



How to drive - What you need to know for the practical test

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Cockpit drill

Caution! Please learn this and carry it out in order every time you enter the car and sit in the driver's seat. Do not forget to take care walking into the road and before opening the driver's door. Opening a door carelessly can put you and others in danger. It may force them to brake or swerve and could cause an accident.

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to:-

- Make sure all the doors are closed
- Ensure your seat and head restraint are properly adjusted
- Check your mirrors are properly adjusted
- Fasten your seatbelt.

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Make sure the hand brake is on and the gear stick is in neutral before starting the engine
1. **DOORS** - Check they are securely closed. Make sure that any passengers have closed theirs. You are responsible for the safety of your passengers. A door not properly shut may fly open as you drive along.
 2. **SEAT** - Adjust it for comfortable use of foot controls and steering. Push the pedal on the far left (clutch) down to the floor. You should be able to do this without stretching.
 3. **STEERING** - Adjust seating position for comfortable steering. Don't get too close or you may find it awkward to let the pedal up and you could knock your knee on the steering wheel.
 4. **SEATBELTS** - Ensure all seatbelts are on correctly. The law requires that all passengers wear seatbelts where fitted, unless they have an exemption certificate. It is the driver's responsibility that children under 14 have the seat belt fastened.
 5. **MIRRORS** - Adjust your mirrors. You should be able to see clearly in the mirror with the minimum of head movement. When adjusting, hold the mirror keeping your fingers off the glass. Adjust the door mirrors to reduce any 'blind spots'.

You are ready to switch on the engine, but before you do you have to check that the handbrake is on and the gear lever is in neutral

Moving off

You should normally use 1st gear for moving off except when moving off down a steep hill, then it may be best to use 2nd gear.

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to: _

- Move off safely and under control on a level road, from behind a parked vehicle and on a gradient
- Use the MSM routine
- Check your blind spot for traffic and pedestrians
- Make balanced use of the accelerator, clutch, brakes and steering
- Use the appropriate gear

Get ready to move - Take your first look to the front and into the mirrors for traffic and pedestrians and then get yourself ready to move.

To do this push the clutch down and select 1st gear. Find the 'biting' point and keep the clutch still in this position.

Check it's safe - Look in your interior and door mirrors again and look round to check the blind spots (the areas you are unable to see in the mirrors). Be prepared to wait if the coast is not clear. Decide if you need to signal. The rule about signals in any circumstances is that they should be given "to help other road users". If there is not the slightest chance of anyone being affected by you moving off, including oncoming traffic and pedestrians, there is no point in signalling? But if there is any sign of life anywhere near you, why risk it? Have your hand on the handbrake ready for release.



Move away - It's safe. Let's go. Are you 100 per cent sure? Check the blind spot again by looking over your right shoulder (see diagram on the left) and release the handbrake. The car should slowly move forwards. If the car doesn't move, let the clutch up a little more.

To increase your speed, press the gas pedal gently and gently raise the clutch and take your foot away from the clutch pedal. You will need to change into 2nd gear soon after moving away.

Now you are on your way - Keep to the left, unless road signs or markings indicate otherwise. The exceptions are when you want to overtake, turn right or pass parked vehicles or pedestrians in the road

Steering

Fold your palms loosely over the rim and rest your thumbs lightly up the flat of the wheel.

Relax your shoulders and keep your arms free of your body.

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to:-

- Hold the steering wheel at either the ten-to-two or quarter-to-three position
- Steer at the correct time and smoothly
- Avoid crossing your hands over one another when turning
- Avoid letting the wheel spin back through your hands when straightening up.
- Keep to the left normally
- Avoid weaving in and out between parked cars
- Obey lane markings

To steer accurately you should look well ahead at where you are going. You must be able to operate the main controls without looking at them. Looking down will result in your car wandering from side to side.

Try to keep both hands on the wheel when braking or cornering.

Although you should keep both hands on the wheel as much as possible, there are times when you need to change gears or operate the lights, wipers and other controls. When learning, find a straight, quiet road where you can steer with one hand while you practise using the controls.

When approaching right bends, move your right hand to the top of the wheel ready to pull it down to steer round the curve in the road. *Your right hand should always stay in the right hand area of the steering wheel.*

When approaching left hand bends, move your left hand to the top of the wheel to pull it down to steer round the curve in the road. *The left hand should stay in the left part of the steering wheel.*

When turning, try not to cross your hands over one another, or in other words, using the diagram above, try and keep your right hand in the red part of the steering wheel and your left hand in the blue.

When turning left it is important for you to maintain a position about a metre from the kerb.

- Too close to the kerb and your rear wheel may roll over the kerb or even strike it, which could damage to the tyre.
- Too close to the kerb could cause you to swing out and into the path of approaching vehicles.
- Too close to the kerb and swinging out just before you turn could cause the following vehicle to swerve across the road to pass you.

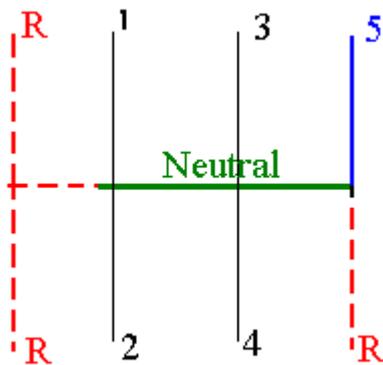
Changing gears

Caution! When driving, you should be able to change gears without looking down at the lever or your feet. Practise this sitting in the car with the engine switched off and the clutch pressed down.

If you are having difficulty mastering the gears, why not try driving an [automatic car](#).

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to:-

- Use the controls smoothly and correctly
- Balance the accelerator and clutch to move away smoothly
- Accelerate evenly
- Avoid stalling the car
- Choose the right gear and change in good time before a hazard
- Brake gently and in good time
- Know how and when to apply the hand brake



In most vehicles the first 4 gears form an 'H' appearance on the gear lever. Neutral is the middle position in the 'H' formation on the gear stick. To engage reverse gear you sometimes have to either push the gear lever down or lift it up towards you. Different vehicles have different setups. So always check where reverse is on a new vehicle. Reverse is often in one of the 3 positions marked in dotted red in the diagram opposite. There may also be a 5th gear.

- **1st Gear** is used for moving off, manoeuvring and for creeping slowly in traffic and at junctions.
- **2nd Gear** is used for moving off down very steep hills, building up speed after moving away and driving at low speeds.
- **3rd Gear** is used to build up speed and when you need more power for climbing hills. It also increases your control when going down steep hills and dealing with some bends.
- **4th Gear** is used for driving at speeds generally higher than 30 mph, where there are no hazards to confront.
- **5th Gear** not all vehicles have a 5th gear which gives better fuel economy. This is normally only used on open roads when travelling constantly at higher speeds.

To Practise - change UP through the gears on the road, first find a fairly straight, wide road where there is little or no other traffic.

Move off in first gear and change into 2nd gear as soon as you can. Accelerate to about 15-20 mph, and then change into 3rd gear. Accelerate in 3rd to 25-30 mph and then change into 4th.

You will only need to practise using the 5th gear when you are competent using the first 4 gears.

To Practise - change DOWN through the gears When you have built up your speed to 30 mph and you are in 4th gear, check the mirror to make sure it is safe. Brake gently to slow the car down to about 20 mph. Release the brake and change into 3rd gear. Check the mirror again and, if safe, reapply the brake gently and slow down to about 10 mph. Release the brake and change into 2nd gear. Check the mirror, if safe, build up your speed, changing up the gears, until you reach 30 mph again. Keep practising until you feel confident.

About Block Gear Changes

Some drivers have a habit of always changing through the gears one-by-one (1,2,3,4,5 - 5,4,3,2,1). This habit has stuck with some older drivers from when they originally learned to drive many years ago.

Today, in a normal car and for everyday on-road driving, it is not generally good practice to use the gears in this way. We can change down the gears in blocks (5th to 2nd or 4th to 2nd. etc)

Over the years, motor car design and engineering has improved. Compared with cars of even ten years ago, modern cars are lighter, more powerful and more aerodynamic.

These changes mean that the driving method that was essential in older cars is no longer needed in modern driving.

It is not necessary to change gears in sequence. For example: If you are driving along at 50 mph in 5th gear, and you want to turn left into a side road, you may be able to do so without having to stop. As you approach the junction you need to reduce your speed (using your brake) until you are going slowly enough to take the junction safely. When you have slowed down to a safe speed using the brakes, you have to select a gear that will drive the car comfortably at that speed. In most cars the best gear for the job will be 2nd. So, move the gear lever directly to the second gear position skipping the other gears.

The benefits of this style of driving include better fuel economy, less overall wear and tear, less driver fatigue on long journeys and more steering control in emergencies.

Hill starts

When you can move off safely and smoothly on a level road, the next stage is to move off on a hill.

The examiner on the driving test will expect you to:-

- Move off safely and under control on a gradient
- Use the MSM routine
- Check your blind spot for traffic and pedestrians
- Make balanced use of the accelerator, clutch, brakes and steering
- Use the appropriate gear
- Avoid rolling back

Uphill Starts

Moving off on a gradient demands good co-ordination of the gas pedal, clutch and handbrake, for the obvious reasons that without it you will roll backwards and you will fail your practical test.

The normal routine for moving off away from the kerb applies, **mirrors-signal-manoevre**

Select first gear, bring the clutch to the 'biting point' and apply higher-than-usual revs. Check your mirrors, make sure too, that there are no pedestrians about to cross the road immediately behind your car, check over your right shoulder then if a signal is needed then give it. If it is safe to move off, release the handbrake and let the clutch bite a little more - enough to get the car rolling forward, but not enough to cause the car to jerk. Give a bit more gas as the car moves off, letting the clutch come right up as the car gathers speed.

Remember that it will be harder for the engine to overcome an extra load up the hill (like when you ride a cycle up a hill, you have to pedal a lot harder). Therefore, you must build up more momentum than usual in first gear before changing, and be sure not to fumble selection, otherwise all momentum will be lost.

Lastly if you signalled check that the indicator has cancelled, then drive the car normally and engage higher gears when required.

Downhill Starts

The approved method of making a downhill start is to use the footbrake to hold the car during take-up of the clutch.

The normal safety checks and signals are required, but the technique differs from a uphill start in the later stages.

To move off, engage first gear, second gear is permissible if the hill is very steep. With the clutch pedal right down (depressed), fully apply the footbrake. Keeping both pedals depressed, Do your checks to make sure it's safe to move off **mirrors-signal-manoevre** not forgetting to look over your right shoulder. If all is safe, release the handbrake and find the biting point with the clutch pedal. Now slowly release the footbrake. The car

should begin to move, so let the clutch come fully home and transfer your right foot away from the brake pedal onto the gas. How much gas you need depends upon the steepness of the hill.

A steep down hill gradient may require you stay in second gear, otherwise third gear is the highest likely to be needed, so you can keep control of the car.

Approaching T junctions

Get into the Habit of using the mirror-signal-manoevre (MSM) routine early when approaching junctions or any other hazards such as obstructions in the road.

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to:-

- Use the MSM routine in good time
- Brake gently and in good time
- Position your vehicle correctly - Choose the correct lane where there are lane markings and in a one-way street
- Look for obstructions, traffic and pedestrians

The examiner will also be looking to see that you: -

- Read Stop signs, Give Way signs, etc, accurately
- Assess the speed of traffic.

While carrying out the junction routine you must keep a constant look-out for other road users. Doing this will help to ensure that you have all the information you need to make the correct decisions about your intended actions.

Give way to pedestrians crossing any road you are turning into. Watch out for those with their backs to you. They may not have seen or heard you and could walk into the road without looking.

Take great care when turning into a main road; you will need to watch for traffic in both directions and wait for a safe gap.

Look Out

For Signs and road markings indicating priorities

Mirrors

As soon as you are aware that there is a junction or other hazard ahead, you must check your mirrors to see what is happening behind. Just looking is not enough. You must ask yourself the question, 'Is it safe to carry out the manoeuvre?' A manoeuvre is any action involving a change to your speed or position.

Signal

When you are sure that it's safe to proceed, give the appropriate signal and in plenty of time. This gives others a chance to see them!

Position

Check your mirrors again to ensure that it's safe to move into the correct position for the junction.

Speed and Gear Use the footbrake to ensure that you have plenty of time to change gear before the junction. If things seem rushed, you're going too fast. Make a final observation check all around and then complete your manoeuvre.

Final Observation - Look for obstructions, traffic and pedestrians.

Keep a special look-out for cyclists or motorbikes travelling along close to the kerb. When approaching the end of the road, watch out for other vehicles who may be cutting corners. Be prepared to hold back for them

Do not assume that a vehicle approaching on your right will turn in just because its left signal is on. You must be sure it is safe before you proceed. The only time you can be certain the other vehicle is going to turn left is when you see it start to do so. How many times have you seen an indicator not cancelled or a driver change their mind? Don't just pay attention to the traffic on your right, a vehicle approaching from your left may be overtaking something and be temporarily on the right hand side of the road, so be sure to check BOTH ways before proceeding. When the way is clear move away smartly and do not cause an obstruction. Check mirror again.

How to do right turns

Get into the Habit of using the mirror-signal-manoevre (MSM) routine early when approaching junctions or any other hazards such as obstructions in the road.

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Speed and Gear Use the footbrake to ensure that you have plenty of time to change gear before the junction. If things seem rushed, you're going too fast. Make a final observation check all around and then complete your manoeuvre.

Final Observation - Look for obstructions, traffic and pedestrians.

Wait until there is a safe gap between you and any oncoming vehicle.

Check your side mirror for anyone fool enough to be overtaking you before you turn (yes it does happen!)

Keep a special look-out for cyclists or motorbikes travelling along close to the kerb.

Sometimes these are hidden from your view behind oncoming cars or lorries.

Give way to pedestrians crossing any road you are turning into. Watch out for those with their backs to you. They may not have seen or heard you and could walk into the road

without looking.

The main danger when turning right is from oncoming vehicles. Slow down and wait until they have passed the junction. Don't be afraid to stop when you reach the point of your turn if it is not safe. When the way is clear move away smartly and do not cause an obstruction.

When turning right into the new road make sure you look into the road before you go. Avoid cutting the corner because another vehicle could be approaching the junction.



More about the Position before Turning Right

Get into position early and maintain it. If you position correctly on a wide road, following vehicles should be able to pass on your nearside (on the drivers left side). There is a tendency these days for wide roads to be marked with chevrons. The chevrons are designed to improve safety by encouraging better driver following behaviour. These are used to separate traffic lanes or to protect traffic turning right.

There are 2 types of chevrons.

- If the area is bordered by a **solid white line**, you should not enter it except in an emergency.
- If the area is bordered by a **broken white line**, you should not enter the area unless it is necessary and you can see that it is safe to do so.

When turning right you can enter a broken white line chevron if you feel by not doing so you would stop the traffic flow from behind. The image (*left*) shows an example when you should drive into a chevron

How to turn in the road

This is a useful turn in cul-de-sac and roads where there are no side turnings or openings to reverse into.

