

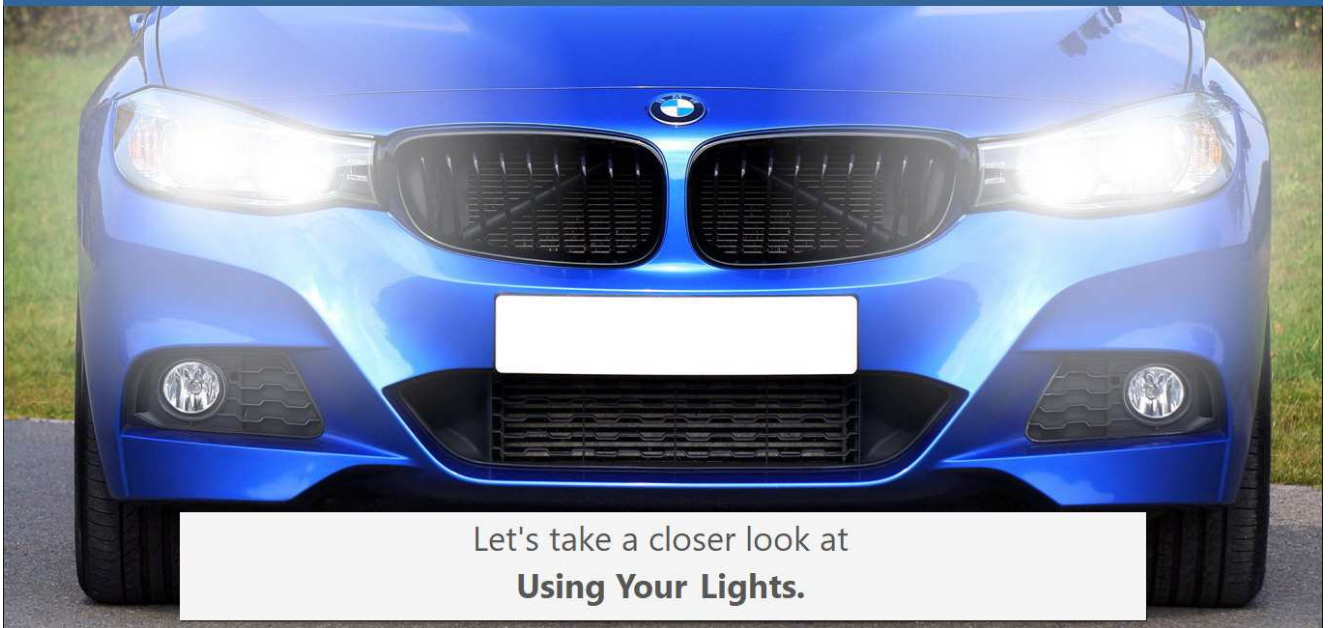
Using Your Lights

Using Your Lights

Welcome to this **Perfect Driver** course. Throughout this course, we are going to look at the law, skills, techniques, and ideas to help you become a better, and safer driver.

In this lesson, we'll look at **Using Your Lights**.

Using Your Lights



Let's take a closer look at
Using Your Lights.

Using Your Lights

Your Lights

Car lights are used to light up the road at night, during inclement weather, or poor visibility. Your car can display lights at different strengths - even different angles. From park lights, to low beam, through high beam, and fog lights - some cars even have lights that can look around corners.



Using Your Lights

Using your driving lights is pretty simple - there are only a few settings, albeit with a few simple things to understand.

Turn your lights on when it is dark enough to require them. Some cars have automatic lights, but most will not. So, when it becomes darker, or you see street lights on, turn on your own lights.

Your lights serve two purposes - one, so you can see the road ahead of you. Two, so that other road users can see you, no matter the driving conditions.



Using Your Lights

Using Your Lights

The controls for the lights in any car are generally found in a control stick connected to the steering column - but not always.

When driving a new car, you should always first familiarize yourself with the controls - see where the lights controls are, as well as the indicators. They may not be where you expect them to be. They could be on the right hand side or the left hand side of the steering column, or even a switch on the dashboard itself.



