

Merging and Changing Lanes

Merging and Changing Lanes

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 **Merging and Changing Lanes.**

Merging and Changing Lanes



Let's take a closer look at
Merging and Changing Lanes.

Merging and Changing Lanes

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Side Mirrors. It is important for general driving that your side car mirrors are adjusted properly.

In your side mirrors, you should be able to see a small amount of the side of your car, and plenty of the road, lane or driveway behind you.

This allows you at a glance to see the cars around you.



Merging and Changing Lanes

Changing lanes is a fairly simple process. On a multilane road, you'll need to learn this skill.

You'll need to change lanes to overtake, or move to the left or right to take an exit, move into the left-most lane if travelling slowly, or just selecting a new lane.

On the next step, the indicated blue car will move into the lane to its right.

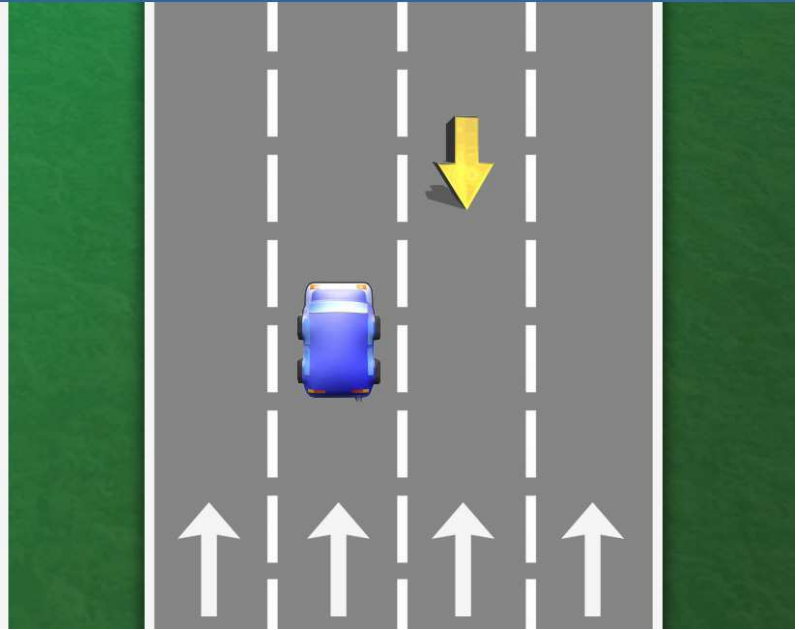


Merging and Changing Lanes

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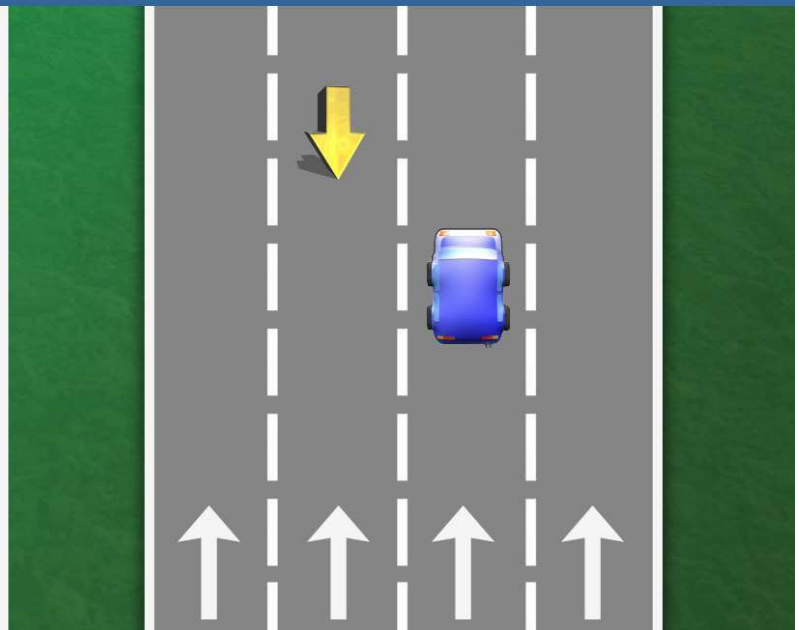
Changing lanes involves three distinct steps.

- Put the appropriate indicator (blinker) on to indicate you are going to be changing lanes.
- Take a look in the lane you will be changing into to ensure that there are no other cars or vehicles in your way. You'll need to look in front of you, and behind you.
- When safe, move from your lane to the new one. Turn off your indicator manually when you arrive.



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On the next step, the blue car will change lanes again, this time to the lane to the left.

