

## 20. Railway crossings

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There are several types of railway crossing, including: crossings with barriers or gates; crossings without barriers or gates; and roads that cross one or several railway lines. All the crossings have one thing in common - great big trains! Trains weigh 100's of tons and often travel over crossings at high speed, which means that they must be treated with the greatest respect. They always win in arguments with cars!

Look out for warning signs; these will give information about the type of crossing to expect. Use the hazard routine as you approach crossings and stop when the lights show. There may also be bells or sirens.

If you come across a half-barrier crossing - that is, a crossing where the barriers block off each side of the road separately - you must stay on your own side of the road. Never try to zig-zag around the barriers; the train will be very near. At this type of crossing the train triggers the lights and barriers approximately 30 seconds before its arrival.

At crossings with gates, but no lights or attendant, look for signs giving instructions about procedure. You will need to be sure that the line is clear before opening the gates to cross. At crossings with no gates or barriers look for signs or lights. When the lights are on, you must stop and wait, even if the line seems clear.

If your car breaks down on a railway crossing get your passengers out of the car and clear of the crossing straight away. Don't wait until the lights start to flash or the barriers come down; this may lead to panic. If there is a telephone at the side of the crossing, use it to contact the signaller. Tell him the problem and he will be able to alert approaching trains until the crossing is clear.

If there is time, move the vehicle from the crossing. Try to push your car clear. If you are unable to do this, try to 'jerk' the car clear by selecting third gear, releasing the handbrake and turning the ignition key to activate the starter motor.

After you have moved your car, phone the signaller again to inform him that the crossing is clear. If you are unable to move your car, use the phone to ask for further advice.

If the bells ring, or if you see a train approaching, you must leave your car and stand well clear of the crossing.



### Lesson Notes:

