TALES OF THE ROAD

A highway code for young road users

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A HIGHWAY CODE FOR YOUNG ROAD USERS

A useful guide to keeping yourself and others safe on the road.

Name: .....

.....

Remember

- Always plan your journey
- Make sure you know where you are going
- Choose the safest route
- Leave yourself plenty of time

When words appear in red, it means that if you don't follow that rule, you are breaking the law.

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WALKING

When walking...

Where there is a **pavement** or **footway**, use it.

Take care when crossing cycle lanes on the road. Cyclists may be travelling quietly but may be faster than other traffic.

If you are looking after somebody younger than you, always hold their hand when using the road.

Where there is no pavement, walk on the right hand side of the road to face the **traffic** coming towards you.

Walk one behind the other at bends in the road or at night or if there is a lot of traffic.

Take special care if you can't see the road very far ahead.

Help other road users see you. Wear or carry something light coloured or bright.

Be bright, be seen

Fluorescent materials are good. They show up in daylight and at dusk.

Reflective materials are good at night.

The Green Cross Code

The steps you need to follow to cross the road safely.

1 First find a safe place to cross

and where there is space to reach the pavement on the other side.

Where there is a crossing nearby, use it. It is safer to cross using a **subway**, a **footbridge**, an **island**, a **zebra**, **pelican**, **toucan** or **puffin** crossing, or where there is a crossing point controlled by a **police officer**, a **school crossing patrol** or a **traffic warden**.

Otherwise choose a place where you can see clearly in all directions.

Try to avoid crossing between parked cars and on a blind bend or close to the brow of a hill. Move to a space where drivers and riders can see you clearly.

2 Stop just before you get to the kerb

where you can see if anything is coming and where drivers can see you. Do not get too close to the traffic. If there is no pavement, keep back from the edge of the road but make sure you can still see approaching traffic.

3 Look all around for traffic and listen

Traffic could come from any direction.

Listen as well, because you can sometimes hear traffic before you see it.

4 If traffic is coming, let it pass

Look all around again and listen.

Do not cross until there is a safe gap in the traffic and you are certain that there is plenty of time.

Remember, even if traffic is a long way off, it may be approaching very quickly.

5 When it is safe, go straight across the road – do not run

Keep looking and listening for traffic while you cross, in case there is any traffic you did not see, or in case other traffic appears suddenly.

Look out for cyclists and motorcyclists travelling between lanes of traffic.

Do not walk diagonally across the road.

Parked vehicles

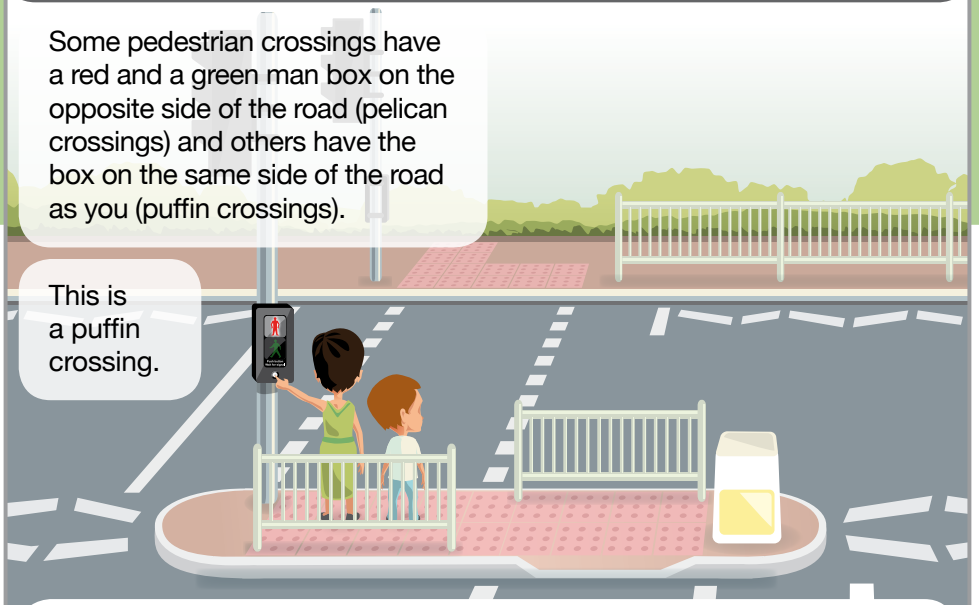
Try not to cross between parked cars

But if there is nowhere else to cross:

- Choose a place where there is a space between two cars and make sure that it is easy to get to the pavement on the other side of the road.
- Make sure neither car is about to move off – look for drivers in the cars, lights and listen for engines.
- Don't cross near large vehicles. You could be standing in a blind spot, where the driver cannot see you.
- Walk to the outside edge of the cars and stop. Here you can be seen by drivers and you can look all around for traffic.
- Use the Green Cross Code. When the road is clear, cross, still looking and listening as you go.

