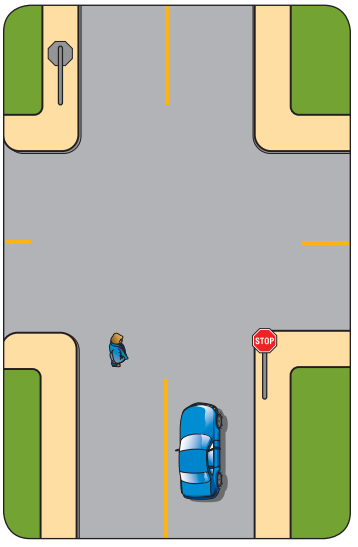
There are rules about where you position your vehicle when you have to stop at an intersection.



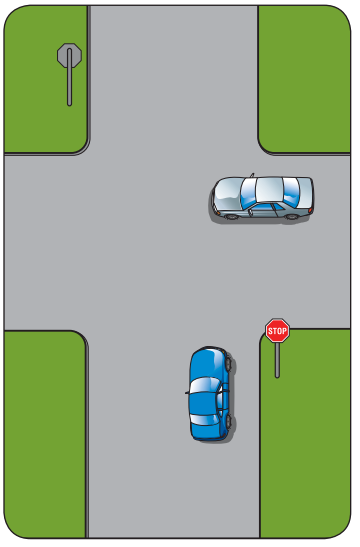
If there is a crosswalk and stop line, stop just before the stop line.



If there is a crosswalk but no stop line, stop just before the crosswalk.



If there is an unmarked crosswalk, stop where you would if there were a marked crosswalk.



Where there is no stop line, no crosswalk and no sidewalk, stop just before you enter the intersection.

driving tip

Sometimes traffic lights can go out, or all four lights can start flashing. Treat the intersection like a four-way stop if all lights are flashing red.

If lights are flashing yellow proceed with caution as long as intersection is clear.

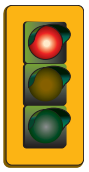
Right-of-way at intersections

Right-of-way rules determine who should yield when more than one road user wants to move into the same space. It's important to know these rules because they keep traffic moving in an orderly way. Remember that you can't always count on the other person to follow the rules. Even if you have the right-of-way, it's still your responsibility to do all you can to avoid a crash.

For information on right-of-way rules for crosswalks and railway crossings, see chapter 6, sharing the road.

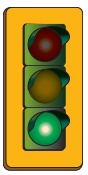
Intersections controlled by traffic lights

Most people know who has the right-of-way at intersections controlled by traffic lights, but they may not understand how to correctly respond to these lights. Here are some pointers that will help you stay safe at intersections.



Steady red light – a red light means that you must come to a complete stop. You must wait for the light to turn green before you go straight ahead.

After you have stopped and made sure the intersection is clear of all vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians, you may turn right or turn left onto a one-way street. Watch for signs prohibiting you from making these turns on a red light.



Steady green light – green means go only if the intersection is clear, and it is safe to do so.

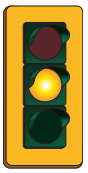
- Stale green light – a stale green light is one that has been green for a long time, and is about to turn yellow. If you didn't see the light turn green, then it may be stale. Look for additional clues:
  - are there a lot of cars lined up on the cross street waiting for the light to change?
  - in many areas, the crosswalk signal will change from a white figure to an orange hand just before the light turns yellow, or will show how many seconds are left before the traffic light will change.
- Point of no return – as you approach a stale green light –taking into consideration your speed, the road conditions and the traffic behind you – decide on a point where you will no longer be able to stop safely. This is sometimes called the point of no return. When you reach this point, keep on going even if the light changes to yellow. You need to judge accurately so you won't be in the intersection when the light turns red.
- Fresh green light – a fresh green light is one that has just turned green. Don't move forward until you've scanned the intersection to make sure it's clear
- Making a left turn on a steady green light – when you are making a left turn, you must yield to oncoming traffic and wait for a safe gap before you turn.

driving tip

If you didn't see the light turn green, then it may be stale. You should be prepared to stop.

driving tip

It is illegal to back up into an intersection or over a crosswalk.



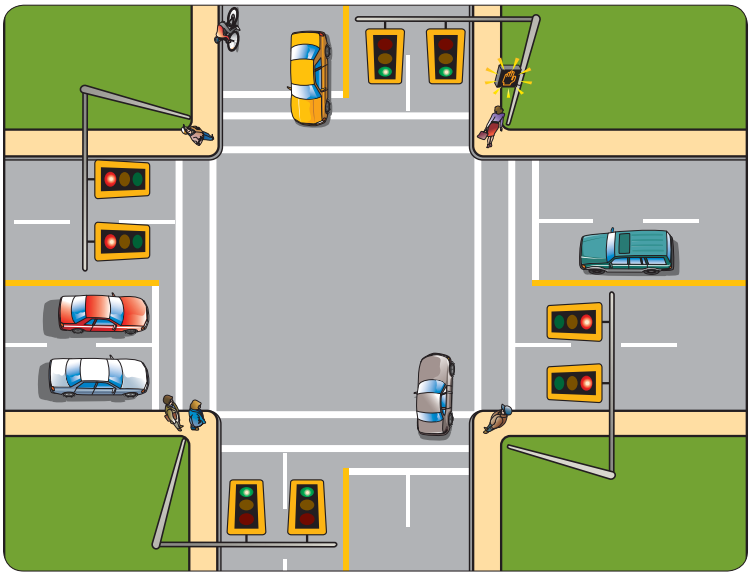
Steady yellow light – yellow means that the signal is about to turn red. You must stop before entering the intersection unless you can't safely stop in time.

Sometimes drivers panic if they are in an intersection waiting to make a left turn and the light turns yellow. In this situation, remember that you are legally allowed to complete your turn. But watch carefully for other traffic, especially oncoming vehicles, who have passed the point of no return on a yellow light.

driving tip

To be safe turning left at an intersection with a solid green traffic light, follow these steps.

- Slow to an appropriate speed as you approach.
- Signal left before entering the intersection.
- Scan the intersection for danger.
- Take possession of the intersection.
- Keep your wheels straight.
- Wait for a safe gap in the traffic.
- Shoulder check left for pedestrians.
- Complete your turn if all is clear.

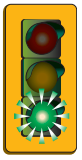


What are the clues that tell you the green light is stale?

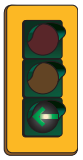
Flashing green light – these lights are activated by pedestrians. Scan the intersection to look for pedestrians who may have triggered the light to change.

Take possession of an intersection – when making a left turn, you can take possession by:

- moving your vehicle into the intersection, fully over the crosswalk;
- staying on your side of the road; and
- stopping before the midway point of the intersection.

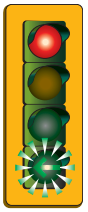


Left-turn signals – some intersections have turn signals with green arrows, or designated lanes controlled by their own set of traffic lights, to allow you to turn left. These are called protected turns. As long as the green arrow is shown, you are protected from through traffic – they are facing a red light.



Separate left signal – some intersections have designated left-turn lanes controlled by their own set of traffic lights. A green arrow at the bottom of a separate set of traffic lights will tell you when to turn left. Traffic in the straight-through and right-turn lanes will be stopped by a red light on a different set of lights.

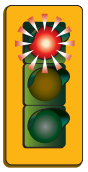
Once the green arrow has turned off, and if there is a regular green traffic light on your set of lights, you may still turn left, but you must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and oncoming traffic.



Left signal on regular traffic lights – other intersections have left-turn lanes that are not controlled by a separate set of traffic lights. Here the advance green arrow is located on the bottom of the regular traffic lights.

The flashing green arrow allows you to turn left. Through traffic is facing a red light.

Once the green arrow has turned off, and only the regular green traffic light is on, you may still turn left, but you must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and oncoming traffic.



Sometimes these advance green arrows operate only during peak traffic hours.

Flashing red lights – a flashing red light means that you must come to a complete stop. After you stop, you may move into the intersection when it is clear and safe to do so.

Intersections controlled by stop signs



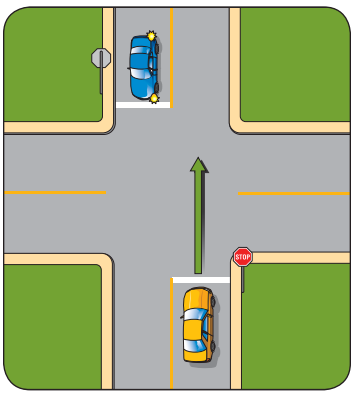
A stop sign always means that you must come to a complete stop. Once you've stopped, check the intersection carefully. How you proceed depends on the type of intersection and the other traffic around you.

Two-way stops – if two streets intersect and only one of the streets has stop signs, then the other street is a through street. Traffic on the through street has the right-of-way. If you are stopped at one of these types of intersections, wait until there is a safe gap before going through or turning.

If two vehicles are stopped at a two-way stop and one of the drivers wants to turn left, this driver should yield the right-of-way to the other vehicle. The only exception is if the left-turning vehicle is already in the intersection and has started to make the turn. In this case, the other vehicle must yield.

These drivers arrived at this two-way stop at the same time. The driver of the blue car wants to turn left. The driver of the yellow car wants to go straight.

Who should yield?



driving tip

If there is any doubt about who has the right-of-way, or if there is any chance of a crash, it's always better to yield the right-of-way to the other driver.

Four-way stops – when there are stop signs at all corners:

- The first vehicle to arrive at the intersection and come to a complete stop should go first.
- If two vehicles arrive at the same time, the one on the right should go first.
- If two vehicles are facing each other and have arrived at the intersection at about the same time, the one making a left turn should yield to the one going straight through.



Intersections controlled by yield sign

A yield sign means that you must let the traffic on the through road have the right-of-way. You may enter the intersection without stopping if there are no pedestrians, cyclists or vehicles on the through road. If there is traffic on the through road, you must slow down, stopping if necessary, and wait for a safe gap to enter traffic.



Traffic circles and roundabouts

These are found in some areas to help traffic get through an intersection safely without necessarily stopping the flow of the traffic.

Traffic circles

Traffic circles usually have only one lane.

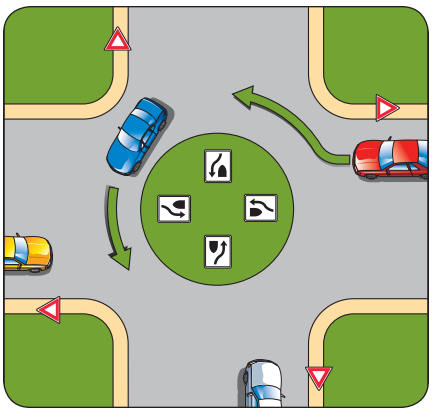
When you're using a traffic circle:

- Slow down as you approach the circle.
- Obey any posted traffic control signs, such as "Yield" or "Stop" signs. If there are no traffic control signs, treat it as an uncontrolled intersection.
- Yield to any traffic in the traffic circle. If another vehicle arrives at the traffic circle at the same time as you do, yield to the vehicle on your right.
- Go around the traffic circle to the right (that is, in a counter-clockwise direction).
- Use your signal to indicate when you are going to exit.

driving tip

You do not need to signal left while entering into or driving in a traffic circle. You are not turning into a new lane because, your lane becomes the circle. It's like a curve in the road.

You must turn right to enter a traffic circle and right again to leave it. Yield to vehicles that are already in the traffic circle. If another vehicle arrives at the traffic circle at the same time as you do, yield to the vehicle on your right.



driving tip

Emergency vehicles displaying flashing lights and sirens always have the right-of-way. If an emergency vehicle is approaching, avoid blocking a traffic circle or roundabout. Stop for the emergency vehicle before entering. If you are already in the traffic circle or roundabout, exit, pull over and then stop to allow the emergency vehicle to pass.

Roundabouts

Roundabouts are usually larger than traffic circles and may have more than one lane. Lane use signs and markings may be displayed at the approaches to show where you can go in each lane when you are in the roundabout. Make sure you know where you want to go, and are in the proper lane to get there, before you enter a roundabout.

Roundabouts often have a truck apron around the central island to help large vehicles get through the roundabout.

When you use a roundabout:

- Know where you want to go before you enter a roundabout, and enter the correct lane. Lane use signs or road markings will show you which lane you need to use. If you want to turn left, make sure you are in the left lane. If you want to turn right, use the right lane. If you want to go straight, you may use either the left or right lane.
- Slow down as you approach the roundabout.
- Yield to pedestrians who may be crossing or about to cross in the crosswalk.
- Yield to any traffic already in the roundabout.
- Go around the roundabout in a counter-clockwise direction. Do not change lanes in a roundabout.
- Don't ride alongside large vehicles such as trucks and buses in roundabouts. They may need extra space and enter your lane in order to safely make their turn.
- If you entered the roundabout in the left lane, stay in that lane. You may either go straight or turn left from that lane.
- Signal "right" before you exit.
- When you exit, be prepared to yield to pedestrians who may be in the crosswalk.



Slow down when approaching a roundabout and yield to traffic already in it. Stay in the same lane in which you approached the roundabout.

In the example above, the red car has entered the roundabout from the south in the right lane after yielding to vehicles in the roundabout. The driver may either turn right at the east exit or continue straight and take the north exit.

The blue car entered from the south in the left lane, and has merged into the left lane in the roundabout. Because the blue car entered from the left lane, the driver can't immediately turn right at the first exit (east), but can take either the north or west exit.

The tractor-trailer combination entered the roundabout from the east in the left lane and the driver is going to take the south exit. Note that because of the length of the combination, the trailer is partly in the right lane, and the combination will be exiting in the right lane.

The driver of the green car must yield to the tractor-trailer that's already in the roundabout.

This sign warns you to keep away from large vehicles such as trucks and buses in a roundabout.

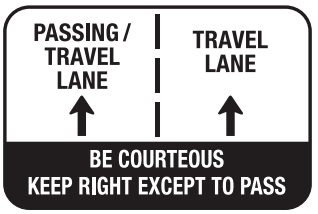


Entering a roadway

When you are pulling out of a driveway, alley or parking lot onto a road, stop before the sidewalk or area where pedestrians may be walking. Then pull out carefully, yielding to traffic on the road and waiting for a safe gap.

Using lanes correctly

In the last chapter, you learned about the signs, signals and pavement markings that identify in which lanes you can drive. This section tells you more about which lanes to use and how to use them.



Which lane should you use?

Choose the lane that gives you the best vision and allows you to go where you want to go. On a multi-lane highway, you should travel in one of the right-hand lanes. This is especially important if you are driving more slowly than other vehicles or if signs direct you to keep out of the left lane.

Just because you are driving at the speed limit does not mean you should continually drive in the left lane. This may cause other drivers to try to pass on the right, which may not be as safe as passing on the left.



When you are on a freeway with more than two lanes in each direction, you should drive in the centre lane or a right-hand lane. This leaves the left lane for higher-speed traffic and passing vehicles.

Turns

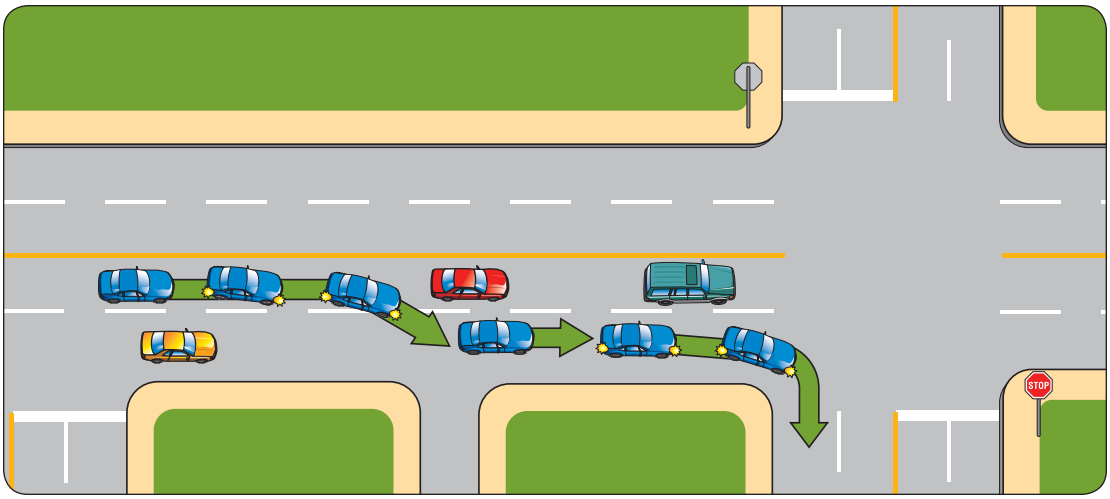
Before you make a turn, you need to get your vehicle into the correct lane by safely completing a lane change. You also need to turn into in the correct lane when you complete your turn. The correct lane is the first allowed lane closest to you in the direction you are travelling.

To turn right at the next intersection, safely complete a lane change in advance of the intersection. Signal, then safely turn into the right lane of the cross street.

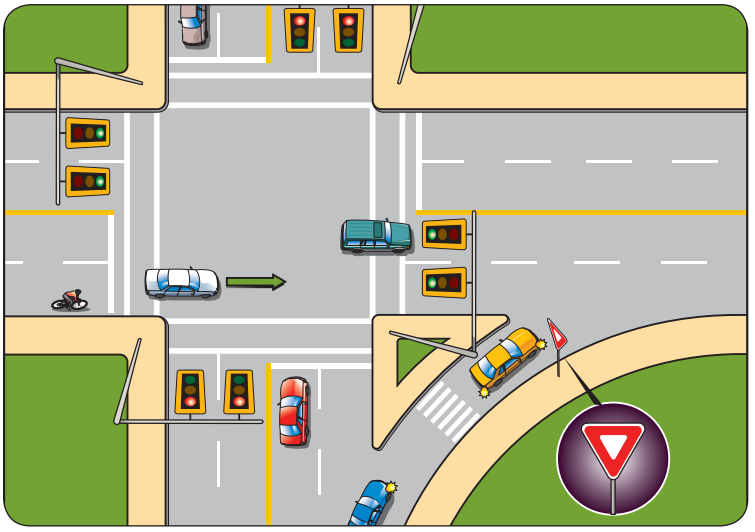
In some intersections, road markings allow you to turn right from a centre lane.

Right turns

These illustrations show lane tracking when you're making a right turn.

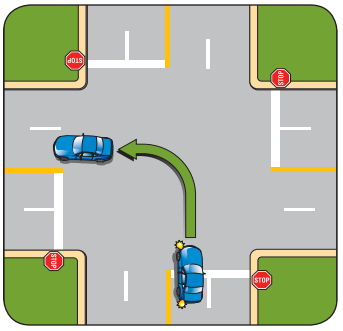


Some intersections have special yield lanes for vehicles turning right. To make a right turn, move into this lane. Wait until there is a break in the traffic and then safely complete your turn.

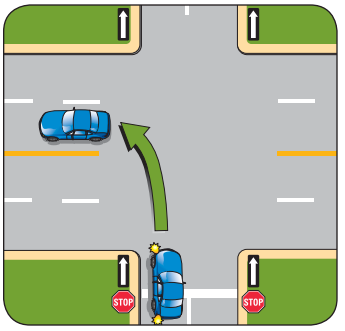


Left turns

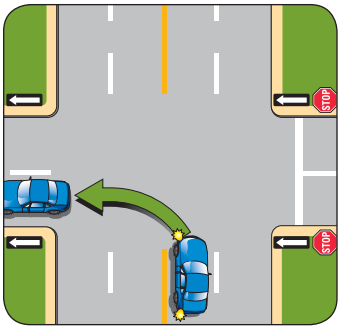
For left turns, it's sometimes harder to figure out into which lane to turn. These illustrations show you the correct lane tracking for different types of roads. In all cases, you should always turn into the lane that is closest to you and moving in the direction you are travelling.



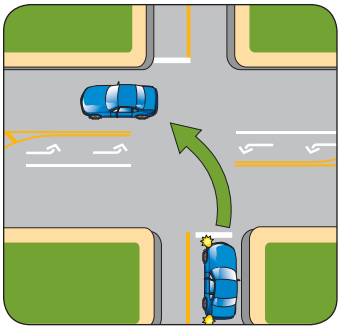
Turning left from a two-way road onto a two-way road: move your vehicle into the centre lane and drive in a smooth arc into the centre lane of the cross street.



Turning left from a one-way onto a two-way road: turn from the left lane into the centre lane.



Turning left from a two-way onto a one-way road: turn from the centre lane into the left lane.

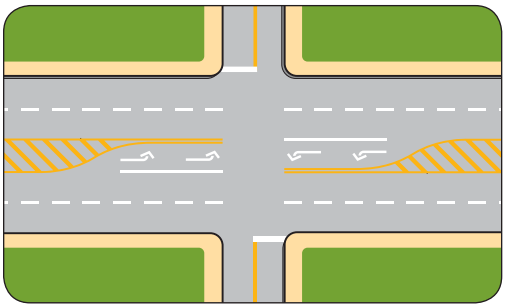


Turning left onto a road that has a centre turning lane: move your vehicle from your lane of travel and drive in a smooth arc into the travelled lane of the cross street. Do not use the centre turning lane as a merge lane.

Turning lanes

Some roads have special lanes for turning. As you approach an intersection, always check the signs and pavement markings to make sure you are in the correct lane to turn or to go straight through.

Turning lanes let you wait for a safe gap without holding up vehicles that are travelling straight through. Use the lane with the arrows only if you are turning left.





Multiple turning lanes

In large, complex intersections, there may be more than one right- or left-turn lane. Look carefully at the pavement markings, lane-use signs and signals. They will tell you what to do.

For example, the sign shown in the left column tells you that both the far-left lane and the lane next to it are used for left turns. If you are turning from the far-left lane, turn into the far-left lane. If you are turning from the lane next to it, turn into the lane next to the far-left lane.



Two-way left-turn lanes

Two-way left-turn lanes, which may also be known as centre turning lanes, give left-turning vehicles coming from either direction a chance to turn without holding up traffic.

They can be handy for turning left in the middle of a block, such as turning into a driveway. When you see one of these lanes, remember that vehicles coming from the other direction also use this lane to turn left.

Two-way left-turn lanes must not be used as a passing, merging or driving lanes.

Drivers from both directions share this centre lane when they want to turn left. Make sure there is enough space before you enter this lane. Watch for vehicles coming from the opposite direction.



Turns in the middle of a block

Most drivers expect other vehicles to turn at an intersection. Sometimes you might want to turn left in the middle of a block, for example, into a driveway. You may turn left, even over a single solid line, if you do this carefully and safely, don't hold up other traffic, and there are no signs prohibiting such turns.

Reserved lanes

In some areas, traffic lanes are reserved for different types of vehicles. High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes and bus lanes help move more people in fewer vehicles. Bicycle lanes are reserved for cyclists.

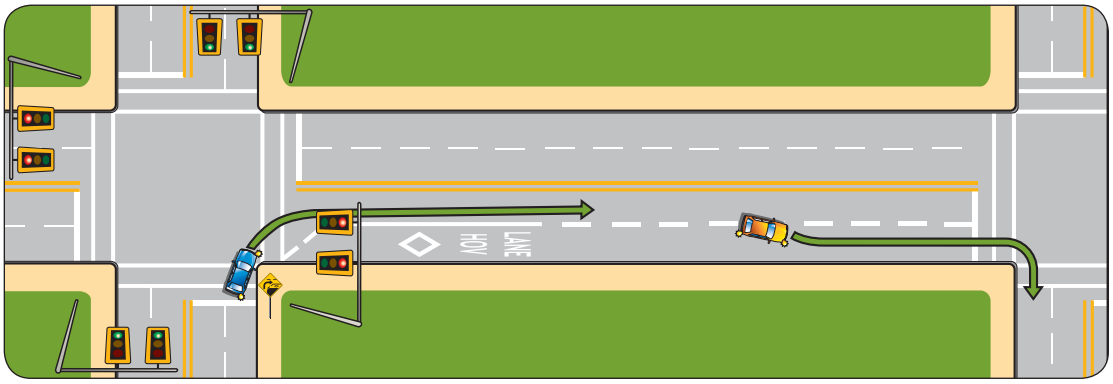


High occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes

HOV lanes are reserved for buses and carpool vehicles. Motorcycles, bicycles and taxis may also use these lanes on some roads. On freeways and main highways, HOV lanes are beside either the median or the shoulder of the roadway. On city streets, HOV lanes are usually directly beside the curb.

Most HOV lanes operate 24 hours a day, but some are only in operation at peak traffic times. Check the traffic signs carefully. They will tell you where the lanes begin and end, when they are in operation, and the minimum number of people that must be in the vehicle.

If your vehicle is carrying enough people to travel in the HOV lane, or if you need to cross an HOV lane to turn, enter the lane with care. Make sure there is enough room for you to enter safely. Enter and exit where there are broken lines to indicate a crossing point.



