



## Department of Motor Vehicles

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## CHAPTER FOUR

# TRAFFIC CONTROL

### Topics:

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- [Pavement Markings](#)
- [Traffic Officers](#)
- [Chapter 4 Quiz](#) <sup>[1]</sup>

*Note: Practice quizzes are available only for those sections of the manual covering rules of the road (Chapters 4 through 11 and Road Signs).*

## Signs

Traffic signs tell you about traffic rules, special hazards, where you are, how to get where you are going and where services are available.

The shape and color of traffic signs give indications to the type of information they provide:

**REGULATION SIGNS** normally are white rectangles with black letters or symbols, but some are different shapes, and some can use red letters or symbols.

**WARNING SIGNS** normally are yellow and diamond-shaped, with black letters or symbols.

**DESTINATION SIGNS** are green with white letters and symbols.

**SERVICE SIGNS** are blue with white letters and symbols.

Know the signs shown below and what they mean. You will be asked about them on your written test.

**Here are descriptions of common traffic signs and what they indicate:**

**REGULATION SIGNS:****Stop Sign****COLOR:** Red, with white letters.

**MEANING:** Come to a full stop, yield the right-of-way to vehicles and pedestrians in or heading toward the intersection. Go when it is safe. You must come to a stop before the stop line, if there is one. If not, you must stop before you enter the crosswalk. (See "[Stop and Crosswalk Lines](#)" under the "[Pavement Markings](#)" section of this chapter.) If there is no stop line or crosswalk, you must stop before you enter the intersection, at the point nearest the intersection that gives you a view of traffic on the intersecting roadway.

**Yield Sign****COLOR:** Red and white, with red letters.

**MEANING:** Decrease speed as you reach the intersection. Prepare to stop and yield the right-of-way to vehicles and pedestrians in or heading toward the intersection. You must come to a full stop at a YIELD sign if traffic conditions require it. When you approach a YIELD sign, check carefully for traffic and be prepared to stop.

**Other Regulation Signs****COLOR:** White, with black and/or red letters or symbols.

**MEANING:** These signs give information about rules for traffic direction, lane use, turns, speed, parking and other special requirements.

Some regulation signs have a red circle with a slash over a symbol. This indicates that an action, like a right turn, is not allowed or that some vehicles are restricted from the road. Rectangular white signs with black or red letters or symbols are indications to be alert for special rules.

**WARNING SIGNS:**



**COLOR:** Yellow, with black letters or symbols.

**MEANING:** You are approaching a hazardous location or a location where there is a special rule, as shown in the sample signs. Sometimes a warning sign is joined with a yellow and black "recommended speed" sign. This indicates reduced speed is advised in that area.

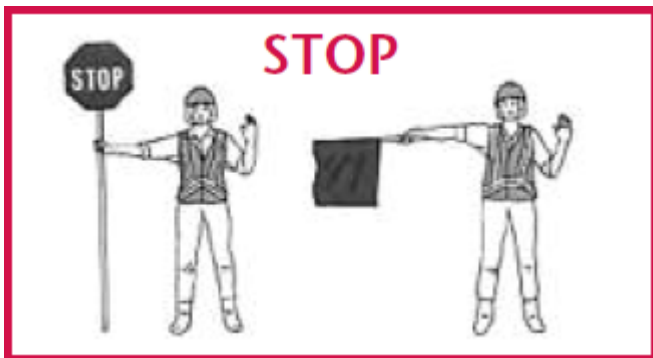


### Work Area Signs

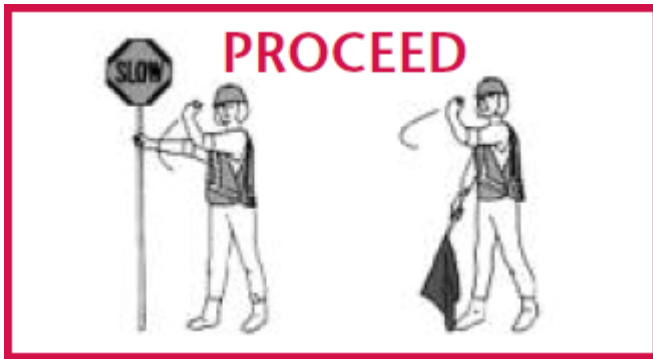
**COLOR:** Orange, with black letters or symbols.