Using a crossing with traffic lights

Some pedestrian crossings have a red and a green man box on the opposite side of the road (pelican crossings) and others have the box on the same side of the road as you (puffin crossings).



Push the button and wait where you can see the signal and the traffic.

Once the green man shows and the traffic has stopped you can start to cross. There may be a bleeper sound at this time. You should still keep looking for the traffic while you cross.

Do not start to cross if the green man is not showing. When the green man disappears there could be:

- A flashing green man
- A red man signal
- No signal

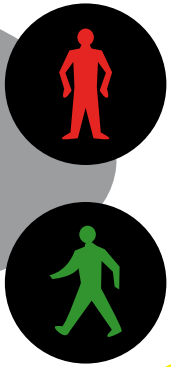
Remember

Some green men will only work if a pedestrian is waiting by the push button.

You may have to wait a little time. Be patient!

Cross the road quickly between the studs. Do not run.

Some crossings have an island in the middle of the road. Treat each half of the crossing as a separate crossing; press the button and wait for the green man.



WALKING

Crossing at a zebra crossing

- If there is a zebra crossing, use it.
- Wait on the pavement near the kerb until all the traffic has stopped before you start to cross.
- After traffic has stopped from both directions, walk across on the black and white stripes.
- Keep looking all round and listening in case a driver has not seen you.
- Drivers need plenty of time to slow down and stop, especially in wet weather.

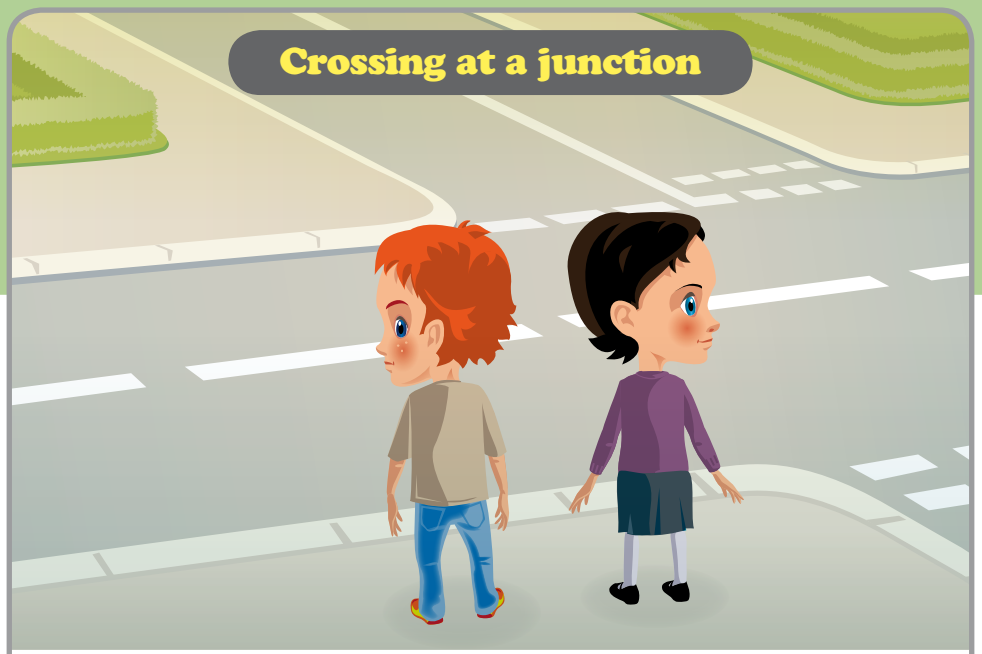
Crossing where there is an island in the road

Use the **Green Cross Code** to cross to the island. Stop there and use the Code again to cross the second half of the road. Remember to look all round and listen.

Watch out for overtaking **vehicles**.

If there is an **island** then treat each half of the crossing as **separate crossings**. Do not assume that vehicles will stop. Check that they have stopped before crossing.

Crossing at a junction



If you have to cross at a road junction, look out and listen for **traffic turning the corner**, especially from behind you.

School Crossing patrols, police or traffic wardens

When **school crossing patrols**, **police officers or traffic wardens** are controlling the traffic, wait until they signal to you to cross the road. Always cross in front of them.

WALKING

Crossing one-way streets

Use the **Green Cross Code** when crossing **one-way streets**. Check which way the traffic is going. If there is **more than one lane of traffic**, do not cross until it is safe to cross the whole road.

Pedestrian safety barriers

If you need to cross the road walk to the gap in the **pedestrian safety barrier** and use the **Green Cross Code**. Never climb over or walk outside the barrier.

Trams

Take extra care where **trams** run along the road. They move quietly and cannot steer to avoid you.

Crossing bus lanes

In **bus lanes**, buses may go faster than other traffic. Sometimes they go in the opposite direction. **Cyclists** and taxis may also be using them so take special care when crossing.

Railway level crossings

Always obey the instructions shown.

There are many kinds of crossings:

- They may have gates or barriers or neither.
- There may also be warning lights or bells.

You **must never cross** when red lights flash or when you can hear warning sounds.

Always stop behind the STOP line. Never go past a barrier that is down, or being lowered.

Remember, if the lights continue to flash after a train is gone, another train is coming. It is not safe to cross until the lights go out.

If there are no flashing red lights, warning sounds or gates, you should still stop, look and listen to make sure it is safe to cross.

Look out for these signs:

1. Level crossing with gate or barrier ahead

2. Level crossing without gate or barrier ahead

3. Level crossing without gate or barrier

Remember

Plan each journey

- Where do you want to go?
- What is the safest way to get there?

Make sure that drivers can see you.

- What sort of clothes should you wear?
- Are you standing somewhere that drivers expect you to be?

Use the Green Cross Code when you are crossing the road.

ROLLERBLADING

When rollerblading or skating, make sure you do so safely and without causing a nuisance to others.

- Rollerblade only on the pavement, never on the road. Where possible use playgrounds, parks or special areas provided.
- Avoid busy areas and always take care near other pedestrians, particularly young children and the elderly.
- Look out for signs – rollerblading may be banned on certain pavements.
- Use the **Green Cross Code** when crossing the road.

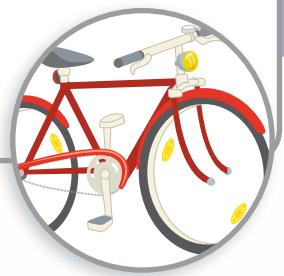
Remember

Respect other road users.

CYCLING

Your bike – check it out

Make sure your cycle is safe to ride – your brakes and tyres should be working well. Make sure your front and back lights work well, and your back **reflector** is clean.



When you have to carry anything on your cycle, use a **bike bag** or **basket**. Make sure that you don't wear any loose clothing so that nothing can get caught in the chain or wheels.

Before you set off

Always wear a **cycle helmet** that is the correct size and securely fastened – it will help to protect your head if you fall off.

Help other road users to see you. Wear **light coloured or fluorescent** clothing in daylight and at dusk, and something **reflective** at night.

Do not ride a bike that is too big or small as it can affect your balance.

Cycling in the dark

Wear reflective clothing and/or accessories (belt, arm or anklebands) or a backpack in the dark.

You must not cycle at night without a white front light, a red back light and a red reflector at the back, so make sure they are clean and working.

Remember that if you have a dynamo on your bike your lights can go out when you stop.

CYCLING

On your bike

Before starting off, turning right or left, overtaking, or stopping, you must look behind and make sure it is safe and then give a clear **arm signal** to show what you intend to do (see page 29).

You **must not ride on the pavement** unless there are special signs allowing you to do so.

When you get on your bike look all round for traffic. When it is safe to move off, cycle away.

Always keep both hands on the handle bars unless you are signalling or changing gears.

Be particularly careful near large vehicles like lorries and buses. The drivers may not be able to see you. Do not ride in the space between the vehicle and the kerb, because they may be going to turn left.

When turning from one road to another, pedestrians who are crossing that road have the **priority**, so give way.

When you are next out in a car, look at the cyclists. Are there times when you can't see them? Which ones are easier to see and why?

Remember Use your eyes and ears all the time.

You **must obey traffic light signals and road signs** and the signals made by police officers, traffic wardens or school crossing patrols.

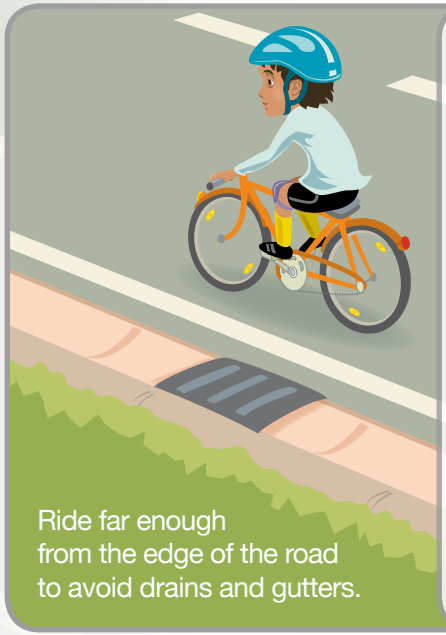
You **must not hold onto any other vehicle** or another cyclist.