Using Your Lights

Defect Notices. Police in all states have the power to issue defect notices on infringing vehicles. This may include cars where certain lights are out. One light out, like in the image below, may earn you a defect notice.

When issued with a defect notice, you may not be able to drive the car at all. So it is up to you to make regular checks and maintenance on your lights to ensure your car is not defected.



Using Your Lights

Pictured here is the car we will use to illustrate how different light settings work on any car.

Currently, this car has no lights on.



Using Your Lights

The first setting is the **Park Lights**, or **Parking Lights**. Turning on your parking lights will illuminate your dashboard, and illuminate the lights at the front and back of your car, albeit not a great amount.

You can use this setting when it is just getting dark, but not quite dark enough to turn on your full lights.



Using Your Lights

The next setting is **Low Beam**. These are turned on when required - when it is dark, foggy, raining heavily, or dangerous to drive.

Low Beam activates bright lights at the front of your car that illuminate the road ahead. The rear of the car will illuminate some red lights so you can be seen from behind.



Using Your Lights

Finally, you have a light setting called **High Beam**.

High Beam illuminates a large part of the road in front of you. So much so, that it is illegal to use High Beam with a car either within 200m in front of you, or approaching from the other direction at less than 200m. The amount of light, plus the angle of the lights, can make it difficult for the other road users to see without being dazzled.

High Beam is designed for highway driving when there are no other cars around.



Using Your Lights

Some cars have what are called **Fog Lights**, or **Driving Lights**. These are normally controlled by another switch in your car, and are generally physically separate from your normal driving lights at the front of your car.

You are only allowed to use your fog lights if driving in fog, mist, or other atmospheric conditions that restrict your visibility.



Using Your Lights

Try the settings below to see the difference each makes.

NO LIGHTS

PARKING LIGHTS

LOW BEAM

HIGH BEAM

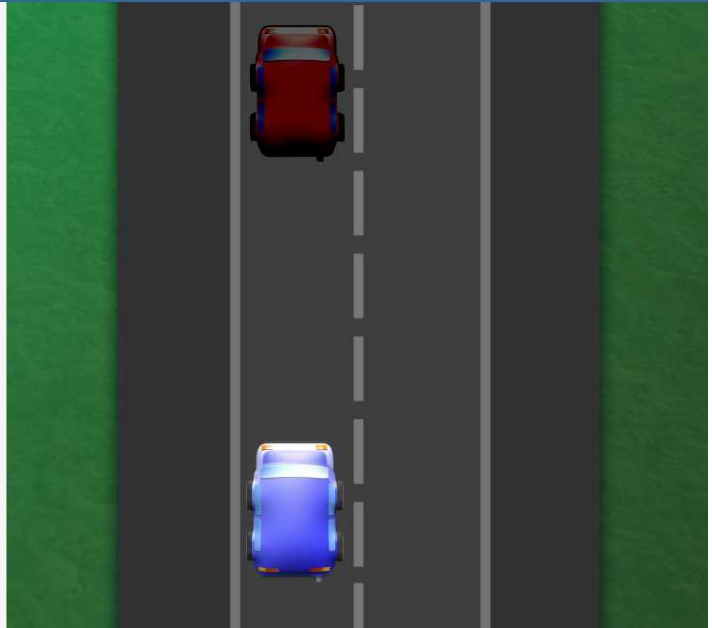
FOG LIGHTS



Using Your Lights

Using Your Lights

The blue car here is currently driving without any lights on. When the street lights are on, or visibility is poor, it is night, or in general vision would be improved with your lights on, you must turn them on.