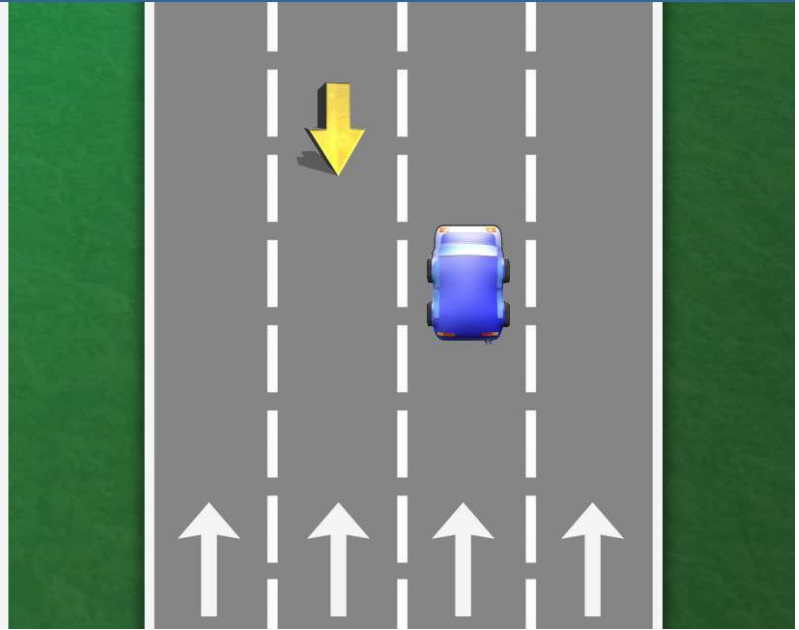


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Again, the same steps were followed.

- Put the appropriate indicator (blinker) on to indicate you are going to be changing lanes.
- Take a look in the lane you will be changing into to ensure that there are no other cars or vehicles in your way. You'll need to look in front of you, and behind you.
- When safe, move from your lane to the new one. Turn off your indicator manually when you arrive.

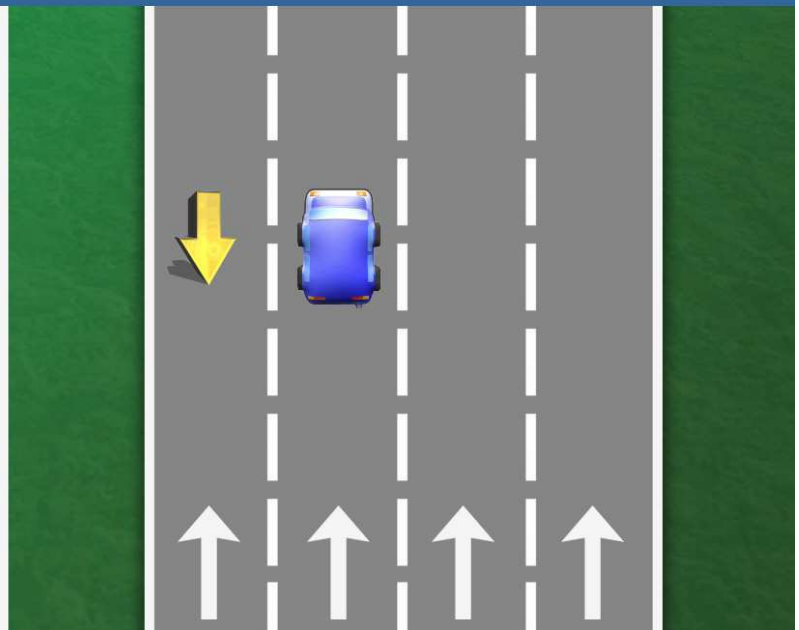


Merging and Changing Lanes

In this case, the blue car is going to change lanes to the left. In this lane is a large truck.

On the next step, the blue car will perform a dangerous lane change.

This is dangerous for two reasons - one, they are risking a collision because the truck is so close.



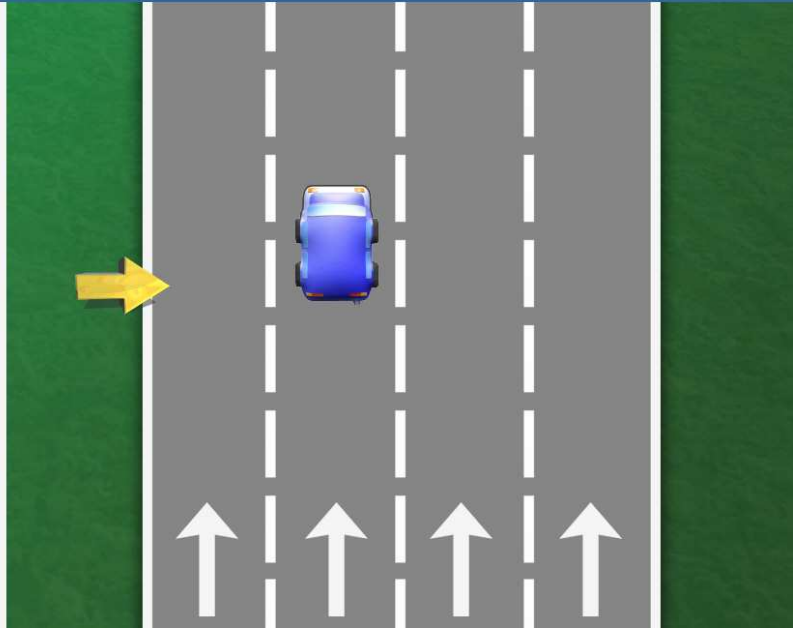
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Secondly, changing lanes in front of larger vehicles requires that you leave a large amount of room. If you change lanes in front of a truck, and you suddenly need to stop quickly, you'll find the truck cannot stop anywhere nearly as quickly as you can.

You can see here just how little space is available between the truck and the car.

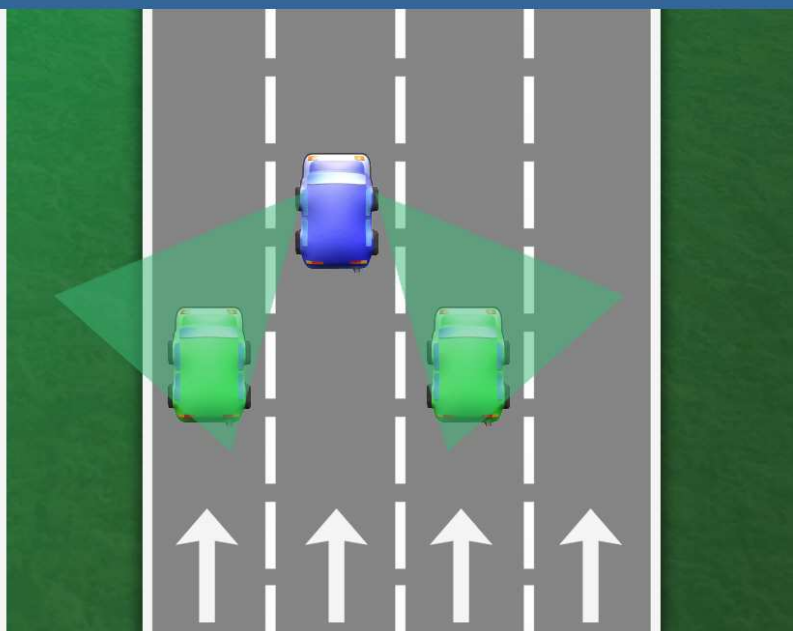
So we repeat - this was a bad and dangerous lane change.



Merging and Changing Lanes

All cars have what is known as blind spots - areas just behind and to the side that are difficult to see as you are driving.

Here, the blind spots are illustrated by the green areas. Note that the two green cars are almost directly in the blind spot for the blue car.

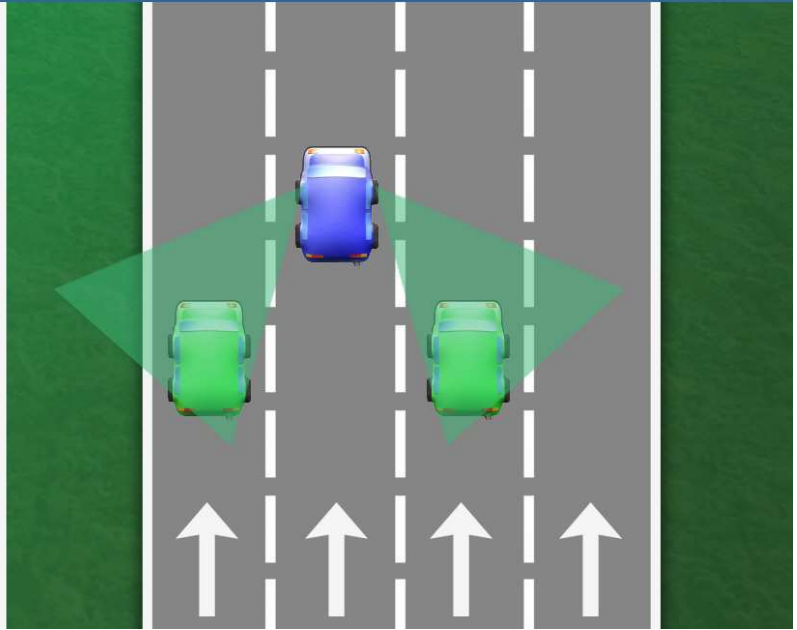


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What this means for the blue car here is that they must always give a head check - a quick glance over their shoulder, before changing lanes. This is, in many cars, the only way to get an idea if another car sits in a blind spot.

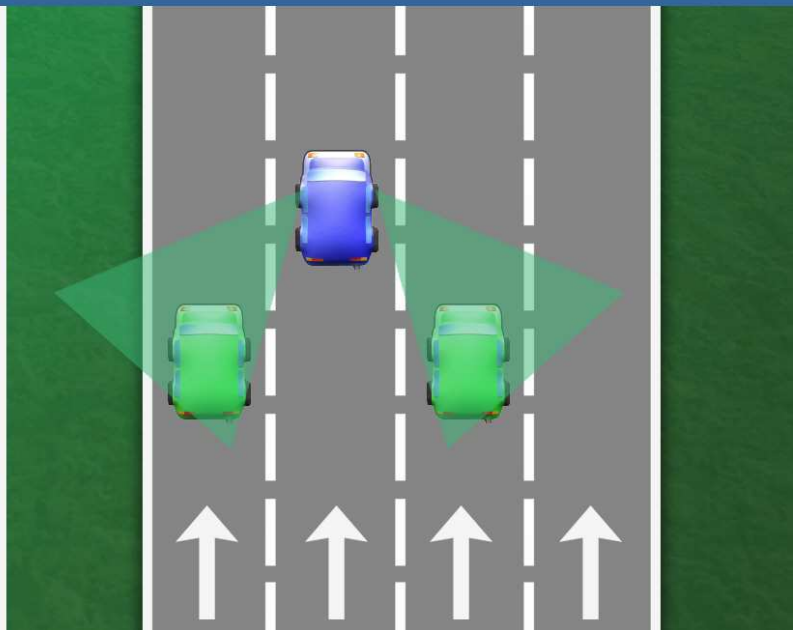
A defensive driver - one who is always attempting to be aware of where all cars are around them at all times, would have a better idea of whether anyone is travelling in their blind spot, in case of an emergency lane change being required.