You **must not carry a passenger** on your cycle unless it is specially designed to do so.

You should never lead an animal whilst cycling.

Watch out for traffic doing unexpected things.

Never ride more than two abreast, and ride in single file on narrow or busy roads and when riding round bends.



Ride far enough from the edge of the road to avoid drains and gutters.

If you want to turn right from a busy road, it is safer to stop on the left hand side before or after the **junction** and wait for a safe gap in the traffic before walking with your cycle across the road.

Only overtake when you are certain it is safe to do so. If you are overtaking parked vehicles, watch out for them starting off while you are doing so, and look out for car doors opening or pedestrians crossing near them. You should also look for traffic coming towards you.

You should not use a personal stereo or a mobile phone whilst cycling.

CYCLING

Parking your cycle

Always park your cycle thoughtfully so that it is not in the way of other people. It is best to use a cycle stand if there is one.

Lock it to prevent it being stolen and have the frame marked with your postcode.

Cycle routes and crossings

Where available, always use routes away from busy roads. In some areas special **cycle routes, tracks and lanes** are provided.

Pedestrian Crossings

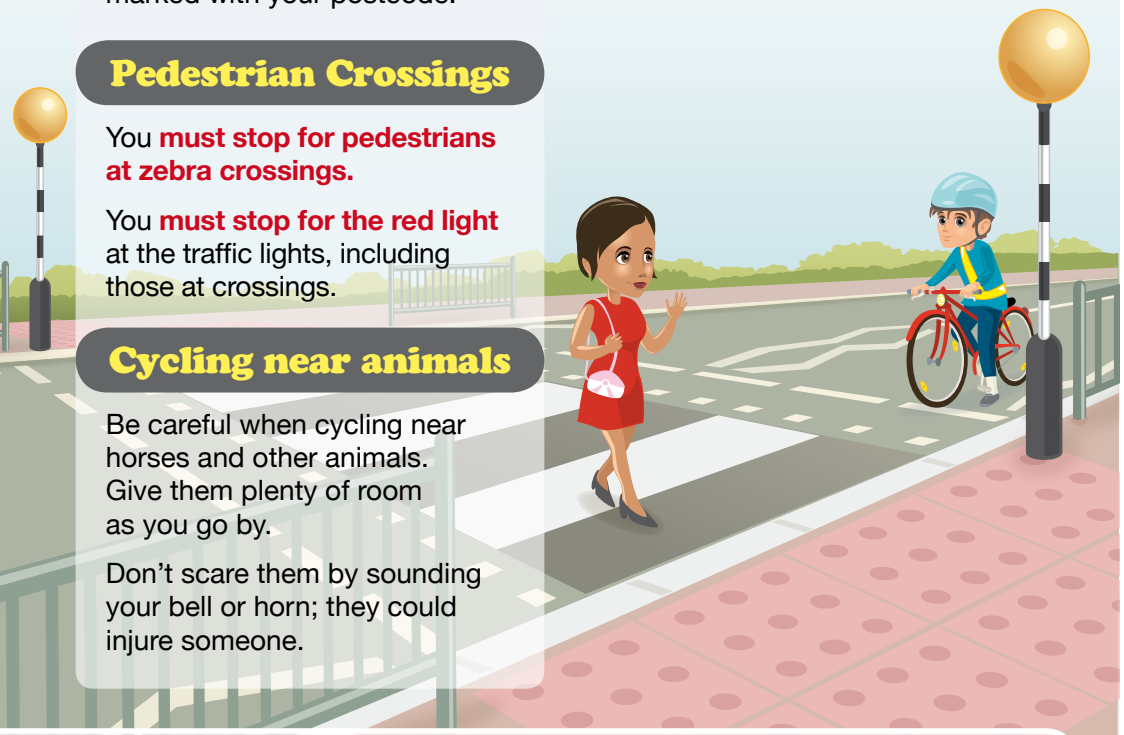
You **must stop for pedestrians at zebra crossings.**

You **must stop for the red light** at the traffic lights, including those at crossings.

Cycling near animals

Be careful when cycling near horses and other animals. Give them plenty of room as you go by.

Don't scare them by sounding your bell or horn; they could injure someone.



These signs show the different routes:

Recommended route for cycles | Cycles only | Shared with pedestrians | Separate cycle & pedestrians | Cycle lane

Bus lanes

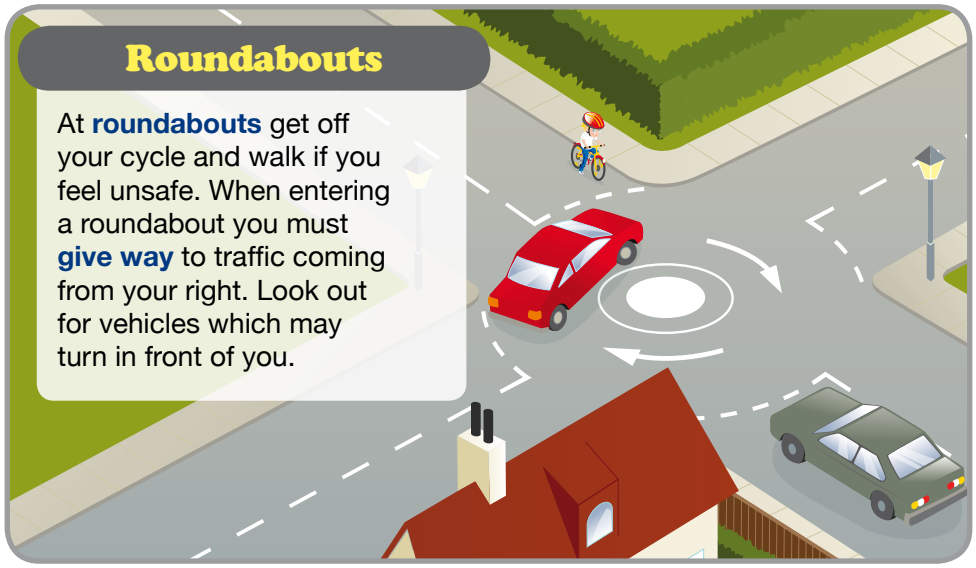
Only cycle in bus lanes if there is a cycle shown on the sign.

Tram tracks

Cyclists should take extra care when driving close to tram tracks, especially if the rails are wet. It is safest to cross the tracks directly at a right angle.

Roundabouts

At **roundabouts** get off your cycle and walk if you feel unsafe. When entering a roundabout you must **give way** to traffic coming from your right. Look out for vehicles which may turn in front of you.



Don't Cycle

where you see this sign

Remember

Look after your bike and make sure it is safe.

Make sure that you are dressed in the right clothes:

- Light, bright, fluorescent, reflective clothes
- A correctly fitted helmet

Make sure that you can always see and hear well.

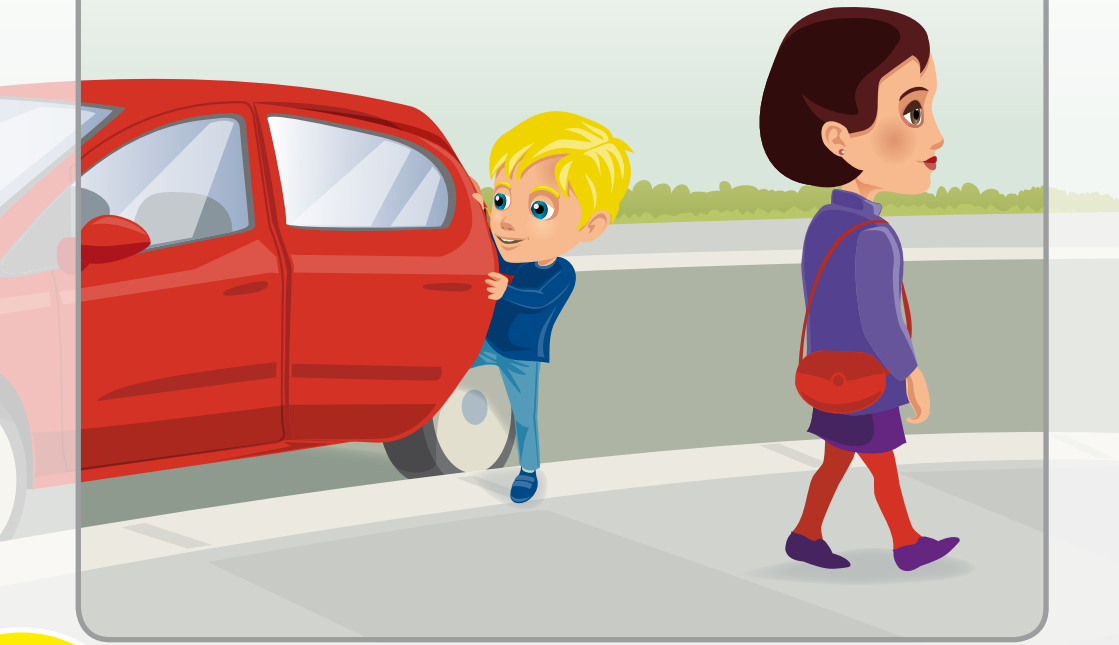
RIDING IN CARS

The law says that **seatbelts must be worn at all times.**

Children under the age of 12 and under 135cms in height **must use the correct child seat for their size.**

When you get in or out of the car, use the door on the pavement side. Only get out when you are sure it is safe.