Using Your Lights

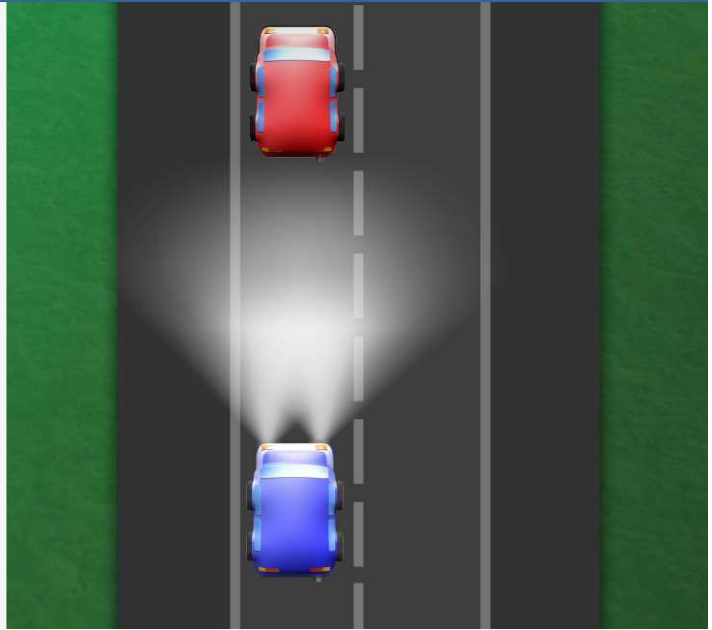
Here, the blue car has turned on his **parking lights**. Parking lights do not throw much light out - and are fine for that time when it is just starting to get dark. However, for driving at night, parking lights do little more than highlight where you are, not the road in front of you.



Using Your Lights

Using Your Lights

Here the blue car has their **low beam** lights on. These are the standard level of lights you'll use in suburban driving. They throw out quite enough light so that you can see the road, cars in front of you, and other cars can see you quite easily.

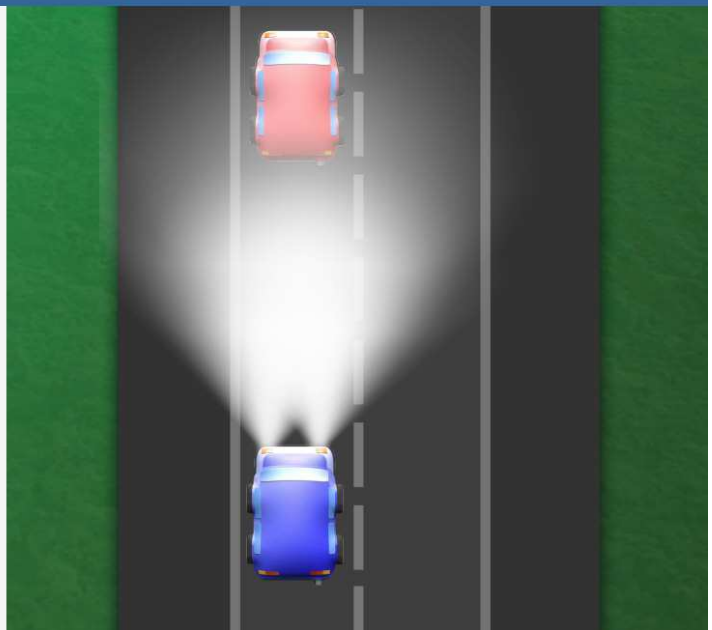


Using Your Lights

Now the blue car has turned on his **high beam** headlights.

While it most certainly throws out more light, you may note that it throws a little too much light on the car in front of the blue car.

Where there is a car less than 200m in front of you, you are not allowed to use your high beam lights. The bright beam can momentarily blind a driver in front.