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The green cars, however, while not breaking any laws, are travelling directly in the blind spot for the blue car.

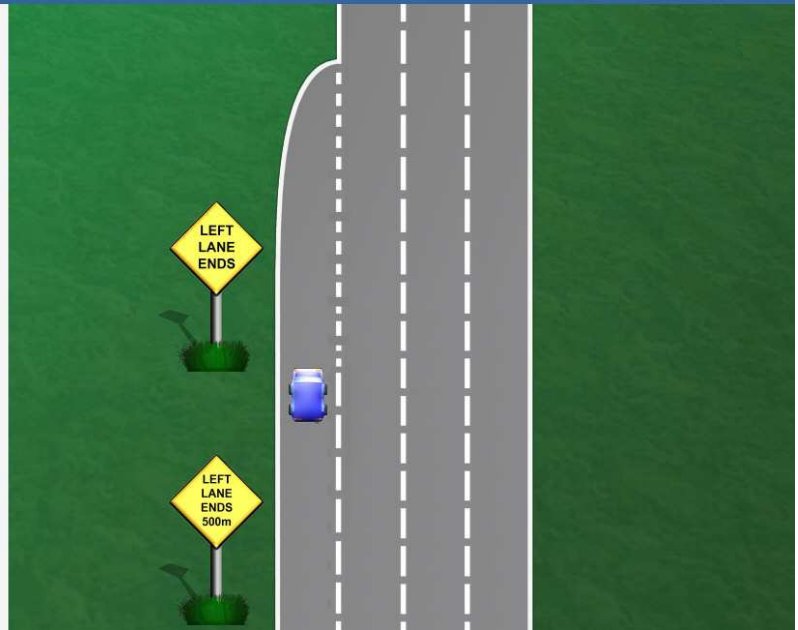
It would make much more sense, and be much safer, not to travel right here. Either drop back a little, or move forwards a little. No one wants a car to change lanes directly in front of them at high speed.



Merging and Changing Lanes

Merging. Merging lanes is a kind of forced lane change. It occurs when a lane ends, or perhaps you need to take an exit.

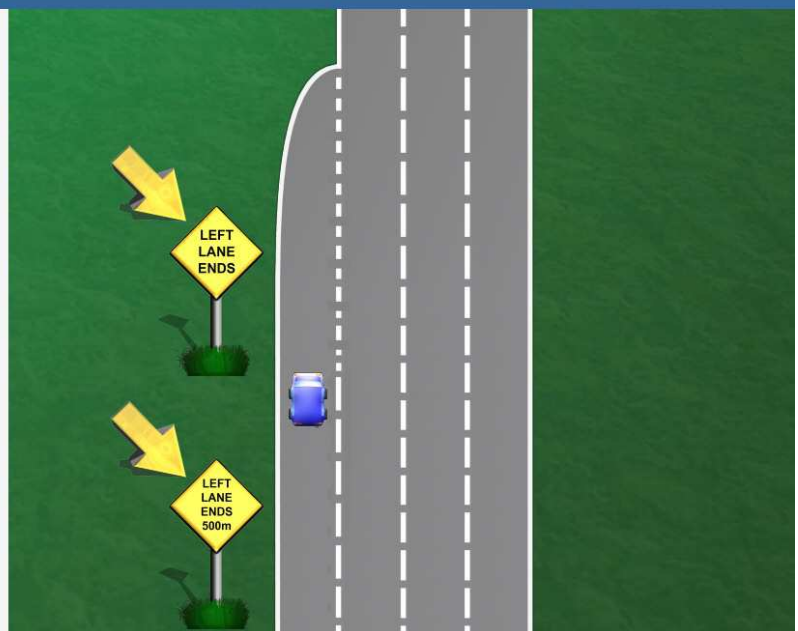
In the example on the right, you can see up in the distance (from the perspective of the blue car), the lane they are travelling in comes to an end.



Merging and Changing Lanes

This is also indicated by a series of signs. A lane will rarely end unexpectedly, but you must pay attention to signs like this.

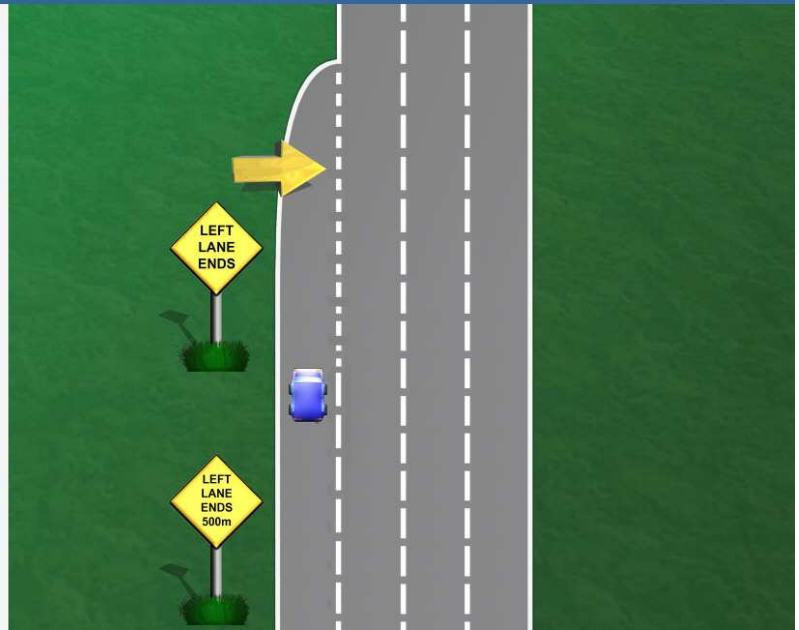
A sign that tells you a lane will end in 500m or so means you should already be looking at changing lanes so you are not stuck in a lane that comes to a dead end.