The driver of the blue car has seen the warning sign indicating that there is a reserved lane on the street onto which the driver wishes to turn. The driver should turn into the lane next to the reserved lane, unless they are entitled to drive in the reserved lane and wish to drive in it. To turn right off of a street with a reserved lane, change lanes into the reserved lane where permitted and when safe.



Bus lanes

In some jurisdictions, you will recognize a bus lane by a sign that has a diamond symbol and a picture of a bus. Only buses and sometimes cyclists are allowed to travel in lanes marked with this sign.

Bicycle lanes

Bicycle lanes are reserved for cyclists.

Sometimes you will need to cross a bicycle lane to turn right, to pull to the side of the road, or to turn into or out of a driveway. Take extra care when you do this.

The rules for bicycle lanes are:

- no driving, stopping or parking in a bicycle lane; and
- you may only cross a bicycle lane if the white line is broken or to turn into or out of a driveway.

driving tip

Be sure to signal well ahead and yield to all cyclists whenever you must cross a bicycle lane.

Entering or changing lanes

Whenever you enter a lane, whether you're pulling into traffic or changing lanes, the vehicles in the lane you're moving into have the right-of-way. When you pull away from the roadside into a lane of traffic, you need to make sure you are not cutting anyone off. Watch carefully for smaller traffic, such as bicycles and motorcycles, that may be approaching faster than you think.

The same rule applies when you're planning to change lanes. Make sure there is a large enough gap so that when you pull in front of another vehicle, that driver doesn't have to slow down to avoid crashing into you. You must signal when you change lanes.

driving tip

Don't change lanes at an intersection. You could confuse other drivers and cause a crash.

Passing

Passing requires moving into another lane, sometimes a lane of approaching traffic, and then back into your original lane. Remember, if you move into another vehicle's lane, that vehicle has the right-of-way. It doesn't matter if it's a car, a motorcycle or a bicycle. Other traffic shouldn't have to change direction or slow down for you.

driving tip

Don't speed up as someone is trying to pass you: it's illegal. Help the other driver get back into your lane by slowing down and making room.

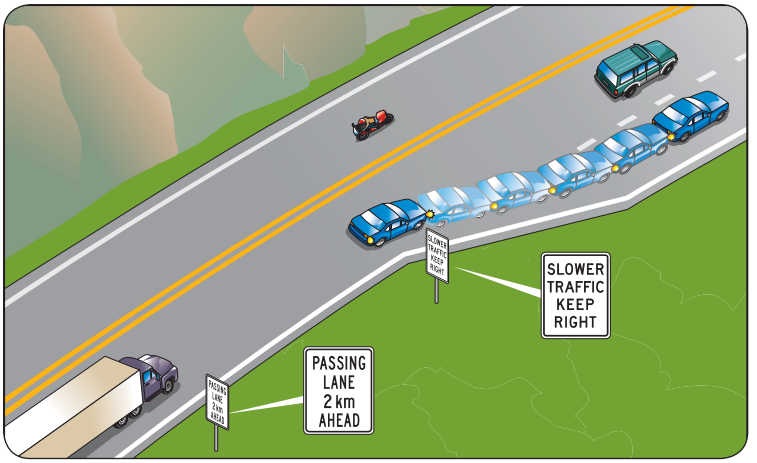
If you're planning to pass, make sure you can do it safely and legally:

- Pass on the right only when there is a designated lane for doing so, or if a driver ahead is turning left. Do not use the shoulder to pass.
- Pass on the left only when it is safe to do so and lane markings allow it.
- Keep within the speed limit when passing.
- Make sure you know whether the pavement markings allow you to pass. See chapter 3, signs, signals and road markings, for more information.

Passing lanes

Some highways have special passing lanes. These lanes let slower vehicles move into the right lane so faster vehicles can pass safely in the left lane.

A sign will tell you how far it is to the next passing lane. Keep right unless you are passing.



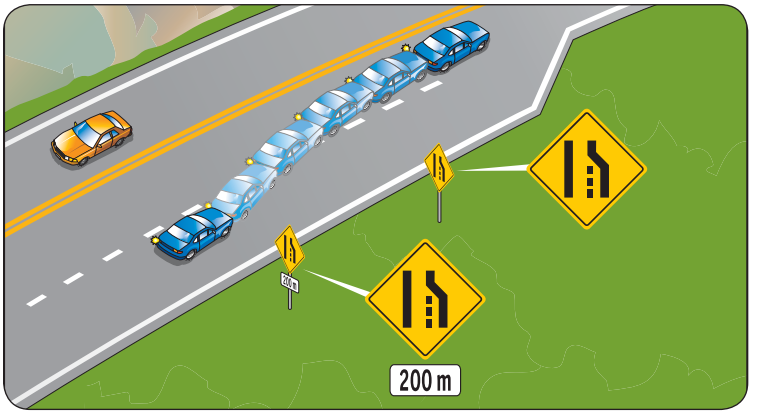


Merging

This sign tells you the right lane will end soon.

If you're driving in a lane that ends ahead, you need to change lanes. Adjust your speed, keeping within the speed limit, and wait for a safe gap in the other lane to safely complete a lane change.

A sign will tell you when the passing lane is about to end. Vehicles in the right lane and the passing lane must merge before the passing lane ends.



Highway or freeway entrances and exits

These lanes are designed to help you safely enter and exit the freeway.

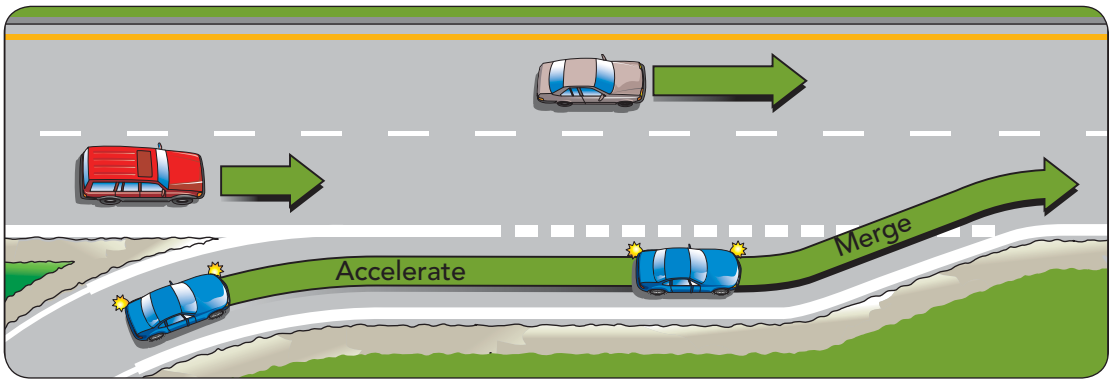
Warning

Avoid stopping in the acceleration lane or merging area. You risk being rear-ended.

Entrance

The entrance consists of an entrance ramp, an acceleration lane and a merging area. Some freeway entrances have ramp meters: a traffic light that controls traffic entering the freeway by restricting the number of vehicles that may proceed along the entrance ramp.

- While you're on the entrance ramp, scan the freeway trafficfor a safe gap.
- The acceleration lane is divided from the rest of the roadway by a solid white line. Use this lane to match your speed to the speed of traffic on the freeway.
- The merging area is divided from the freeway by a broken white line. Use this area to find a safe gap to merge with freeway traffic. Be aware that cycling is permitted on some freeways, so merge safely.

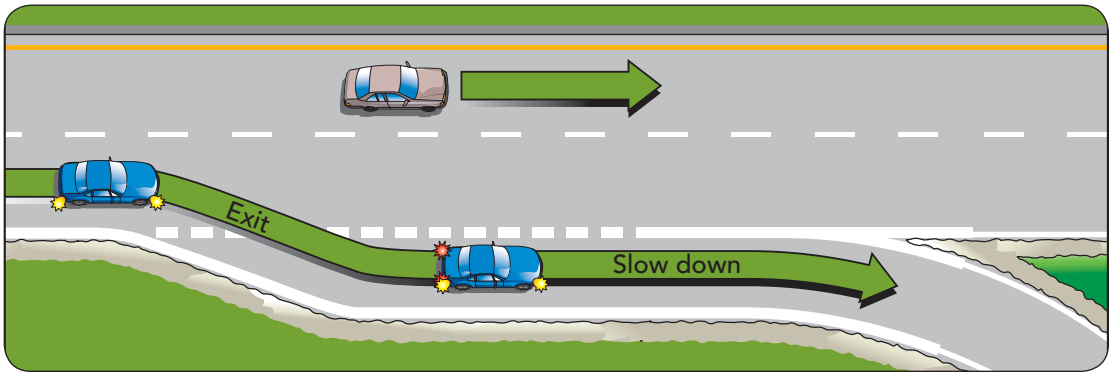


A highway entrance gives you a short distance to match your speed to the vehicles already on the highway. Observe the freeway traffic, make sure you have a space that is safe to move into, signal your intention and then safely merge into traffic.

Exit

The exit lane allows you to move off the freeway and reduce your speed.

Most freeway exits are numbered. Before you start your trip, check a map to see which exit you will need to take. That way you can move to the right lane in plenty of time for the exit.



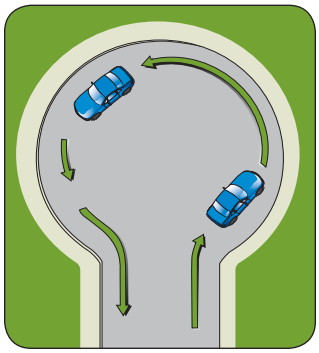
Signal your intention to turn off the highway, maintaining your speed until you enter the exit lane. Then slow down gradually as you prepare to enter roads with lower speed limits.

Strategies: freeway courtesy

When you are driving in the right lane of a freeway, other drivers may try to merge from an entrance lane. It's not always easy for them to find a safe gap.

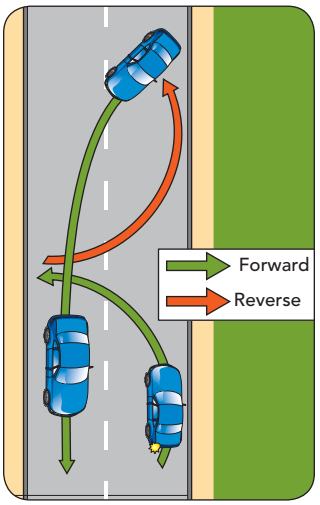
Use these pointers to help other drivers merge safely:

- Pull over into the left lane (if it's safe) to give them room to merge onto the freeway.
- Adjust your speed to allow a large enough gap for them to move into safely.



Cul-de-sacs

A cul-de-sac is a street that's closed at one end. Most cul-de-sacs are designed so that you can turn your car around without needing to back up. Slow down and keep to the right. Most cul-de-sacs are in residential areas, so watch carefully for children playing, vehicles coming out of driveways and other hazards.



Turning around

Sometimes you can turn around by doing a series of turns at intersections or by turning in a cul-de-sac. You may also be able to do a U-turn, a two-point turn or a three-point turn.

If you need to turn around mid block – look at your roadway.

If there is a solid line in the middle of the road – you will have to do a two-point turn:

A two-point turn is done by stopping near the side of the road, backing into a driveway and then turning into the street to proceed in the opposite direction.

If there is no solid line in the middle of the road, you can do a three-point turn when safe.

A three-point turn is done by making a sharp turn to the left in the middle of a block when no vehicle traffic is coming in either direction, and stopping just before the curb.

To complete the three-point turn, back up to your right and then proceed to drive down the street in the opposite direction.

For both two- and three-point turns, you need to make sure it's clear and safe and that there is no other traffic nearby.



U-turns

If you find you are going in the wrong direction, you may be tempted to make a U-turn. U-turns are often risky. They are illegal if they occur:

- in a manner that interferes with other traffic;
- on a curve;
- on or near the crest of a hill, where you cannot be seen by other traffic within 150 metres;
- in a municipality on a roadway between intersections;
- where a sign prohibits U-turns;
- at an intersection where there is a traffic light;
- in a business district, except at an intersection where there is no traffic light; and
- where a municipal by-law prohibits making a U-turn.

When you are deciding whether to make a U-turn, think about some alternatives, like driving around the block or continuing on to a side road where you can turn more safely.

driving tip

When parking in a stall, it's usually safest to back in so you won't have to back out. Better still, if there are two empty facing stalls with no barrier between them, drive through one into the next so your vehicle is facing forward.

Parking tips and rules

Park where it's safe and legal.

Signs, curb markings and common sense will tell you if you are allowed to park. You should park where you are not blocking traffic and where others can clearly see you. If you park where you shouldn't, you could be a hazard to others, you could be fined or your vehicle could be towed.

It's illegal to park:

- on a sidewalk or boulevard;
- within 1.5 metres of the entrance to any driveway, back lane, private road, or garage;
- within 5 metres of a fire hydrant (measured from the point at the curb beside the hydrant);
- within 5 metres of a crosswalk or intersection;
- within 5 metres of a stop sign or traffic light;
- within 15 metres of the nearest rail of a railway crossing;
- in a bicycle lane;
- on a bridge or in a highway tunnel;
- where your vehicle obstructs the visibility of a traffic sign;
- where a traffic sign prohibits parking, or where the curb is painted yellow or red; or
- in a space for people with disabilities unless you display a disabled person parking permit in your windshield and your vehicle is carrying a person with a disability.

Park parallel to and within 50 centimetres of the curb. If you're parked on a hill, turn the wheels to keep your vehicle from rolling into traffic.

Turn the wheels:

- to the right when parking uphill without a curb or when parking downhill with or without a curb; or
- to the left when parking uphill with a curb.

Set the parking brake and leave the vehicle in gear:

- leave an automatic transmission in "park" gear; or
- with a standard transmission, place the vehicle in "reverse" if facing downhill, and "first" gear if facing uphill or on a level surface.

See-think-do 5

in this chapter

- **See**
  - observation
  - hazard perception
- **Think**
  - assess the risk
  - choose a solution
- **Do**
  - speed control
  - steering
  - space margins
  - communication
- **Using see-think-do**

In the previous four chapters, you began developing your smart driving skills by learning the basics of driving:

- being a thinking driver;
- maintaining a safe vehicle;
- understanding signs, signals and road markings; and
- knowing the rules of the road.

This chapter will bring all of these concepts together and describe how to use them as part of **see-think-do**, a driving strategy that helps you be a safe and competent driver.

see – scan for hazards. Pay attention to other road users and the areas where hazards could occur.

think – decide which hazards are the most dangerous. Think quickly about possible solutions. Decide on the safest solution.

do – make manoeuvres to keep yourself and others safe.

see-think-do

Whenever you drive, your eyes should be scanning the area around you to gather information. Good observation means knowing how to look and where to look. The next step is hazard perception – knowing what to look for.



Observation

Good observation involves looking ahead, beside and behind.

You in the driver's seat

You're driving along a city street, scanning well ahead. You check your mirrors. The car behind is keeping well back. There is an intersection ahead. You carefully scan the intersection to see if it's clear before you proceed.

Strategies: the observation cycle

Always keep your eyes moving while you're driving.

- Look well ahead.
- Scan from one side of the road to the other, checking for potential hazards.
- Glance in your rear- and side-view mirrors to keep track of what is happening behind you.

Then start all over again. You should complete the whole cycle every five to eight seconds.

warning!

Don't overdrive your ability to see. You should always be able to stop within the distance you can see.

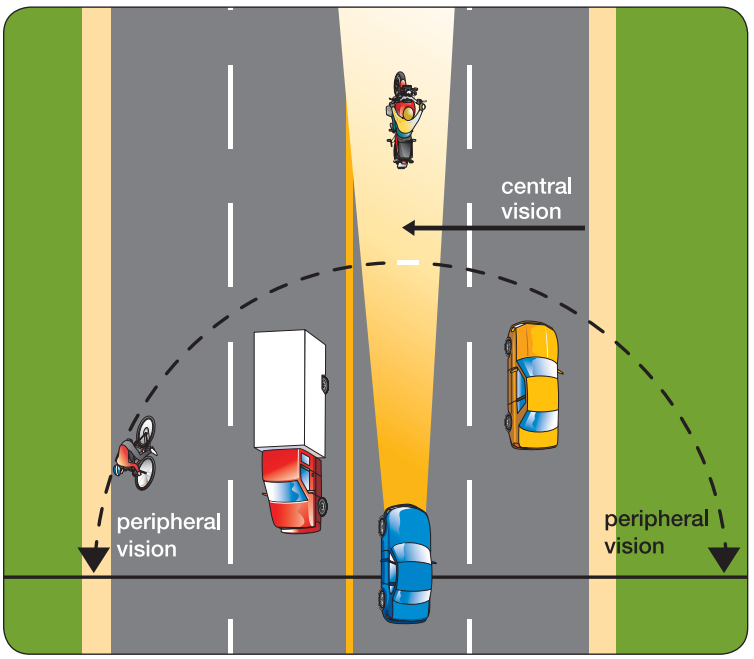
Observing ahead

Research shows that new drivers spend so much time looking at the road just in front of their vehicle that they often miss hazards further ahead. Make sure you know what's coming up by scanning at least 12 seconds ahead. This means look one to two blocks ahead in city driving and half a kilometre ahead on the highway. This will give you time to prepare for a potential hazard instead of being taken by surprise.

As you look ahead, scan to the left and right so you can see what's happening along the sides of the road. If you see cars parked by the side of the road, be careful. A child may be walking out from between them, or a door might be about to swing open.

driving tip

By looking ahead, you can avoid sudden stops.



It's easiest to see things that are directly in front of you, in your central vision. It's important to also pay attention to things outside your central vision. Peripheral vision allows you to see more than what is directly in front of you.

driving tip

An excellent method for opening your door safely would be to use your far hand to open the vehicle door. Also known as the Dutch Reach.

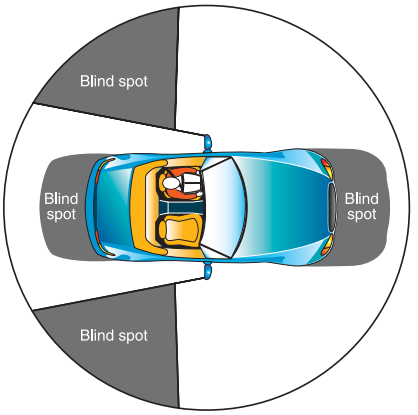
Observing behind

Your side and rear-view mirrors let you know what is happening behind you. Adjust them to get the best possible view. Look in each mirror about every five to eight seconds and pay attention to what you see

Rear-view mirrors – look in the rear-view mirror before you slow down or stop. Will the cars behind you have space to stop? If not, you may need to take action.

Side-view mirrors – use your side-view mirrors whenever you are planning to change your road position or direction. When you're pulling away from the right side of the road, you need to check your left mirror to make sure there are no cars coming from behind. If you're making a lane change to the right, check your right mirror to make sure there's enough space to move into.

Blind spots – even when your mirrors are properly adjusted, there are large areas that you can't see in your mirrors. These are called blind spots. The most dangerous blind spots are to the side. There are also blind spots below your field of vision to the front, rear and both sides of your vehicle.



driving tip

Try sitting in your vehicle and finding the areas you can't see even when you use your mirrors.

Blind spot detectors, cameras – some vehicles are equipped with blind spot detectors and/or back-up cameras. While these can help you to detect hazards in blind spots or behind the vehicle, they do not replace the need to turn your head to do a shoulder check or look behind.

Shoulder checks – whenever you plan to change your direction or road position, do a shoulder check to make sure the blind spot on that side is clear.

Do a shoulder check to be certain your blind spot is clear before you move your vehicle into another lane or in a different direction. Look at least 45 degrees over your shoulder in the direction you plan to move. If you are going to move to the right, check over your right shoulder. If you are going to move to the left, check over your left shoulder.



Check your mirrors and do a shoulder check whenever you plan to change lanes or merge:

- Look well ahead;
- Scan from one side of the road to the other, checking for potential hazards;
- Glance in your rear- and side-view mirrors to keep; and track of what is happening behind you.

Backing up – before you back up, make sure you do a 360 degree vision check. Look all around the vehicle using shoulder checks and mirror checks, and then turn your body to look out the rear window while backing up. Be especially careful and take your time when you're backing out of a driveway. It's easy to miss seeing children, pets, pedestrians, cyclists and people in wheelchairs. If you've been stopped for some time, walk around the back of your vehicle to check that your path is clear. Better yet, try to back into driveways and parking spots so you can drive out facing forward.

Observing at intersections

Look well ahead as you approach an intersection. Check for signs, signals, road markings and other clues about whether you will need to stop.

As you're approaching an intersection, scan the road you are crossing. Look left, centre, right, then glance left again. If an oncoming vehicle is turning left, take extra care; the driver may not see you. Check crosswalks you intend to cross to make sure they are clear.

think about

You are about to pull away from the side of the road into traffic. Where should you look? What should you look for?

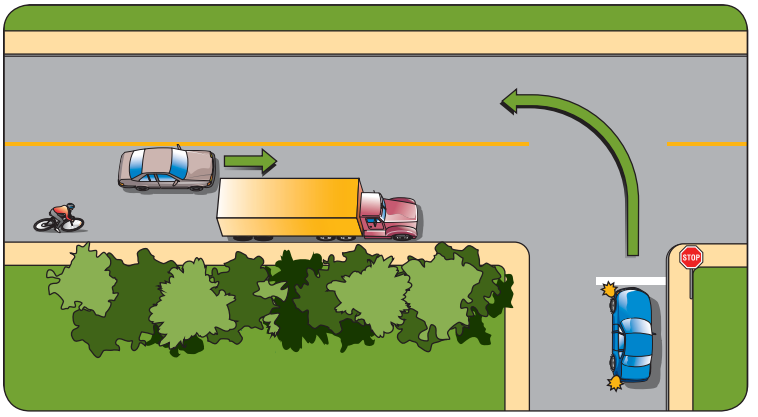
driving tip

Before you start to back up, give a quick warning tap on your horn if visibility is limited.

crash fact

More than 40 per cent of all collisions that result in injuries or fatalities happen at intersections.

Bushes and large vehicles are two of the many things that could block your view of an intersection and oncoming traffic.



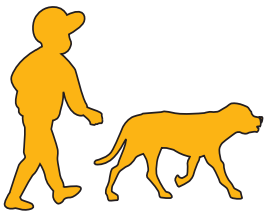
think about

What other things might block your view of an intersection?

Stopping and starting up again – as you slow down to stop, check your mirrors for traffic behind you. Then make sure you have a clear view of the intersection. If your view is blocked, you may need to move slowly into the intersection so you can see clearly before going ahead.

Turning – shoulder check to make sure a cyclist or other road user hasn't come up beside you. Then scan the intersection just as you begin to move forward. Make sure that your eyes are looking in the direction you want to go once you begin your turn.

Hazard perception



You in the driver's seat

You're driving in the rain, using your eyes to gather information ahead, to the sides and in your mirrors. Just ahead there's a cyclist. Further on, a bus has stopped to let passengers out. Behind you is a driver who seems to be moving up too close to the back of your vehicle. Suddenly, the door of a parked car swings open right in front of the cyclist. Will the cyclist swerve or fall? You take your foot off the accelerator to slow down, and cover the brake. (Get ready to put your foot on the brake peddle.)

Driving safely means looking out for hazards. A hazard is anything in the driving environment that could harm you or other road users. Hazard perception is the skill of identifying these risks. To share the road safely, train yourself to look for other road users and all objects or road surfaces that might cause problems for you or for others in the driving environment. As you drive, think about where hazards could occur.



The driving environment includes everything around you, including other road users, road conditions, weather conditions and all activities at the side of the road that might affect you.

Space conflicts

A space conflict happens when two road users try to move into the same space at the same time. To drive safely, you need to keep areas of space, called space margins, around your vehicle. If you need to stop suddenly, a driver too close behind you could cause a space conflict.

Some other space conflicts are:

- a vehicle pulling into your path;
- a pedestrian stepping onto the road in front of your vehicle; and
- a vehicle backing out of a driveway.

Surprises

Anything unpredictable is a potential hazard. A car door opening suddenly could be a surprise for a cyclist. If the cyclist swerves to avoid it or falls in front of you, you could be surprised as well. To avoid surprises, think well ahead and ask yourself what could possibly happen in the driving environment.

Some other surprises are:

- a driver weaving back and forth;
- a poorly loaded pickup truck, as something might fall; and
- a coyote who might suddenly run onto the road.

Vision blocks

Having your vision blocked is a hazard.

Some examples of vision blocks are:

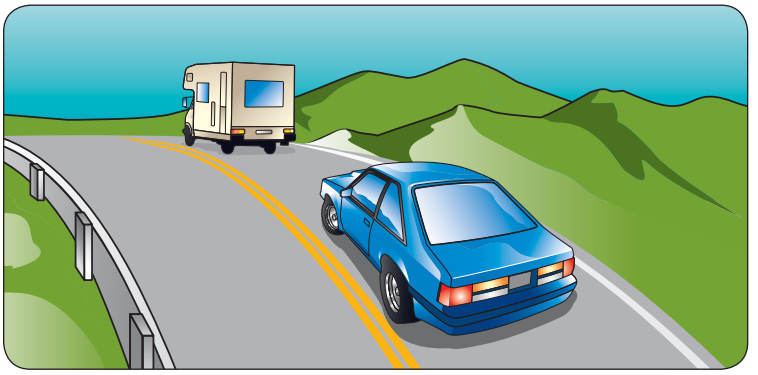
- a bus that blocks your view of people about to cross the street;
- a curve or hill that doesn't let you see what's ahead;
- a large truck in the next lane; and
- fog, rain or snow.