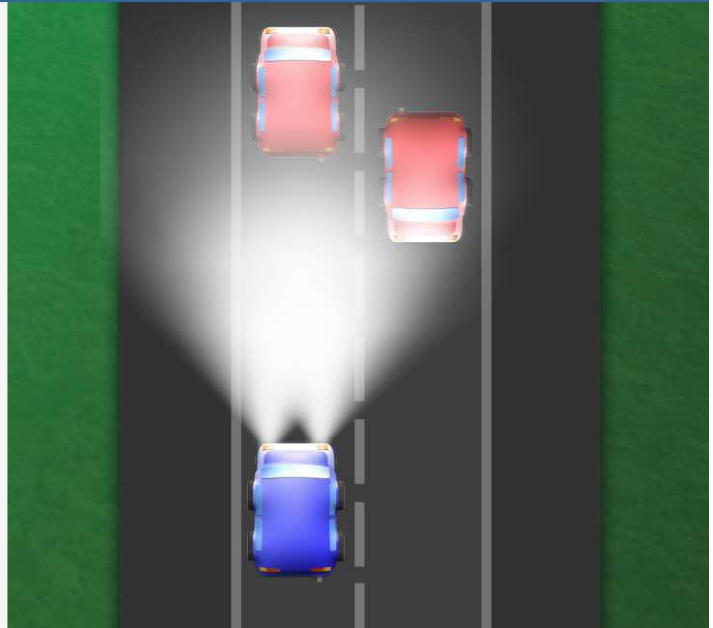


Using Your Lights

Using Your Lights

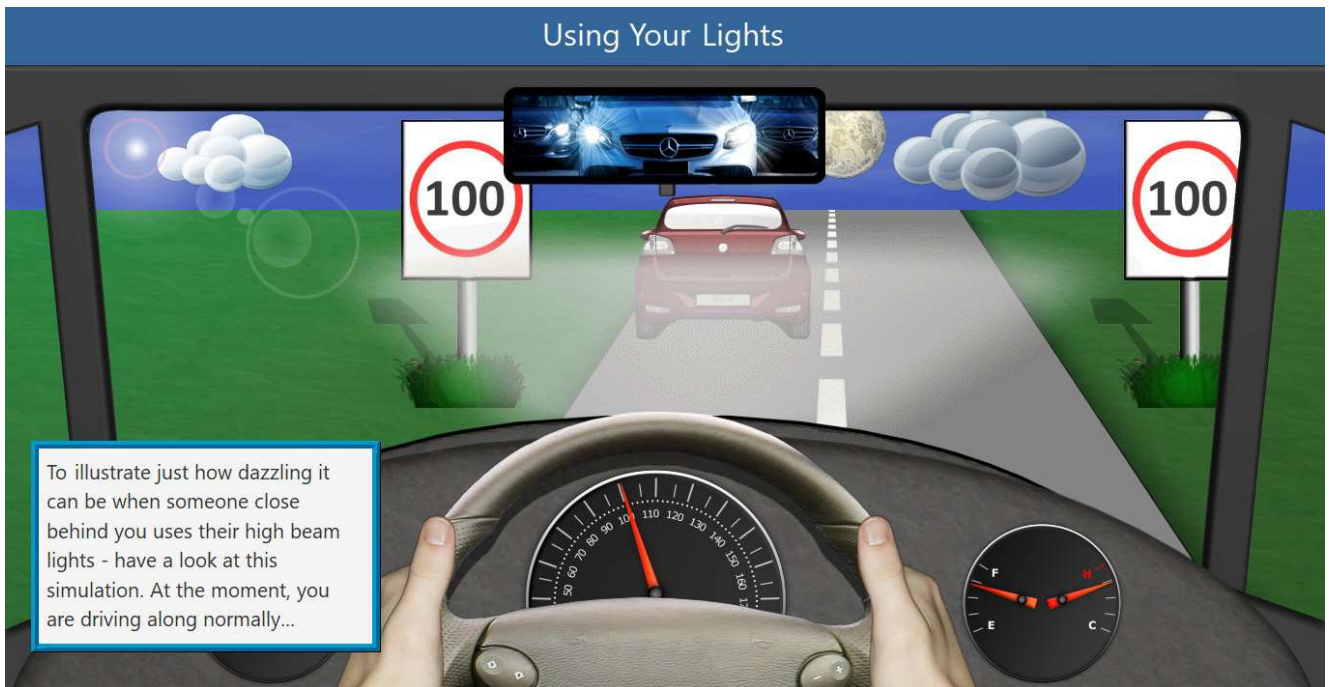
The same rule applies for cars travelling in the opposite direction as you. Where there is a car less than 200m in front of you, travelling in any direction, you must not use your high beam lights.

The driver of the red car on the right would be truly dazzled and disoriented by the bright lights of the blue car's high beam.