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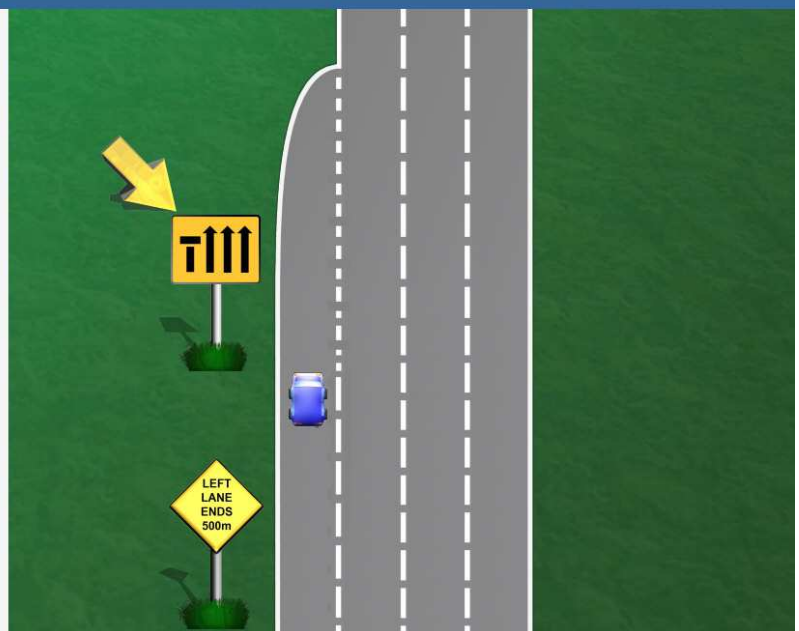
The final indication that a lane is closing is the dashed line that appears near its end.



Merging and Changing Lanes

Here is another variation of a sign that may be displayed to inform you of a lane ending.

This sign indicates which lane is closing, and how many lanes are still open.

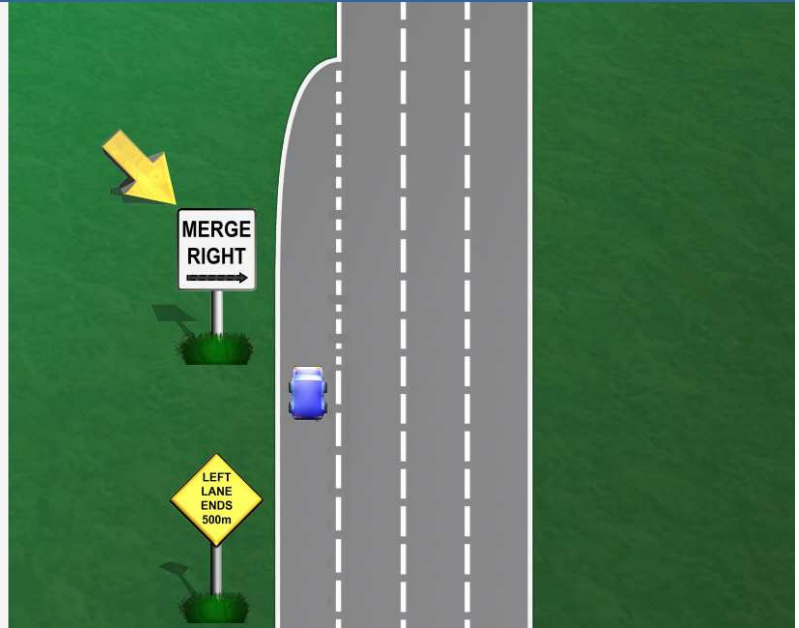


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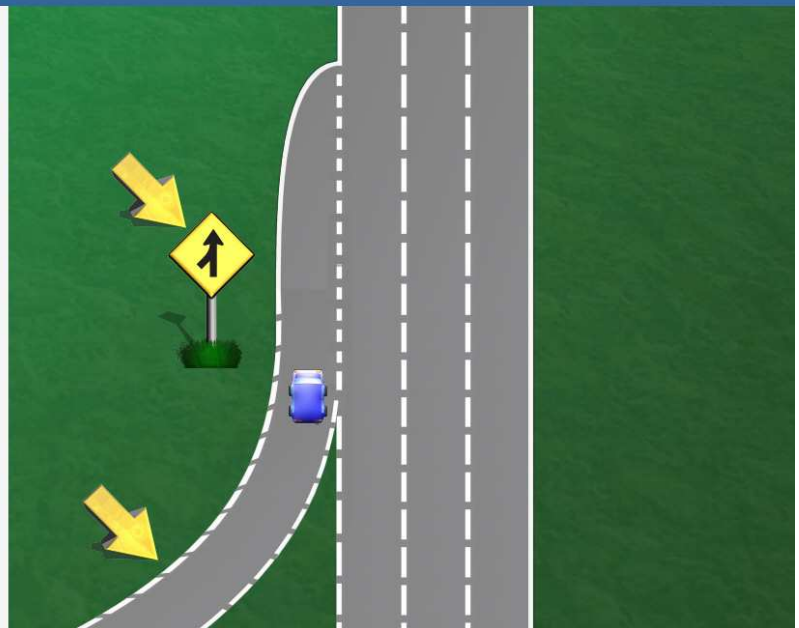
Sometimes the sign will read like this one - **Merge Right**, or **Merge Left**, depending on which way you are merging.

