

27. Reverse parking

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The heavy volume of traffic on our roads sometimes means that parking spaces can be hard to find. Because of this, it's well worth preparing to make the best of every parking opportunity, otherwise you may end up parking a long way from your intended destination.

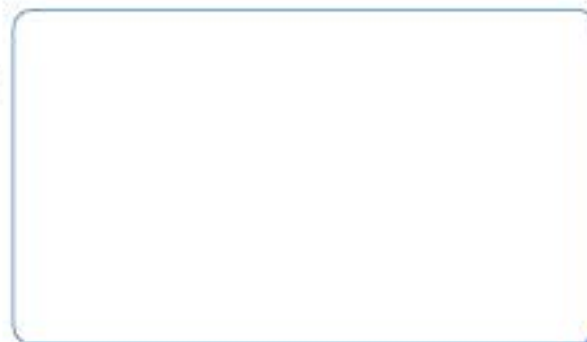
Reversing into parking space will enable you to manoeuvre your car into a smaller gap. In order to drive into a space you need a gap of at least three or four car lengths - with practise, reverse parking will enable you to fit into a space of about one-and-a-half car lengths.

Step by step

- 1 Select a suitable parking position by looking well ahead.
- 2 Check your mirrors, signal if necessary and stop alongside, and parallel to, the car that you wish to park behind. You should be about a metre away from it with the front of your car approximately level with that of the other car (position A). If for any reason it isn't safe to stop, drive around the block and come back to the space again.
- 3 Select reverse gear, and if the road is clear all around, drive slowly back, steering into the space. Aim to reverse at an angle of approximately 45° to the centre of the gap (position B); to do this you might need full lock. As you move back, your speed will be slow walking pace or less and you will be keeping a look-out for traffic. If any traffic approaches, take the usual manoeuvring precautions.
- 4 When the front of your car is clear of the 'target car', steer briskly to the right and continue to reverse slowly.
- 5 Stop, select first gear and drive slowly forward to straighten up (position C).

Be careful to avoid hitting the kerb with your tyres or rubbing them along the kerb edge. This can weaken the sidewalls and cause them to 'blow out' at a later date, possibly when travelling at high speed!

See the DriverActive web site for an easy way to learn this manoeuvre.



Lesson Notes:

