

Chapter 3 - Rules of the Road

Your highest duty as a motorist is to drive your vehicle carefully and prudently. Your speed and manner of driving must create a safe environment for yourself and other road users, including pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists.

Right-of-Way

Where vehicles or pedestrians are likely to meet one another, and there are no signs or signals to regulate traffic, there are rules that say who must yield the right-of-way. These rules tell drivers who goes first and who must wait in different traffic situations.

*The law says who must **yield** the right-of-way; it does not **give** any driver the right-of-way.* You must do everything you can to prevent striking a pedestrian or another vehicle, regardless of the circumstances.

Passing

Passing is a dangerous maneuver where the dangers are compounded by intersections, other vehicles within an intersection and two-lane roads (Refer to No Passing Zones in Chapter 3).

If you are caught speeding or passing in a construction zone or work zone on Missouri state roadways, you could be fined a minimum of \$250 for the first offense and a minimum of \$300 for a second or subsequent offense in addition to any other fine authorized by law according to **Section 304.582, RSMo**.

Use the same care when passing a pedestrian or cyclist as when passing a motor vehicle. You may need to slow down and wait for a safe opportunity to pass a pedestrian or cyclist, just as you would for any other slow-moving traffic.

Passing on the Right

The driver of a motor vehicle may overtake and pass to the right of another vehicle only under the following conditions:

- When the vehicle overtaken is making or about to make a left turn;
- Upon a city street with unobstructed pavement of sufficient width for two or more lines of vehicles in each direction;
- Upon a one-way street; or
- Upon any highway outside of a city with unobstructed pavement of sufficient width and clearly marked for four or more lanes of traffic.

In no event shall such movement be made by driving off the paved or main traveled portion of the roadway (shoulder).

Passing on the Left

No vehicle shall at any time be driven to the left side of the roadway under the following conditions when:

- Approaching the crest of a grade or upon a curve of the highway **where the driver's view is obstructed** within such distance as to create a hazard in the event another vehicle might approach from the opposite direction;
- The view is obstructed upon approaching within 100 feet of any bridge, viaduct, or tunnel;
- Approaching within 100 feet of or at any intersection or railroad grade crossing; or
- There is a solid yellow line.

Intersections

The following right-of-way rules apply at intersections:

- Drivers must yield where necessary to avoid striking pedestrians who are legally crossing the road;
- Drivers crossing a sidewalk, entering or exiting a driveway, alley, or parking lot must yield to pedestrians. It is illegal to drive on a sidewalk except to cross;
- Drivers turning left must yield to oncoming vehicles going straight;
- At a four-way stop, the driver reaching the intersection first may proceed before the other drivers (after coming to a complete stop);
- Drivers entering a road from a driveway, alley, or roadside must yield to vehicles already on the main road;
- At an intersection where there is no stop sign or traffic signal (with the exception of roundabouts), drivers must yield to vehicles coming from the right; and
- When approaching a roundabout intersection, always yield to traffic in the circle and pedestrians in the crosswalks. Wait for a gap in traffic before entering.

Emergency Vehicles

You must yield the right-of-way to police, fire, ambulance, or any other emergency vehicles using a siren or air horn, and a red or blue flashing light. Pull over to the right edge of the road, or as near to the right as possible, when you see or hear an emergency vehicle approaching from any direction. If you are in an intersection, drive through the intersection before you pull over. Remain stopped until the emergency vehicle passes. Follow any instructions given over the emergency vehicle's loudspeaker. Emergency vehicles may follow each other so proceed only when the way is clear.

When approaching a stationary emergency vehicle displaying lighted red or red and blue lights, you must:

- Proceed with caution, and if it is safe to do so, make a lane change into a lane not adjacent to the stationary vehicle (if on a roadway having at least four lanes with not less than two lanes proceeding in the same direction as the approaching vehicle); or
- Proceed with due caution and reduce the speed of the vehicle, maintaining a safe speed for road conditions, if changing lanes would be unsafe or impossible.

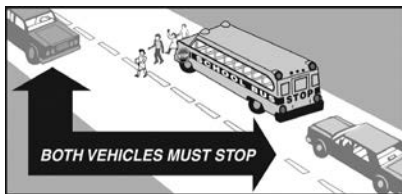
For more information regarding the "Move Over Law" see page 93.

School Buses

When a school bus stops to load or unload school children, the driver activates the mechanical and electrical signaling devices to notify other drivers of an impending stop. Amber warning lights will flash 500 feet before the bus comes to a designated stop. When the school bus is stopped, the alternate flashing red lights and the stop signal arm are activated. Oncoming and following traffic must stop before they reach the bus when these signals are activated. You must stop:

- On a two-lane road where the vehicles travel in either direction.
- On a two-lane road that is a one way street.

