

CALIFORNIA

DRIVER'S HANDBOOK

This handbook is available at
dmv.ca.gov



Gavin Newsom, Governor
State of California

Toks Omishakin, Secretary
California State Transportation Agency

Steve Gordon, Director
California Department of Motor Vehicles

We know your time is *valuable*

GOONLINE
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- Renew driver's license and vehicle registration
- Replace sticker or registration
- Change address
- Request driver's record
- Request vehicle record
- And more...



STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DMV
Department of Motor Vehicles

Dear fellow Californian,

All who use our streets, roads and highways must follow and understand the rules of the road. Whether driving a car, motorcycle, commercial vehicle or riding a bicycle, it is critical we adhere to the rules to share the road safely and responsibly.

The California Driver's Handbook is available in nine languages and offers valuable information for Californians who are getting their driver's license for the first time or seasoned drivers who wish to update their knowledge of traffic rules.

A driver's license offers the opportunity to travel to essential services, a favorite vacation spot, education, loved ones and more—and to do so well into one's golden years. It also enables truck drivers to transport goods and services to support our economy.

The driver's license application can be started from the comfort of home by visiting the DMV website at **dmv.ca.gov**. Due to the department's expanding online services, most DMV transactions can be completed on this site. Some of these transactions include driver's license renewal, vehicle registration and others. The DMV has been modernizing interactions with its customers, making Californians' digital experience easier, faster and more convenient. Try online first, as it can be a timesaver.

Remember that driving or riding is a privilege, and above all, safety must be the priority. Always buckle up, follow traffic laws, pay attention to other drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians, and put down that cell phone when behind the wheel or handlebars. Do not operate a vehicle, motorcycle or bicycle while distracted or impaired—it could mean the difference between life and death.

Wishing you safe journeys,



Toks Omishakin

Secretary

California State Transportation Agency



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Disclaimer

This handbook is a summary of the laws and regulations in the *Vehicle Code* available at **leginfo.legislature.ca.gov**. DMV, law enforcement, and the courts follow the full, exact language.

Contact Us

Send comments or suggestions for this driver’s handbook to **dmv.ca.gov/customerservice**.

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DMV SERVICES

Have your driver's license or identification (ID) card number, vehicle license plate number, or vehicle identification number (VIN) available.

Online Services

Vehicle Registration Renewal at dmv.ca.gov/vrservices.

Driver's License Renewal at dmv.ca.gov/dlservices.

Office Appointments at dmv.ca.gov/make-an-appointment.

Visit dmv.ca.gov/online to find many other online services.

Kiosk Services

Visit dmv.ca.gov/kiosks to find kiosk services and locations.

Phone Services

Call 1-800-777-0133.

During Normal Business Hours:

- Talk to a DMV representative.

Automated 24/7 Phone Services:

- Renew your vehicle registration.
- Make a DMV office appointment.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired may call 1-800-368-4327 for assistance.

SECTION 1. *The California Driver's License*

A California driver's license allows you to drive on public roads.

Before you can get a driver's license in California, you are required to pass the knowledge and behind-the-wheel drive tests based on information in this handbook.

You must have the correct license to drive your vehicle type. Most people need a noncommercial Class C driver's license. To operate commercial vehicles, motorcycles, and other types of vehicles, you must have a different class of license.

For information on vehicles covered by a Class C, visit [**dmv.ca.gov/dl**](https://dmv.ca.gov/dl).

CARD DESIGNATIONS

REAL ID Driver's License

Beginning May 2025, your driver's license, or identification (ID) card must be REAL ID compliant if you use it to:

- Board an airplane for domestic flights.
- Enter military bases.
- Enter most federal facilities.

Visit [**dmv.ca.gov/realid**](https://dmv.ca.gov/realid) to learn more about applying for a REAL ID.

Driver's Licenses for Undocumented Residents

California offers driver's licenses for all residents regardless of immigration status. For more information, visit [**dmv.ca.gov/dl**](https://dmv.ca.gov/dl).

Organ and Tissue Donor

For information, visit [**donateLIFEcalifornia.org**](https://donateLIFEcalifornia.org).

Veterans

Visit [**dmv.ca.gov/veterans**](https://dmv.ca.gov/veterans) to learn more about the requirements and benefits of a Veteran designation.

ID Cards

ID cards are issued for identification purposes to eligible persons of any age. They do not permit you to drive. To get an ID, you must provide your identity document, residency documents, and social security number.

Visit [**dmv.ca.gov/id-cards**](https://dmv.ca.gov/id-cards) to complete an ID card application and get information on current acceptable documents and reduced-fee, no-fee, or senior ID cards.

SECTION 2. *Getting an Instruction Permit and Driver's License*

If you do not have a driver's license from California or another state, you must apply for an instruction permit before taking the behind-the-wheel drive test to get your driver's license.

WHAT YOU NEED

To apply for an instruction permit or driver's license, you must provide:

- **Proof of identity:** Proving who you are.
- **Two proofs of residency:** Proving you live in California. Exceptions may apply.
- **Legal full name document:** Proving your current name if the name on your identity document and application do not match.
- **Social security number:** Exceptions may apply.

For REAL ID requirements, current acceptable documents, and eligibility, visit dmv.ca.gov/realid.

REGISTER TO VOTE

For information on registering to vote, visit California Secretary of State at sos.ca.gov.

APPLYING FOR AN INSTRUCTION PERMIT

To apply for a Class C instruction permit:

1. Complete a Driver's License & ID Card Application.
2. Provide your documents.
3. Pay a non-refundable application fee.
4. Pass your knowledge test(s).
5. Pass a vision test.

For more information, visit dmv.ca.gov/instructionpermit for a complete list of application steps and requirements.

If you are under 18 years old, you will also need to:

- Be at least 15½ years old.
- Complete a driver education program.
- Have a parent or guardian sign to approve the application and accept financial responsibility (see Section 10). If your parents or guardians share joint custody of you, both must sign.
- Wait to use your instruction permit until you start behind-the-wheel driver training with an instructor who will validate the permit.

DRIVING SCHOOLS

Driver education and driver training are offered at DMV-licensed driving schools and some high schools. Instructors must carry an instructor's ID card. Ask to see it.

See the Driver Training Schools page at dmv.ca.gov/driver-ed for more information about selecting a driving school.

APPLYING FOR A DRIVER'S LICENSE

To get your driver's license after you have your instruction permit, you need to:

- Practice driving with a California-licensed driver who is at least 18 years old (25 for minors). This person must sit close enough to take control of the vehicle if needed.
- Pass a behind-the-wheel drive test.

If you are under 18 years old, you will also need to:

- Be at least 16 years old.
- Have an instruction permit from California or another state for at least 6 months (or turn 18 years old) before scheduling your behind-the-wheel drive test.
- Prove that you completed **both** driver education and driver training.
- Practice driving for at least 50 hours with a California-licensed driver who is at least 25 years old. Ten hours must be at night.

See the Driver's Licenses page at dmv.ca.gov/teendriver for the complete list of application steps, requirements, the Parent Teen Driving Contract, and Driving Performance Evaluation (DPE) Score Sheet.

Minor's Restrictions and Exceptions

When you are under 18 years old, your driver's license will have the word provisional. As a provisional driver, you **cannot** drive:

- Between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. during the first 12 months you have your license.
- With passengers under 20 years old, unless your parent or guardian or other California-licensed driver (at least 25 years old) rides with you.
- For pay or operate vehicles that require a commercial Class A, B, or C license.

There are exceptions to these restrictions if you:

- Have a medical need and cannot reasonably find another way to travel. You must carry a note signed by your physician. The note must have your medical condition and date you are expected to recover.
- Drive for schooling or a school activity. You must carry a note signed by your school principal, dean, or designee.
- Must drive for work reasons. You must carry a note signed by your employer. The note must confirm your employment.
- Must drive an immediate family member. You must carry a note signed by your parent or legal guardian. The note must state the reason you need to drive, the family member, and date when the need will end.

NOTE: A parent or guardian may cancel their teen's license by completing a Request for Cancellation or Surrender of a Driver License or ID Card form.

SECTION 3. *The Testing Process*

DRIVER'S LICENSE TESTS

Here is an overview of the driver's license tests:

1. Vision Test

DMV tests all applicants to ensure they can see well enough to drive safely. If you take your vision test with corrective or contact lenses, your driver's license will have a corrective lenses restriction. If you do not pass your vision test, you will be asked to have your eye doctor complete a Report of Vision Examination (DL 62) form. For more information, visit dmv.ca.gov/vision-standards.

2. Knowledge Test

When you apply for an original driver's license, you must pass a knowledge test with multiple choice questions. You are allowed three attempts to pass before you must reapply. Minors must wait seven days to retake a failed knowledge test, not including the day of the failure.