- Do not block the driver's view in the mirror.
- Never lean or wave out of the window or throw or hang anything out.
- Only open doors or windows if it is safe.
- Keep your hands away from door handles while the car is moving.



USING BUSES AND TRAMS

When you wait for a bus or tram, stand on the pavement well back from the traffic. It is dangerous to play around at bus or tram stops.

Wait for people to get off the bus or tram before you get on.

Always do what the driver tells you and don't distract them.

If you do need to cross the road after getting off a bus or tram, wait for it to move away first so that drivers can see you and you can see what's coming.

Remember

- **Always try to think about what might be happening around you.**
- **Make sure that you are easily going to be seen.**
- **Drivers need to concentrate on what they are doing. Make sure that you do not distract the driver, no matter what vehicle you are travelling in.**
- **Where there are seatbelts always use them.**

ANIMALS ON THE ROAD

Riding horses or ponies

Check that your horse or pony is properly **shod** and the **saddlery and bridle** fit well and are in good condition.

Make sure you can control your horse. If your horse is nervous, ride with other less nervous horses.

Before you move off or turn, always look around to see if it is safe, give a clear arm signal and move off with both hands on the reins.

Avoid roundabouts wherever possible. If you have to use one, keep to the left and look out for traffic coming on to the roundabout from other roads. Signal left before you leave the roundabout.

When you lead a horse, always keep yourself between it and the traffic.

Make sure other road users can see you by day and night. Fit fluorescent / reflective **legbands and tailguard** to your horse and wear a fluorescent reflective jacket or belt.

It is safer not to ride at night, but if you have to you should fit a light which shows white to the front and red to the rear and you should wear a band on your right arm and/ or leg/riding boot.

If you are under 14 you **must wear an approved safety helmet** which **must be fastened securely**. Those 14 and over should also wear a helmet. Wear boots and shoes with hard soles and heels.

Taking care of dogs

Do not let your dog out on its own. Keep it on a short lead when walking on the pavement or road and keep between the dog and the traffic.

If you have a dog in the car, make sure it and any other animal is restrained so it cannot distract the driver or cause injury if there is a collision. Put the animal on a lead before getting out of the car.

Remember

- Make sure that your animals are safe.
- Be aware of other road users.
- Do not take your animal somewhere that will frighten it.

ROAD SIGNS

Always obey traffic light signals, road signs and the signals given by police officers, traffic wardens and school crossing patrols.

Learn the meaning of all road signs and markings. Circular signs usually give orders, triangular signs give warnings and rectangular signs give information.

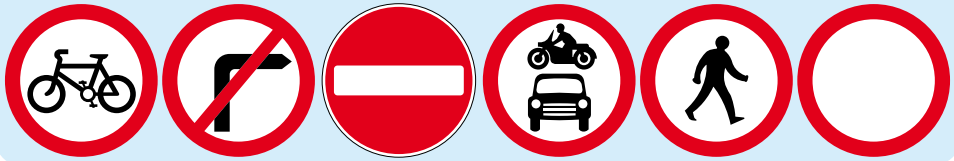
Signs giving orders

These signs are mostly circular.

Those with blue circles usually tell you what you **must** do.

Keep left | Keep right | Turn left ahead | Turn right ahead | Ahead only | Mini roundabout (give way to traffic from the right)

Signs with red circles tell you not to do something



No cycling | No right turn | No entry for vehicles including pedal cycles | No motor vehicles | No pedestrians | No vehicles except pedal cycles being pushed by hand

These two signs **must** also be obeyed:

Give way to traffic on major road

Stop and give way

Warning signs

These are usually triangular

Road works

Slippery Road

Danger – words describe the danger

Children going to or from school

Steep hill downwards

Crossroads

Roundabout

Uneven road

Cycle route ahead

Road narrows on both sides

Traffic signals ahead

Zebra crossing ahead

Two way traffic

Information signs

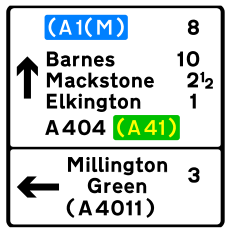
These are usually rectangular

One way street

Recommended route for pedal cycles to place shown

Tourist attraction

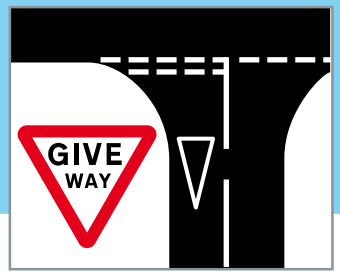
Route for pedestrians to place shown



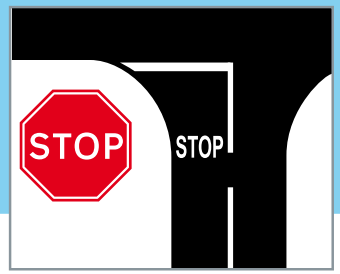
On approaches to junctions

ROAD MARKINGS

Across the road

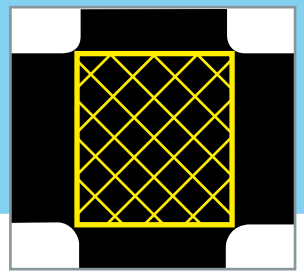


Give way to traffic on the major road



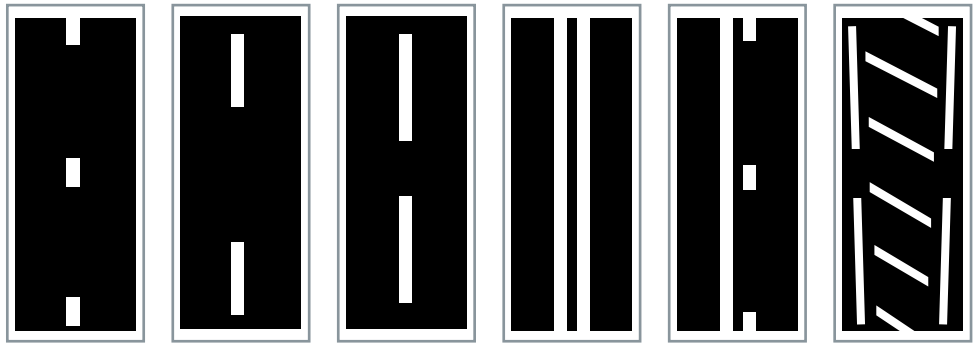
Stop at the **STOP** line

Box junction



Do not enter the box unless your exit road or lane is clear, except to turn right

Along the road



Lane Line

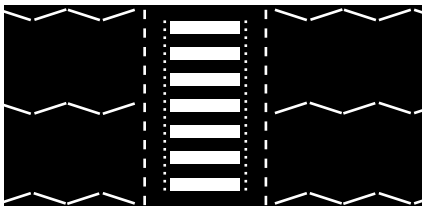
Centre Line

Hazard warning line

Do not cross double white lines

Do not cross solid line if it is on your side

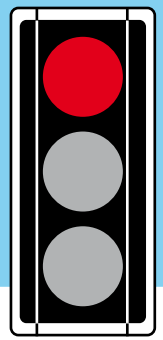
Do not enter marked area unless it is safe to do so



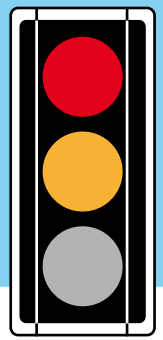
Zebra and pelican crossings' zig zag lines. Vehicles must not overtake, wait or park in the zig zag areas. Pedestrians should not cross on the zig zag areas. They should always use the crossing.

Keep school entrance clear

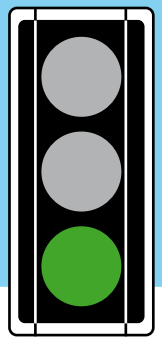
TRAFFIC LIGHTS



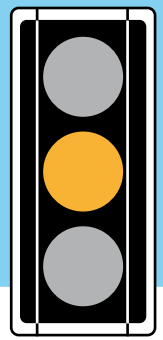
Red
STOP
Wait behind the **stop** line



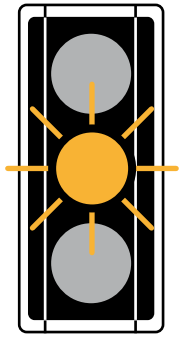
Red and amber
Also means
STOP



Green
You may go if it is safe to do so. Take special care if you mean to turn left or right and give way to pedestrians who are crossing.

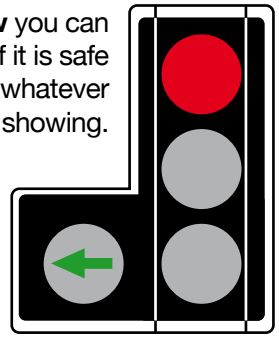


Amber
Also means
STOP

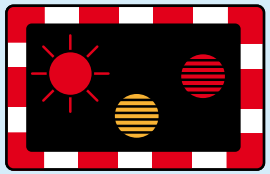


Flashing amber
Means you **must give way to pedestrians** on the crossing, but you may continue if there is nobody on the crossing.