No driver of a school bus shall take on or discharge passengers at any location upon a highway consisting of four or more lanes of traffic, whether or not divided by a median or barrier, in such a manner as to require the passengers to cross more than two lanes of traffic. The following are situations when you do not have to stop:



- When you are traveling the opposite direction of a school bus on a highway divided by a median where the vehicles traveling one direction are on a totally separate road from the vehicles traveling the opposite direction;
- When you are traveling the opposite direction of a school bus on a highway containing four or more lanes of traffic; or
- When a school bus is stopped in a loading zone (at a school) where students are not permitted to cross the roadway.

After stopping for a school bus that is unloading school children, watch for school children walking along the side of the road. You must remain stopped until the bus moves or the bus driver signals for you to proceed. Proceed with caution.

Hand and Vehicle Signals

Before you stop, turn or change lanes, let the other drivers know what you are going to do by signaling. You can signal with your hand and arm or with your vehicle's turn signals and brake lights. You should signal at least 100 feet before you turn so the other drivers can be ready. Check your vehicle's turn signals often to ensure they are working properly.

The pictures below show the correct hand signals to use when turning or stopping.

Turns

As a good driver, you should get into the proper turn lane and signal at least 100 feet before you turn. Before you make any turn, you should look both ways for oncoming traffic or pedestrians.

If there are no signs or lane markings to control turning, you should turn from the lane that is closest to the direction you want to go, and turn into the lane closest to the one you came from. This way, you will cross the fewest lanes of traffic. When making turns, go from one lane to the other as smoothly as possible without crossing lane lines or interfering with traffic. Once you have completed your turn, you can change to another lane if you need to.

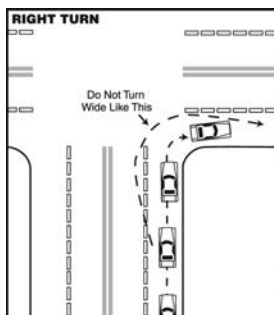


U-Turns

You should only make a U-turn when it is safe. U-turns should not be made on any curve or near the crest of a hill when your vehicle may not be seen by other drivers. Some towns and cities do not allow U-turns. Never make a U-turn at a location that is marked with a “No U-Turn” sign or at an intersection controlled by a traffic signal or police officer.

Right Turns

On right turns, avoid swinging wide to the left before turning. If you swing wide, the driver behind you may think you are changing lanes or going to turn left, and may try to pass you on the right. If you swing wide as you complete the turn, drivers who are in the far lane will not expect to see you there and you could cause a crash.

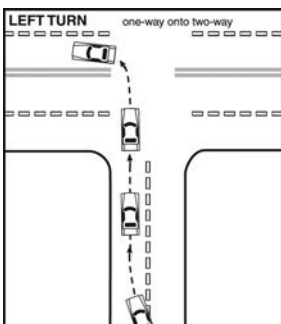


Left Turns

When making a left turn, avoid cutting the corner so sharply that you run into someone approaching from the left. However, you must leave room for oncoming vehicles to turn left in front of you.

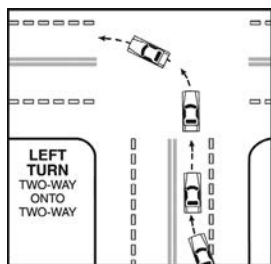
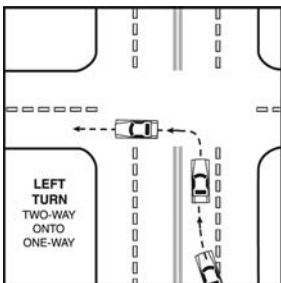
One-Way Street onto a Two-Way Street

Begin the turn in the left lane. Enter the two-way road to the right of its yellow dividing line. If the two-way road is a four-lane road, you may enter it in the right lane if that lane is free of traffic.



Two-Way Street Onto a One-Way Street

Begin the turn with your left wheel as close as possible to the yellow dividing line. If the one-way road has two lanes, turn into its left lane or right lane, whichever is free of traffic.

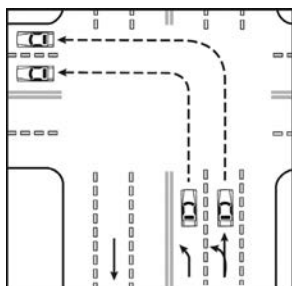


Two-Way Street onto a Two-Way Street

Begin the turn with your left wheels as close as possible to the yellow dividing line. Enter the road to the right of its center line. If the road onto which you are turning is a four-lane road, you may enter it in the right lane if the right lane is free of traffic.

