

Miscellaneous signs

HOV lanes

HOV lanes (**H**igh **O**ccupancy **V**ehicle lanes) are similar to bus lanes, but they can also be used by vehicles (other than lorries) with at least one passenger in addition to the driver, as indicated by the "2+" car symbol. Where the requirement is for at least two passengers in the vehicle, a "3+" car symbol is shown on the signs. Solo motorcycles are normally allowed to use HOV lanes, but large lorries are likely to be prohibited. Signs indicate which vehicles are permitted in the lane. The aims of a HOV lane are to reduce traffic congestion by maximising the use of a bus lane and encourage car sharing.



This sign gives advance warning of a HOV lane ahead



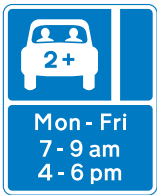
A separate sign gives the times of operation of a HOV lane ahead



Another sign indicates which vehicles may use the HOV lane ahead



Start of HOV lane (near-side)



HOV lane (near-side)



HOV lane road marking



End of HOV lane

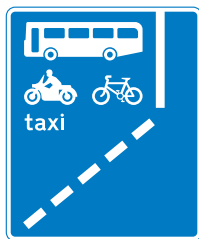
HOV lanes (also known as car-sharing lanes) are to be introduced on some motorways. These could be on the right-hand side of the carriageway, where their use by buses might be prohibited. The HOV lane signs are likely to be mounted above the carriageway to indicate which types of vehicle may use, or are prohibited from using, particular traffic lanes.

Bus lanes

Signs and road markings for bus lanes are shown on pages 32 and 33. However, in recent years different types of bus lane have been introduced. These may be centre or right-hand lanes on the approaches to junctions, or may be lanes that can be used by other vehicles, such as solo motorcycles. Some examples are shown below. These signs may include a lower panel showing the times of operation.



Off-side, with-flow bus-only lane ahead (the bus symbol facing right indicates that the lane leads to a right turn at a junction ahead)



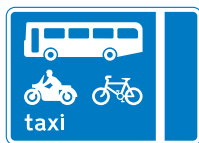
Near-side, with-flow bus lane ahead that can also be used by solo motorcycles, pedal cycles and taxis



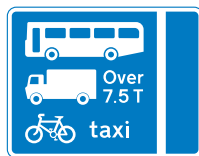
Near-side, with-flow bus lane ahead that can also be used by lorries, pedal cycles and taxis



Off-side, with-flow bus-only lane leading to a right turn at a junction ahead



Near-side, with-flow bus lane that can also be used by solo motorcycles, pedal cycles and taxis



Near-side, with-flow bus lane that can also be used by lorries, pedal cycles and taxis

Road charging

Road charging was first introduced in central London and within a small area in Durham. The white on red "C" symbol is used on signs in both schemes and will, in future, be used to indicate road-charging schemes that might be introduced elsewhere. The symbol is not currently used for toll roads and tolled crossings, such as the M6 Toll motorway and the Dartford Crossing.



This example shows a typical zone entry sign. The charging period is shown in the lower panel. The name of the traffic authority may be shown at the top of the sign. The sign is usually supplemented by a "C" symbol road marking. Direction signs may incorporate the "C" symbol to indicate routes that lead into the charging zone. Details of the actual charges and the method of payment are available from the appropriate traffic authority.

Rising bollards

In some town and city centres, certain streets may be closed for part of the day, either to all traffic (e.g. pedestrian zones) or to through traffic, with access permitted, for example, to public transport. Enforcement of these restrictions may be by the use of



automatic bollards that rise from the ground to provide a physical closure. Where such bollards are in use, warning signs are normally provided. Where certain vehicles are allowed entry, red and green signals control the operation of the bollards. Only one vehicle should pass at any one time and may proceed only if the green signal is showing.

Some vehicles, e.g. buses, have devices that can be recognised by detectors controlling the operation of the bollards. If you are not driving an authorised vehicle, do not follow the vehicle in front, as you may risk personal injury and damage to your own vehicle. Where pedal cycles are exempt, a separate route avoiding the bollards is normally provided.

Rising bollards might also be used at the exit to a road-charging area, such as in Durham (see page 142). These operate when payment has been made (similar to the exit from some car parks).

Driver location signs



These have been introduced at regular intervals along many motorways and some other roads so that, in the event of a vehicle breakdown or other emergency, the exact location can be identified quickly. They show the motorway or road number, the carriageway identifier and a distance reference.

Variable signs



Some signs are designed to provide information about varying traffic conditions, such as delays or diversions ahead, or to warn of specific hazards, such as animals or debris in the road. These are called "variable message signs" and

may be free-standing with an electronic display, such as the signs that have been erected above motorway hard shoulders. Some direction signs contain variable elements. They might show, for example, alternative routes, or the availability of spaces in car parks.

Signs activated by moving vehicles are provided as a road safety measure. They can give a reminder of the speed limit, or warning of a hazard such as a bend or crossroads. They are activated when a vehicle is travelling above a certain speed and the driver needs to slow down.

Variable signs are also used for traffic control, such as Active Traffic Management described on pages 91 to 93.