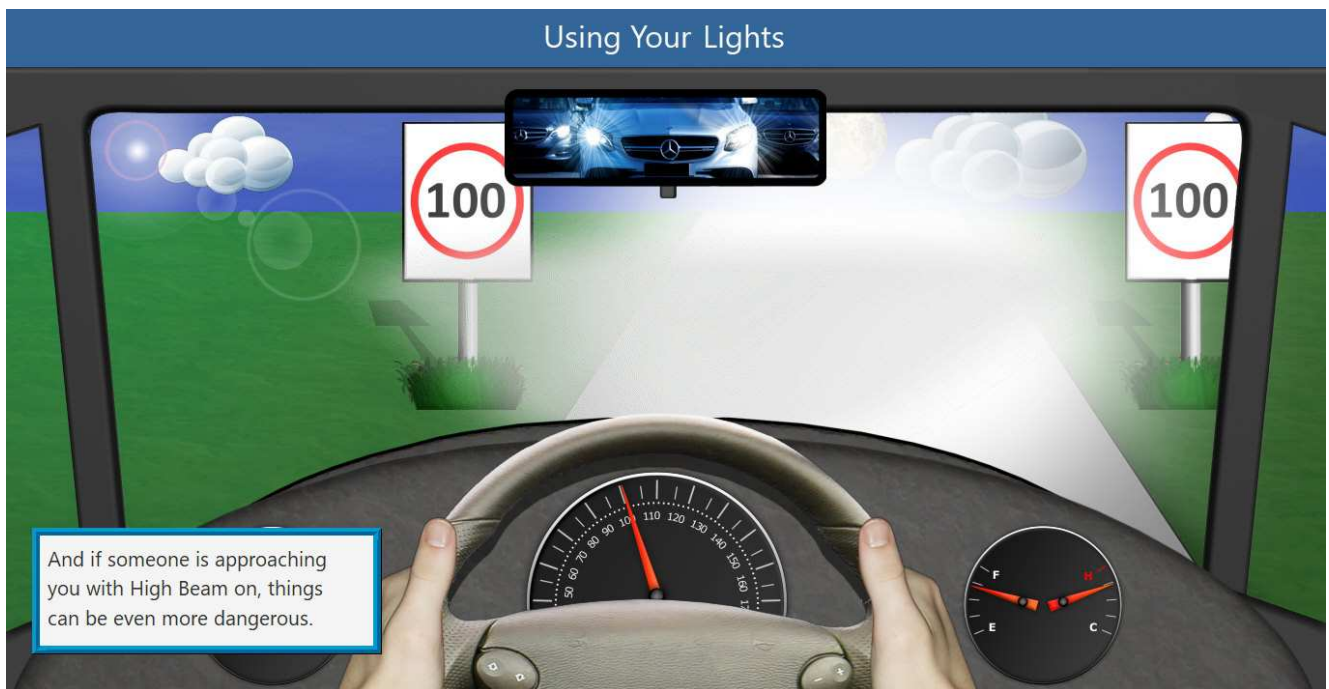
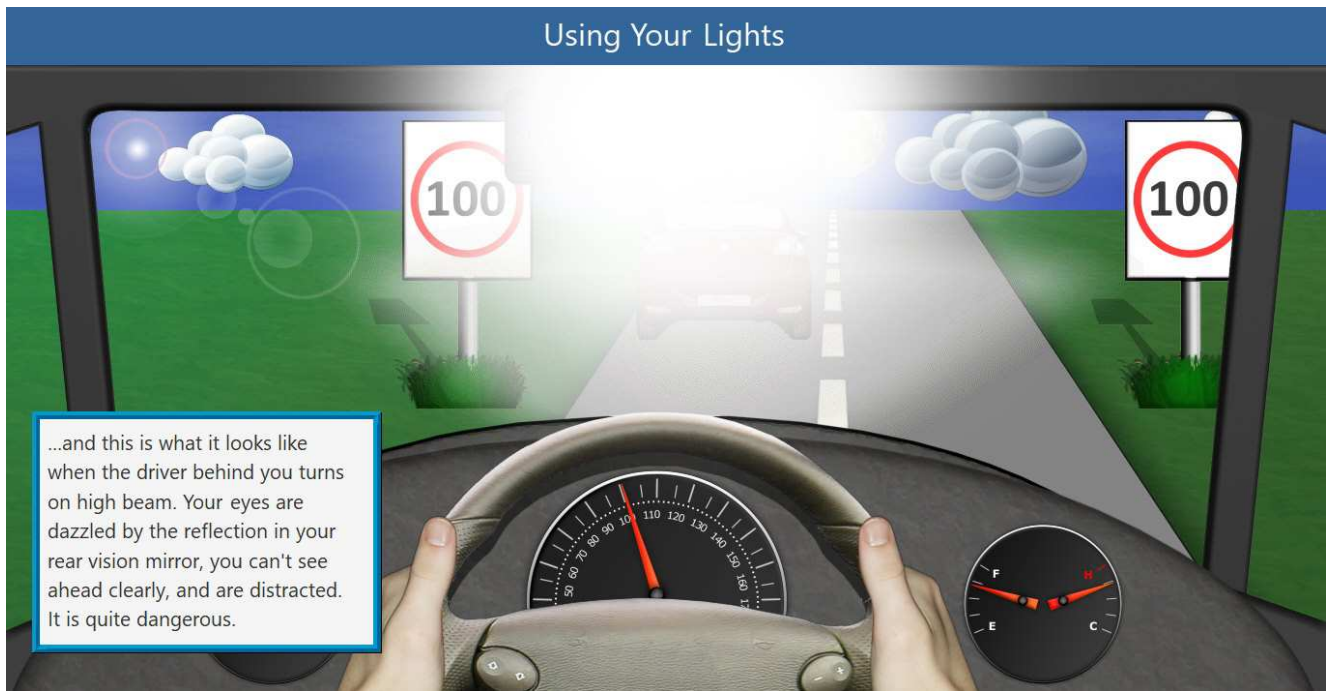


Using Your Lights

To illustrate just how dazzling it can be when someone close behind you uses their high beam lights - have a look at this simulation. At the moment, you are driving along normally...



Using Your Lights



Using Your Lights

If you get 'high-beamed' by someone behind you, locate and flick the small switch at the bottom centre of your rear vision mirror. This changes the reflection angle in the mirror so that you can still see the cars behind you, but the bright lights are muted.

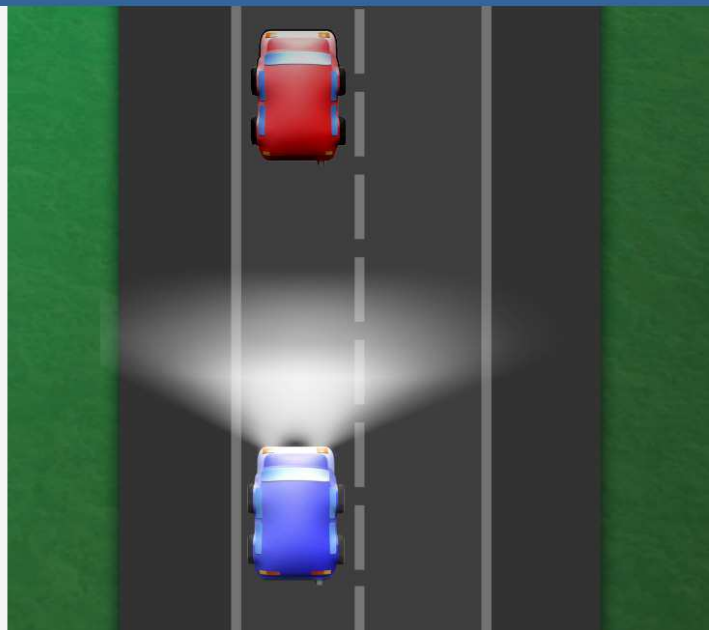


Using Your Lights

Here we've illustrated what it might look like when a car's **fog lights** are turned on.