**MEANING:** People are at work on or near the roadway and traffic can be controlled by a flag person. A work area speed limit as low as 25 MPH (40 km/h) can be posted. Even if no speed limit is provided, you must drive at a reduced speed through the work zone and you must always obey the flag persons. These illustrations show some signals a flag person will use. Know and obey them.

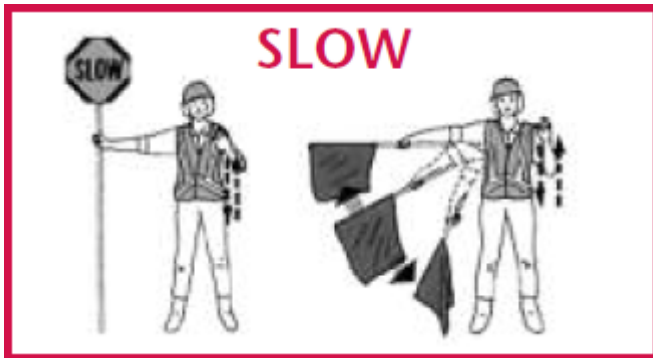
STOP



PROCEED



SLOW



### Destination Signs

**COLOR:** Green, with white letters.

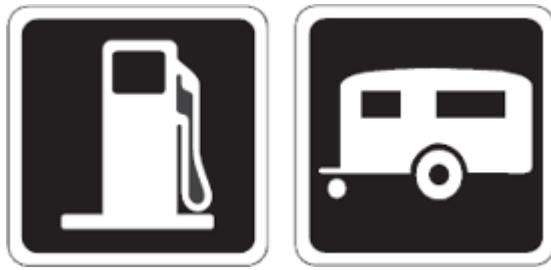
**MEANING:** Show the direction and distance to locations.



### Route Signs

**COLOR:** Varied.

**MEANING:** Indicate interstate, U.S., state or county routes. The shape tells you the type of route you are on. The sample signs, left to right, are for state, U.S., and interstate routes. When you plan a trip, use a highway map to decide which routes to take. During the trip, watch for destination signs so you will not get lost, or have to turn or stop suddenly.



### Service Signs

**COLOR:** Blue, with white letters or symbols.

**MEANING:** Show the location of services, like rest areas, gas stations, camping and medical facilities.



### Traffic Signals

#### Traffic Lights

Traffic lights are normally red, yellow and green from the top to bottom or left to right. At some intersections, there are lone red, yellow or green lights. Some traffic lights are steady, others flash. Some are round, and some are arrows. State law requires that if the traffic lights or controls are out of service or does not operate correctly when you approach an intersection, you must come to a stop as you would for a stop sign. You must then continue according to the rules of right-of-way, unless you are told to continue by a traffic officer.

#### Here is what different traffic lights indicate:

**Steady Red:** Stop. Do not go until the light is green. If a green arrow is shown with the red light, you can go toward the arrow and only if the intersection is clear.

You can make a right turn at a steady red light after you come to a full stop and yield the right-of-way to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. You can make a left turn at a steady red light when you turn from a one-way road into another one-way road after you come to a full stop and yield the right-of-way to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.

You cannot make a turn at a red light if there is a NO TURN ON RED sign posted or another sign, signal or pavement marking prevents the turn. You are not allowed to turn on a red light in New York City unless a sign that permits it is posted.

The driver of a school bus containing pupils cannot turn right on any red light.

**Flashing Red:** Means the same as a STOP sign: Stop, yield the right-of-way, and go when it is



safe.

**Red Arrow:** Do not go in the direction of the arrow until the red arrow light is off and a green light or arrow light goes on. A right or left turn on red is not permitted at a red arrow.