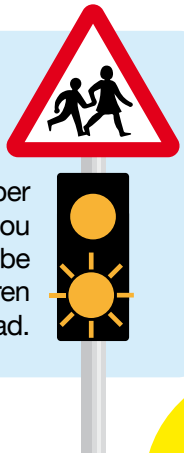
If there is a **green arrow** you can go in the direction shown if it is safe to do so. You can do this whatever other lights are showing.



Flashing lights



Flashing lights mean you **must stop.** They appear at level crossings, lifting bridges, air fields, fire stations etc



Flashing amber lights tell you there could be school children crossing ahead.

SIGNALS

Police officers' signals

Also given by traffic wardens

Stop
Traffic approaching from the front

Stop
Traffic approaching from behind

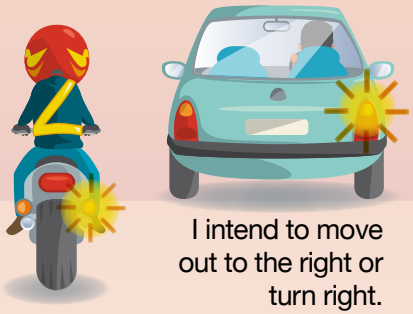
Stop
Traffic approaching from both front and behind

Come on
Waving on traffic from the front

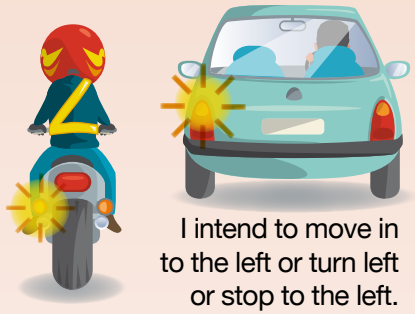
Come on
Waving on traffic from the side

Come on
Waving on traffic from behind

Signals given by drivers



I intend to move out to the right or turn right.



I intend to move in to the left or turn left or stop to the left.

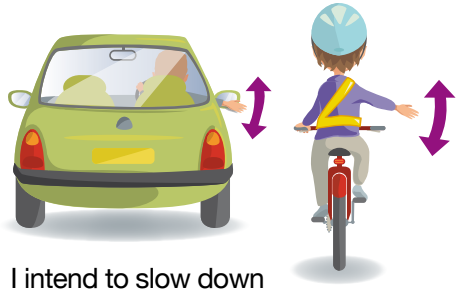
I am slowing down or stopping.

I am going to reverse.

Arm signals

I intend to move out to the right or turn right.

I intend to move in to the left or turn left.



I intend to slow down or stop (particularly useful at zebra crossings).

GLOSSARY

Here are some of the words used in this book and their meanings:

Bus lane
• Part of the road marked for buses. May sometimes be used by taxis, cyclists and motorcyclists.

Cycle lane
• These are marked by a white line (may be broken) along the carriageway.

Cycle track
• These are normally located away from the road but may occasionally be found alongside footpaths and pavements.

Fluorescent material
• Coloured material which shows up brightly in daylight.

Give way
• Give priority to other road users.

Kerb
• Edge of the pavement.

Pavement or footway
• A place at the side of the road where people walk.

Pedestrian
• Person who walks.

Pedestrian crossing
• Special places where people can walk across the road safely.

Pedestrian island
• Part of the road which is raised or marked, where pedestrians can wait in the middle of the road.

Pedestrian safety barriers
• Metal fences at the edge of the pavement to stop people from crossing that part of the road.

Pedestrian subway
• Pathway under the road.

Pelican and puffin crossings
• These are signal-controlled crossings operated by pedestrians.

Priority
• Who goes first. Priority is decided by pre-set rules and is indicated by signs or markings on the road.

Reflective material
• Special material which shows up brightly when a light shines upon it, especially at night.

Road junction
• Where two or more roads meet.

Roundabout
• Where two or more roads meet with an island in the middle.

School crossing patrol
• A person who helps you cross the road. They wear a special uniform and carry a sign to stop the traffic.

Toucan crossing
• Push-button operated light-controlled crossings which allow cyclists and pedestrians to share crossing space and cross at the same time.

Traffic
• Anything which uses the road.

Traffic lanes
• The space between the white lines painted along the road.

Traffic lights
• Red, amber (yellow) and green lights which tell the traffic when to stop and when to go.

Traffic warden
• A person who wears a uniform, and a cap with a coloured band. Wardens sometimes direct traffic and tell people when to cross.

Vehicle
• Anything which travels along the road on wheels.

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