Be very careful when you can't see the whole driving scene.

Be extra cautious when anything blocks your view. What could the driver of the blue car miss?



Never pass when you are approaching the top of a hill. You don't know what hazards may be on the other side of the hill.



Poor road conditions

Poor road surfaces are a hazard because they can affect your traction and steering. Loose gravel, ice or rain can cause you to lose control unless you're prepared. Some other poor road conditions are:

- a paved road that suddenly changes into a gravel one;
- wet or icy patches; and
- large puddles after a rainstorm.

see-think-do

Whenever you drive, you will see hazards.

To make good driving decisions, follow this two-step process:

1. Assess the risk.
2. Choose the best solution.

Assess the risk

You in the driver's seat – part 1

You are driving down a two-lane highway, and are just starting into a sharp curve. You can't see very far ahead.

In this scene, the risk is moderate. You can't see well ahead, so you need to slow down a little and be cautious.

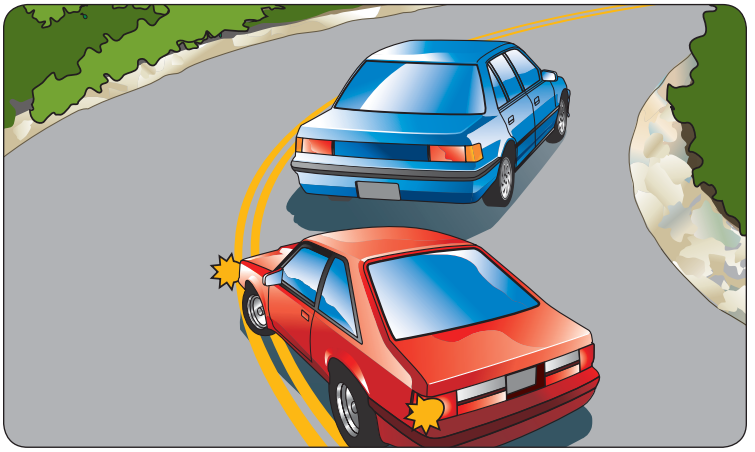
You in the driver's seat – part 2

As you go into the curve, a driver in a red car behind you pulls out to pass, even though the highway is divided by a solid double yellow line.

Now the risk increases. This is not a good time for that driver to pass because there may be all kinds of hazards just around the curve.

To assess just how risky this situation is, ask yourself what could happen. What if the driver in the red car finds an unexpected obstacle just around the curve? That driver may have to slow down and stop suddenly or pull back into your lane. That means you need to be ready to react if necessary.

If you are the driver of the blue car, what are the possible risks in this situation?



You in the driver's seat – part 3

As you come around the curve, you see a large truck in the approaching lane. The car that is passing you will cut in front of you, trying to get out of the way of the truck. To make matters worse, you see a fallen branch on the road ahead.

When you find yourself in a situation with more than one hazard, what do you do? You need to figure out which hazard is the most dangerous.

What is the most dangerous hazard in this scene?



Choose a solution

You in the driver's seat – part 4

Here you are, with a car trying to squeeze in front of you. What solutions can you think of?

All solutions involve speed control, steering, space margins and communication.

As you think of possible solutions, try to predict the possible outcomes of each one. Here's a slowed-down version of what your thinking process might look like.

Speed control

- Can I slow down quickly, or is the road too slippery? Will I skid?
- Can my vehicle stop that quickly? Are my brakes and tire tread good enough?

Steering

- If I steer onto the right shoulder, can I keep control of the car?
- Can I drive over the branch safely? Or do I have to avoid it?

Space margins

- Do I have space to stop safely? Is there space ahead? Space behind? Is there a car behind that might crash into me if I stop suddenly?
- Do I have enough space to steer onto the shoulder?

Communication

- If I honk the horn, will it help to alert the driver?

Usually, the solution you choose depends on where the space is. Is there enough space in front? To the side? Space will allow you to get out of the situation safely.

Some decisions have to be made in seconds. This means you need lots of practice in assessing risk and choosing the best solution. Practise by thinking ahead about what you would do in emergency situations.

think about

You are passing an elementary school. A soccer ball rolls onto the road about half a block ahead. Assess the risk: what the major risk? Choose the best solution: what would you do?

see-think-do

Once you've assessed the risk and have chosen a solution, you need to use your driving skills to perform the manoeuvre.

The "do" step of see-think-do involves:

- speed control;
- steering;
- space margins; and
- communication.

All of your driving manoeuvres will combine these four skills, whether you are driving straight, turning at an intersection or swerving to avoid a hazard.

You in the driver's seat

You're driving along a rural road. A yellow sign warns there's a sharp curve ahead. You take your foot off the accelerator and apply the brake to slow down before the curve. At the midpoint of the curve, you accelerate slightly, and speed up once more on a straight stretch. Then you notice something up ahead that looks like a road construction sign. You take your foot off the accelerator to slow down.

crash fact

Speeding kills and injures people on Yukon roads every year.

driving tip

Driving at a steady speed saves fuel. Suddenly changing your speed or driving over the speed limit will increase your fuel consumption.

Speed control

You are using the tools of speed control: the accelerator and the brake. If you drive a vehicle with a standard transmission, you'll also use the gears to help you control your speed. Good speed control means maintaining appropriate and steady speeds based on the driving conditions.

Appropriate speeds

The slowest speed is not always the safest speed. If you drive much slower than surrounding traffic, other drivers might get frustrated and try to pass you.

Aim for a speed that's appropriate for the driving conditions. The posted speed is the maximum for ideal conditions only. Choose a slower speed if the conditions are not ideal, for instance, if the roads are slippery or visibility is limited.

Unless a sign tells you otherwise, speed limits are 50 km/h.

If you are driving too slow you are creating a hazard, if this happens, pull over and let the traffic pass. Be aware of your surroundings.

Steady speeds

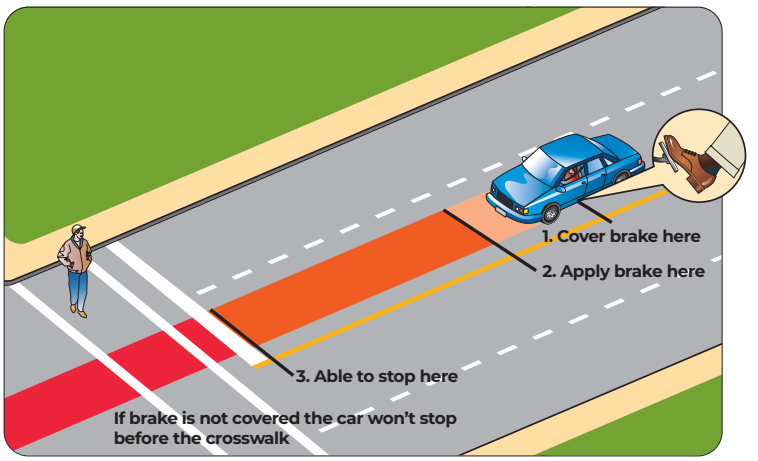
To keep a steady speed, use your brake and accelerator smoothly.

Braking hard can cause the following:

- Increase risk of collision or injury to others.
- Injury to you or your passengers.
- Increase wear or damage to your vehicles.

To keep your driving speed smooth and steady, you need to anticipate and be aware of your driving conditions and surroundings. When you see a stop sign, start to slow down. Scan for hazards ahead, and use your brakes to gradually slow your vehicle to a complete stop.

Prepare yourself when you see a hazard ahead. Take your foot off the accelerator and cover the brake. Your vehicle will slow slightly and you will be able to respond more quickly if you must stop.



Gear use

If you're driving a vehicle with a standard transmission, you need to be able to choose the appropriate gear and shift smoothly. You can use a lower gear to help control your speed when going downhill. Ensure your RPM's stay within a normal range. You need practice to coordinate the clutch, accelerator and gearshift.

Physics and driving

You need to pay attention to the laws of physics when you drive.

Traction – this is the grip your tires have on the road. Slippery or sandy road surfaces, worn tires, and under- or over-inflated tires that don't grab the road will reduce traction. Slow down if you are on a poor road surface.

Inertia – this is the tendency for moving objects, in this case, you and your vehicle, to keep moving forward in a straight line. When you brake, inertia tries to keep your vehicle moving. When you go around a curve, inertia tries to keep you going in a straight line. The faster you are going, the greater the force of inertia.

Gravity – this is the force that pulls everything towards earth. It's the reason your vehicle slows down going up a hill and speeds up coming down. It's important to remember this when you're going downhill because your vehicle will need a longer distance to stop.

Centre of gravity – this is the point around which all of an object's weight is balanced. The centre of gravity for any object can change. For example, a tightrope walker may carry a pole to lower the body's centre of gravity and make it easier to balance.

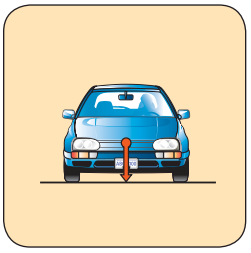
Most vehicles are built on the same principle: low enough to the ground so they balance well on hills, curves and uneven road surfaces. Some vehicles, for example, some sports utility vehicles, pickup trucks and camper vans, have a higher centre of gravity. Whenever the height of a vehicle or its load rises,the centre of gravity also rises. A vehicle with a higher centre of gravity is less stable on uneven road surfaces and is more likely to tip over on a curve taken at higher speeds.

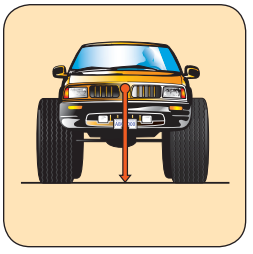
You need to remember this if you are driving one of these types of vehicles.

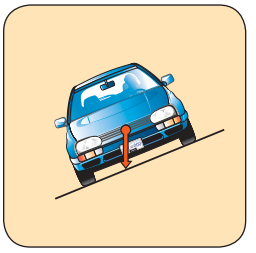
think about

What you would do to help prevent a roll-over when driving a vehicle with a higher centre of gravity (or a heavy car -top carrier).

The blue car has a low centre of gravity. On a curve, the weight shifts to one side but the car remains stable. The truck, with its large wheels, has a much higher centre of gravity. On a flat surface it is stable, but when the weight shifts on a curve, the truck becomes unstable and may roll.







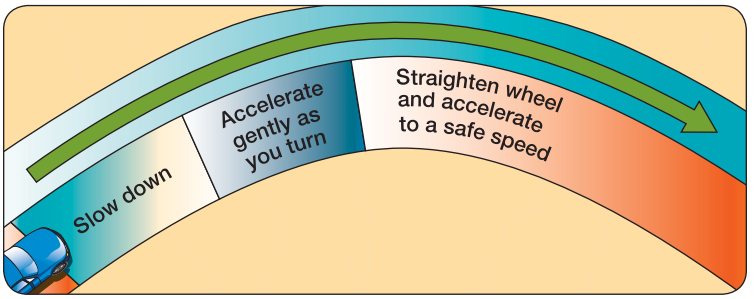


Handling curves

When you go around a curve, inertia tries to keep your vehicle going in a straight line, while traction tries to keep your tires sticking to the curved pavement. The faster you travel, the more pressure is exerted on the outside front tire. If you are going too fast, inertia will cause your vehicle to go off the road. If you brake, your vehicle may skid. The problem is increased if the road is slippery or uneven. Also, the vehicles' condition and driver experiencce could increase the problem. The best practice is to slow down before the curve and avoid braking in it.

If you do start to lose traction in a curve, don't brake. Ease off the accelerator and re-apply gently when you regain traction.

Before you enter a curve, slow down to a speed that will allow you to go through the curve without using your brakes. When you reach the middle of the curve, begin to straighten your wheels and accelerate to help you leave the curve.



Steering

warning!

It is dangerous to coast downhill in neutral or with the clutch in. You need to be in gear to safely control your vehicle.

You in the driver's seat

You are about to make a left turn at a major intersection. You're a bit nervous because you haven't been driving long. You see a safe gap in the oncoming traffic, start to move to meet the gap, look at where you want to go so your eyes guide you as you steer in a smooth arc, ending up in the correct lane.



Steering, like any skill, takes practice. Practice will help you coordinate your hands and your eyes so that you can drive in a straight line or a smooth arc. The two main principles of good steering are controlling the wheel and maintaining good road position.

warning!

Loading up your vehicle with extra weight can cause it to steer and stop very differently, especially on curves. Don't overload your vehicle or tow more than your vehicle manufacture recommends. Check your owner's manual for weight limit information.

driving tip

In a vehicle equipped with an air bag in the steering wheel, the 9 and 3 positionis best. If the airbag went off when your hands were in the 10 and 2 position, your hands could hit your face.



driving tip

When you stop behind another vehicle at an intersection, leave about one car length between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead. This way, you will have room to move if you need it. Allow more space when stopped directly behind a large vehicle so you can see around it.

Controlling the wheel

Keep both hands on the outside of the steering wheel. If you drive with your hands inside the wheel, your hands could be injured in a crash. You may sometimes have to steer with only one hand when you are changing gears or using a dashboard control, but try to use both hands when possible. This gives you better control and also shortens your response time when you see a hazard.

Where should you put your hands? Imagine that your steering wheel is a clock. Put your hands at an equal height at the 9 and 3 position.

Keeping good road position

Steer the vehicle in a smooth line so there is little side-to-side movement when you're driving. The best way to do this is to look well ahead in the direction you want to go. Your peripheral vision will help you centre your vehicle and keep you moving in a straight line. When you turn, scan the intersection and look well ahead in the direction you are turning. This will help you turn in a smooth arc.

Space margins

You in the driver's seat

You are driving behind someone who is travelling at 30 km/h in a 50 km/h zone. You wouldn't mind so much but you're already late for an appointment. There's no chance to pass on this residential street. You think it might be a good idea to pull up closer behind the driver to get him to hurry up.

Tailgating, which is following too closely behind the vehicle in front, is a major cause of crashes. If you tailgate, the vehicle in front can block your view of hazards ahead. Worse, if the vehicle stops suddenly, you have no time to slow down and stop safely. If you rear-end the other driver, you will be held responsible for the crash.

Stopping

Stopping your vehicle is more than just pressing on the brake pedal.

When you see a problem ahead while you're driving, it will take you about three-quarters of a second to see-think and another three-quarters of a second of do. Only then will your vehicle begin to slow down.

This is why it is so important to allow enough space in front.

see – a hazard

think – decide to stop

do – place your foot on the brake pedal until you stop.

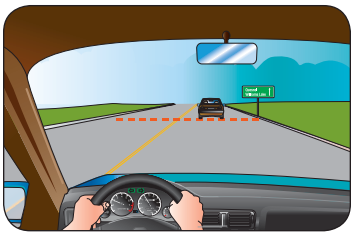
driving tip

It's also a good idea to keep at least a four-second following distance if a vehicle is following close behind you.

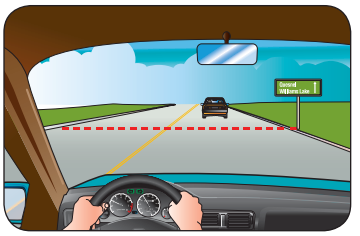
Space in front – the three-second rule

Always leave a safe following distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front. You will need at least 3 seconds of following distance. Increase to four seconds in bad weather conditions or on uneven or slippery roads.

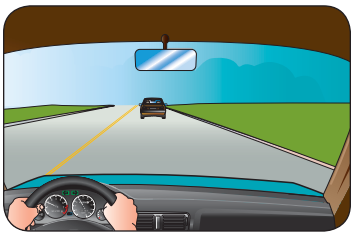
Allow at least four seconds following distance when you're behind a large vehicle that could block your vision, or a motorcycle that could stop very quickly. You control the space in front of you, you cannot control the space behind you. When you are following another vehicle on an unpaved road where dust or gravel may obscure vision and hide hazards increase your following distance.



On a highway, measure a three-second space by picking an object ahead that will not move.

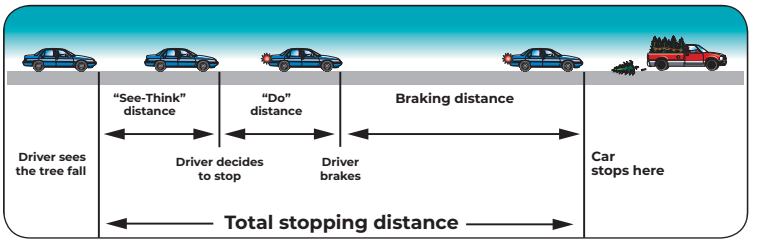


When the vehicle in front of you passes that object, begin your count: one thousand and one, one thousand and two, one thousand and three.



If you reach the object as you say "three" you are keeping a three-second following distance.

Total stopping distance is the distance your vehicle will travel from the moment you notice a hazard until the moment your vehicle stops. You need time to see, think and do before your brakes even begin to slow your vehicle. Braking distance depends on your speed, your vehicle, and road conditions. Always allow enough following distance.



Space behind

What do you do when someone is tailgating you? You can't control the space behind you in the same way as the space in front. What you can do is slow down slightly to increase your space in front. This way, if you have to stop, you can stop more gradually and there will be less chance of the person behind crashing into you. Other options are to move into another lane or to pull over to the side and let the tailgater pass.

warning!

If you are turning left off a highway onto a driveway or side road, watch your mirrors and make sure you have plenty of space behind you. The cars behind may not be prepared to slow down for you.

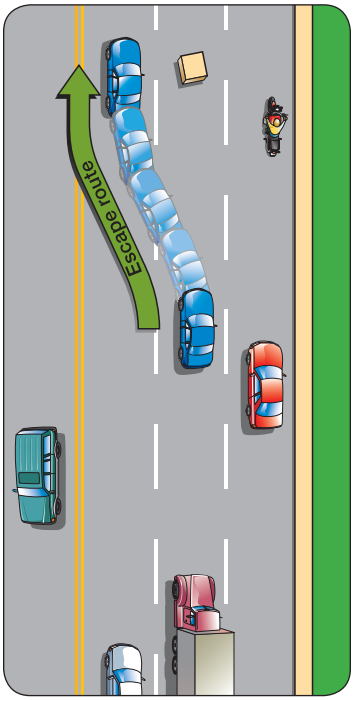
Space beside

Keep at least one metre of clear space on each side of your vehicle while you're driving. When you're passing pedestrians, cyclists or other vehicles, allow at least one metre and more if you are going at a faster speed. Increase your side space margins even more when visibility or road conditions are poor.

driving tip

By looking ahead, keeping good space margins and anticipating road hazards, you can avoid sudden stops and changes in speed. These safe driving habits also save fuel.

Lane position



When you're deciding where to position your vehicle in the lane, there are several things to consider.

- On a two-lane road, stay fairly close to the centre line so other vehicles do not move into your lane space.
- In the curb lane, stay well away from hazards on the side, such as car doors that might open
- In most lanes, drive near the centre of the lane.
- Avoid driving in other drivers' blind spots.

On a multi-lane road, the right lane is often the safest one to choose. It keeps you away from oncoming traffic and it's less likely that another driver will tailgate you.

Try to leave yourself an escape route when you are driving on a multi-lane highway. Then, if something happens in front, you can pull into another lane to avoid trouble.

driving tip

Did you know that, in ideal conditions, it takes most vehicles stopped at an intersection about:

- two seconds per lane to go straight across;
- five seconds to turn right and get up to 50 km/h; and
- seven seconds to turn left and get up to 50 km/h (allow extra time if you need to cross several lanes).

Remember to add an extra two seconds for safety.

You in the driver's seat

You're waiting at a stop sign. The traffic seems endless. Just when you think it's safe to cross the intersection, another car comes into view.

What would you do?

Choosing a safe gap

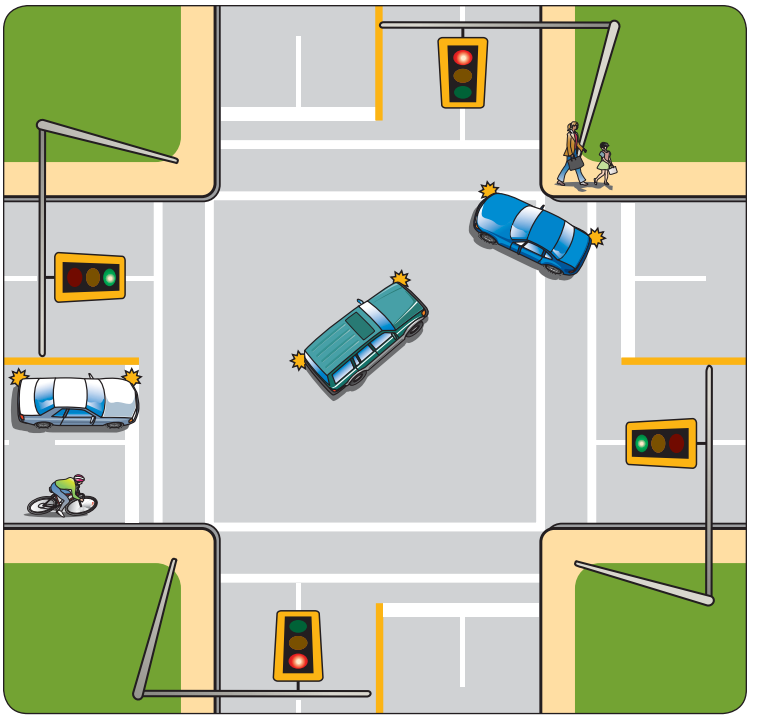
The space you need to get across an intersection safely or to merge into a line of traffic is called a gap. Deciding whether a gap is big enough to be safe isn't always easy.

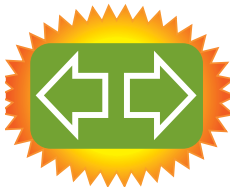
You need to consider several things:

- the speed of the traffic;
- the time it will take to do your manoeuvre; and
- the time it will take your vehicle to get up to the speed of the traffic flow.

Be careful not to underestimate the speed of approaching motorcycles or bicycles. They are often travelling much faster than they appear to be.

The driver of the blue car and the driver of the station wagon may have a problem if either of them moves out of correct lane position when they are turning. In this situation, time your turn so you won't have a space conflict with the other driver. If there's any doubt about who should go first, the driver making the left turn should yield.





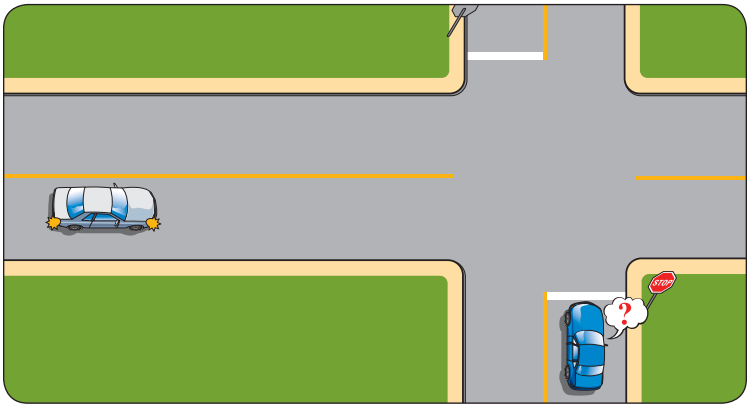
Communication

You in the driver's seat

Your car is at a stop sign and you're waiting to cross the intersection. The intersection is clear except for a car approaching from the left. Its right turn signal is on. If this car turns right before it reaches you, you can safely cross the intersection right now. But the driver isn't slowing down and they are not pulling over to the right.

What would you do?

Is the driver of the grey car really going to turn right?



In this scene, the other driver is confusing you by giving mixed messages. Their turn signal shows that they are planning to turn right, but the lane position and speed of the vehicle suggest they are planning on going straight. In this situation, wait and see what they do, then safely cross the intersection.

Sharing the road safely means understanding the tools of communication and using them effectively.

Your vehicle has different types of lights to help you communicate with other road users. The lights that you use most for communication are turn signals, brake lights, backup lights and hazard lights.

Turn signals

Your primary communication tools are your turn signals. Always use your turn signal to let people know you are planning to turn, change lanes, pull out or pull over.

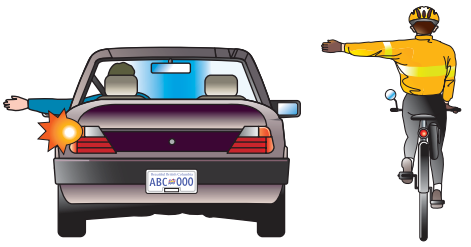
When you use your turn signal:

- **be timely** – signal well ahead to give other road users plenty of warning.
- **be clear** – turn your signal on when the next intersection or laneway/driveway is where you want to turn. Turning your signal on too soon will confuse other people as they will expect you to turn at the next available roadway.