**Steady Yellow:** The light will change from green to red. Be prepared to stop for the red light.

**Flashing Yellow:** Drive with caution.



**Yellow Arrow:** The protection of a green arrow will end. If you intend to turn in the direction of the arrow, be prepared to stop.

**Steady Green:** Go, but yield the right-of-way to other traffic at the intersection as required by law (see [Chapter 5](#) [2]).



**Green Arrow:** You can go in the direction of the arrow, but you must yield the right-of-way to other traffic at the intersection as required by law (see [Chapter 5](#) [2].)



**Lane Use Control Lights**

Special above the pavement lights are sometimes used to indicate which lanes of a highway can be used at certain times:

**Steady Red "X":** Do not drive in this lane.

**Steady Yellow "X":** Move from this lane.

**Flashing Yellow "X":** This lane can only be used for a left turn.

**Green Arrow:** You can use this lane.

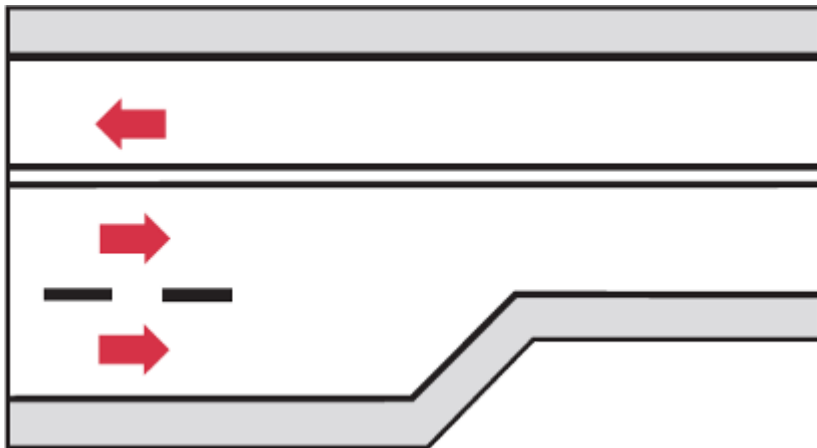
## Pavement Markings

Lines and symbols on the roadway divide lanes and tell you when you can pass other vehicles or change lanes. They also tell you which lanes to use for turns and where you must stop for signs or traffic signals. The arrows on these illustrations show the direction of traffic.

### Edge and Lane Lines

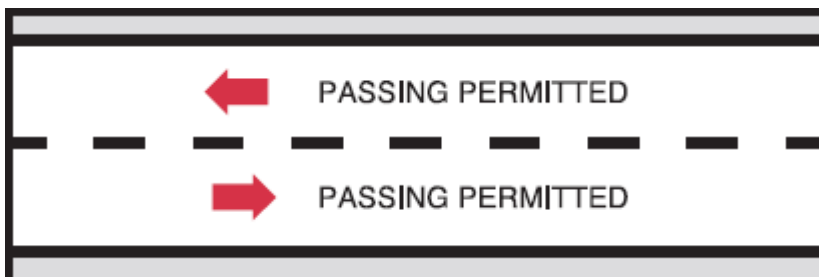
Solid lines along the side of the road tell you where its edge is - where the travel lane ends and the shoulder begins. It is illegal to drive across the edge line, except when told to by a police officer or other authorized official or when allowed by an official sign. An edge line that angles toward the center of the road shows that the road is narrower ahead. Lines that separate lanes of traffic that moves in the same direction are white.

Lines that separate traffic that moves in opposite directions are yellow. There may be two lines between lanes and lines can be solid or broken. Read [Chapter 6](#) <sup>[3]</sup> for the rules on how to pass other vehicles.

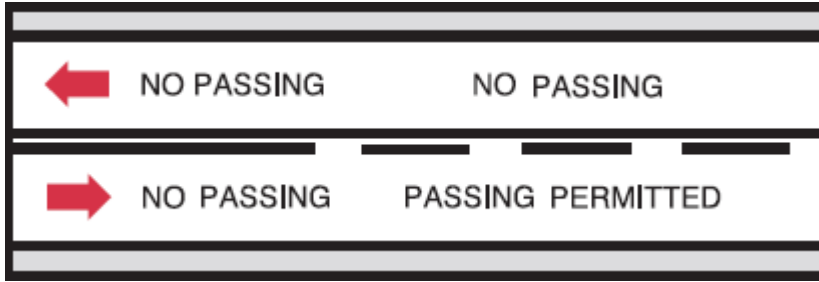


### What some lane lines indicate:

**One broken line:** You can pass other vehicles or change lanes if you can do so safely without interfering with traffic.



**Solid line with broken line:** If you are on the side with the solid line, you cannot pass other vehicles or go across the line except to make a left turn into a driveway. If you are on the side with the broken line, you can pass if it is safe to and you will not interfere with traffic.



**Double solid lines:** You can not pass or change lanes. You cannot go across the lines except to turn left to enter or leave the highway (e.g., to or from a driveway or to do a U-turn see [Chapter 5](#) [2]).

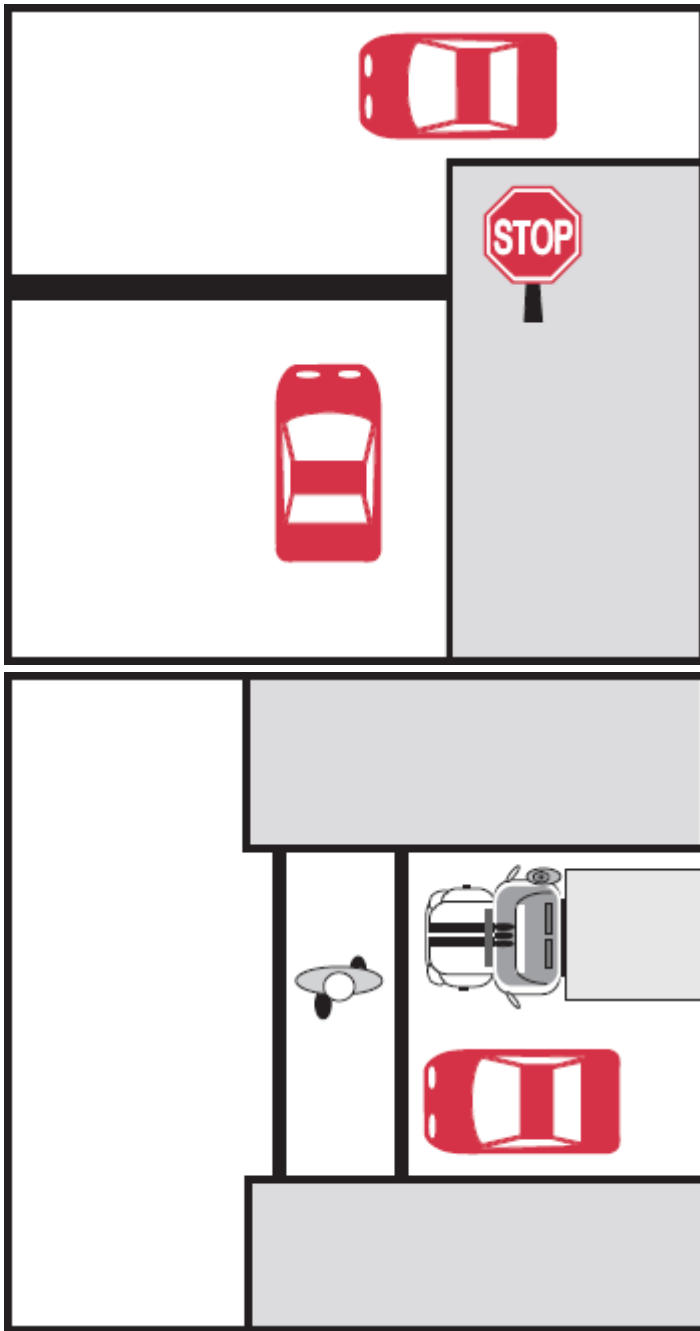


**One solid line:** You can pass other vehicles or change lanes, but you can only do so when obstructions in the road or traffic conditions make it necessary.