The examiner on the driving test will expect you to turn your car around in the road:-

- Safely
- Smoothly
- Under control
- Making proper use of the accelerator, clutch, brakes and steering
- Without touching or mounting the kerb.

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Are aware of other road users
- Keep looking all around throughout the manoeuvre.

A Choose a safe place where there is good visibility, no obstruction in the road or on the pavement (watch for the lamp post, telephone poles or even post boxes), and where you have plenty of room. Stop on the left. Check the indicators have cancelled. Make sure the way is clear in front and behind, check the blind spot over your right shoulder

B Go slowly forward in first gear using clutch control, turning your steering wheel briskly to the right. Aim at getting the car at right angles across the road.

C When the front of the car is about one metre from the kerb and still moving very slowly, change the lock by turning the steering wheel briskly to the left. As the front wheels get near to the kerb, put the clutch right down and use your foot brake to stop. Apply your hand brake. Select reverse gear. Find the biting point.

Make sure the way is clear. Check in all directions. If clear, release your hand brake. Back slowly across the road. Turn the steering wheel as far to the left as it will go.

D As the back of the car nears the kerb (you will see this over your right shoulder), turn the wheel briskly to the right so that when you stop you will be nearly on the right-hand lock ready to drive forward again.

Stop the car before you hit the kerb. Put on the hand-brake. Select first gear.

Again make sure the road is clear and drive forward, turning the wheel to the right.

E You should now be able to straighten up on the left of the road.

The turn round the corner

Using reverse gear is difficult for new drivers. The car steers differently, the front wheels become, in effect, the rear ones. When you drive forward you can see the car turning when you steer. In reverse, you have to wait for the steering to take effect.

The examiner on the test will expect you to reverse:-

- Safely
- Correctly
- Smoothly
- Under control
- Keeping reasonably close to the kerb
- Without mounting or hitting the kerb
- Without swinging out too wide.

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Check traffic and road conditions
- Look out for traffic and pedestrians
- Stop in a safe position.

Sequence for reversing to the left

A On the approach, draw up to the kerb on the left. Cancel your indicator. Note any obstructions and the type of corner. (The corner shown is a sharp left angle turn - some corners are wide with very long turns, semi-sharp). Move off following the MSM procedure, remember to look over your right shoulder! Do you need to indicate? Drive to the point beyond the junction at **B**.

B Draw up about 0.5 metres from the kerb and about 2 car lengths past the junction. If you used your indicators make sure they have cancelled. You are allowed to take your seat belt off at this point if you find it makes it easier for you to turn around to see out of the rear window. If it makes it any easier to see, lower your left side mirror. Carry out a visual check all round. If clear, engage reverse gear and move off very slowly. DO NOT use any signals.

C Looking in the rear window, you will see the kerb disappear behind the car pillar and start to appear in the rear side window. At this point turn the steering wheel fully to the left (This is a sharp corner remember). The front of the car will swing out, so check for traffic both ways and for pedestrians behind, continue very slowly if clear. If a vehicle comes down the road you are reversing round, STOP. If the vehicle continues with its journey than wait until they pass and you can then carry on. If the vehicle stops behind you, then you are causing an obstruction so you will have to engage first gear and move back to **B** where you can start the process again.

On the test:-If someone comes right up close behind you after you have turned the corner, but before the examiner has indicated it is finished, wait a moment, this is to give the examiner a chance to say it is far enough, if he judges it is nearly finished. If he says nothing, then pull forward round the corner and start again, without saying a word.

D Straighten up when looking out of your rear window and checking that the car is running parallel to the kerb. Watch in front as well, if someone comes around that corner and you do not notice, you will certainly fail your test. If someone is coming STOP. Continue when they have passed by. Keep a clearance of a few centimetres from the kerb. Stop on the examiner's instruction.

E Engage your handbrake and neutral. Put your seat belt back on. Wait for the examiners next instruction Remember, perfection is not expected. Do not assume that you have failed if you think it is not perfect. What you regard as an error may actually be extremely trivial and not marked at all.

Reverse parking

This takes advantage of a car's manoeuvrability when driving in reverse gear. When doing this you will be something of an obstacle, so use of the *mirror-signal-manoevre* routine is important. It is also vital to keep a look-out for passing traffic.

The examiner on the driving test will expect you to:-

- Reverse into a space of about two car lengths
- Park your car at the kerb safely, smoothly and under control.

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Take all-round observation
- Do not get too close to the parked car
- Do not mount the kerb
- Stop reasonably close to the kerb

A Drive forward and stop parallel to and not more than one metre away from the blue car. Select reverse gear. Look to check its O.K. to move off. Drive back very slowly and watch for the corner of the blue car appearing in the side window.

B When you can see the corner of the blue car, turn the wheel to the left one full turn. Check the road ahead and the road behind over your right shoulder. If it's safe, continue reversing until the front of the car aligns with the back of the blue car. Turn the wheel fully to the right, watching you clear the blue car. The car will begin to swing in towards the kerb.

C Here you will be close to the kerb and the blue car. Still move the car very slowly and take off some of the right lock so that the front of your car does not swing in too far. Check your distance from the kerb and from the blue car. Keep your car within two car lengths from the blue car.

D Here you should be close to the kerb. If you need to correct your position you are allowed to move forward and backwards to get it right. But too much will be frowned upon by the Examiner. If you are not in the middle of the road and not on the kerb you should be O.K.

Park your car in a Parking Bay

(Only at centres which have a car park)

From 5th May 1999 you may be required to do the reverse park exercise as a reversing into a parking bay at the driving test car park.

If you are asked to reverse into a parking bay, you can usually choose whether to reverse from the right or the left.

Reverse parking into a bay must be carried out at the test centre at the start or end of the test, when there is a car park at the test centre. So if your test centre does not have a car park, you will **NOT** be asked to do this exercise.

The examiner on the driving test will expect you to do your bay parking:-

- Safely
- Smoothly
- Under control
- Making proper use of the accelerator, clutch, brakes and steering
- Without crossing the white bay marking.

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Are aware of other road users
- Keep looking all around throughout the manoeuvre

The layout below shows a parking bay. You can choose whether to reverse from the right or the left. When practicing you will be able to see which way suits you best.

Image A shows an approach to reverse into a bay from the right. You will be able to see the bay clearly over your right shoulder.

Image B shows how to approach a bay to get a clear view in your rear window. This is the easier option, however it can only be used if you have plenty of space in front of the bay. This is what you should be going if you are asked to do these manoeuvres on your test.

- Look at the layout markings and the size of the space available
- Use your mirrors and signal if necessary
- Check your position and keep your speed down
- Use effective all-round observation
- Look out for pedestrians
- Reverse and park as neatly as possible, with your wheels straight
- Make sure that your vehicle is neatly parked between the layout markings in the bay.

When doing these manoeuvres take your time, reverse under full control, safely and steadily. Always use good, effective all-round observation and show consideration to other road users.

You should be aware that if any "shunting" (moving forwards then back again) is needed to correct your ultimate position between the lines, then it must be done **BEFORE** your car enters the bay. Beware: they're really picky on this one! I've seen people fail for having just half of one tyre over a bay line. Critics say that if the Examiner has to open

the door & lean out to check the line, how the heck is an inexperienced driver supposed to be able to judge!!!

Can you adjust your left side mirror to do this manoeuvre?

It is OK for you to move a mirror before starting the manoeuvre, but this could cause a problem especially if you become too reliant on the mirror and forget to use all round observations. When doing this manoeuvre you have to reverse using all round observations and occasional quick glances at the side mirror for checking your position. If lots of practice and encouragement fails to get you confidently into a bay then sometimes we would suggest moving the mirror, but keep checking all round and it is important that **the mirror is returned to its usual setting before driving off.**

Emergency Stops.

Throughout your driving test your aim will be to slow down in good time and pull up gently, **except in the emergency stop exercise**, which will show your competence in taking immediate and effective action.

★**From 4th May 1999** the emergency stop will be conducted at random during one-in-three car tests to enable extra time to be spent in normal driving.

The examiner on the driving test will expect you to:-

- Stop the car promptly
- Keep the car under control without locking the wheels
- Stop the car in the shortest possible distance
- Stop the car without endangering other road users

The Examiner will ask you to stop at various places during the driving test. Whenever you stop, you should do so in a safe place. The Examiner will not trap you by asking you to stop in a illegal place, but you have to select a safe position for normal stops.

It's during one of these 'stops' that the Examiner will say to you that, very shortly he will ask you to stop the vehicle as in an emergency. The signal he will give you as he says 'Stop' will be shown to you. Years ago it used to be a tap on the dashboard or the windscreen, usually with the test board. However Examiners now appear to favour holding up their right hand onto the windscreen and saying 'Stop'.

This is the one occasion in the test when you don't follow the *mirrors-signal-manoevr*e routine. Before giving you the signal to 'Stop' the Examiner himself would have checked the road behind with a look over his right shoulder. He won't ask you to stop if there could be a danger to you from following traffic.

When you get the signal, release the accelerator pedal and slide your right foot across to the brake pedal, easy. Apply firm pressure, trying to judge pedal movement so that the brakes are on the point of locking. Hold the pedal still then, as the car slows to a standstill, gradually release the pressure. During braking, keep two hands on the steering wheel and hold the car in a straight line and be alert for the first signs of the wheels locking up. If a skid has actually started, ease the pedal but don't release it completely, and then re-apply the pressure.

Your instinct will tell you that as you brake you should apply the clutch. However try to avoid depressing the clutch until just before you stop. This will give the car extra braking from the engine.

With the car safely at a standstill, and the clutch and brake pedals still depressed, apply the handbrake and move the gear lever into neutral.

Move on again when told to do so by the Examiner, not forgetting the *Mirrors-signal-manoevr*e routine. Sometimes you may stop in the middle of the road. So don't forget to look over your left shoulder as well. Something could be on the left of the road.

Approaching roundabouts

Take notice and act on all the information available to you, including traffic signs, traffic lights and lane markings which direct you into the correct lane.

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to:-

- Use the **MSM** routine
- Position correctly and adjust your speed
- Choose the correct lane where there are lane markings
- Watch out for motorcyclists, cyclists and pedestrians
- Take effective observations
- Assess the speed of traffic

To Turn Left (taking the first exit) *Click the button on the image below*

- signal left and approach in the left-hand lane
- keep to the left on the roundabout and continue signalling left to leave.

To go straight on (taking the second exit) *Click the button on the image below*

- select the appropriate lane on approach to and on the roundabout. If no marking on the road it is usually safest to keep to the left lane
- stay in this lane until you need to alter course to exit the roundabout
- signal left after you have passed the exit before the one you want.

To Turn Right (taking the last exit or third exit) *Click the button on the image below*

- signal right and approach in the right-hand lane
- keep to the right on the roundabout until you need to change lanes to exit the roundabout
- signal left after you have passed the exit before the one you want.

Note:- Our animation shows the vehicle exit the roundabout into the right lane (Lane 2). You should only do this if there is traffic in the nearside lane or you wish to turn right straight after leaving the roundabout.

In an ideal situation you should leave the roundabout in the left lane (Lane 1)

When approaching a roundabout:-

use **Mirrors - Signal - Manoeuvre** at all stages and decide as early as possible which exit you need to take, give an appropriate signal. I've always found that if you take your time and make sure you are in the correct lane a good distance from the roundabout you can't go far wrong.

Adjust your speed and Position to fit in with traffic conditions.

If you get your approach speed and gear right you can merge in with the traffic most times without stopping.

Another hint is sometimes you can judge where other drivers are going before they

signal etc by looking at their faces and seeing which road they are looking into. Generally the road they look into is where they are going.

You will readily recognise body language or facial expression in other road users when eye contact has been made.

This in itself does not mean it is safe to proceed but it does mean the other person is aware of you and many accidents result from people not noticing other road users.

Always be aware of the speed and position of all the traffic around you.

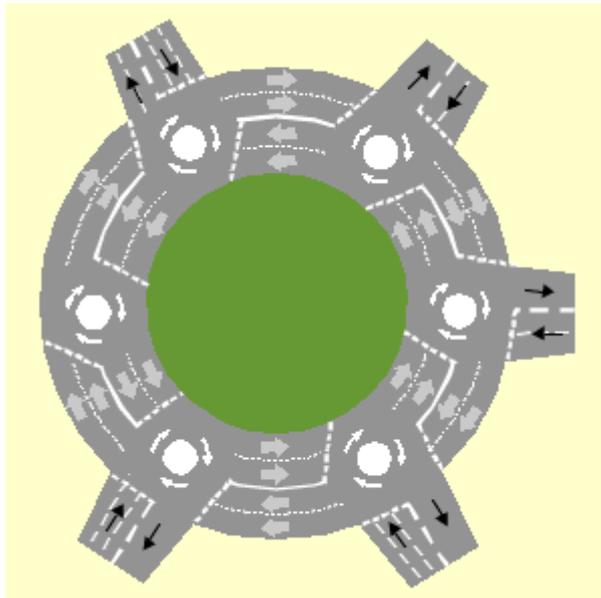
Don't worry if you have to stop when you reach the roundabout. When it's clear, ease up off the clutch smoothly, don't rush, keep using the mirrors, and above all, stay calm.

Once you are on the roundabout maintain a reasonable speed. Failing to do this, especially when you are in the right-hand lane, may result in other drivers passing on the nearside.

Watch out for vehicles already on the roundabout; be aware they may not be signalling correctly or at all.

Always keep an eye on the vehicle in front as you're about to emerge. Don't assume the driver won't have to stop while you're still looking right. **Many rear end collisions happen this way.** Make sure the vehicle has actually moved away.

'Magic Roundabout' in Hemel Hempstead, Herts.



'Magic Roundabout' at Swindon



• Mini Roundabouts

- Approach these in the same way as a roundabout, but remember there is less space and time to signal and manoeuvre.
- Vehicles coming towards you, they may want to turn right.
- Be sure any vehicle on the roundabout is going to leave before you join the roundabout yourself.
- Be aware of drivers that are using it for a 'U turn'
- All vehicles **MUST** pass round the central markings except large vehicles which are physically incapable of doing so.
- When turning right at a mini roundabout, you don't always have time to signal, but remember to check left mirror

Multiple Mini roundabouts. At some complex junctions, there may be a series of mini-roundabouts at the intersections. Treat each roundabout separately and give way to traffic from the right.

When negotiating a number of junctions within a short distance of each other, choose a lane that puts you in the correct position for the next one.

In all cases watch out for and give plenty of room to

- pedestrians who may be crossing the approach and exit roads
- traffic crossing in front of you on the roundabout, especially vehicles intending to leave by the next exit
- traffic which may be straddling lanes or positioned incorrectly
- motorcyclists
- cyclists and horse riders who may stay in the left-hand lane and signal right if they intend to continue round the roundabout
- long vehicles (including those towing trailers) which might have to take a different course approaching or on the roundabout because of their length. Watch out for their signals.

Pedestrian crossings

You **MUST NOT** park on a crossing or in the area covered by the zigzag lines. You **MUST NOT** overtake the moving vehicle nearest the crossing or the vehicle nearest the crossing which has stopped to give way to pedestrians

There are 5 different types of pedestrian crossing: - Zebra, Pelican, Puffin, Toucan and Pegasus.

The examiner on your driving test will expect you to: -

- Demonstrate consideration and courtesy for pedestrians
- Stop at Pelican, Puffin, Toucan and Pegasus Crossings if the lights are red
- Give way to pedestrians at Pelican Crossings if the lights are flashing amber
- Slow down and stop at Zebra Crossings if anyone is crossing or waiting to cross

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Control your speed on approach to Pedestrian Crossings
- Move off, after looking carefully to ensure it is safe.

- **Zebra:-**

A Zebra crossing is a path across a road marked with black and white stripes where pedestrians may cross.

They have **NO** traffic lights.



Pedestrians using the crossing should give traffic plenty of time to see them and to stop before starting to cross. Vehicles will need more time when the road is slippery. Remember that traffic does not have to stop until someone has moved onto the



crossing. Wait until traffic has stopped from both directions or the road is clear before crossing. Keep looking both ways, and listening, in case a driver or rider has not seen you and attempts to overtake a vehicle that has stopped.

Drivers approaching a Zebra crossing are made aware of the crossing because of its black and white poles with flashing yellow beacons and zigzag road markings. As you approach a zebra crossing look out for people waiting to cross and be ready to slow down or stop to let them cross. **Use your mirrors frequently** on approach so you know exactly what following traffic is up to and stop before the white dotted line - not after it. If you have time, give an arm signal for slowing down like the one on the right. This lets the pedestrians know what you are doing and also warns other vehicles that you are stopping.

You **MUST** give way when someone has moved onto a crossing. **Do Not** wave people across; this could be dangerous if another vehicle is approaching and don't flash your headlights! Try and make eye contact with anyone waiting. This helps reassure them that they have been seen.

Be aware of pedestrians approaching from the side of the crossing after you have stopped.

- **Pelican: (Pedestrian Light Controlled Crossing)**

These are signal-controlled crossings operated by pedestrians.

The name derives from a cute pseudo-acronym for 'Pedestrian Light Controlled', with the 'o' changed to an 'a' in deference to the bird. The use of improbable animal symbols began in 1951 with the introduction of 'Zebra' Crossings.

Push the control button to activate the traffic signals. When the red figure shows, do not cross. When a steady green figure shows, check the traffic has stopped, then cross with care. When the green figure begins to flash you should not start to cross. If you have already started you should have time to finish crossing safely.

At some pelican crossings there is a bleeping sound to indicate to blind or partially-sighted people when the steady green figure is showing, and there may be a tactile signal to help deaf blind people.

Drivers approaching a Pelican crossing are made aware of the crossing because of its traffic lights and zigzag road markings. Iron railings are usually used to stop pedestrians entering the road away from the crossing.

Plan what you are going to do before you get there. If, for example, the lights are on green for some time and people are waiting at the crossing, be prepared to slow down as they could turn to red! Use your mirrors frequently on approach so you know exactly what following traffic is up to and stop on the white line - not after it!

These are signal-controlled crossings where flashing amber follows the red 'Stop' light. You **MUST** stop when the red light shows. When the amber light is flashing, you **MUST** give way to any pedestrians on the crossing. If the amber light is flashing and there are no pedestrians on the crossing, you may proceed with caution.

After the lights start flashing, watch out for people making a last-minute dash. Be prepared to let them cross but do not wave others onto the crossing.



- **Puffin (Pedestrian User-Friendly Intelligent crossings)**

These differ from pelican crossings as there is no flashing green figure phase. On puffin crossings the red and green figures are above the control box on your side of the road. Press the button and wait for the green figure to show..

Infra-red cameras similar to those used to find earthquake victims trapped under rubble are being used to help people cross the road. Attached to traffic lights at pedestrian crossings, the cameras extend the time drivers see red so elderly or disabled people aren't at risk from oncoming traffic. The new 'smart' system also uses heat sensors to tell

if pedestrians are waiting on the pavement, and can even override the red light shown to drivers if they've already got to the other side.

It has reduced delays to motor vehicles, and improved crossing conditions for

elderly and disabled persons by automatically varying the crossing times.
Drivers approaching a Puffin crossing are made aware of the crossing because of its traffic lights and zigzag road markings. Iron railings are usually used to stop pedestrians entering the road away from the crossing
the lights have no flashing amber phase, so the lights just change like a normal traffic light at a junction.

- **Toucan: (Two-Can Cross)**

On toucan crossings cyclists are permitted to ride across the road.

Drivers approaching a Toucan crossing are made aware of the crossing because of its traffic lights and usually zigzag road markings (zigzag marking are not always present). Iron railings are usually used to stop pedestrians and cyclists entering the road away from the crossing.