When merging, you must give way to all other traffic.



Merging and Changing Lanes

If you are merging onto a larger road from a sliproad, as pictured here, the sign you will likely see is the one indicated - meaning your lane is going to have to merge to the right when you reach the larger road.



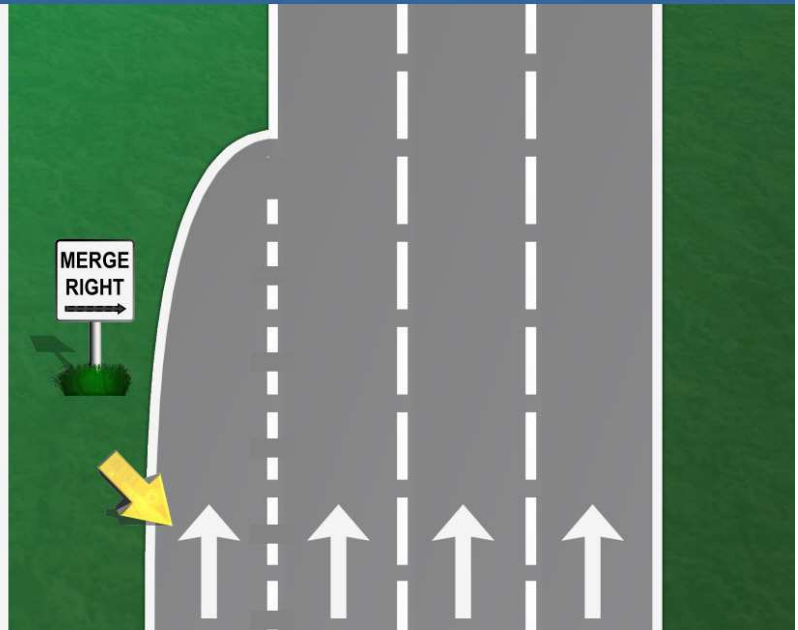
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Here we've zoomed in a little, and the blue car is approaching the end of the lane they are in.

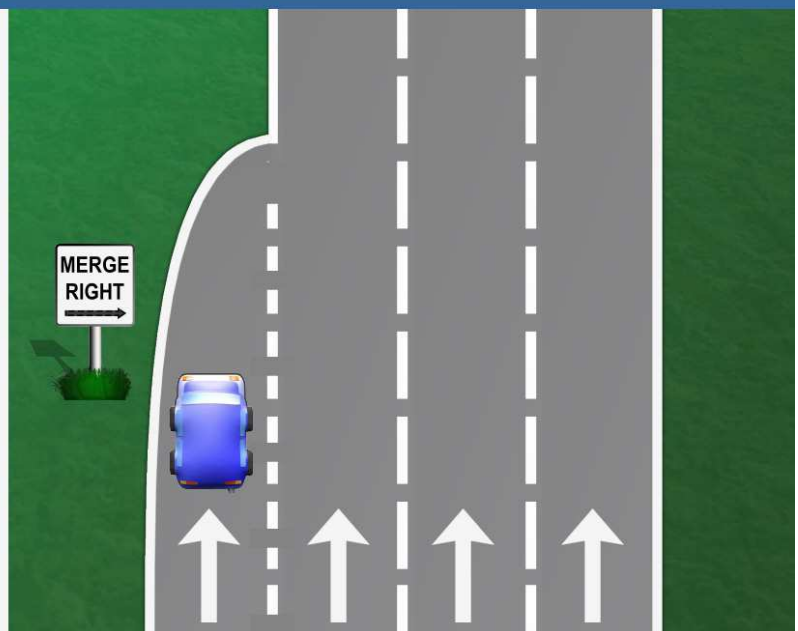
On the next step, they'll merge into the right-hand lane, following the guidelines we looked at before:

- Put the appropriate indicator (blinker) on to indicate you are going to be changing lanes.
- Take a look in the lane you will be changing into to ensure that there are no other cars or vehicles in your way. You'll need to look in front of you, and behind you.
- When safe, move from your lane to the new one. Turn off your indicator manually when you arrive.



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The merge is completed successfully. But we didn't have much traffic here, which always makes this easier.



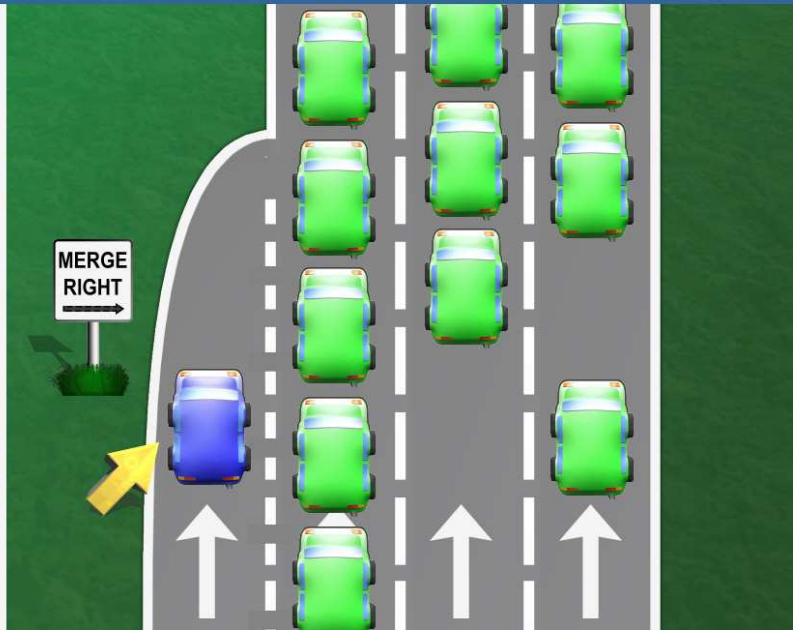
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Here, the road is very busy. A simple merge is out of the question.

In this case, the blue car has had to come to a stop, as there is no room to merge into the next lane.

In this case, the blue car waits, and puts on their right indicator.



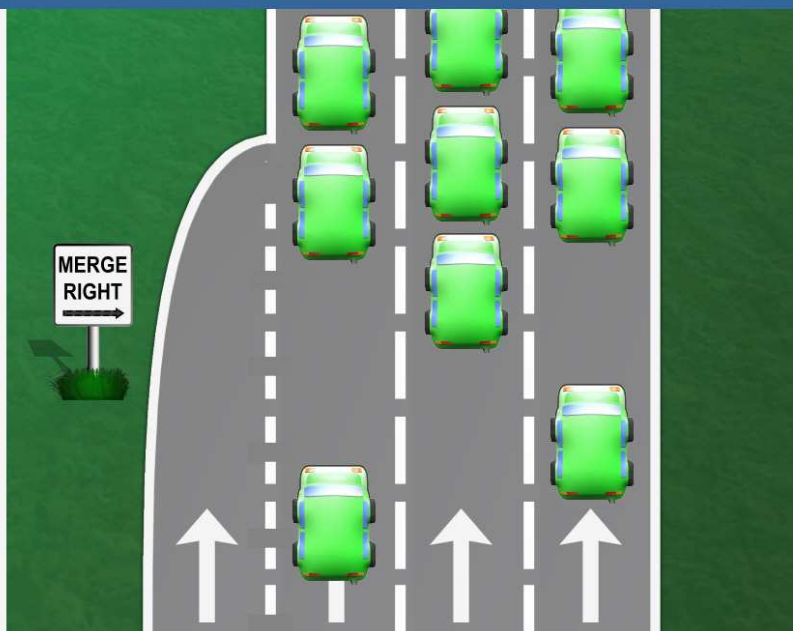
Merging and Changing Lanes

The polite thing to do in so far as the green cars are concerned to make some room if someone appears to need to change lanes or merge. It will not always happen.

If this happens, a friendly wave is a nice way to say thanks.

It also means next time, you might give way and allow someone to change lanes in front of you.

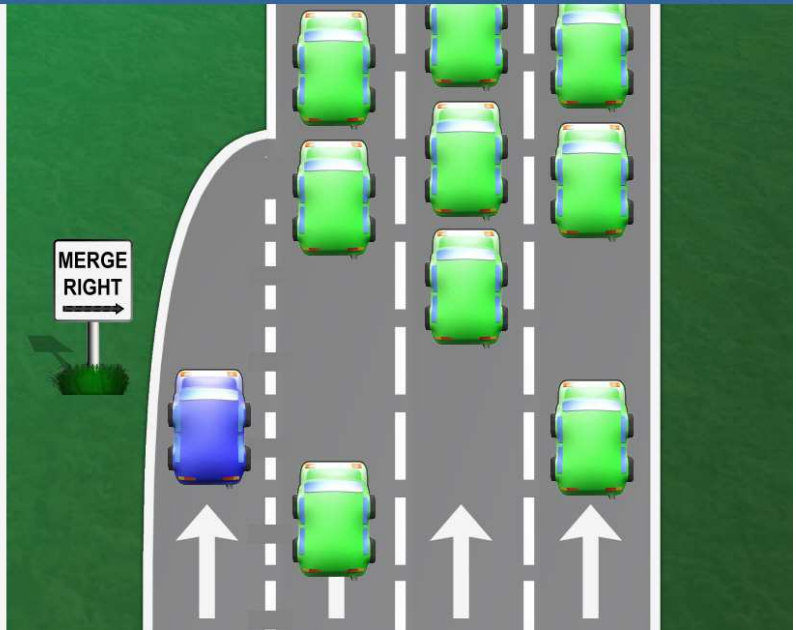
Here, a gap has been opened by a polite green car driver.