**Stop and Crosswalk Lines:** At an intersection controlled by a STOP sign, YIELD sign or traffic light, there can be a white stop line painted across the lane (called a Stop Line), and/or two parallel lines painted across the road (called a Crosswalk). When required to stop because of a sign or light, you must stop before you reach the stop line, if there is one, or the crosswalk. You need only stop at a stop line or crosswalk if required to by a light, sign or traffic officer, or to yield to a pedestrian, in-line skater or scooter at a marked or unmarked crosswalk. A single stop line may be placed at intersections to allow room for larger vehicles (such as tractor-trailers, buses and trucks) to turn without forcing other traffic to back up. It's important that you stop before you reach this stop line. (See "[Pedestrians](#)" [4] in Chapter 11).



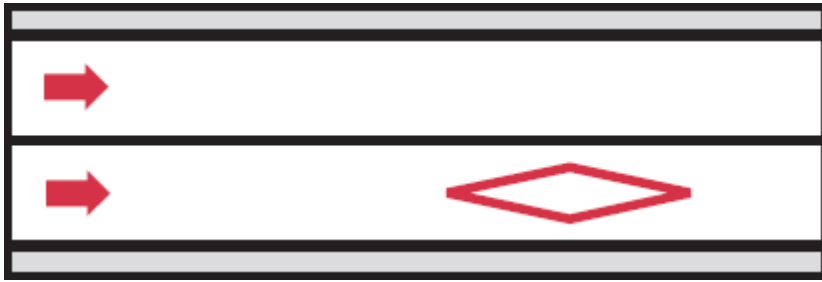


**Arrows:** Arrows show which lanes you must use. In this illustration, for example, you can turn right only from the right lane. To go straight, you must use the left lane. You must be in the correct lane before you reach the solid line that separates the lanes.



**Diamond Symbol:** This symbol indicates reserved lanes for buses, HOV (High Occupancy Vehicles) like car-pools and van-pools, bicycles or other special vehicles. You cannot enter and use these lanes unless your vehicle complies with the occupancy or other requirements indicated by signs for the times the special conditions are in effect. When used to designate reserved lanes on city streets, sections of the solid white line that separates the diamond lanes

from the normal lanes can be replaced by broken white lines. In these locations, non-HOV can enter the HOV lane if they make a right turn at the next intersection. Bus lanes and HOV lanes are to promote the most efficient use of limited street and highway capacity. They assure that vehicles with the highest importance move the fastest.



## Traffic Officers

Directions given by traffic officers take precedence over signs, signals or pavement markings. If a traffic officer signals you to stop at a green light, for example, you must stop. If an officer signals you to drive through a red light or stop sign, you must do it.

Among the persons authorized to direct traffic are police officers, fire police, highway work area flag persons, school crossing persons, and school bus drivers.

## Questions

Before you move on to Chapter 5, make sure you can identify the signs in this chapter and know what they mean. Also, make sure you can answer these questions:

- A regulation sign is normally what shape?
- What is the normal color and shape of a warning sign?
- What color and shape is a destination sign?
- What must you do at a STOP sign?
- What must you do when facing each of the following: a flashing red light, flashing yellow light, steady yellow light, a red light with a green arrow?
- What does it indicate if an edge line angles in toward the center of the road?
- What do each of these lines indicate: one broken, one solid, double solid, solid and broken together?
- If an intersection has crosswalk lines but no STOP line, where must you stop for a red light at that intersection?
- What type of pavement marking is used to show you which lane you must use for a turn?
- Which of the following must you obey over the other three: steady red light, flashing red light, STOP sign, police officer?

**End of Chapter 4: ✓ [Chapter 4 Quiz](#)** <sup>[1]</sup>

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