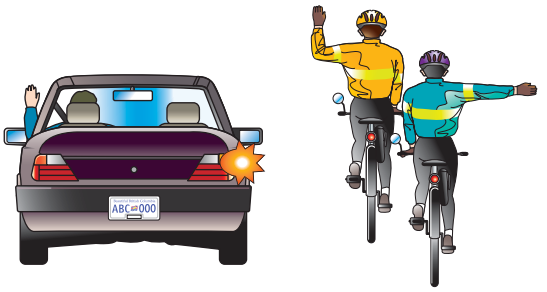
- **mean what you say** – your turn signal is designed to switch off after you have made a turn, but sometimes it doesn't. Make sure that your signal has cancelled after you turn so it doesn't give the wrong message.

There are times when an automatic turn signal is hard to see, for example, if you're pulling out from a line of parked vehicles. In these situations use a hand signal in addition to the turn signal

Signalling a left turn.



Signalling a right turn. Cyclists may use either of these hand signals.



Signalling a stop.



Brake lights – these are visible when the brake is applied. When you see these lights on the car ahead, you know the driver is slowing down and perhaps planning to stop. Let others know you intend to slow down or stop by tapping lightly on your brake.

Backup lights – these show that the vehicle is in reverse and the driver is backing up or intends to back up.

Hazard lights – these let people know you have stopped for an emergency.

driving tip

Watch for backup lights when you are driving in a parking lot. Not only do they warn you that you need to slow down, they also tell you where you might find a parking space.

Horn

The horn is a useful communication tool if it's used properly. For example, if you see someone start to pull out of a driveway without looking, a light tap on the horn will let the other driver know you're there. Only use the horn when it gives a useful signal to other drivers and helps prevent a crash.

Eye contact

You can often communicate with other road users just by using your eyes. When you stop for pedestrians, make eye contact so pedestrians know you have seen them and it is safe for them to cross. Do the same for other drivers, motorcycle riders and cyclists when you are stopped at an intersection.

Body language

Waving your hand to let another driver proceed, or a pedestrian cross in front of you, is generally not a good idea. The other driver or pedestrian may face hazards you can't see.

Vehicle language

You can tell a lot about what a driver is going to do by watching "vehicle language." If a vehicle moves over in the lane, the driver may be planning to change lanes or turn. If the vehicle slows down when approaching a corner, the driver may be planning to turn. When you see a parked vehicle with its wheels turned out, the driver may be planning to pull out into traffic.

warning!

When you carry a load that extends behind your vehicle, attach a red flag to the end of the load as a warning to other drivers.

think about

A parked car starts to pull out just in front of you. How can you use your "do" skills: speed control, steering, space margins and communication?

Using see-think-do

Research shows that new drivers often panic and even freeze in an emergency. You can avoid this by giving yourself plenty of time and space to react, and practise using the **see-think-do** strategy. You should have time to see problems coming up if you are:

- driving at a safe speed;
- looking well ahead; and
- keeping alert and focused.

Think of possible solutions and take actions that will help keep you safe.

Sharing the road 6

in this chapter

- **Sharing the road safely**
  - how to share the road
- **Pedestrians**
- **Cyclists**
- **Motorcycle riders**
- **Passenger vehicles**
- **Large vehicles**
- **School buses**
- **Public transit buses**
- **Emergency vehicles**
- **Emergency workers on roads**
- **Construction zones**
- **Trains**
- **Animals**

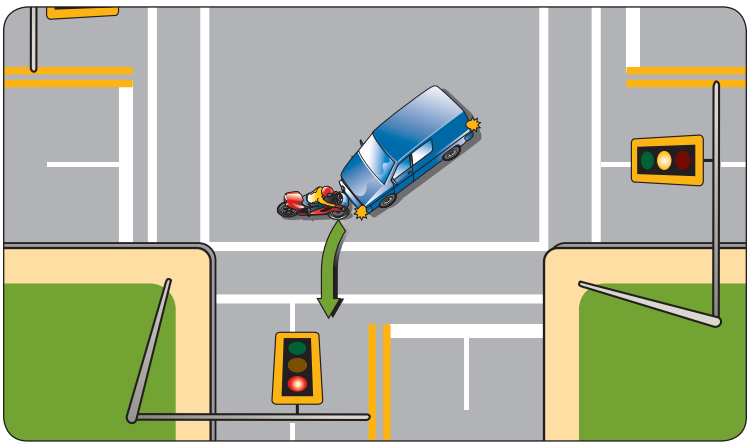
The last five chapters presented important driving information that can help you develop your smart driving skills. The next three chapters give suggestions on how you can apply this information to your driving. Knowing how to share the road is an important part of keeping safe when driving. In this chapter, you will learn who you share the road with and how to share the road with them safely.

Sharing the road safely

At the scene of a crash

Walter is travelling along Main Street in his van. He take control of the intersection and is waiting for a safe gap to turn left. Jodi is riding her motorcycle along Main Street in the opposite direction. The light turns yellow. Walter starts to turn left assuming that Jodi will stop for the yellow light. Jodi speeds up to beat the yellow light.

The result is a crash that seriously injures Jodi and sends Walter to the hospital with minor injuries.



In this crash scene, both Walter and Jodi tried to move into the same space at the same time. By law, Jodi should not have entered the intersection on a yellow light. Walter should not have assumed that the motorcycle would stop.

Be aware of other road users who may want to use the space into which you plan to move.

The way to avoid crashes is to make sure that the space you plan to move into will be empty. To share the road safely with others, use your **see-think-do** skills.

see-think-do

Use your observation skills. Scan the intersection from left to right, and left again, looking for hazards. Walter started across the intersection without making sure the road was clear.

think about

How you'd feel if you injured or killed someone while you were driving. What difference would this make to the rest of your life? Who else would be affected?

see-think-do

When another road user is approaching the space you were planning to use, you need to assess the risk, then choose the safest solution.

It's also important to know the right-of-way rules. When two or more road users want the same space, right-of-way rules tell you which road user should yield. However, other road users make mistakes and do unexpected things. It may not always be easy to decide who has the right-of-way. If in doubt, always be ready to give the right-of-way.

To learn more about right-of-way rules, turn to chapter 4, rules of the road.



see-think-do

Speed control

Drive at a safe speed. That way you will have time to stop if needed.



Steering

Keep both hands on the outside of the wheel to maintain good steering control.



Space margins

If you keep well away from other road users, there will be less chance of space conflicts. You will have room to stop or to steer around if others start moving into your space.



Communication

Let other road users know what you are doing so they can react in time. Watch for communication from other road users.

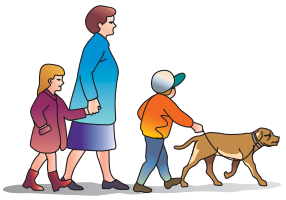
How to share the road

Next time you are stopped at a busy intersection, look around and count the different types of road users you can see.

You share the roads with a number of different road users, including:

- pedestrians;
- cyclists;
- motorcyclists; and
- drivers of:
  - passenger vehicles;
  - large vehicles (motorhomes and commercial vehicles);
  - buses (school and public transit);
  - emergency vehicles; and
  - trains.

To share the road safely, you need to use all of your **see-think-do** skills. You also need to understand how different road users use the road. The following sections highlight some of the main points to keep in mind for each type of road user.



warning!

Crosswalks with flashing green lights are controlled by pedestrians. When you see a pedestrian standing near this type of crosswalk, you know that they have probably pressed the button and the light is about to change. Slow down and be prepared to stop.

Pedestrians

You always need to watch out for pedestrians. Like all road users, they can be unpredictable. You never know when a child might dash into the street, or someone might step out from behind a parked car. Pedestrians are often hard to see, especially at night.

see

Scan at crosswalks and intersections

Many pedestrians are unaware of the distance it takes a vehicle to stop or they may suddenly step out onto the street without warning.

Any time you approach a crosswalk or intersection:

- Be aware of vision blocks. If you see a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk, assume there is a pedestrian trying to cross and drive with caution.
- Check to see if the crosswalk is clear before entering.
- Watch out for pedestrians on the cross street whenever you make a turn.



When you see a school zone sign with a 30 km/h posted speed, slow down to that speed. The speed limit is in effect between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on school days, or the hours shown on the sign on school days. The school zone ends when you see an end of school zone sign or speed limit sign.

driving tip

You must always be prepared to stop if you see a pedestrian who is about to step out in front of you. Don't encourage jaywalking (crossing between intersections) by stopping and inviting pedestrians to cross. The car behind you may not be expecting you to stop and may crash into you. Drivers in the other lanes may not see the pedestrians crossing in front of your vehicle and may hit them.

Watch for people in wheelchairs travelling along the side of the road, especially when you are planning to make a right turn.

Pay attention at school zones and playgrounds

Observe carefully when driving in school and playground zones. Smaller children are harder to see than adults and are less predictable.

As you approach a school zone at a time when children may be arriving, leaving or taking their lunch hour, look well ahead for school patrols or crossing supervisors. You must obey them at all times.

For details on speed limits for school and playground zones, see chapter 3, signs, signals and road markings.

Observe carefully in residential areas

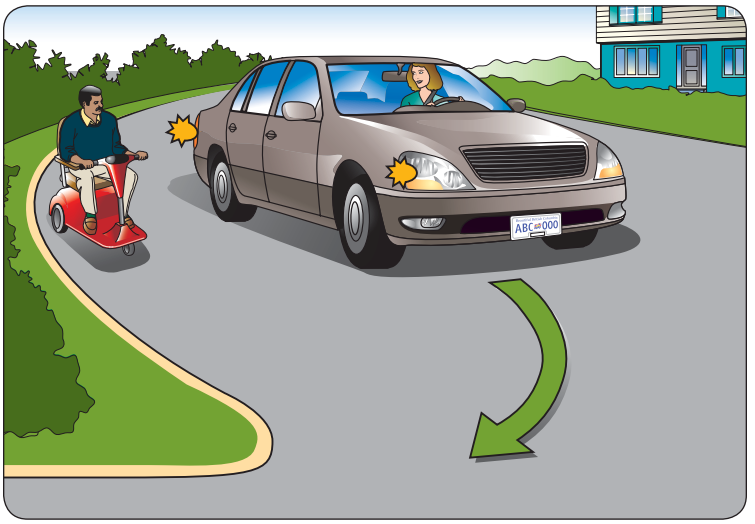
Children, animals and other pedestrains may move in unpredictable ways. Remember, a ball or a hockey net can mean children are playing nearby.

Be especially careful when you're backing up. Check around your car before you get into it, then do a 360-degree vision check before moving. It's important to continue checking because you could easily back into a child or a family pet if you aren't observing carefully.

Watch for pedestrians with disabilities

Take extra care if you see a person who's visually impaired. (They may be carrying a white cane or accompanied by a guide dog.) Often, they will raise their cane when they're uncertain about crossing the street safely. That is your signal to stop and give the person the right-of-way. Don't startle them or their guide dog by racing your engine or honking your horn.

People in motorized wheelchairs also share the roads. While wheelchairs should be on the sidewalk, not all roads have sidewalks. Also, sidewalks may be too rough or narrow to travel on, or difficult to access.



think

Know the rules – you must yield to pedestrians:

- in marked and unmarked crosswalks;
- at intersections (pedestrians near your half of the road still have the right-of-way even when there is no marked crosswalk);
- when turning; and
- when entering a road from a driveway or alley.

It is always the driver's responsibility to avoid hitting a pedestrian.

do





Speed control and space margins

Slow down when you see pedestrians who might enter your path, and give them plenty of room.

Strategies: to be a safe pedestrian

Just as drivers need to carefully observe for pedestrians, pedestrians also need to carefully observe for drivers. You can make yourself safer when you are walking by remembering a few simple rules:

- Don't be an impaired pedestrian, ensure you are not impaired by alcohol, drugs or distracted by electronic devices.
- Look both ways and do not leave the curb unless you are sure the approaching vehicles on the cross street have stopped or will stop.
- Watch for vehicles that are turning.
- Make eye contact with drivers so you know they have seen you and it is safe to cross.
- Always hold a child's hand while crossing the street until he or she is old enough to understand safety rules.
- Do not start to cross if the traffic signal is flashing a warning (for example, an orange hand).
- Use crosswalks; don't jaywalk.
- Always activate the pedestrian crossing signal if there is one.
- Be seen, avoid dark coloured clothing at night time.



Cyclists

Cyclists commute to work as well as ride for recreation, so you can expect to see them on the road at any time of the day or night. Be aware that bicycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities on the road as drivers. Cyclists, like pedestrians, are vulnerable.

fast fact

Children have poor peripheral vision, and often find it hard to judge the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles. They may not know the traffic rules or how much room it takes vehicles to stop.

driving tip

One of the most common causes of crashes involving cyclists is drivers who swing their doors open without checking.

warning!

A cyclist will expect you to follow the rules of the road.

Be very careful near children on bicycles. Children are used to adults watching out for them, so they tend to be unaware of danger.

see

Shoulder check – shoulder checking is important because bicycles and riders are narrow and can easily be hidden in your blind spot. Make sure you shoulder check and check your side mirrors before you:

- open your door to get out of your vehicle;
- pull away from the curb; and
- move to the right.

Pay attention at night – observe carefully, and watch for bicycles coming in from side streets. Cyclists may be hard to see.

Be careful when passing – before you pass another vehicle, make sure you check for oncoming cyclists and cyclists in front of the vehicle you are passing.

Scan at intersections – be very careful to:

- Shoulder check for bicycles before turning right.
- Watch out for a cyclist ahead waiting to turn left if you're driving straight through.
- check carefully for oncoming cyclists before making a left turn.
- Check carefully for cyclists crossing the road when coming to a place where a bicycle trail meets a road.
- Be aware that a cyclist riding along the through road could be approaching faster than you think.

think

Know the rules – cyclists follow the same rules and regulations as drivers.

- Yield to cyclists as you would to any other vehicle. If you have the right-of-way at an intersection, proceed if it is safe.
- Be aware that cyclists don't always stay on the right. To make a left turn, for instance, they need to move over to the left lane. If the lane is narrow, or if there is glass or a pothole on the right, a cyclist has the right to move out toward the middle for safety.
- Pay attention to bicycle lanes. For more information about these lanes, see chapter 4, rules of the road.

driving tip

Even if you pull just slightly into another lane to pass, you are changing lanes. Remember to mirror check, signal and shoulder check.

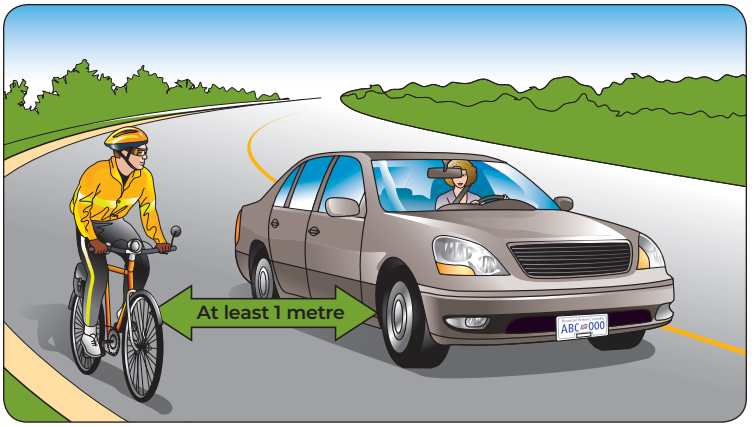
do

Space margins

Allow following distance – allow plenty of following distance. You need to be able to avoid hitting a cyclist who falls. Cyclists who wobble are probably inexperienced and are more likely to fall than experienced cyclists. Give them even more space than usual.

Allow side margins – a significant number of crashes involving cyclists result from side-swiping. Make sure there is enough space if you want to pass a cyclist. On a narrow road, wait for a clear, straight stretch that will allow you to pull out and give the cyclist room. Remember, you are allowed to cross a single solid yellow line when passing a cyclist, provided you can do it safely. On a multi-lane road, change lanes rather than risk crowding the cyclist.

Always check your side margin when passing a cyclist.





Communication

Recognize hand signals – understand the hand signals that cyclists use. A cyclist may signal a right turn by extending the right arm straight out in the direction of the turn. For more information about hand signals, see the Turn signals section in chapter 5, see-think-do.

Make eye contact – a cyclist often uses eye contact to communicate. Make eye contact if you can. They're probably trying to anticipate your next move.

Avoid honking your horn – don't honk your horn at a cyclist unless you need to give a warning. A loud honk could startle a cyclist and even cause a fall.

Strategies: being a safe cyclist

If you are a cyclist, you're responsible for sharing the road in a way that keeps you and others safe.

Be predictable. Cyclists are more predictable if they follow the rules of the road.

Be visible. Because bicycles are narrow, you need to work at making yourself visible. Have your lights and reflectors on and clean at all times. Wear bright or reflective clothing, especially in the dark or in poor weather. Position yourself so drivers can see you. Avoid riding in blind spots.

Ride defensively. Think and look well ahead. Be assertive, but remember that a conflict between a cyclist and a motor vehicle usually results in injury to the cyclist.

Ride legally. In Whitehorse, you must wear an approved bicycle helmet. In the Yukon, if you ride at night, your bicycle must be equipped with a front white headlight, but not more than two front headlights. You must also a rear red light, and have a red rear reflector.



Motorcycle riders

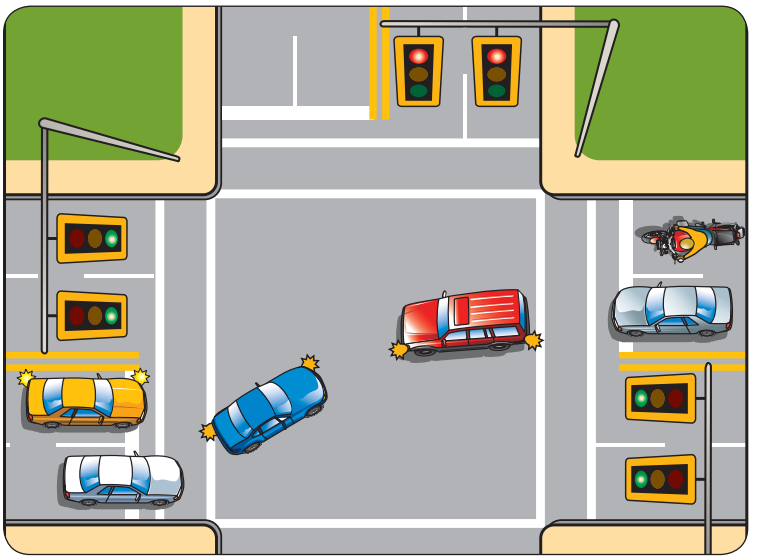
Like cyclists, motorcycle riders are vulnerable road users. They do not have the protection of an external frame, airbags or bumpers, and are sometimes difficult to see.

More than half of all motorcycle crashes result in injury or death.

see

Watch for clues – sometimes a motorcycle's turn signals are hard to see. Watch the rider for clues. If the rider shoulder checks or the motorcycle leans, the rider is probably planning to change lanes or turn.

Look carefully for bicycles and motorcycles when you drive through an intersection. Without good driving and observation skills, the driver of the blue car might initiate the turn and miss seeing the motorcycle.



Scan at intersections – look carefully for motorcycles when you come to an intersection.

- When you're turning left, look out for oncoming motorcycles. Motorcycles can be hard to see, especially at night, at dusk or in heavy traffic. It is also difficult to judge how fast they are approaching.
- When you're driving through an intersection, watch for an oncoming motorcycle that may be turning left.



do

Space margins

Allow side margins – never try to share a lane with a motorcycle. A motorcycle needs the whole lane to travel safely.

Allow following distance – allow at least three seconds of following distance when you're behind a motorcycle because:

- Motorcycles can stop very quickly.
- Motorcyclists can skid and fall because of poor road conditions.
- You need to leave plenty of room to stop safely.

Allow space when passing – allow plenty of space when you pass a motorcycle. Your vehicle may throw dirt or water in the rider's face.



Communication

Make eye contact – establish eye contact whenever possible.

Read vehicle language – don't assume that a rider in the left part of the lane is planning to turn left. Motorcyclists often ride in the left part of the lane to make themselves more visible.



Passenger Vehicles

When you drive, you will interact with other drivers. Drivers of vehicles can be just as unpredictable as other road users. They may not always look ahead. Their vehicles may not be well maintained; for example, their brakes and signal lights may not be working properly. Some drivers may be tired, impatient or impaired.

Use all of your **see-think-do** skills to observe and respond safely to other vehicles.



Large vehicles

Large vehicles operate quite differently than cars. Give them lots of room.

do

Space margins



Allow following distance – a large vehicle can prevent you from seeing hazards ahead. You'll have a wider range of vision if you increase your following distance.

If you're stopped facing uphill behind a large vehicle, remember that it may roll backwards when the driver releases the brake. Leave extra space in front of your vehicle.



In rainy weather, large vehicles can spray dirt or water onto your windshield, reducing your vision. Their tires may also spray up rocks that could hit your vehicle. Staying well back will help prevent this.

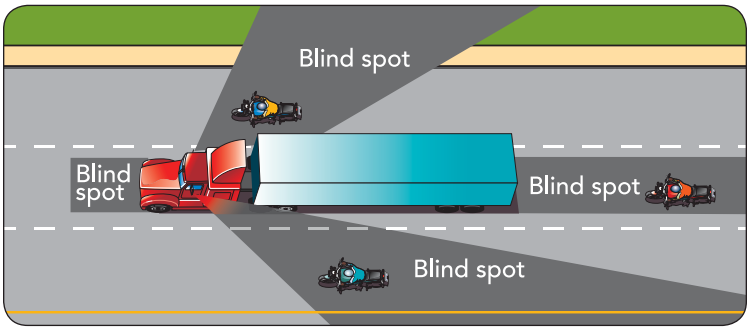
You'll see this sign on the back of some vehicles. It is used to indicate vehicles that will be moving slowly. Keep your distance and pass only when you're certain it is safe.



When you see this sign or a sign that says wide load, long load, or oversize load on a truck or pilot car, it indicates that an oversize load is being transported.

Keep clear of blind spots – there are large blind spots both behind and beside large vehicles. Make sure you keep out of the blind spots, otherwise the driver will not see you. You should be able to see both mirrors of the truck or bus in front of you. Never try to sneak behind a truck if it is backing into a loading bay or out of a driveway as you will enter one of the truck driver's blind spots and risk being hit.

When travelling near a large vehicle, think about whether the driver can see you – avoid travelling in blind spots.



Allow space when passing – you need a lot of space when passing. Remember that trucks are long and some pull two trailers. Don't pass unless you're sure you have enough space.

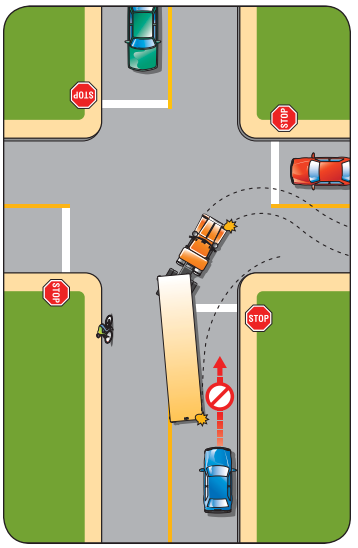
If you pass a large vehicle, or make a lane change in front of one, remember to leave extra room before you pull in. Large vehicles take longer to slow down. Make sure you can see the truck's headlights in your rear-view mirror before you re-enter the lane, and maintain your speed once you get there.

If you see a truck starting to slow down well before a red light, remember that the driver requires all of that space to stop in time. Never move into that space; you could be rear-ended by a large vehicle.

driving tip

Use extreme caution when passing large vehicles, especially if visibility is not ideal.

Avoid being on the right of a large vehicle if there's a chance it might turn right.



Make room for turns – large vehicles need a lot of room to turn. When they turn right, keep your distance or you may be squeezed between the truck and the curb.

You may also have a space problem if you are on a road that a large vehicle is turning onto. The driver may need to cross the centre line or cut a corner in order to complete a turn. Again, keep your distance.

Avoid turbulence – large vehicles create turbulence that can push you away from the vehicle or pull you towards it. Turbulence can cause problems when you are passing a big truck, or when you meet one coming toward you. Allow lots of space on the side and keep a firm grip on the steering wheel.

Communication



Read vehicle language – many large vehicles are equipped with engine retarders that slow the vehicle down without the use of brakes. Truck drivers also use their gears to slow down. This means the truck or bus ahead of you could slow down without the brake lights coming on. Look ahead and listen for a change in the truck's engine noise.

Watch for signs that a large vehicle is about to back up – a horn or beeper, four-way flashers or backup lights.

Signal well ahead – if you're ahead of a large vehicle, signal well before you slow down, turn or stop. Large vehicles need lots of time to slow down.



School buses

see

Watch for clues – the school bus driver will turn on flashing amber lights when preparing to stop. A school bus that has stopped to let children on or off has flashing red lights at the top and a swing-out stop sign.



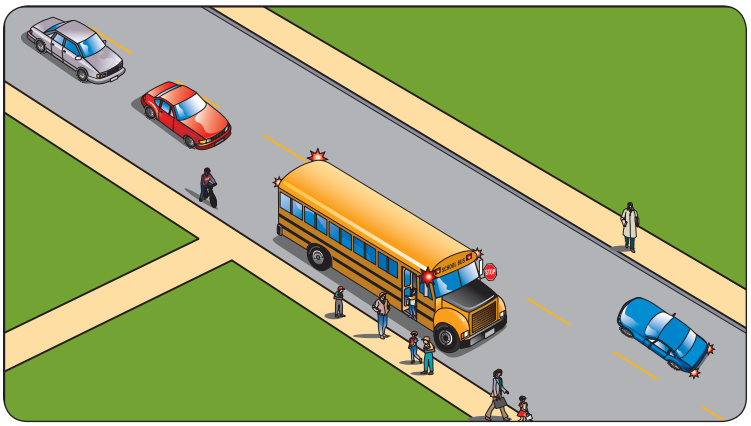


On a street or undivided highway, you must stop in either direction whenever you see flashing red lights on a school bus.

think

Know the rules – when you see a school bus with alternating flashing amber lights be prepared to stop. You must stop when you see a school bus with flashing red lights, whether you driving towards it in the oncoming lane or following behind it.

After stopping for a school bus, don't start moving again until the bus moves on or the driver signals that it's safe by turning off the lights and pulling in the stop sign.





Public transit buses

see

Watch for buses that have stopped – they may block your view of pedestrians about to cross the street or they may be about to pull into traffic.

think



Know the rules – when it is safe to do so, allow a public transit bus that is signalling and displaying a yield-to-bus sign to move out from the curb lane or a bus stop.

do



Space margins and speed control

Change lanes to let a bus pull out if there is space in the next lane, or slow down if you can't change lanes or pass safely.

Emergency vehicles

Emergency vehicles include police cars, ambulances and fire trucks.



see



Watch for flashing lights and listen for sirens – look to see where the emergency vehicle is coming from and if it is coming in your direction. Once the vehicle has passed, watch and listen because there may be others.



think

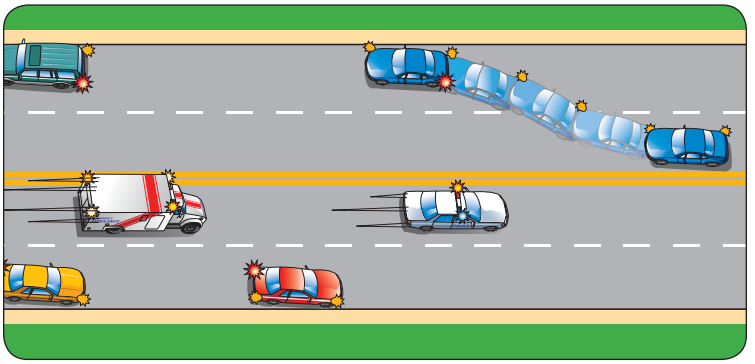
Know the rules – emergency vehicles displaying flashing lights and sirens always have the right-of-way. All traffic moving in both directions must stop. (Exception: If you are on a divided highway and the emergency vehicle is approaching on the other side of the median, you may not need to stop. Make sure that it would be impossible for the emergency vehicle to move onto your side of the highway. Think well ahead and have a plan in mind to create a path for the emergency vehicle.)

driving tip

If you're stopped at an intersection and you're blocking the path of the emergency vehicle, you may have to turn the corner to get out of the way.

warning!

All vehicles on both sides of the road must pull over to leave a clear path whenever an emergency vehicle uses its siren and flashing lights.









do

Clear a path – don't block the path of emergency vehicles. Pull over to the right and stop (or to the left if you're driving in the left lane of a divided highway or on a one-way street). Do not stop in an intersection.

Space margins and speed control

Allow following distance – when you're following a fire truck, you should stay back at least 150 metres.

Communication

Signal – use your turn signal to let the emergency vehicle driver know you have seen them and are pulling over.

Emergency workers on roads

Slow down and leave plenty of room when passing stopped emergency vehicles displaying red and/or blue or amber flashing lights.

These include police cars, fire trucks, ambulances, tow trucks, and vehicles used by vehicle inspectors, conservation officers, park rangers and special constables.

see

Watch for – flashing red, blue or amber lights or other signs that emergency workers are on the side of the road.

think

Know the rules – all traffic must slow down when approaching stopped emergency vehicles displaying flashing lights. If you're in the closest lane next to a stopped emergency vehicle change lanes if traffic permits. (Exception: this does not apply if you are on a divided highway and approaching the emergency workers from the opposite direction.)



Do

Space margins and speed control

Slow down and leave space when passing emergency workers on roads. Change lanes if it is safe to do so.



Construction zones

Road crews work throughout the year to maintain and improve our roads.

Despite construction zone signs and traffic control persons, crashes still occur in construction zones, mainly because some drivers don't pay attention.



warning!

Road surfaces and posted speed limits will vary in construction zones.

see

Scan ahead – look for construction zones ahead and be prepared to obey traffic control devices within the zone.

Pay attention at night – road construction does not just occur in the daytime. With the high daytime traffic volumes, more and more road construction takes place at night. You need to pay extra attention and drive extra slowly through construction zones at night.

Look around – just because you don't immediately see traffic control persons or construction workers in a construction zone doesn't mean they are not there. Be alert for traffic control persons, construction workers and equipment.

driving tip

Check radio, television and websites for the latest traffic reports and updates to find out what is happening on the roads within your area, and along your intended route. Consider taking an alternate route. For Yukon's road report, phone 511 or visit 511yukon.ca.

think

Know the rules – you must obey the directions of traffic control persons and road construction signs from the start to the end of the construction zone.

Think ahead – construction zones often require lane closures, so you may need to change lanes. Merge to avoid a lane closure as soon as you can. This will help maintain traffic flow.

Plan ahead – expect delays, and plan for them by leaving early to reach your destination on time. Construction crews are not there to personally inconvenience you – they are improving the roads for everyone.



driving tip

Unecessary idling wastes gas and causes emissions that degrade air quality and contribute to climate change. If you are directed to stop in a construction zone, turn off your engine. Idling for more than 10 seconds costs more than turning the engine off.

do

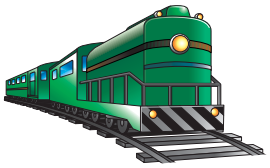
Space margins and speed control

Slow down – the road surface may be uneven or unpaved, so you need to slow down. You must obey construction zone speed limits.

Stop when directed – stop when directed to do so by traffic control persons or other traffic control devices. In some construction zones, you may need to wait for a pilot car to escort you through the construction zone.

Allow following distance – leave plenty of following distance between your vehicle and the vehicle immediately ahead. Avoid changing lanes in a construction zone.

Allow side margins – leave as much space as you can between the construction crews and their equipment in the construction zones.



Trains

Every year in North America people die or are seriously injured in collisions between vehicles and trains, so you need to be careful when approaching a railway crossing. Most trains require approximately two kilometres to stop – never try to beat one.



see

Watch for clues – lots of clues warn you of a railway crossing ahead.

Advance warning signs – these signs alert you to an upcoming crossing, and tell you to look, listen and slow down because you may have to stop. They're usually posted in locations where you cannot see an upcoming railway crossing (for example, on hilly or curvy roads). A speed warning sign below the advance warning sign may advise that the safe road speed is less than the posted speed.

Pavement markings – at the approach to some railway crossings, you may see a painted "X" on the pavement. Some crossings also have flashing lights, a bell and gates. If the light and bell are activated or the gate is down, it means a train is approaching.

Reflective strips – at night, reflective strips along the sides of train cars may be your first warning that a train is crossing the road in front of you.

You may not be able to see a train coming if visibility is poor, but you may hear its whistle. Remember that trains are not required to sound a whistle at every crossing.

crash fact

Be especially careful at night. Half of all nighttime collisions between trains and cars involve vehicles hitting the side of a train because the driver didn't see it.

warning!

Expect a train on a track at any time. Trains don't always follow regular schedules.

Observe carefully – be aware that your eyes may mislead you. Trains often seem to be moving much slower than they really are. Passenger trains travel at up to 160 km/h in Canada.

Check for other road users – watch out for other road users at railway crossings. Motorcycle riders and cyclists may have to swerve to cross the tracks safely. They could slip and fall on wet tracks, so be sure to cover your brake and leave extra room.

Watch for a second train – be aware that there is often more than one track, so watch out for a second train. One of the main causes of car and train crashes is that the driver does not wait for the second train that is hidden behind the first one.

driving tip

When there is a red traffic light at an intersection on the other side of a railway crossing, do not stop on the tracks. Stop before the railway crossing unless there is room on the other side.

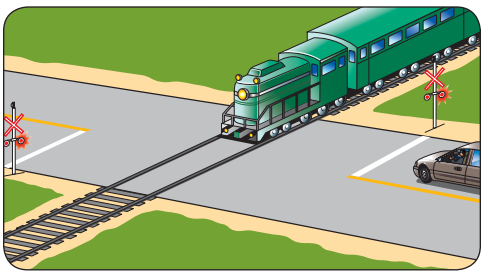
think

Know the rules – trains always have right of way. They don't slow down for crossings. If there is a gate down, you must stop and wait for it to rise before you cross the tracks. If flashing red lights are displayed at the crossing, you must stop. Move across the tracks only when it's safe. If a flag person directs you to stop, you must obey their directions. If you hear or see a train approaching the crossing, stop and don't proceed until it is safe.

Think ahead – if your vehicle is stuck on the track, you will have to think and act quickly. Get all passengers out of the vehicle. Quickly move at least 30 metres away from the track to avoid flying debris. Then phone for help.

Stop no closer than five metres and no further than 15 metres from the nearest rail.

- Transport Canada – look for the phone number and location on the back of the railway crossing sign
- 911 or the local police





do

Speed control

Travel at a safe speed – you should always be able to stop within the distance lit by your headlights if you're driving at night.

Gear down – if you're driving a vehicle with a standard transmission, change to a lower gear before you begin to cross. Never change gears on the crossing because you could stall the vehicle.



Space margins

Allow following distance – never get trapped on a crossing. When traffic is heavy, wait until you can clear the crossing before moving ahead.



Animals

Hitting a large animal, such as a moose, elk, bison, or horse, can cause crashes that are fatal to both the animal and the people in the vehicle. Emergency braking and swerving to avoid hitting even small animals can also cause crashes.

see

Scan ahead – and always be on the look-out for animals on the road or in the ditches.



think

Know the rules – very few roads are fenced on either side to prevent wild animals, and even domestic animals, from crossing the road in front of you. In the Yukon, bison and elk herds are allowed to range freely. Horses may be ridden on most public roads and horse carriage operators have the same rights (and responsibilities) as motor vehicle operators.

Know the hazards – animals are unpredictable. Startled by sudden movement or noise, they may run across the road right in front of you. Horse riders or herders of domestic animals may not be able to control their animals.



Animals are also very hard to see at night. Even when no large animals are visible on the road ahead of you, the driver in front of you may brake suddenly, or steer erratically, to avoid running over a small animal, or even hitting a bird.

driving tip

What strategies will you use to avoid crashes caused by trying to avoid hitting animals on the road?

do

Space margins

Slow down – especially at night. Never out-drive your headlights. Allow plenty of following distance in case the driver ahead of you brakes or swerves for an animal you canot see.

Leave extra space – when passing animals or when passing slow or stopped vehicles that may obstruct your view of animal hazard on the road.

Pass carefully – pass carefully and slowly.

Prepare to stop – if an animal is in position to cross the road or a rider is having trouble controlling a horse, pull over to the shoulder of the road and stop. It's better to wait until the animal moves, or the horse is back under the rider's control, than to risk passing them.

Impairment and high risk behaviour 7

in this chapter

- **Fitness to drive**
  - seeing and hearing
  - assessing your health
- **Dangerous emotions**
- **Impairment**
  - alcohol impaired driving
  - drug impaired driving
  - fatigued driving
  - distracted driving
- **Other high risk behaviours**
- **Peer pressure**
- **Unsafe passengers**
- **Unsafe drivers**
- **Aggressive driving**
  - preventing aggression
- **Yukon Organ Donation Program**

In the previous chapter, you learned how to share the road safely with other road users. This chapter gives strategies you can use to handle situations that can have a negative influence on you and your driving.

Fitness to drive

You in the driver's seat

You wake up with a cold and feel awful, but you have to go to work. You take some cold medication before getting into your car. As you're driving, you notice that you feel light-headed and tired. Turning right at the first intersection, you narrowly miss a cyclist.

What should you do?

To be in control while driving, you need to be able to rely on the information your eyes and ears pick up. You need to be healthy, rested and focused to be a safe driver.

Seeing and hearing

Experts estimate that about 80 per cent of all driving information comes to drivers through their eyes. You need to take a vision screening test before you can be licensed to drive.

Your sense of hearing also helps you gather information about the driving scene. Listen for important warning signals such as horns, sirens, train whistles and unusual noises in your engine.

warning!

Vehicle noise will affect your ability to hear noises outside the vehicle and can affect your concentration.

Strategies: seeing and hearing effectively

To see and hear effectively while driving:

- Use glasses or contact lenses if you need them.
- Scan systematically as you drive.
- Do not play your sound system too loudly.
- Do not use headphones while driving.

Assessing your health

Even a mild illness like a cold or the flu can affect your alertness. Over-the-counter medication can make you drowsy and slow your reaction time. Over-the-counter medication could also make you an impaired driver. Read labels carefully before taking medication if you plan to drive.

If you have a health condition that you think might impair your ability to drive, be sure to check with your doctor or pharmacist before getting behind the wheel.



Strategies: what to do if you're not feeling well

- Walk, take the bus, taxi or get a friend to drive you.
- Read the label carefully if you are taking any medications. Don't drive if the label says the drug may cause drowsiness or dizziness.

Dangerous emotions

We all have changing emotional states. Emotions are powerful forces that can interrupt the concentration you need for driving. When you are feeling very angry or excited, anxious, sad or upset, you miss important information. Your thinking becomes unclear. Your safety and the safety of others is in danger.

Sometimes you may become angry or impatient because of the driving environment. Crowded traffic conditions and high- speed freeway driving often cause stress. Being slowed down by other traffic when you're in a hurry produces tension. Drivers who are angry or stressed are less tolerant of the mistakes that other road users make.

Whatever the cause of the emotion, it is important to look at your emotional fitness to drive. Pull over park, and wait until you are calm and able to resume driving safely. Sometimes it's best to stay out of the driver's seat.

You in the driver's seat

You're on your way to work or school. The traffic is heavy, so your progress is slow. As you approach a green light, the car in front slows down. The driver seems to be deciding whether to make a turn. You mumble under your breath in frustration. Finally, the car moves, but the light turns yellow, so you now have to stop and wait. You feel a surge of anger because you just know you are going to be late.

Strategies: controlling emotions

Here are some things you can do to help you stay calm and in control while driving:

- Keep learning. Review your stressful driving situations and figure out what you can do next time to be calmer and safer.
- Plan ahead. Choose a route that avoids heavy traffic so you can concentrate better.
- Allow yourself plenty of time. Being in a hurry can cause you to become angry or frustrated. Realize that if you leave late, you'll arrive late.
- For your drive, make your own safety and the safety of others a priority.
- Be patient and extra courteous. Remember that all drivers make mistakes. Take a couple of moments to calm yourself down and leave your problems behind before you start to drive. If you can't focus, do not get behind the wheel.
- Open the windows to let in some fresh air and take a few deep breaths.
- Keep a firm controlling grip on the steering wheel. If you are clutching the steering wheel too tightly, your arm and neck muscles will tense and it will increase the chance of you getting a headache.

crash fact

Every year people are killed on our roadways due to impairment. On average, 50 per cent of the drivers killed in Yukon are impaired.

If you plan to drink, decide ahead of time how you will get home safely.

Impairment

Alcohol impaired driving

You in the driver's seat

You are going home from a party with your friend. It's pretty late and you're anxious to get to bed. It's been a long day. Your friend runs a yellow light, just catching the beginning of a red. You notice he is staring straight ahead, his eyes not moving. The car starts to weave and then lurches to one side as he brakes hard. "Hey, what are you doing?" you ask. "It's okay, I thought I was at the intersection... a little early, huh?" he laughs.

What should you do?



The table below shows some ways that alcohol can interfere with seeing, thinking and doing. It's risky behaviour to mix drinking with driving.

Ability	Driver's symptoms	Effects on the driver
See	• tendency to stare	• cannot take in information quickly enough
	• eyes lose reflex abilities	• can be blinded by glare
	• reduced coordination of images	• sees double
	• reduced depth perception	• can't judge distance or speed of other vehicles
	• reduced peripheral vision	• may not see hazards approaching from the side
Think	• reasoning becomes unclear • reduced concentration • emotional state becomes unstable	• thinks mental ability is sharp but cannot make sound driving decisions
Do	• reduced muscle control	• cannot coordinate steering and braking
	• increased impulsiveness	• takes greater risks by speeding or taking chances
	• reduced coordination	• oversteers; brakes late or not at all
	• slowed reaction time	• cannot make turns accurately • cannot react to emergencies quickly

What alcohol does to drivers

Alcohol myth		Alcohol fact
Alcohol won't affect me as much if I drink coffee, have something to eat, or take a cold shower.	 	Only time can sober you up or lower your Blood Alcohol Content (BAC). Contrary to popular belief, food, coffee, cold showers or exercise will not speed up the elimination of alcohol from your system. Transport Canada states that if you have a BAC of .08 it takes about six hours for your body to completely process that alcohol and return to a BAC of zero.
Beer doesn't affect driving as much as other alcoholic drinks do.		A glass of beer contains the same amount of alcohol as a glass of wine or an average cocktail. In some cases, even small amounts of alcohol can cause a driver to be impaired.

Chapter 10, Yukon's driver's licence, talks about some of the fines and charges for impaired driving.

think about

Is it worth it to drink and drive?

- You or your passengers could be injured or killed in a crash.
- You may spend time in jail.
- You could lose your licence.
- You may have to pay stiff fines.
- Your insurance may not pay for any injuries or damage you cause.
- You could spend the rest of your life dealing with the grief of injuring or killing an innocent person.

driving tip

Always read the label of any medication you are taking to see if it can affect driving. If you are taking more than one medication, ask your pharmacist or doctor about their combined effects on driving.

crash fact

A driver who combines alcohol and drugs is nine times more likely to have a crash than a sober driver.

Australian study, O Drummer, 1994

Drug impaired driving

Drugs and driving

Drugs and medications can impair driving. If you are taking medications or drugs, you need to know how they can affect your ability to drive safely. Drugs affect people differently. If there is any doubt about safety, leave the driving to someone else.

Cannabis

Research shows that consuming cannabis impacts your ability to drive safely. Researchers estimate that driving within three hours of consuming cannabis doubles your risk of having a crash.

What happens when you consume cannabis?

Cannabis impairs both the cognitive and motor abilities you use to safely operate a motor vehicle.

Cannabis can also slow your reaction time, slow your ability to make decisions, and make it harder for you to split your attention. These are crucial skills on the road. You never know when you may need to react and make a split-second decision on the road that saves a life.

Medications

Over-the-counter medicines for allergies, coughs, colds and nausea can cause drowsiness and inattention. Prescriptions, including sedatives, tranquilizers, painkillers and some antidepressants, can affect alertness, concentration and reaction time.

These effects can continue for many hours after the medicine is taken.

If your doctor or pharmacist cautions you that a medication is likely to interfere with driving safety, pay attention. If you are feeling impaired after taking a medication, don't drive – let someone else do the driving until the effect has worn off.

Other drugs

Recreational or street drugs, such as speed, heroin and cocaine, have a wide variety of effects. Some effects are listed under Medications in the section above, and others include:

- hallucinations;
- altered perception;
- feelings of invincibility; and
- lack of judgment.

They may cause a driver to:

- have difficulty following the movement of vehicles or pedestrians accurately;
- misunderstand visual cues from the driving environment; and
- delay responses, especially in emergency situations.



Drugs and alcohol

Many drugs will greatly increase impairment when combined with even small amounts of alcohol.

Strategies: protecting yourself from impaired drivers

To get home safely:

- Learn the effects of drugs and alcohol. Accurate information allows you to make informed decisions.
- Refuse to ride with drivers who may be impaired. Ask to be let out of the car if necessary.
- Take a stand. Don't let someone who may be impaired drive.
- Choose a designated driver before going out.
- Keep money aside for a bus or taxi.
- Call a friend.

In general, be conscious that in certain areas (such as near bars) and at certain times of the day (especially at night), the driver of a car sharing the road with you could be drunk.

driving tip

You can become unaware of your surroundings when you drive for a long time on a highway or freeway that doesn't change much. This is called highway hypnosis. Some areas have installed rumble strips or rough patches to warn drivers if they start to drift into another lane. You can help avoid highway hypnosis by turning off the cruise control, scanning systematically and using strategies to stay awake.

Fatigued Driving

Have you ever had a long day, trouble sleeping, a stressful week, more than one night with less than your regular amount of sleep? Fatigue is cumulative.

Strategies: staying awake

To keep alert behind the wheel, especially for long journeys:

- Start out well rested.
- Take breaks. Walk around and get some exercise.
- Stop and eat, but avoid heavy meals because they may make you feel sleepy.
- Keep the heat level moderate.
- Keep a window open for fresh air.
- Sing or talk to keep yourself paying attention.
- Pull over to a rest stop and take a nap (be sure to lock your doors).
- Don't drive too far at one time. If you are making a long trip, be especially careful on the second day. This is when tiredness is most likely to affect you.

fast fact

Examples of hand-held electronic devices include laptop computers, iPods, iPads, electronic video devices, hand-held music devices with or without headphones, hand-held GPS devices and electronic gaming devices.

Distracted Driving

When you are driving, your mind and senses should be focused only on driving. Distractions can affect your hazard perception and your reaction time.

Strategies: keeping focused

To help you concentrate on driving:

- Keep your eyes moving. Do not get distracted by one thing in the driving scene.
- Keep predicting what might happen, and plan your moves.
- Pull over and stop your car if you need to use your cellphone or other electronic device.
- Pull over and look after whatever is distracting you – check the map and figure out the best route, look for the music you want to play, send a text message, etc.
- Let your passengers know that you need to give most of your attention to driving, so you will have to keep conversation to a minimum.
- Don't hang distracting items on the rear-view mirror or keep them on the dash.

warning!

GDL drivers caught using electronic devices will be required to restart the GDL program. Some cellphones will auto text a reply for you when you are driving.

Cellphones and other hand-held devices

Transport Canada research shows that using electronic devices while driving is distracting and increases driving risks. For this reason, most Canadian jurisdictions, including the Yukon, have banned the use of electronic hand-held devices while driving.

The Yukon does permit fully licensed drivers to use hands-free electronic devices while driving. Examples of allowable electronic devices while driving are hands-free GPS and communication devices.

Yukon residents learning to drive in the Graduated Driver Licensing program (see Chapter 9) are not permitted to use electronic devices while driving, even if they have hands-free capabilities.

In all cases, a driver who is safely and lawfully parked may use electronic devices.

Driving requires your full attention and concentration. You have a responsibility to yourself, your passengers and all other road users, to operate your vehicle in a safe manner. Cellphone use while driving reduces awareness of what is happening around you and slows reaction times. The distraction results from your involvement in the conversation, not only from physically handling or looking at the device.

Avoid crashes as a result of cellphone use

- Turn off your cellphone or turn on your auto-reply function before you start driving. Let voice mail do its job.
- If you must use your cellphone, look for a safe place to pull over and legally park. Then use your cellphone.

driving tip

What kind of driving style do you plan to have? Do you think it is better to be cautious rather than take too many chances? Driving attitude or style is something you choose.

Other High Risk Behaviours

You in the driver's seat

You are alone and driving on a straight stretch of highway. You are tempted to floor it.

What choice will you make?

New drivers differ in how they manage risk. You probably know drivers who are unsure of what actions to take and are nervous around other road users. These people lack confidence in their skills.

Other drivers are overconfident and think they are much better drivers than they really are.

A few people adopt a dangerous driving style, seeking excitement through speeding and taking risks. These people are thrill-seekers who enjoy speeding, tailgating or passing unsafely.

All these drivers need to learn more and take more time to practise their skills.

How often do you:	Always	Sometimes	Never
Shoulder check?			
Drive within the speed limit?			
Signal?			
Avoid drinking and driving?			
Avoid using your cellphone while driving?			
Avoid using drugs then driving?			
Give yourself enough travel time to reach your destination?			
Stop for yellow lights?			
Full stops at all stop signs and red lights?			
Stop behind a school bus with red lights flashing?			
Leave good space margins?			