The lights have no flashing amber phase, so the lights just change like a normal traffic light at a junction.



- **Pegasus**



The Pegasus crossing is usually used outside race courses or areas where horses are trained. They appear to be very popular in Scotland.

The Pegasus crossing is similar to any other light controlled crossing, but in addition to provision for pedestrians (as at a Puffin Crossing) and/or cyclists (as at a Toucan crossing) the Pegasus crossing makes special provision for horses.

Drivers approaching a Pegasus crossing are made aware of the crossing because of its traffic lights and zigzag road markings. Iron railings are usually used to stop pedestrians and horses entering the road away from the crossing.

From a drivers point of view, the crossing works in the same way as ordinary traffic lights.

For riders there is a 'high level' push button to operate the crossing. Because this is placed on the traffic-light support, the horse has to come very close to the road in order for the button to be pressed ... So be careful!

- **Watch out for Pedestrian Refuges**

Pedestrian refuges or traffic islands are placed in the middle of wider roads where there is no crossing point. This helps to narrow the road giving pedestrians a safe area to wait whilst they cross the other half of the road. Drivers have priority at these traffic islands.

Box junctions

Box junctions are normally used on large busy junctions such as traffic light controlled crossroads, T-Junctions and even roundabouts. These have criss-cross yellow lines painted on the road.

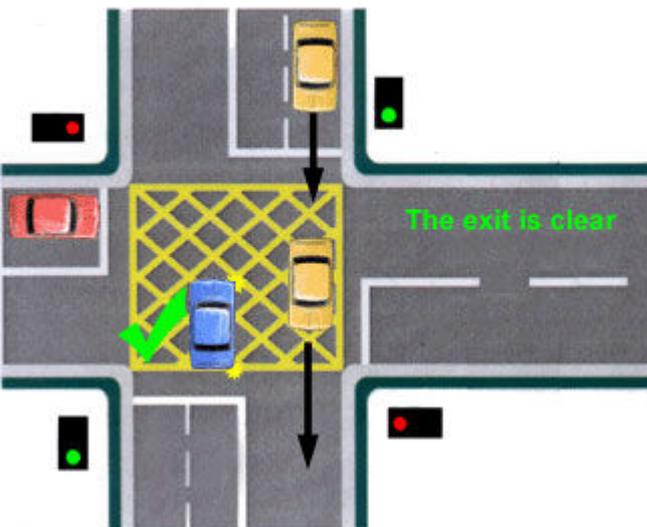
The examiner on your driving test will expect you to: -

- Use the *MSM* routine in good time
- Not to enter a box junction unless your exit road is clear
- Slow down and stop before the box junction if your exit road is not clear

The examiner will also be looking to see that you:-

- Control your speed on approach to box junctions.
- Move off, after looking carefully to ensure it is safe.

How to use a Box Junction



Box junctions make it possible to keep the flow of traffic moving and therefore keep the junction clear, by preventing traffic from stopping in the path of crossing traffic.

Use the Mirror, Signal, Manoeuvre routine (*MSM*) early and this will give you time to assess the junction before you get there.

Our diagram on the left shows a box junction at traffic lights. You should enter the box junction if you wish to turn right and your path is blocked by oncoming traffic. It is OK for you to wait on the yellow criss-cross providing your exit road is clear.

If you wait outside the box in these circumstances, you could fail your driving test.

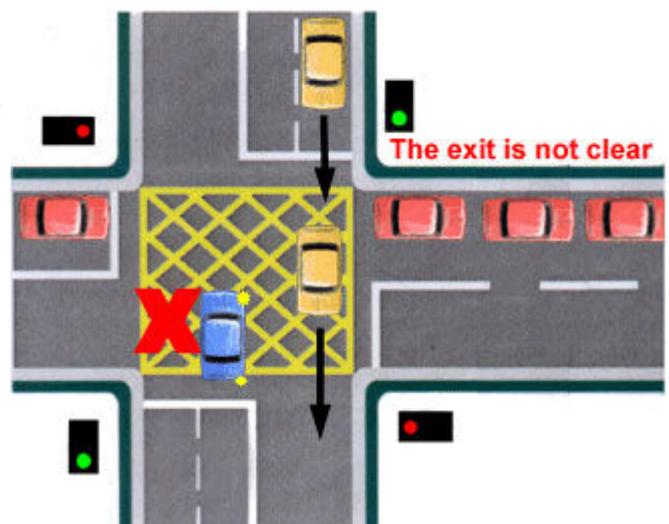
When the way is clear move away smartly and do not cause an obstruction.

Be careful when queuing inside the box junction as you may not have time to clear the junction before the traffic lights change.

The diagram on the right shows **when you should not enter the box junction**

You **MUST NOT** enter the box until your exit road or lane is clear.

Because there is a line of traffic already in the road on the right, there is no room for you to join this queue without blocking the flow of traffic shown by the yellow cars.



In these circumstances you should not enter the box.

If you enter the box in these circumstances, you could fail your driving test.

Box junctions shouldn't be feared. If anything they make life easier. Like everything else when learning to drive, keep practising.

Notes