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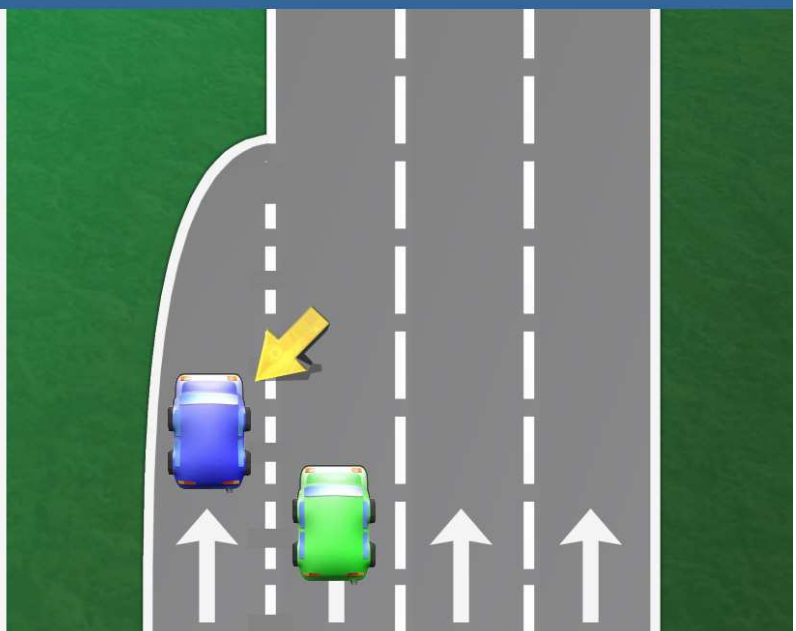
Thanks to the green car driver slowing down and creating a gap, the blue car is able to merge easily and successfully.



Merging and Changing Lanes

Let's do a small recap, and have a look at one more variation of where a lane ends and merging is required.

In this scenario on the right, the left-lane ends with clear markers and signs. At all the times, the blue car must give way to the green car when merging.

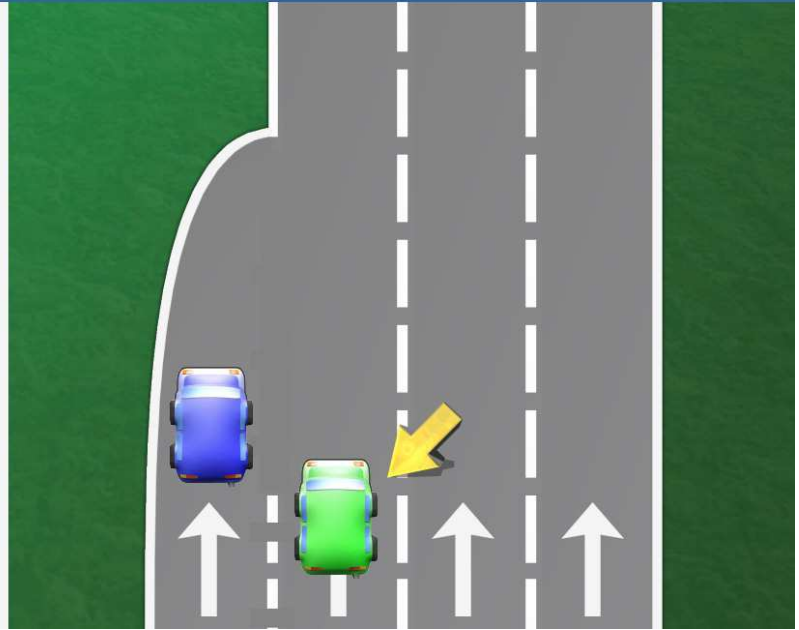


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This scenario is slightly different. The lane marker does not extend to the end of the left-hand lane, so it is a true case of two lanes merging into one, rather than a single lane merging to the right as we looked at previously.

In this case, the trailing car must give way to the leading car. Here, the green car must give way to the blue car.



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SUMMARY

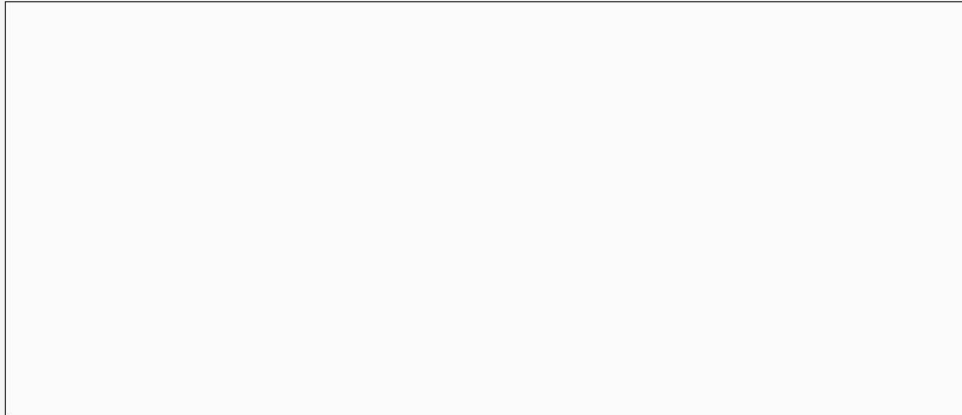
In this lesson, **Merging and Changing Lanes**, we discussed:

- Use of rear vision mirrors.
- Merging.
- Lane changing.
- Lane ending.
- Lane markings.
- Being polite.

[FINISH LESSON](#)

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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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