If you answered always, you are driving safely. If not, you are taking on unnecessary risks.

Analyze your attitude and style. If you have a close call, ask yourself why it happened and think about how you can drive more safely so it doesn't happen again.

Do you find yourself always blaming others for bad driving? If so, then ask yourself: is it really their fault or could it be me?

crash fact

Over 75 per cent of all drivers travelling at an unsafe speed resulting in a casualty collision were male. Over 37 per cent of people killed in collisions were victims of collisions caused by unsafe speed.

B.C. Traffic Collision Statistics, Police-attended injury and fatal collisions 2007

Peer pressure

You in the driver's seat

"Aw come on, join the party, have a joint," your friend says.

You promised to be the driver after the party. You were going to stick to soft drinks and stay sober. But this is a new friend and you really like him.

What choice would you make?

Learning how to handle peer pressure takes a lot of practice. You want to keep your friends, but you don't want to get talked into doing things that put you and others in danger.

We want to belong, so we're sensitive to what others think of us. There are two kinds of peer pressure: positive and negative.

Friends who persuade you to do the safe thing because they care about you are giving positive peer pressure. On the other hand, friends or acquaintances who encourage you to do something dangerous are putting negative pressure on you.

Strategies: handling negative peer pressure

Try using these four steps to help you resist negative peer pressure.

1. **Identify the problem**. You may impress your new friend if you drink, but you aren't keeping your promise to stay sober and be the designated driver.
2. **Think about the consequences**. If you choose to have a drink/joint so you don't upset your friend, you increase the risk of being involved in a crash when you get behind the wheel. You could hurt or even kill yourself or someone else.
3. **Identify alternatives**. Tell your friend you will join them some other time when you don't have to drive.
4. **Follow through**. Stay sober and get your friends home safe.

think about

How you would handle unsafe passengers?

Unsafe passengers

You in the driver's seat

You are driving home at night with a load of passengers. They are all having a good time, telling jokes and fooling around. The light rain is making it hard to see. There is a lot of reflection on the road. You need to concentrate, but you are finding it hard to think with all the noise around you.

What should you do?

When you drive, you are responsible for the safety of your passengers. Sometimes you will find that passengers can be distracting. This is a time when you will have to show leadership and maintain control.

Strategies: being a good passenger

As a passenger, you can help drivers:

- Avoid heated or emotional conversations, as these can distract the driver.
- Discourage reckless driving.
- Be prepared to take a stand for safety.

driving tip

Make sure animals you are transporting are secured in cages. A wandering, frightened animal is a dangerous distraction.

Strategies: keeping passengers safe

Help keep people in your vehicle safe.

- Refuse to move unless everyone is wearing a seatbelt.
- Tell children the rules before you start the trip.
- Give children activities if it's a long drive.
- Tell passengers that you will not be able to talk very much because you need to concentrate on driving.
- If needed, pull over and park until you feel that your passengers will allow you to drive safely.

Unsafe drivers

You in the driver's seat

Your friend offers to drive you and your buddies to their house. It's only 20 km away so you agree. He starts down the highway and is soon way over the speed limit. He pulls out to pass a car and barely has space to get back into the lane. You quickly realize that he is a very unsafe driver.

What should you do?

Everyone's had the experience of being stuck in a car with someone whose driving scares them. Having a licence gives you more power to deal with this situation because you know the rules and regulations and you know what safe driving means. However, it isn't easy to persuade unsafe drivers to change their driving style.

Strategies: stopping unsafe driving situations

Here are some ideas that could help you handle unsafe drivers.

- Try using humour. It works sometimes.
- Use "I" statements to get across how you feel. For example, you might say: I'm feeling pretty nervous right now. Could you please slow down for me?
- Offer to take the wheel. Tell your friend that you'd really like a turn driving.
- If there are other passengers, try to get their help. Ask: Are you guys really in this much of a rush to get there? Chances are they are probably feeling the same way.
- Be firm. Say something like: Hey! Slow down before you get us killed.
- If all else fails, ask to be let out of the car.

Aggressive driving

You in the driver's seat

It's late at night and you are driving in an unfamiliar neighbourhood. A vehicle comes speeding up behind you. The driver starts flicking the headlights back and forth from high to low beam.

What should you do?

It's often difficult to know what to do when you're faced with drivers who are aggressive. Their lack of courtesy and bad driving habits can lead to crashes. Extreme aggression, or road rage, is not common but mild aggression can grow if you are not careful. How should you respond?

Strategies: handling other drivers' aggression

When other drivers start acting aggressively behind the wheel:

- Maintain good driving habits. Give the other driver plenty of room and the right-of-way.
- Don't return aggression. Avoid eye contact, keep away from erratic drivers and don't gesture back.

If you're in a situation where you feel threatened:

- Get help. Drive to a police station or to a location where there are plenty of people (for example, a shopping mall).
- Call 911. (If you're travelling with someone else, get this person to make the call so you can focus on driving.)
- Don't go home.
- Keep the doors locked and the windows closed.
- Sound the horn or attract attention to yourself if someone tries to get into your car.

Preventing aggression

How can you make sure you don't increase the anger or frustration of other drivers? If you use your smart driving skills, allow plenty of space and give others the right-of-way, you can help prevent situations that cause aggression.

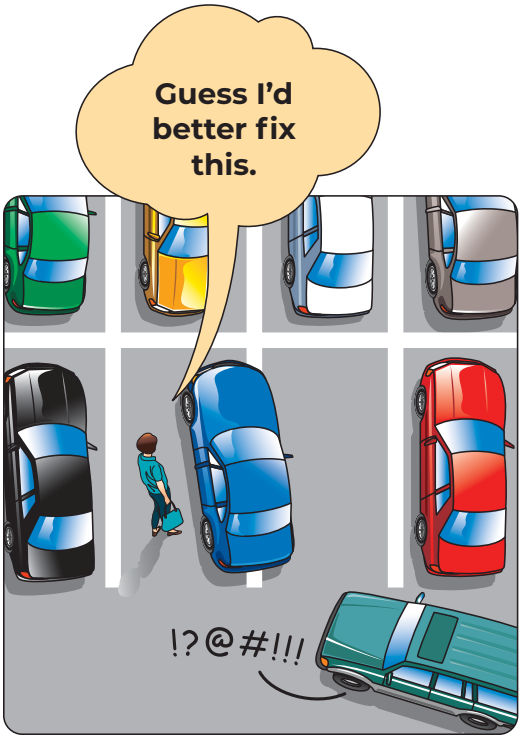
think about

What messages do your actions give to other drivers? Sharing the road means considering other drivers.

Strategies: preventing aggression

Help prevent other drivers from becoming frustrated or angry:

- Know the rules of the road and follow them.
- Keep a generous following distance.
- Give the right-of-way.
- Slow down or move over for merging traffic.
- Signal your intentions.
- Pull over to let other drivers go by if there is a line of vehicles behind you.
- Keep your headlights on low beam unless you're in an unlit area.
- Keep your car enterainment system turned down.
- Don't block passing lanes.
- Don't take more than one parking spot.
- Don't use your horn unless it's really necessary.
- Don't park in spaces reserved for people with disabilities if you're not entitled to use the space.
- Don't yell or gesture at other road users.



Yukon Organ Donation Program

Give someone a second chance at life

Every year, hundreds of men, women and children wait anxiously for a phone call that will save their lives. They need a new kidney, liver or heart. They are the ones who hope to see again, or for the first time, through a cornea transplant.

When that call does come, they are the ones who get a second chance to live life to the fullest, thanks to the kindness of people who gave the gift of life through donation of organs and tissue. However, many more are waiting and many lives are lost because suitable donors are not found in time.

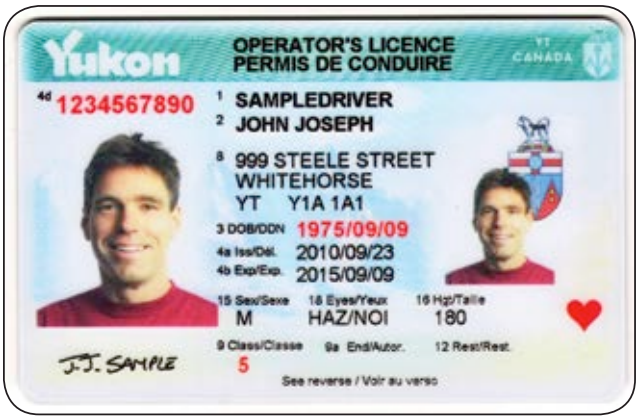
People will spend months or even years waiting for that second chance because the need for organs and tissue in Canada continues to outweigh the availability.

You can improve and save lives by choosing to be an organ and tissue donor. Your family may find comfort in knowing that someone else has hope for a better life.

How to register

If you want to be a donor, the most important thing you can do is to make your wishes known to your family and next-of-kin. Doctors will support the decision of the family at the time of death. That is why it is so important to talk to your family about your wishes.

For more information on how to become an organ donor, contact the Yukon Organ Donation Program at 867-667-5209 or toll free at 1-800-661-0408, local 5209. Once you are registered, your preferences will be stated on your Yukon health card. When you apply for your Yukon driver's licence, you can ask to be a part of the organ donor program.



Preventing and handling emergencies 8

in this chapter

- **Environmental hazards**
  - wind turbulance
- **Night hazards**
  - using headlights and taillights
  - overdriving the headlights
- **Animals on the road**
- **Emergency driving strategies**
  - emergency braking
  - brake failure
  - skid control
  - steps to handle a skid
- **Vehicle breakdowns**
  - tire blowout
  - engine problems
  - headlight failure
  - hood flying up
  - gas pedal sticking
- **Collision avoidance**
- **At the scene of a crash**
  - you arrive at the scene of a crash
  - you are involved in a crash

Chapter 7 gave useful strategies to help you avoid impairment and high risk behaviour that can influence your driving in a negative way. This chapter describes strategies for handling driving emergencies and many practical tips for helping you prevent emergencies from developing.

No one really expects to be involved in an emergency, but you can be sure that at some time you will face one while you're driving.

The best preparation is to always be alert and drive using the see-think-do strategy. If you're alert and make good decisions based on your observations, you will usually be able to take a driving action before an emergency occurs.

- As you drive, look ahead and scan the scene for potential hazards. (A child running out into the street, a cyclist swerving into your lane, a car stopping in front of you suddenly, etc.)
- Ask yourself: What would I do? (Brake, swerve, pull over, etc.)

Remember to prepare your vehicle for emergencies. Carry the right emergency equipment to help you deal with situations described in this chapter.

Environmental hazards

In the Yukon, sun, ice fog, rain, snow and black ice are examples of environment hazards that can create difficult driving conditions.

These hazards can make visibility and road surfaces unpredictable. and are dangerous for drivers. They may lead to crashes involving several vehicles.

driving tip

Check and ensure you have the right type of emergency equipment in your vehicle for the season and the type of trip.

think about

If you do not feel comfortable driving in extreme weather conditions, find an alternate method of transportation. Change your plans or stay home.

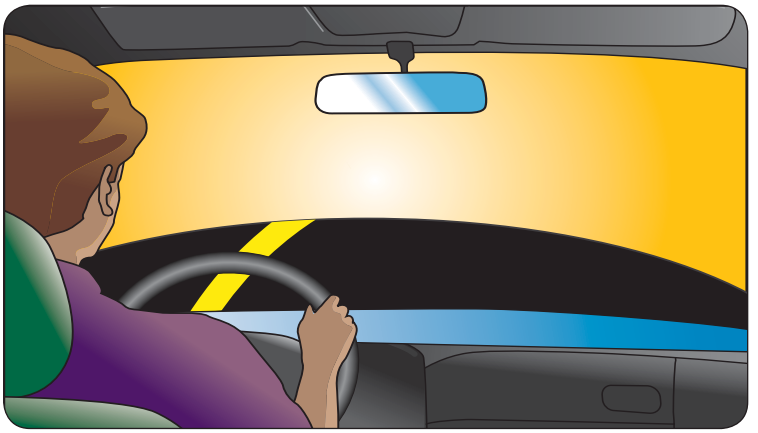
warning

Your ability to effectively see-think-do is reduced in low visability conditions.

You in the driver's seat

During winter, you're driving and you crest a hill when suddenly you're blinded by the sun. You strain to see ahead, but it is hard to see anything.

What should you do?



Sun and weather conditions like fog, rain or snow can also be blinding.

If you can't see clearly ahead or behind, your information about the road scene is dangerously reduced. You can't make good driving decisions in these conditions.



driving tip

Make sure you know how to use your vehicle's heater and defroster controls to ensure that your windows do not fog or frost up.

Strategies: driving in low visibility conditions

Difficult weather conditions can be hazardous for drivers because visibility is often reduced. In these conditions:

- Slow down.
- Maintain extra space margins.
- Search and scan more carefully.
- Use low beam headlights in rain, snow and fog.
- Do not pass in extreme weather conditions because you can't see far enough ahead.
- Pull over and stop if necessary until the visibility improves. Choose a place that is safe from other traffic and does not block roadways.
- Use your defroster to keep your windows clear. If necessary, leave a window partly open for ventilation.
- Clear the vehicle of snow and ice before starting off. Make sure you can see clearly.
- Keep your windshield washers and wipers in good working order.

Glare and shadows

Changing light conditions can reduce your ability to see. Glare can blind you in the day or at night when meeting vehicles with bright headlights. Dark shadows can hide hazards.

warning!

It is against the law to drive unless your windows are clear of snow, ice, fog or any other thing that would obscure any of your windows.

Strategies: overcoming glare and shadows

To handle glare and shadows while driving:

- Keep your windows clean inside and out.
- Slow down before entering tunnels to let your eyes adjust to the lower light levels.
- Remove your sunglasses and turn on your headlights while driving through tunnels.
- Use sunglasses and your sun visor when sunny.
- If needed, adjust your rear-view mirror to the night-driving position.
- Keep a good following distance at night to reduce the glare your headlights create.

Loss of traction

driving tip

Make sure your vehicle tires are in good condition, properly inflated and suitable for the driving conditions.

You in the driver's seat

It's a cold morning and you're in a hurry to make it to work on time. You suddenly feel the vehicle isn't responding when you turn the steering wheel. You press the brake. The back of the car swings to the right. You've hit ice!

What should you do?

Rain, snow and ice can affect your traction. Loose gravel, wet leaves, mud or sand can also make roads slippery and dangerous. Slow down and use caution when driving on any low-traction surface, and avoid driving altogether in extremely bad weather conditions.

Rain

Rain makes the road surface slippery, especially during the beginning of a rainfall. The rain mixes with the oil on the road to create a slippery, oily film. This film washes away with continued rain, but if the rain is light or if it has not rained for a long time, the road will remain slippery longer.

Rain can cause dangerous driving conditions:

- loss of traction;
- loss of visibility; or
- hydroplaning.

Hydroplaning happens when the tires lose contact with the road surface and float on a film of water. The driver instantly loses control of steering and braking. It can happen in rain or standing water. The higher your speed, the greater your chances of hydroplaning.

warning!

Never use cruise control in wet or slippery conditions. Your owner's manual will tell you to use it only in ideal driving conditions.

Strategies: driving on wet roads

Make sure you have good control when roads are wet:

- Slow down and leave more following distance.
- Allow at least twice the normal braking distance.
- Brake gently so the wheels don't lock.

driving tip

Carry a good quality tire pressure guage, know the correct tire pressure for your vehicle and adjust the tire pressure as needed.



Vehicles with low tire pressure or worn tread are more likely to hydroplane.

Strategies: preventing or handling hydroplaning

To prevent hydroplaning:

- Check your tires for proper tread and inflation.
- Scan ahead for large puddles.
- Reduce your speed, especially during heavy rain.

If hydroplaning happens:

- Slow down and drive straight.
- Never brake.

warning

Moving water that is deeper than half a metre can carry a car away.

Deep water

Going through deep water can stall your vehicle and can even damage the engine or transmission. Consider taking an alternate route if you are faced with water across the roadway. If you can't avoid the section of roadway, drive through very slowly. After leaving the water, lightly apply the brakes for a short distance to dry them.

Ice and snow

Ice and snow can cause you to lose traction very quickly. Lack of traction causes the wheels to spin when accelerating and to lock when braking. You can easily lose control of the steering.

In winter, temperatures can change quickly, causing unpredictable road conditions. Temperatures near freezing are more dangerous than colder temperatures. Although the road may look the same, ice can form unexpectedly and may not be visible.

Be aware of hidden dangers:

- Black ice is caused by moisture freezing on the road surface. Normally you can't see it. If the asphalt looks shiny and black instead of gray-white, be suspicious.
- Shaded areas may still be icy even after the sun has melted the ice on the other parts of the road.
- Bridges and overpasses tend to form ice before other road surfaces do.
- Intersections ice up quickly because of car exhaust and snow packing.

Strategies: handling ice and snow

Plan ahead

- Check the weather forecast before starting out.
- If you do not feel comfortable driving in the forecasted weather conditions, staying home may be the wisest choice.
- Use tires that are suitable for seasonal weather conditions.
- Carry chains. Snow tires and/or chains are a good idea on Yukon roads during the winter.
- Carry sand or a piece of carpet to use if you become stuck on ice or in snow.
- Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle, especially if you're going on a long trip.

See

- Make sure you can see. Scrape snow or frost from the windows and mirrors, get rid of any ice or snow on the wipers and clean all the lights before driving.
- Scan further ahead when driving to give yourself a larger safety margin.

Think

- Plan turns and stops further ahead so you have more time to react.

Do

- Slow down before entering curves, corners and when going down hills that are icy. Braking may cause you to skid.
- Accelerate gently. Sudden starts can send a vehicle into a skid or cause the wheels to spin.
- Carefully test your braking and steering at a very low speed. Use this test to decide whether to continue, or whether to slow down more.
- Make sure you do not lock your wheels so that you can maintain steering control.

- Don't use cruise control in icy or snowy driving conditions.
- Allow extra space margins (including more following distance).
- Avoid passing unless absolutely necessary.
- Travel in the section of road with the least amount of snow or ice if you have the choice of more than one lane.
- Use a gentle, smooth steering motion.

warning

If you feel dizzy or drowsy while your vehicle is running, you may be getting carbon monoxide poisoning. Turn off the engine and get plenty of fresh air.

Stranded or snowbound

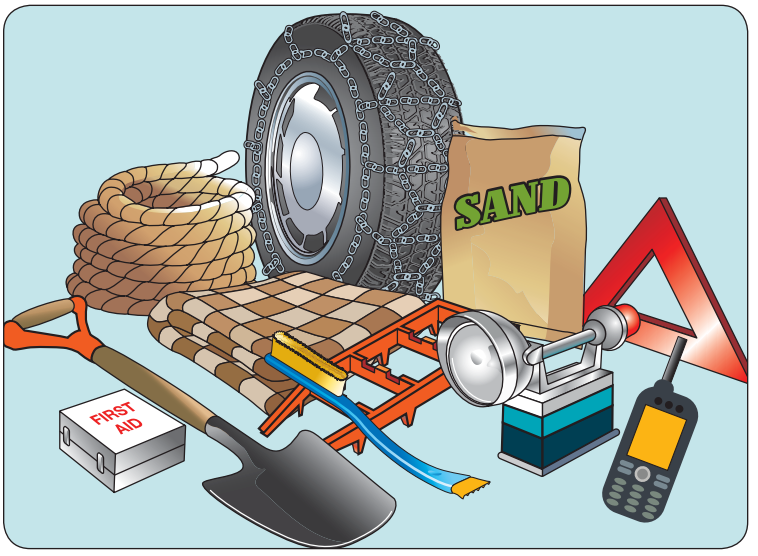
If you're stranded in snow, stay with your vehicle unless you are absolutely sure you can reach help.

If you decide to run the car to keep the interior warm, run the vehicle sparingly as needed, to conserve fuel. You must be very cautious because the car could fill with carbon monoxide gas. Carbon monoxide poisoning can cause dizziness or drowsiness and even lead to death.

Make sure you also check that the exhaust pipe and exhaust system are not blocked or damaged because this could cause increased leakage of carbon monoxide into the car. Ensure you have fresh air coming into your vehicle, by keeping the window slightly open farthest from your exhaust. Make sure that at least one person stays awake at all times.

think about

Consider the equipment you need for winter driving. On long trips through rural areas, or with passengers, what else might be useful?



warning

It can take you 10 times the normal braking distance to stop on ice.

Wind Turbulence

Watch out for crosswinds, headwinds and tailwinds. These can make it difficult for you to control steering. Even a passing tractor-trailer can create enough wind turbulence to move a vehicle.

fast fact

Driving in strong cross winds can make your vehicle harder to handle.

Strategies: dealing with wind turbulence

If you experience wind turbulence while driving:

- Slow down.
- Grip the steering wheel firmly with both hands.
- Watch out for vehicles that could be more easily forced into your path.
- Leave extra space if you are passing a large truck or trailer.

Night hazards

You in the driver's seat

You've been driving all day to return home from a trip. Now it's dark outside, and you're feeling a bit drowsy. There is very little traffic, but you see a car approaching from a distance. You switch from high beam to low beam. The other driver isn't dimming the headlights. They are shining straight into your eyes, and it's hard for you to see.

What should you do?

Driving at night is a challenge for all drivers. It means your vision is limited and you can't be seen as well. You also can't judge distances as well. You will need to be more alert to practise **see-think-do** effectively.

note

The law states you must have your headlights on at all times when driving Yukon highways.

Using the headlights and taillights

Make sure you use the correct headlights for the driving conditions. Low beam headlights will light up a path up to 30 metres straight ahead of you. High beams give you about 100 metres of light.

Be sure to use your headlights properly:

- You must have your headlights and taillights on when drive at night. (ensure you are using your headlights, not your parking lights or daytime running lights.)

driving tip

Do you have trouble judging distances? Most people do. Be courteous and dim your lights early.

- You must also use headlights and taillights if visibility is reduced to less than 150 metres (e.g., in fog or heavy rain).
- You must dim your high beam headlights when you are within 300 metres of an approaching vehicle or within 150 metres when following a vehicle.



Daytime



Low beam headlights



High beam headlights

Overdriving the headlights

Be careful not to overdrive your headlights at night, or in fog, rain or snow. Overdriving happens if you go too fast and you are not able to stop within the distance covered by your headlights. It is especially dangerous in a curve.

Strategies: night driving

To reduce the risks of driving at night:

- Keep your eyes moving. Scan carefully for other vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists and animals on or near the road.
- Avoid glare from lights. Glance to the right edge of the road to avoid glare from oncoming lights.
- Adjust your rear-view mirror to the night-driving position to avoid headlight glare from vehicles behind you.
- Adjust your side view mirrors so that the body of the vehicle is just outside your view. This will help reduce blind spots as well as glare.
- Keep interior lights off and keep the instrument panel lights low.
- Keep your windows and lights clean.
- Stay alert. Take regular breaks, keep the car cool, open car window, if still tired pull over safely and take a powernap.
- Slow down.
- Increase your following distance.

warning!

Drive with extra caution when you see animal signs posted along the road. These signs are posted in areas with a history of wildlife/vehicle collisions.

Animals on the road

You in the driver's seat

You're driving along a rural highway at dusk. You're keeping a careful watch for animals; you've seen bison and elk in this area before. Suddenly, a large elk steps out from the brush, right into your path.

What should you do?

In the Yukon, animals on the road are a major hazard. Crashing into a large animal can cause damage and injury, not just to the animal, but to you and your passengers.

driving tip

If you see an animal on the road, slow down and try flashing your headlights from high to low beam.

driving tip

Take extra care when driving near horses and riders. Slow down and give them lots of space when you pass. Don't honk the horn because this could cause the horse to bolt into your path.

driving tip

Watch the ditches on either side of the road for animals. Also consider whether you could safely drive into the ditch in an emergency.

Strategies: watching for animals

To help prevent a collision with an animal:

- Scan the sides of the roadway ahead for animals.
- Watch for animal crossing signs when driving through farming or wooded areas. Slow down in these areas.
- Be extra cautious at dusk and dawn. This is when animals move around to feed, and it is also harder for you to see them at these times.
- Look for sudden, unusual spots of light on the roadway at night. This may be the reflection of your headlights off an animal's eyes.
- Remember that wild animals often move in herds. If you see one animal, there may be more.

Strategies: when an animal is in your path

If an animal is directly in front of you:

- Check your rear-view mirror to see if there is a vehicle behind you, in case you need to stop suddenly.
- Assess the risks and decide on an action. Can you stop safely? Can you steer around the animal? Would it be better to hit the animal or risk a crash avoiding it?
- Slow down and stop as quickly as possible, if you can. Ensure you stay in control of your vehicle.
- If the animal is large and you can't stop in time, prepare for a crash.
- Leave a wide margin when you drive around an animal. A frightened animal may run in any direction.

warning

Even skilled drivers are not able to safely handle every emergency. The strategies in this chapter can't guarantee your safety. The best preparation for an emergency is to avoid it.