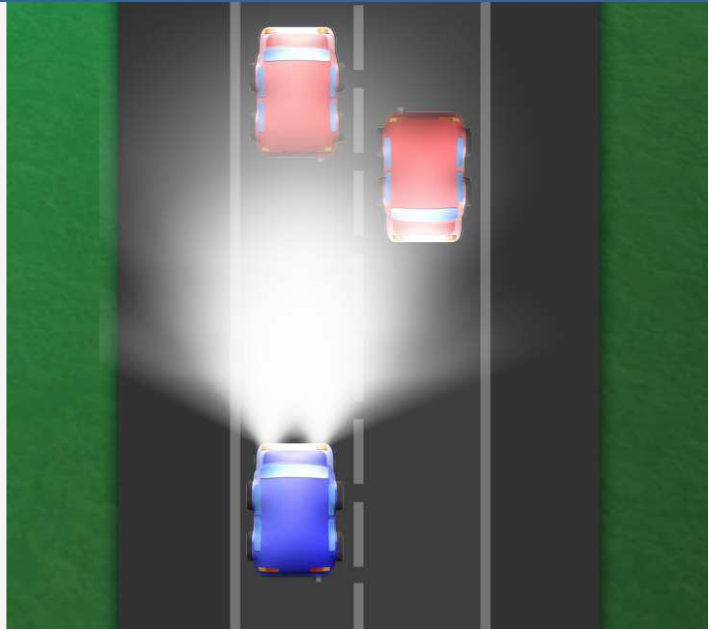
Fog lights tend to throw out a shallower beam of light, and give more light to the side of the road.

During severe fog, mist, or other weather conditions, using fog lights can aid in helping visibility.



Using Your Lights

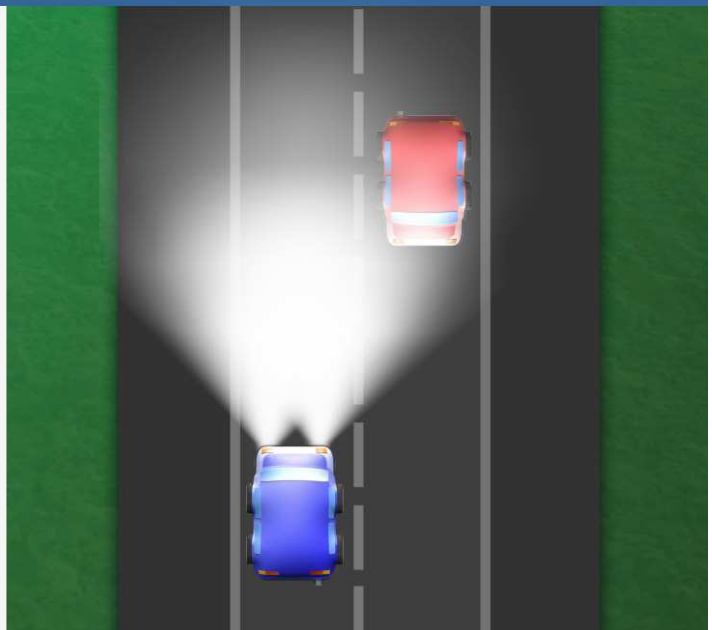
Finally, here the blue car has turned on high beam, and fog lights. Truly an impressive display of light - as long as you remember the rules that the blue car appears to be ignoring here - no high beam when there is a car within 200m of the front of your car.



Using Your Lights

If, when passing another car at night, they flash their high beam lights at you, just for a second or so, they may be trying to warn you that there is a police presence up ahead - maybe a camera, a radar, or something else.

It is not quite legal, but probably advisable if you see this, to slow down for a little while.



Using Your Lights

Modifications. You are free to add driving lights to your car, but they must not be too bright. It is advisable to check with your local state regulations to ensure you fit legal spotlights to your car.

Laws relating to added spotlights are vague, and change from state to state, car to car, and from time to time. Especially when related to spotlights at the back of your car, or mounted on your roof racks. For this reason, they are best avoided.



Using Your Lights

SUMMARY

A summary of what was discussed in this lesson on **Using Your Lights**:

- Using Lights.
- Familiarize Yourself.
- Park Lights, Low Beam, High Beam, Fog Lights.
- Try it Out.
- Animations.
- Careful with High Beam.
- Modifications.

[FINISH LESSON](#)

Using Your Lights

Signature. It is very important that you use the mouse, or touch, to *sign* the form below. This helps us record your progress accurately.

SUBMIT SIGNATURE

CLEAR SIGNATURE

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