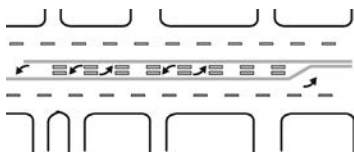
Multiple Left-Turn Lanes

Some streets may have more than one lane marked for left turns. If you are turning from the left side, left-turn lane, enter the left lane on the right of the yellow dividing line. If you are turning from the right side, left-turn lane, enter the right lane.



Two-Way Left-Turn Lanes

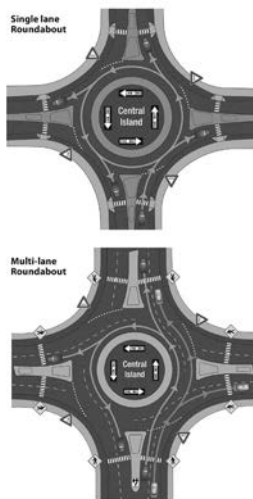
Some streets have a center lane marked as a two-way left-turn lane. Only enter this lane when preparing to slow down or stop before making a left turn from the main roadway. Do not use this lane as travel lane (a vehicle may not travel in this lane for more than 500 feet), and do not use this lane when entering the roadway from a side street.



Roundabout Intersections

General Information

Roundabouts are a traffic control device that may be used as an alternative to signalized and all-way stop intersections. Statistically roundabouts are safer than traditional intersections because they reduce fatal and injury crashes by reduction of speeds and removing left-turns in front of opposing traffic. A roundabout uses a circular island in the center to control the flow of traffic through the intersection. Roundabouts feature yield traffic signs at all entering roadway legs. Yield control creates efficient traffic flow and often less delay at the intersection. They reduce pollution and fuel use due to fewer stops and hard accelerations. At a roundabout, drivers who approach the intersection make a slight right turn to go counterclockwise around a circular center island. The driver may then either exit the roundabout onto a different roadway, or continue on the same roadway. When approaching a roundabout, always yield to traffic in the circle, bicyclists, and pedestrians in the crosswalks.



Approaching the roundabout:

- Slow down before entering the roundabout.
- For multi-lane roundabouts, observe roadside signs and pavement markings to direct you into the correct lane.
- Look to your left as you drive towards the entrance, yield to traffic already in the roundabout, bicyclists, and pedestrians in the crosswalk.
- Enter when there is a gap in traffic and merge with the other flow of vehicles.
- NEVER make a left turn to enter a roundabout.

Traveling through a roundabout:

- Always stay to the right of the center island.
- Vehicles within the roundabout have the right of way.
- DO NOT stop within a roundabout unless it is the only way to avoid a crash.
- DO NOT change lanes within a roundabout.
- Give special consideration to trucks, trailers and other large vehicles. They may need to utilize more than one lane within a roundabout.
- DO NOT attempt to pass any vehicles especially large trucks.
- If you miss your exit, continue through the roundabout until you reach your appropriate exit.
- When exiting, watch for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the street.

Exiting the roundabout:

- Maintain a slow speed to avoid losing control or striking traffic islands.
- Use your right turn signal to let others know you are exiting.
- Do not accelerate until you are beyond the pedestrian crossing at the exit.

Emergency Vehicles

Always yield to emergency vehicles. DO NOT enter a roundabout if an emergency vehicle is approaching. NEVER stop while inside a roundabout. If an emergency vehicle approaches while you are in the roundabout, exit immediately and pull to the right.

Truck Apron

Large trucks need more space when driving in a roundabout. A truck apron, also known as off-tracking, is the paved area on the inside of the roundabout for the rear wheels of large trucks to use when turning. Truck aprons are not to be used by cars, SUVs or pickup trucks.

J-Turn Intersections

The J-turn is an alternative to traditional roadway intersections on a four-lane highway. Instead of motorists crossing



fast-moving lanes of traffic to get to the opposing lanes, drivers at a J-turn intersection turn right in the same direction of traffic, merge into the far left lane, and then make a left turn in the direction they intend to travel.

Local Ordinances

Local governments may make traffic ordinances in addition to laws made by the state. You must obey any traffic sign or regulation whether set by a municipality, county, or the state. Cities and towns may have regulations to do the following:

- Set speed limits;
- Set one-way streets;
- Set stop signs at intersections;
- Prohibit commercial vehicles from using certain streets;
- Control parking by installing meters or by some other reasonable method;
- Control turns;
- Require the use of turn signals, brake lights, and horns on all motor vehicles; and/or
- Prohibit the use of sound-producing warning devices.