Emergency driving strategies

There are several strategies to handle dangerous situations. You should only practise them in a safe location under the supervision of an experienced driver.

Emergency braking

You in the driver's seat

You're driving along your street, almost home. Out of the corner of your right eye you see a ball roll out onto the street. There's hardly any time to stop.

What should you do?

Standard braking systems

The key to emergency braking with standard braking systems is to stop the vehicle as quickly as possible without locking the brakes. If you lock the brakes, the wheels stop turning. You will lose control of the steering and the car may skid.

In most cases, you will not want to lock the brakes when stopping quickly. However, there may be occasions when you choose to lock the brakes because stopping is more important than steering.

driving tip

Learn to use ABS correctly by practising in a safe location. Accelerate to 30 km/h, brake hard and steer around an imaginary object. Do not pump the brakes because this turns the system off. Don't be alarmed by brake noise or shudder; this is normal. Check your owner's manual so you know the correct braking technique.

Anti-lock braking systems (ABS)

ABS allows drivers to brake and steer at the same time. You can't do this with ordinary brakes. In an emergency situation, drivers using ABS should apply continuous, firm, hard pressure to the brake pedal until the vehicle stops. The computerized sensors automatically release the brakes from the wheels to prevent locking.

Contrary to what some people believe, ABS does not allow you to drive faster and doesn't always allow you to stop sooner. On some surfaces, like gravel, the braking distance may be longer. But ABS can help prevent wheels from locking up on wet and slippery surfaces.

driving tip

Think about the road conditions before you start to drive. Will the weather conditions make the road slippery? You should be able to avoid skidding by making safe choices in the first place. The most likely cause of skidding is poor driving skills.

Brake failure

Total brake failure is rare. However, if your brake system fails, you will need to use your see-think-do skills to respond quickly and safely. Your vehicle may have a warning system to alert you to a brake failure or problem. Ensure you properly maintain your braking system at all time.

Strategies: handling brake failure

If your brakes ever fail:

- Don't panic. Keep thinking about the hazards in front of you and how to avoid them.
- Look for an escape route or something to slow you down (like a side road or open field).
- Pump the brakes hard and fast. You may be able to get enough braking action to stop the vehicle.
- Gear down to the lowest gear so the engine will help slow you down.
- Apply the parking brake gently and gradually. Use the brake release as you do this, so you are prepared to release the brake quickly if the car goes into a skid.
- Use the hazard lights or the horn to warn other drivers

warning

Skids happen when drivers:

- slam on the brakes
- slam on the brakes and steer at the same time
- go around a corner too fast
- accelerate suddenly

Skid control

You in the driver's seat

It's a cold morning and you're in a hurry to make it to work on time. You turn the wheel and your car starts to slide.You press the brake. The back of the car swings to the right. You've hit ice!

What should you do?

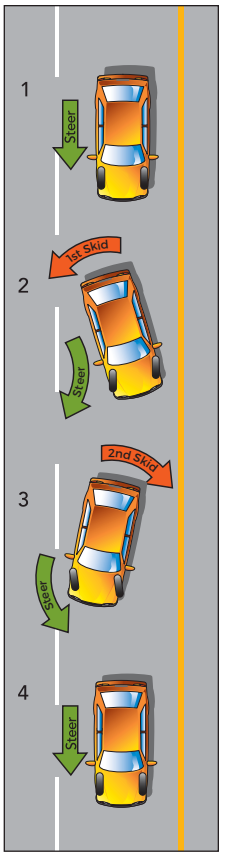
Skids can happen any time the tires lose traction on the road. This can be caused by slippery surfaces, as in the scene below, or by changing speed or direction too suddenly. Rain and ice contribute to skidding. Most skids result from driving too fast for road conditions, hard braking and overly aggressive turning or accelerating. The way to avoid skids is to use your see-think-do skills. In slippery conditions, slow down.

warning!

Oversteering can increase risk the of roll overs, loss of control and collision.

Steps to handle a skid

The illustration shows what happens to your car when it skids and how you can regain control. The numbers in the illustration correspond to the following steps.



1. You're driving straight, but you fail to notice the patch of black ice ahead.
2. As you drive over the black ice, the rear of your vehicle skids to the right. Ease off the accelerator. Look and steer smoothly in the direction you want to go. (In this case, steer to the right.) Don't brake; this will make the situation worse.
3. Now the rear of your vehicle skids to the left. (This is likely caused by overcorrecting in Step 2.) Stay off the accelerator. Steer smoothly in the direction you want to go. (In this case, steer to the left.) You may need to repeat Steps 2 and 3 until you regain control.
4. Once you've regained control, continue driving with caution.

think about

What a tire blowout would feel like and what you would do to regain control of the vehicle.

Vehicle breakdowns

An unexpected vehicle breakdown can create a dangerous situation for you and your passengers. The best prevention is having a well-maintained vehicle and doing regular and pre-trip checks.

Tire blowout

You in the driver's seat

You are driving along a highway when your front tire suddenly blows out.

What should you do?

When a front tire blows out, your vehicle can be pulled in the direction of the deflated tire, especially at high speeds. A rear blowout can cause the vehicle to start skidding. Maintaining control of your vehicle is the most important priority.

Be sure you know how to change a tire. Is your spare tire properly inflated? Is your vehicle carrying the equipment you need? Is packing a tire repair kit a good idea?

driving tip

If you have power or power-assisted steering, you can still steer even after the engine has stopped. You just need to use more effort. If the engine stops, don't turn the ignition off, because the steering will lock.

warning!

If your vehicle catches fire, stop and get everyone out immediately. Do not open the hood – that could cause the fire to spread. Move well away from the vehicle.

think about

Whether you'll equip your vehicle with flares. What about a HELP sign?

Engine problems

You never know when a vehicle engine may fail. If this happens, you need to move out of traffic and into a safe place as quickly as possible.

Strategies: handling engine failure

If your engine ever fails:

- Signal and steer to the edge of the road.
- Try to get to the nearest exit or service area or pull off the road as far as possible on a busy highway or freeway. Avoid stopping on a bridge or in a tunnel if at all possible.
- Turn on your hazard lights.
- Set out flares or a warning triangle if it is dark or visibility is limited.
- Stay with your vehicle. Put a HELP sign on your windshield.
- Consider carrying a cellphone if you often travel on freeways or isolated roadways. In Yukon, cellphones may only work in communities.
- Let someone know your travel plans before you leave.
- Never get into a stranger's vehicle. Ask them to continue ahead and phone for you.
- Don't try to do roadside repairs on crowded and fast-moving freeways.

Headlight failure

It is dangerous and illegal to drive at night without headlights. You must get off the road as quickly as possible if your lights fail.

Strategies: handling headlight failure

If your headlights ever fail:

- Turn the light switch on and off quickly.
- Turn on the hazard lights if the headlights stay off.
- Slow down, pull off the road and get help.

Hood flying up

Hoods can fly up if they are not securely latched. If you notice that your hood is not properly latched, pull over and fully close the hood.

Strategies: hood flying up

Don't panic if you find yourself blinded by the hood flying up when you're driving.

- Take your foot off the accelerator.
- Pump your brakes to warn drivers behind you that you're slowing down.
- Turn on the hazard lights.
- Try to look through the crack below the hood or open your window and look in the direction you're travelling.
- Steer over to the side of the road.
- Be conscious that there could be cars or people on the edge of the road or that you could be on a multilane road.

warning!

Never reach down with your hand to release a stuck gas pedal because you could easily lose control of the vehicle.

Gas pedal sticking

The gas pedal can stick due to ice or snow build-up, or because of a malfunction.

You may be able to release the pedal by using your toe to lift it if you are travelling at a very low speed when the pedal sticks.

Strategies: stuck gas pedal

If your gas pedal sticks:

- Apply the brake.
- Look for an escape path that will get you off the road. Continue to brake.
- Shift to neutral to disconnect the engine from the wheels. (This may damage your engine but it's better than crashing. Note that steering and braking will become harder if the engine stops.)
- Follow your escape path and, once you're stopped, turn off the engine.
- Do not try to start the engine again. Call for help instead.

driving tip

In an emergency, try to steer away from light posts and power poles. Crashing your vehicle into hard, objects increases the risk of death and injuries.

Collision avoidance

You in the driver's seat

You're driving up a hill. Suddenly a car is coming right toward you in your lane.

What should you do?

No one wants to be involved in a collision, but you may find yourself in a situation where one is unavoidable. The best way to avoid collisions is to use your **see-think-do** skills. Keep yourself alert, scan systematically, maintain good space margins and travel at the appropriate speed. These steps will help you avoid most collisions.

Strategies: avoiding crashes or reducing the impact

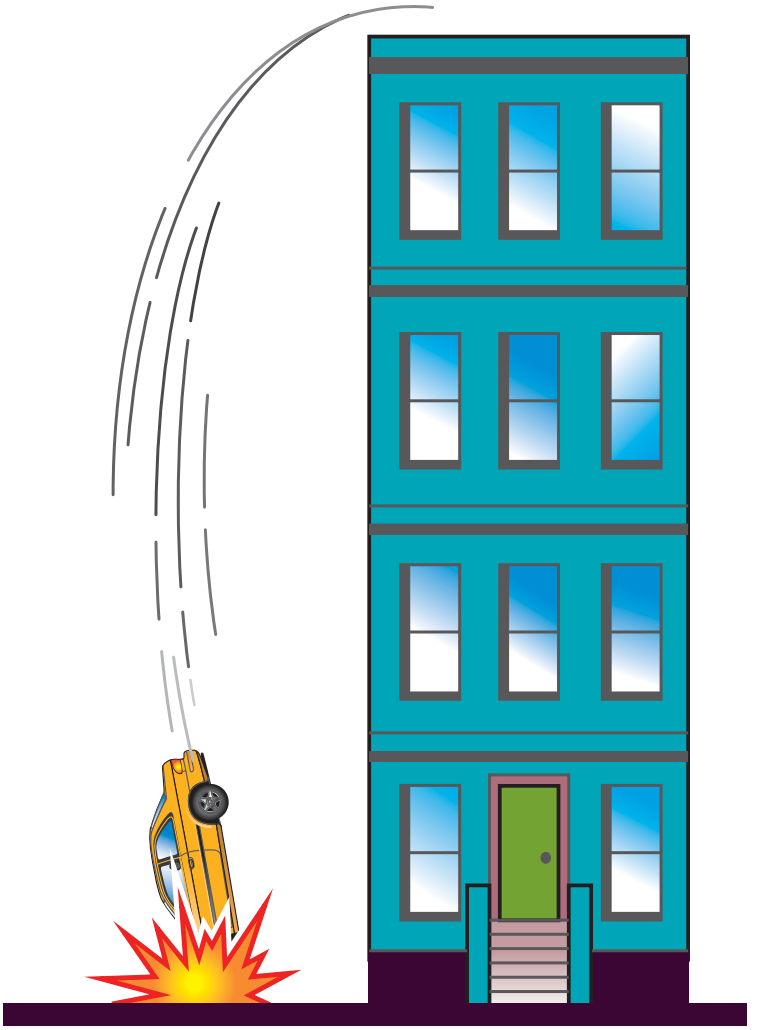
These techniques may help avoid a crash or reduce the impact of a crash:

- Slow down as much as possible.
- Try to avoid locking the brakes.
- Try to avoid a head-on collision by steering to the side.
- Use the horn. This may help the other driver regain alertness.

driving tip

If a collision is unavoidable, by acting quickly you may be able to reduce the impact.

Try to steer for something that will cushion your car, like bushes or a high snow bank. Avoid hard objects like parked cars or trees



Crashing into a solid object at 30 km/h is like sitting in a vehicle when it falls from a one storey building. At 60 km/h, hitting a solid object is like being in a vehicle when it falls from the roof of a four storey building.

The force of the impact greatly increases with your speed. Twice the speed means four times the force of impact. This is one reason why speed is such an important factor in crashes, and why slowing down saves lives!

think about

If you arrive at the scene of a crash, you may decide to stop and help. Think about what you would do. What would you like others to do if you were involved in a crash?

driving tip

When driving by a crash scene, don't slow down more than necessary. Stay focused on your driving to avoid causing another crash.

At the scene of a crash

You in the driver's seat

As you round a curve, you hear the sound of screeching brakes followed by a crash. You slow down and see that the car in front of you has rear-ended a truck.

What should you do?

You arrive at the scene of a crash

If other drivers have been involved in a crash, they may need assistance.

Strategies: assisting at a crash scene

Here are some of the ways you might be able to help:

- Make sure your vehicle is parked away from the crash where it won't hold up other traffic or emergency vehicles.
- Take measures to alert other drivers that there has been a crash: for example, set up warning triangles. This will help to avoid further crashes and injuries.
- Call for emergency services if necessary. Consider carrying a cellphone for emergency situations.
- Stay with injured people until help arrives.
- Do not let anyone smoke or light matches near the scene. There could be a fuel leak.

driving tip

Record important information at the scene of a crash.

You are involved in a crash

Legal responsibilities

You have certain legal responsibilities if:

- you or a vehicle you own is involved in a crash; or
- other drivers have a crash because of something you do.

In either of these cases, you are legally required to:

1. Remain at the scene.
2. Give all reasonable assistance. Call for emergency services if you can and if necessary.
3. Report the crash to the police if the damage is over $1000 or there is an injury.

You must exchange the following information with the other driver, anyone who has been injured and anyone whose property has been damaged:

1. your name and address;
2. the name and address of the registered owner of the vehicle;
3. the licence plate number; and,
4. insurance information.

You must also provide this information to the police or a witness if requested.

Suggestions

Here are some other things you should do:

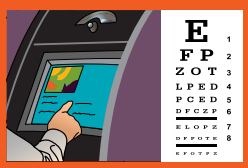
- Move the vehicles off the road if it is safe to do so.
- Avoid discussing who is at fault for the crash.
- Write down the names and addresses of all witnesses.
- Exchange driver's licence numbers with any other drivers involved.
- Draw a sketch or take photos of the scene, noting conditions such as time, location and weather.
- Notify your insurance company right away.

Graduated Driver Licensing program 9

in this chapter

- **Learner's stage: Class 7 licence:**
  - testing for your learner's licence
  - learning to drive
  - learner's stage driving restrictions and conditions
- **Novice stage:**
  - preparing for your road test
  - your Class 5 road test
  - novice stage driving restrictions and conditions
- **Full-privilege Class 5 licence**

The Yukon's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program is designed to help create safer drivers and reduce the number of crashes involving new drivers of any age. Under GDL, new drivers gain experience gradually, under conditions that expose them to less risk. To get your full-privilege Class 5 licence, you'll go through two stages.

Enter the stage	Licence awarded	Restrictions/ conditions
Learner stage You must be at least 15 years old and pass both a vision and a sign and knowledge test. 	**Class 7** learner's licence L	**Minimum of 6 months** • zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs; • no use of cellphones or other electronic devices, including hands free; • log 50 hours of driving experience; • must have co-driver at all times; • limit of two passengers including the co-driver, unless everyone is a family member; • restricted hours; and • display learner's sign.
Novice stage You must be at least 16 years old. You must have a Class 7 learner's licence and have successfully completed the learner's stage. **Class 5 road test**	**Class 5** novice licence	**At least 540 days in a row without violating any prohibitions and convistions** • zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs; • no use of cellphones or other electronic devices including hands free; and • restricted hours.
Full-privilege Licence You must have a Class 5 novice licence and have successfully completed the novice stage. **Apply for your full-privilege licence**	**Class 5** full-privilege licence	No GLD resitrictions

Motor Vehicles offices

Carcross
821-4281

Carmacks
863-6411

Dawson City
993-5348

Faro
994-2724

Haines Junction
634-2201

Mayo
996-2276

Old Crow
966-3261

Ross River
969-2347

Teslin
390-2024

Watson Lake
536-7311

Whitehorse,
667-5315

Toll-free in Yukon at
1-800-661-0408
poste 5315

Email:
motor.vehicles@yukon.ca

Learner's stage: Class 7

The first licence new drivers receive is a learner's licence. You must be at least 15 years old to apply for your learner's licence. You will also need to pass the knowledge test and pass a vision screening.

To apply, go to your nearest Motor Vehicles office. There is a Motor Vehicles office in most Yukon communities to serve you.

If you pass the tests, you'll be issued a Class 7 learner's licence and given a Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program information package.

Proving your identity

The first time you get a driver's licence, you will need to provide several government-issued documents as proof of your identity showing your photo, signature, date of birth and full legal name.

Proving Yukon residency

You will be required to show two piece of documentation to prove you are a current Yukon resident.

Remember to bring:

- fees for the knowledge test and Class 7 licence.
- all documents required to prove identity and Yukon residency.
- glasses or contact lenses if you are prescribed them.

A complete list of accepted documents can be found by visiting www.yukon.ca. You can also find current fees and other licensing information on the website or by contacting your local Motor Vehicles office.

Applicants under the age of 18 years old

If you are under 18, your legal guardian must come with you to sign the application. Applicant and legal guardian must both provide proof of identity and Yukon residency.

Citizenship

If you are a newcomer to Canada, bring proof of citizenship, record of landing or your passport accompanied by your work permit, study permit, visitor permit, or other related identification to prove your current status in the Yukon.

You must also provide two pieces of documentation providing proof of Yukon residency.

Testing for your learner's licence

Knowledge test

The knowledge test is a multiple choice exam that measures how well you know road signs, rules of the road and safe driving practices. The pass mark is 80 per cent.

Vision screening

When you apply for your licence, you must pass your vision test to ensure you can see well enough to drive safely. If you have the corrective lenses restriction on your licence, you are required to wear your glasses or contact lenses when you drive.

Medical requirements

The law requires that you report any medical condition, change in health, or physical disability that may affect your driving. Medical practitioners and optometrists are required, by law, to report to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, any medical concern of a person holding or applying for a driver's licence that may interfere with the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

think about

You can prepare for the Class 5 road test by taking lessons from a professional driving instuctor. Learning to drive skillfully and safely is not easy.

Learning to drive

Once you have your Class 7 learner's licence, you are in the learner's stage of the Graduated Driver Licensing program. It is in this stage that you put the knowledge learned from this handbook into practice and start to build your life-long safe driving habits

You will be in the learner's stage for at least six months. During this time, you (with a valid co-driver) are required to log and record 50 hours of driving practice. During your practice, you should drive in a variety of traffic and weather situations, such as highway and urban driving, night time and winter driving.

Choosing your co-driver

You need to choose a co-driver who will be serious about helping you become a skilled, safe driver. You are allowed to log your 50 hours with different co-drivers.

Mandatory co-driver requirements:

- Your co-driver must have held a valid full-privilege licence for at least two years immediately prior to teaching you to drive.
- Your co-driver must have zero alcohol and zero drugs in their system while co-driving.

If your co-driver is in violation of either of the above conditions, your hours will not count. If your co-driver is unsure if they qualify as a valid co-driver, please have them contact a Motor Vehicles office.

Other things to consider when choosing your co-driver(s):

- Is this person ready to commit the time needed to practice?
- Is this person a skilled, experienced driver?
- Will this person provide a good example of safe driving?
- Do they drive within the speed limits, pay attention to the road conditions, and avoid other risks on the road?
- Is this person able to get information and ideas across clearly?
- Does this person have the patience to guide you effectively?

fast fact

Zero tolerance means absolutely no amounts of alcohol or drugs in your body.

driving tip

Free replacement "L" signs are available at any Motor Vehicles office.

Learner's stage driving restrictions and conditions

While you are driving with a learner's licence, you must follow all of these restrictions and conditions:

- Zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs for the driver.
- Zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs for the co-driver.
- A valid co-driver must accompany the learner at all times.
- Driver may not use any electronic devices, hand-held or hands-free, including cell phones, while driving.
- Driver can only operate a motor vehicle between 5 a.m. and midnight.
- An "L" sign, must be visible to operators of vehicles approaching from behind.
- Driver must log 50 hours of driving with a valid co- driver.
- Limit of two passengers including the co-driver, unless each passenger over that limit is a parent, grandparent, spouse, brother, sister or child of the holder of the Class 7 Learner Licence.
- Driver can only operate a vehicle weighing up to 4,000 kilogram gross vehicle weight, not exceeding 7 person seating capacity including the driver.
- You may not tow anything behind your vehicle.
- You may not operate any motor vehicle for which you do not hold a licence.

You must restart the learner's stage if you break any of these restrictions or conditions.

Novice stage

To get your novice licence, you must pass the Class 5 road test. This test assesses whether you are ready to drive on your own.

To be eligible to take the Class 5 road test, you must:

- be at least 16 years old;
- have continuously held your Class 7 licence for six months immediately before your test; and
- have driven a motor vehicle and logged at least 50 hours.

To develop the skills and experience needed to pass the road test and become a safe driver, spend some time driving:

- at night;
- in the winter;
- on the highway; and
- in a busy urban area.

Preparing for your road test

You can prepare for the test by reviewing this guide and using the Tuning up for drivers guide to help you practise.

The driver examiner will conduct the Class 5 road test and mark your ability to drive in a safe, smooth and controlled manner. The road test takes about 30 minutes. You must provide a safe vehicle to use for your road test. Only the examiner and driver are allowed in the vehicle during a road test. Pets and passengers are not allowed.

Before you start

The examiner checks that:

- you know where the controls are;
- you use your seatbelt and adjust your seat;
- you adjust your mirrors and head restraints for maximum visibility and safety;
- the required lights are in working order;
- the vehicle is registered and insured; and
- the vehicle is safe to be on the road.

Using your skills

The Class 5 road test assesses your ability to perform the **see-think-do** skills: observation, hazard perception, speed control, space margins, steering and communication. For more information about these skills, see Chapter 5, **see-think-do**.

Your Class 5 road test

Your road test may include:

- stopping safely;
- yielding to right-of-way;
- using intersections (driving through, turning right, turning left);
- backing up;
- entering and merging into traffic;
- simulated passing on the highway;
- changing lanes;
- parking; and
- completing two- and three-point turns.

Examiners' tips for passing the Class 5 road test

Here are some tips on how to prepare to pass the road test:

- Keep to the posted speed limits; don't try to keep up with speeding traffic.
- Watch for school and playground zones. Speeding through school and playground zones is a common reason for drivers to fail their test.
- Make full stops at red lights and stop signs. Make sure you stop in the correct position. When it's safe, proceed while scanning the intersection.
- When turning right, shoulder check to the right to ensure there are no cyclists, pedestrians or other road users heading straight through the intersection (and into your path).
- Mirror check, signal and shoulder check whenever you change lanes or direction.
- Keep a safe distance from other vehicles.
- Scan intersections before driving through, even if the light is green when you approach.
- Practice all skill manoevors that you may be asked to do as part of your road test.
- Practice proper procedure for entering and exiting a roundabout.
- Practice how to correctly enter, take control and turn left at an intersection.
- When merging onto a highway, use the acceleration lane to get up to the speed of the highway traffic, while remaining within the speed limit. The rest of manoeuvre is a lane change.

Driver examiners will mark you on the **see-think-do** skills you read about in this guide.



Observation



Speed control



Communication



Steering



Hazard perception



Space margin

- Before you back up, make sure you do a 360 degree vision check.
- Pull over to the right and stop, for emergency vehicles.
- If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask. We'll be happy to answer them before you start your road test.

When you're ready to take your Class 5 road test, contact the Motor Vehicles office nearest you. You should note that:

- Class 5 road tests can only be booked after your log book has been dropped off for inspection.
- You must pay your road test fee at the time of booking.

When you arrive for your road test, you should have with you:

- your driver's licence;
- glasses or contact lenses if you need them to drive;
- valid vehicle registration and insurance;
- a clean and safe vehicle; and
- a valid co-driver.

Strategies: ensuring your vehicle is safe

For your road test, make sure you have a safe, reliable vehicle that meets legal requirements. Also, make sure you are familiar with the vehicle.

Your road test may be cancelled if any items are defective on the vehicle you bring for your road test. Here is a list of some of the items to check for:

- ☐ Seatbelts – make sure they work and wear them properly.
- ☐ Head restraints – adjust your head restraint to suit you.
- ☐ Horn – check to see that it works.
- ☐ Doors – make sure both driver-side and passenger-side doors open and close properly.
- ☐ Windows, windshields and mirrors – make sure they are clean, vision is not obstructed.
- ☐ Windshield wipers – make sure they work.
- ☐ Heaters and defrosters – you may need to use them to keep the windows clear during your road test.
- ☐ Brakes – the foot brake and parking brake must work properly.
- ☐ Tires – make sure they are in good condition.
- ☐ Lights – know how to operate the headlights, tail lights, brake lights and turn signals.
- ☐ Exhaust system – must be in good condition.
- ☐ Bumpers – must not be missing.
- ☐ Licence plate – properly displayed.
- ☐ All your loose items are properly secured.

driving tip

Co-driver restriction may not apply to a driver who has been approved for a midnight exemption by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

After your road test

At the end of the test, the examiner will discuss your results with you. Whether you have passed or failed, you can learn how to improve your driving.

Make sure you ask questions if you don't understand something.

Novice stage driving restrictions and conditions

You must hold a Class 5 novice licence for at least 18 months in a row without any violations of the program restrictions and conditions.

The Class 5 novice licence differs from the full-privilege Class 5 licence in that it includes the following restrictions and conditions:

- Zero tolerance for alcohol or drugs for the driver.
- Must be accompanied by a co-driver between midnight and 5 a.m.
  - Zero tollerance for alcohol or drugs for the co-driver.
- Driver may not use any electronic devices, hand-held or hands-free, including cell phones, while driving.
- Driver can only operate a passenger vehicle weighing up to 4,000 kilogram in gross vehicle weight, not exceeding 9 person seating capacity including the driver.
- Number of passengers must not exceed the number of seatbelts in the vehicle and no passengers are allowed to ride in the box of a truck.
- Novice drivers may not operate any motor vehicle for which they do not hold a licence.

Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) program penalties

When you're a new driver, your record is closely monitored by the Motor Vehicles office. If you get a traffic violation ticket or other driving offence, you could receive a warning letter, suspension or prohibition from driving. In addition to the regular driving penalties, there are extra penalties for GDL drivers.

- At seven demerit points, your licence will be suspended for one month.
- More points or more serious offences could result in a suspension from driving for two months to a year, or more.
- If you violate the blood alcohol restriction, or operate a vehicle while under the influence of drugs, you may receive an immediate suspension. Police may also impound your vehicle. You'll have this charge recorded on your driver's record for all time and you may also face impaired driving criminal charges.

The above will all result in resetting your GDL clock to zero, causing you to restart the stage you are in. Your GDL clock will be reset any time you are driving contrary to your GDL restrictions and conditions.

Full-privilege Class 5 licence

After you have held your novice licence for at least 18 months in a row while observing all of the program restrictions/conditions, you may apply to graduate to a full-privilege Class 5 Licence at any Motor Vehicles office in the Yukon.

Chapter 10 gives more information on Yukon's full-privilege driver's licence.

in this chapter

- **Your driver's licence**
- **Summary of licence classes**
  - endoresements
- **Responsibilities**
  - protecting your driver's licence
  - keeping your licence up-to-date
  - medical requirements
  - new Yukon residents
  - driving outside of the Yukon
- **Enforcement**
  - outstanding fines
  - penalties for unsafe driving
  - penalties for impaired driving
  - registrar suspensions
  - getting your licence back
  - vehicle impoundment

Your driver's licence

Some people stop learning as soon as they pass their road test. You will know people who still drive the same way now as they did when they got their driver's licence many years ago.

Even if their driving skills and knowledge haven't changed, other things have. Roadways are constantly evolving. Traffic patterns have changed. Vehicles have changed. The vehicle they are driving now could be quite different from the one in which they took their road test.

In your driving career, you may need to get additional information and training if you take on additional driving challenges, such as towing a trailer, driving a large recreational vehicle or driving for many passengers, so you know how to drive safely.

Research shows that it takes about five years for new drivers to develop into fully experienced drivers. After that, people still need to work at keeping their driving skills sharp and up-to-date if they want to be safe on the road.

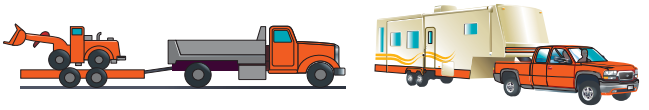
This chapter covers information that you need to be aware of as a driver.

Summary of licence classes

This chart shows the various classes of licences for Yukon drivers. For more detailed information on Yukon licence classes, contact your nearest Motor Vehicles office.

Class	Typical vehicles	Minimum age
Class 1 	• truck tractor and semi trailer • permits you to drive all types of vehicles except Class 6	18
Class 2 	• motor coaches, transit buses, school buses, special activity buses with seating for over 24 passengers • permits you to drive all types of vehicles except Class 1 and Class 6	18
Class 3 	• any motor vehicle with 3 or more axles including steering axles • permits you to drive Class 5 vehicles • Class 4 vehicles may be driven if approved by a driver's medical and your licence lists Class ¾	18
Class 4 	• taxi, limousine, ambulance or bus up to 24 passengers • permits you to drive Class 5 vehicles	18
Class 5 	• two-axle vehicles including cars, trucks and tow trucks that weigh up to 11,000 kilograms by itself or when towing another vehicle or trailer under 4,550 kilograms • motorcycles 50 cc and under, construction vehicles, ATVs, snowmobiles and off-road vehicles • novice stage drivers, please refer to additional GDL restrictions and conditions in chapter 9. • a full-privilege Class 5 licence is a learner's licence for all other licence classes	17.5
Class 6 	• motorcycles and mopeds	17.5
Class 7	• permits the learner to operate vehicles in Class 5 and 6 • to get a Class 7 licence, you need to go through the GDL program; see chapter 9	15

Endorsments



fast fact

A Class 2, 3, 4 or 5 driver's licence permits towing trailers weighing up to 4,550 kilograms. Some recreational and light duty industrial trailers exceed this weight. To tow them you need a Class 1 licence or Class 2, 3, 4 or 5 licence with a heavy trailer endorsement.

Air brakes

To operate vehicles equipped with air brakes on a highway, you must have a Yukon driver's licence with an air brake endorsement.

Heavy trailer

To tow a trailer or vehicle over 4,550 kilograms without air brakes you must have a Yukon driver's licence with a heavy trailer endorsement. Any time you tow, you must not exceed the vehicles' safe towing capacity.

Heavy recreational vehicle

To operate a recreational vehicle that exceeds 11,000 kilograms, you must have a Yukon driver's licence with a heavy recreational vehicle endorsement.

Snowmobiles, ATVs and off-road vehicles

In order to operate an off-road vehicle on, beside or across any roadway or publicly accessible trail, drivers of all off-road vehicles must have a valid learner's licence and be accompanied by a valid co-driver or have a Class 5 driver's licence. Additionally, the machine must be insured and registered.

Contact the Motor Vehicles office to ensure you are up to date on any changes to the Yukon's requirements for off road vehicles. Also check municipal bylaws before using off-road vehicles anywhere inside a municipality's boundaries.

Restrictions

Restrictions, such as wearing adequate vision correction, daylight driving only or restricted driving hours, may be placed on your licence for many reasons. Restrictions are listed as condition code numbers on your driver's licence. For information about restrictions or removal of a restriction, contact your nearest Motor Vehicles office.

Most restrictions are applied by the Motor Vehicles office. In addition, a parent or legal guardian can request restrictions on your licence while you are under 18. The Registrar of Motor Vehicles will consider all such requests and may place the requested restrictions on your licence.

Responsibilities

As a driver, you must ensure any vehicle you drive is properly registered and insured at all times to protect yourself and other road users.

Protecting your driver's licence

As a licence-holder, you have legal responsibilities. Having a Yukon driver's licence is a privilege, not a right.

You must:

- carry your licence every time you drive; and
- keep your licence current by notifying a Motor Vehicles office if you change your name or address.

You cannot:

- lend your licence to anyone else;
- use a licence that isn't valid; or
- alter your licence in any way.

note

Contact a Motor Vehicles offices to get a replacement licence as soon as possible.

Identity theft and driver licence fraud

Identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in North America. Identity theft occurs when someone uses your personal information without your knowledge or consent to commit a crime, such as fraud or theft. Victims of identity theft may suffer finanical loss, a poor credit rating and a damaged reputation.

A driver's licence has become a widely accepted and trusted form of identification. If your driver's licence is stolen, obtained by fraud, scanned or faked, it can be used as a tool for committing crime. Remember to report to the RCMP if your licence is stolen.

Keeping your licence up-to-date

note

Drivers from other jurisdictions coming to Yukon may get credit for their driving experience in their original jurisdiction, if proof is provided.

If your licence is damaged or lost, apply for a replacement at any Motor Vehicles office.

To change your name or address on your driver's licence, visit your nearest Motor Vehicles office. Remember, you are required by law to notify a Motor Vehicles office of a name or address change for both your driver's licence and vehicle registration. You will be required to properly identify yourself before any change, replacement or renewal can be performed.

It is your responsibility to renew your licence before it expires. A renewal notice is mailed to your registered address before the expiry date. If you do not receive your notice, contact a Motor Vehicles office.

note

If you have an air brake endorsement, you have 30 days to switch your license over.

A driver's licence in Yukon is valid for a period of up to five years.

You will be asked to re-test if:

- your licence has been expired for more than two consecutive years;
- your licence has been suspended, disqualified or cancelled for more than two consecutive years; or
- you have let your Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 licence requirement for a driver's medical report lapse for more than two consecutive years.

You may be asked to re-test if:

- your driver's medical report indicates it's necessary; and
- the police have informed the Motor Vehicles office that your abiity to safely operate a motor vehicle may be in question.

strategies: sharpen your skills

Here are some ways to help you keep sharp and up-to-date.

- Take advanced driver training. You may decide to take a course in defensive driving skills or a refresher course.
- Use feedback. Ask an experienced driver to watch your driving and give you some suggestions for improvement.
- Know your vehicle. Make sure you know all the controls of any vehicle you drive. Read the owner's manual.
- Keep up with the rules of the roads and driving regulations.

Medical requirements

Commerical medical reports required for Class 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be found in the commercial driving handbook. Non-commercial holders medical reports for Class 5, 6 and 7 licences are not required until you reach age 70. A medical report is required again at at 75, 80, and then every two years after that.

The law requires you to report any medical condition, change in health, or physical disability that may affect your driving. Medical practitioners, nurse practitioners and optometrists are also required by law to report to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles if they feel that the health or vision of a person who has, or is applying for, a driver's licence may interfere with the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

New Yukon residents

People who have recently moved to the Yukon may use a valid driver's licence from outside of the Yukon for the first 120 days they reside in the Yukon. When driving on your licence from another jurisdiction, you must follow all restrictions and conditions imposed by the original licensing jurisdiction. You must, however, apply for your Yukon driver's licence and surrender your old licence within that 120 days. You may not hold two valid driver's licences.

warning!

Driving without the proper class of driver's licence or with an expired licence is illegal.

It is an offence for vehicle owners to permit operation of their vehicle by an unlicensed driver.

A Canadian driver's licence from outside the Yukon is accepted at the same class without testing. All applicants get a vision screening test. Applicants for a Class 1, 2, 3 or 4 licence must provide a medical report. A medical report from another jurisdiction may be accepted if it is a valid motor vehicle medical form and completed within the last six months.

New residents needing a licence should contact their nearest Motor Vehicles office listed on the back cover of this handbook.

Driving outside of the Yukon

You need to be aware that rules, signs and traffic controls can change when you cross a border. To be a safe driver, think ahead and find out the driving rules of the area you're travelling. Driving signs, rules and road configurations may change even within Canada.

When driving overseas, ensure you know the rules of the road before you drive there. For example, you may find yourself driving on the left side of the road, going around a complex roundabout or looking at unfamiliar traffic signs.

Whether you are a pedestrian or a driver in other countries, ensure you know the rules of the road to keep yourself safe.

Enforcement

warning!

The vehicle you are driving may be impounded by the police if you are caught driving without valid insurance or with expired registration.

The RCMP has authority under the Motor Vehicles Act to order you to stop your vehicle on the roadway or to pull your vehicle off the roadway for many reasons, including:

- you are considered to be breaking the law;
- your vehicle equipment does not meet equipment regulations under the Motor Vehicles Act; or,
- a public road check campaign is being conducted.

Other peace officers have similar authority, including:

- municipal bylaw officers;
- highway and mobile safety enforcement officers; and
- other officers designated under the Motor Vehicles Act.

If an officer in uniform directs you to stop your vehicle, you must comply and remain stopped until the officer allows you to proceed.

Always be courteous and respectful to an officer who has directed you to stop.

warning

You will void your insurance coverage If you drive without:

- a valid driver's or learner's licence;
- the proper licence class for that vehicle; or
- contrary to licence restrictions or conditions.

If you are in a collision, your insurance claim may be denied and you could be responsible for all costs associated with the crash.

Outstanding fines

Be sure to pay all fines promptly. Any outstanding fines for moving violations will affect your ability to renew your driver's licence or may result in a driving suspension.

Penalties for unsafe driving

There are consequences to unsafe driving. You could be seriously injured, fined, and prohibited from driving. A prohibition means it is illegal for you to drive for a specific amount of time. If you are caught driving while you are prohibited, risk vehicle impoundment and possible additional fines and a jail term.

Demerit point system

Demerit points are recorded against a driver's licence for traffic offences and driver convictions under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Driver convictions under the Criminal Code of Canada may result in 10 demerit points being recorded against a driver.

Full licensed driver

Demerit point suspensions happen when you have too many demerit points on your licence:

- If you receive 15 or more demerit points, your first demerit point suspension will be for one month.
  - A second demerit point suspension, within one year of the first, results in a three-month licence suspension.
  - Third or subsequent demerit point suspensions within a two year period results in a six-month licence suspension.
- When a demerit point suspension has been served, your licence is reinstated with a balance of seven demerit points. These points remain on your record for two years after you complete your driving suspension.

Graduated Driver Licensing program

In the GDL program, demerit point suspensions happen when you have too many demerit points on your licence:

- If you receive 7 or more demerit points, your first demerit point suspension will be for one month.
  - A second demerit point suspension, within one year of the first, results in a three-month licence suspension.
  - Third or subsequent demerit point suspensions within a two year period results in a six-month licence suspension.
- When a demerit point suspension has been served, your licence is reinstated with a baance of three points. These points remain on your record for two years after you complete your driving suspension.
- If you less than 6 demerit points, you can complete a defensive driving course, to have up to three points removed from your driving record.

There is a fee to get your licence back after a suspension.

The only appeal of a demerit point suspension is if you can prove that the demerit points were assigned in error. You may request a review of your driving record on these grounds by contacting the Deputy Registrar of Motor Vehicles at 867-667-5315 or toll free at 1-880-661-0408, extension 5315.

crash fact

Impaired driving remains one of the major causes of crashes. It kills hundreds of people each year and thousands more are injured.

Penalties for impaired driving

If you are convicted under the *Criminal Code of Canada* for an impaired driving offence you will also face penalties under the Yukon Motor *Vehicles* Act. All Canadian jurisdictions have their own territorial or provincial laws dealing with impaired driving. If you drive impaired anywhere in Canada, you will have to deal with both the federal and the territorial (or provincial) laws.

Impaired driving offences are criminal charges; they're not treated lightly. The penalties range from heavy fines to jail terms. In every case, these offences include a court order that prohibits a convicted person from operating any kind of vehicle, anywhere in Canada, for a set period of time.

Under the Yukon *Motor Vehicles Act*, a federal driving prohibition also results in the convicted person being disqualifed from holding a driver's licence. The disqualification may be longer than the court-ordered prohibition.

More information about disqualifications

In addition to the penalties applied by the judge under the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the Registrar of Motor Vehicles will also order a licence disqualification and will set certain conditions for getting the licence back.

Driving while prohibited or disqualified

If you are caught driving a vehicle while you are prohibited or disqualified you will be heavily fined or even go to jail. This will seriously affect your future driving privileges. If you are convicted of driving while disqualified you risk losing your ability to hold a Yukon driver's licence for the rest of your life.

Other costs of impaired driving

Besides the penalties listed above, there are still other costs if you are caught driving while impaired.

Insurance – if you are convicted of impaired driving and you cause a crash your insurance claim could be denied including:

- claims for your own injuries;
- damage you cause to your vehicle; or
- damage to other people or property.

You could be responsible for paying all these costs. As well, your insurance rates may increase.

Additional costs – to get your licence back you may have to take a remedial driving program and then have an ignition interlock device installed in any vehicle that you drive. You pay the costs for both of these measures. You pay for all impoundment, towing and storage fees for your vehicle and licence reinstatement fees.

Job – an impaired driving conviction can prevent you from holding certain jobs. Being unable to drive a vehicle may cause you to lose your job.

Travel – an impaired driving conviction could cause you to be denied entry into other countries.

Registrar suspensions

The Registrar of Motor Vehicles may suspend a driver's licence for reasons such as a poor driving record, failure to pay fines or medical grounds.

note

Be sure your licence shows your current address. It is your responsibility to keep the Motor Vehicles office informed when you change your address. All correspondence will be mailed to the address on your file.

Getting your licence back

If you appear in court and receive a driving disqualification with your conviction. Your licence disqualification takes effect immediately.

A Notice of Disqualification will be sent to you by registered mail to the last recorded address on your licence.

Read your notice carefully. It contains conditions that must be met in order to be eligible for licence reinstatement.

A disqualification remains in effect until you meet all of the conditions listed on the Notice of Disqualification. This applies, as well, to drivers who have left the Yukon.

Vehicle impoundment

If you drive a vehicle illegally, the police can impound the vehicle immediately for 30 days or longer. Examples include if you are unlicensed, impaired, uninsured or in an unregistered vehicle. The owner must pay for all costs associated with the impoundment of the vehicle (towing and storage).

It's important for vehicle owners to understand that they are accountable for making sure that only responsible, licensed drivers use their vehicles. For example, if an employer allows a prohibited or unlicensed driver the use of a company vehicle, the vehicle could be impounded.

A

Accelerator....19
Accidents, see emergencies
Address change....143
Aggression....106–108
Airbags....14
Alcohol, see impairment
Animals....94, 119
ATVs, snowmobiles, see off-road vehicles
Automatic transmission....16–17, 56

B

Backing up....17, 60, 75, 80
Blind spots....15, 59, 72, 82, 84, 86, 118
Booster Seats....13
Brakes
- anti-lock brakes (ABS)....20– 21, 120
- brake failure....121
- brake pedal....19
- parking brake....17, 21, 56

Braking
- emergency braking....120
- stopping distance....72

Buses
- public transit....25, 79, 89, 141
- school....88, 141

C

Cellphones, see impairment
Child car seats....13–14
Clutch, see transmission
Commercial vehicles, see large vehicles
Communication....66, 74–76
- eye contact....76
- horn....76
- lights....75
- turn signals....74–75

Construction zones....91
Crashes, see emergencies
Crosswalks, see pedestrian and intersections
Cruise control....18
Cul-de-sacs....54
Curves....69
Cyclists....81–84
- bicycle lanes....50, 51, 82
- communication....83
- observing for cyclists....82
- right-of-way rules....82
- shoulder check....82
- space margins....83

D

Distraction, see impairment
Dashboard....20
Demerit points....139, 146
Drugs, see impairment

E

Emergencies
- collision avoidance....125
- crash scene....77, 127

Emergency vehicles....89–90
Emergency workers....90–91
Emotions....96–97
Engine failure....123
Environment....25–26

F

Fees....130, 148
Fines....146, 148
Fitness....95–96
Fatigue, see impairment
Following distance, see space margins
Freeway entrance and exit lanes, see lanes

G

Gap, see space margins

Gearshift....16, 68

Glare, see vision

Graduated Driver Licencing (GDL) program....129–139

Gravity....68

H

Hand signal....75, 83

Hazard lights....21, 74–75, 123, 124

Hazards

- environmental....10–112
- night....117–118
- perception of....61–64
- poor road conditions....63
- space conflicts....62
- surprises....62
- vision blocks....63

Headlights, see lights, vehicle

Head restraints....11

Hills....17, 18, 68, 115

Horn, see communication

Horses....94

HOV lanes, see lanes

Hydroplaning....113–114

I

Identification....131, 143

Ignition switch....16

Impairment....97–102

- penalties....147, 148

Impoundment, see vehicle

Inertia....68–69

Insurance....128, 137, 148

Intersections....39–46

- controlled....39
- four-way stops....44
- right–of-way....41–46
- roundabouts....45–46
- stopping at intersections....40
- traffic circles....44
- traffic lights....41–43
- two-way stops....43
- uncontrolled....39–40
- yield signs....44

L

Lane position, see space margins

Lanes

- bicycle lanes....50–51
- bus lanes....50–51
- freeway entrance and exit lanes....53–54
- HOV lanes....50–51
- lane tracking....47–48
- merging....52–53
- passing lanes....52
- pulling into a lane....51–52
- reserved lane markings....38
- reserved lanes....50–51
- reserved lane signs....30
- turning lanes....49–50

Large vehicles....86–87

- blind spots....86–87
- communication....87
- following distance....86
- passing....86–87
- space margins....86–87
- turbulence....87

Learning to drive....101, 132–133

Licence

- address change....143
- application....131
- Class 5 Novice....134–138
- full-privilege Class 5....139, 141
- learner's licence....129–139
- licence classes....146–141
- name change....143
- renewing or replacing....143

Lights, vehicle....18, 21
headlight failure....123
headlights....117–118

M

Maintenance
periodic check....22–24
pre-trip check....22
preparations for winter....24
Medical....131, 144–145, 148
Medications, see also impairment....95, 96
Merging, see lanes
Mirrors, see observation
Motorcycles....50, 73, 84–84, 141
communication....85
observing for motorcycles....84–85
space margins....85

N

Name change....143
New Yukon residents....144
Night driving....117–118

O

Observation....57–61
ahead....58
at intersections....60–61
backing up....60
behind....59–60
blind spots....59, 86–87
mirrors....15, 59
observation cycle....58
scannin....58
shoulder checks....59–60
Off-road vehicles....141–142
Yukon Organ Donation Program....109

P

Parking
parking signs....30
rules....56
Parking brake, see brakes
Passengers....9, 104–105
Passing....51–52, 82, 85, 86
Pedestrians....79–81
crosswalks and intersections....79
pedestrians with disabilities....80
right-of-way rules....81
school zones and playgrounds....80
Peer pressure....103–104
Penalties
Graduated Driver Licensing program....139
impaired driving....147–149
unsafe driving....146
Periodic check, see maintenance
Plan ahead....6, 91, 97, 118
Point of no return....41
Pre-trip check, see maintenance
Predicting....4

R

Railway crossings, see trains
Renewing or replacing licences....143
Reserved lanes, see lanes
Responsibility....8–10
Right-of-way rules....41–46
Risk
assessing risk....64–65
choosing solutions....65–66
managing risk....64–65
penalties....139, 146–149
taking risks....95–102
Road markings....36–38
Road rage....106–108
Roundabouts....44–46

S

Scanning, see observations
School buses, see buses
School zone....27, 29, 80
Seatbelt....9, 12–14
Seeing, see vision
See-Think-Do....57–76
Shoulder checks, see observation
Sign and knowledge test, see tests
Signalling....39, 75, 89
Signals, see traffic signals
Signs, see traffic signs
Snowmobiles....141–142
Skid....65, 69, 85, 115, 120–121
Space margins....62, 65–66, 78, 81, 83, 85–86, 89–92, 94
- escape route....72, 121
- following distance....70–72, 83, 85–86, 90, 92–94
- gap....42–44, 46, 51–54, 69, 73
- lane position....72–74
- space beside....72
- stopping distance....24, 70–72
- tailgating....70, 72

Speed control....78, 81, 89–93
- speed limits....67, 80

Standard transmission....19, 20, 56, 67, 68, 93
Steering....11, 16, 66, 69–70, 78

T

Tests....130, 134–136
Traction....23, 63, 68–69
Traffic circles, see intersections
Traffic signals....34–35, 41–43
Traffic signs....27–34, 50, 145
Trains....79, 92–94
- railway signs....34, 92

Transmission
- automatic....16–17, 56
- clutch pedal....20
- standard....19, 20, 56, 67, 68, 93

Trucks, see large vehicles
Turbulence....87, 117
Turn signals, see communication
Turning around....55

U

U–turns....55

V

Vehicle impoundment....149
Vision....47, 59, 95, 131
- central and peripheral....58
- glare and shadows....112
- low-visibility conditions....110–112
- seeing....95
- screening....131, 145

W

Weather conditions....62, 71, 110–112

Y

Yielding....39–46

Licensing information

Contact your nearest Yukon Motor Vehicles office to get information on licence classifications and requirements.

For general information call:

Whitehorse 667-5315

Toll-free throughout Yukon ..... 1-800-661-0408, ext. 5315

Booking road tests

Whitehorse 667-5315

Other communities, contact the territorial agents or territorial representatives

Yukon Territorial Agents

Dawson City Liquor Store 1-867-993-5348

Faro Liquor Store 1-867-994-2724

Haines Junction Liquor Store 1-867-634-2201

Mayo Liquor Store 1-867-996-2276

Watson Lake Liquor Store 1-867-536-7311

Yukon Territorial Representatives

Carmacks Community Housing Office 1-867-863-6411

Carcross Community Housing Office 1-867-821-4281

Teslin Community Housing Office 1-867-390-2024

Old Crow, VGFN Office 1-867-966-3261

Ross River Community Housing Office 1-867-969-2347

Website addresses

Visit Motor Vehicles: www.yukon.ca

Road Safety information: www.yukon.ca/road-safety

Yukon road report: www.511yukon.ca


Yukon