When renewing your driver's license, eLearning may be an alternative testing option. This is a no-fail, self-paced interactive modulated course with quizzes after each module. The course can be taken on a computer, laptop, tablet, or mobile device.

Testing options will be available once you complete your application at dmv.ca.gov/dl.

IMPORTANT: You are not allowed to use any testing aids during knowledge tests, such as a California Driver's Handbook or cell phone.

3. Behind-the-Wheel Drive Test

When you apply for an original driver's license, you will be tested on your ability to safely drive a vehicle. Upon renewal, drivers with a vision or medical condition may be required to take a behind-the-wheel test. The examiner may give two or more instructions at one time to determine whether you can understand and properly follow both directions. For example, "At the next street, make a left turn, and then at the first intersection make another left turn."

Visit dmv.ca.gov/make-an-appointment to schedule a behind-the-wheel drive test appointment.

On the day of your behind-the-wheel test, you must bring:

1. Your instruction permit or driver's license (if you have one).
2. Another California-licensed driver who is at least 18 years old (25 for minors), unless you are already licensed to drive.
3. A vehicle that is safe to drive for your test.
4. Valid proof of insurance and vehicle registration.
5. If you plan to use a rental vehicle for your drive test, your name must be listed on the rental contract. The contract must not exclude behind-the-wheel drive tests.

NOTE: Minors must wait 14 days to retake a failed behind-the-wheel drive test, not including the day of the failure.

Before you begin, the DMV examiner will ask you to locate and demonstrate the following:

- **Driver window** – The window on the driver side must open.
- **Windshield** – The windshield must allow a full, clear, unblocked view for you and the DMV examiner. Windshield cracks may postpone your test.
- **Rearview mirrors** – At least two rearview mirrors. One of them must be on the left side of your vehicle.
- **Brake lights** – The right and left brake lights must be operational.
- **Tires** – The tires must have at least 1/32-inch of uniform tread depth. The use of a donut tire is not allowed during a drive test.
- **Foot brake** – There must be at least one inch of clearance between the bottom of the brake pedal and the floorboard when depressed.
- **Horn** – Designed for the vehicle, in proper working condition, and loud enough to be heard from a distance of at least 200 feet.
- **Emergency (parking brake)** – How to set and release the parking brake.
- **Turn/Arm signals**
 - a. Left turn.
 - b. Right turn.
 - c. Slowing down or stopping.
- **Windshield wipers: control arm or switch** – You may be required to show they function.
- **Seat belts** – All seat belts must work properly and be used by the individual(s) in the vehicle.

NOTE: If your vehicle does not meet the requirements, your drive test will be rescheduled.

Interpreters may be used during the pre-drive inspection for the identification and use of certain controls in the vehicle but may not accompany you during the drive test.

Only the examiner is allowed to accompany you during the drive test. Exceptions are made for training, service animals, and certain law enforcement situations.

The use of a recording device, including a video recorder, is prohibited during a behind-the-wheel drive test. If the recording device cannot be powered off or disabled, the applicant must block it so there is no visual or audio recording during the drive test.

Other Things to Know for Your Behind-the-Wheel Test

The drive test is intended to determine your skill in operating a motor vehicle in most road situations and evaluate your abilities, not the vehicle's technology. Therefore, advanced driver assistance systems technologies, such as automated parallel parking, lane departure, and adaptive cruise control, are not permitted during the drive test. Vehicle safety technology, such as backup cameras and blind spot monitors, may be used on the drive test, but are not a replacement for an actual visual check of your mirrors and blind spots.

To view a sample of the Driving Performance Evaluation (DPE) Score Sheet, visit **dmv.ca.gov/teendriver**. For a sample of the Supplemental/Area DPE Score Sheet, visit **dmv.ca.gov/seniors**.

SECTION 4. *Changing, Replacing, and Renewing Your Driver's License*

Changes to Your License

If you legally change your name or need an update to your driver's license, such as your physical description or gender identity, visit **dmv.ca.gov/dlservices**.

Change Your Address

If you move, you must notify DMV of your new address within ten days. Submit a change of address online at **dmv.ca.gov/addresschange** or by mail. It is your responsibility to ensure DMV has your correct mailing address on record.

You do not automatically get a new driver's license when you change your address. You may request a replacement for a fee.

Replace or Renew Your Driver's License

It is against the law to drive with an expired driver's license. To renew or replace a lost, stolen, or damaged driver's license, visit **dmv.ca.gov/dlservices**. If ineligible to renew online, visit a DMV office.

Before DMV can issue you a driver's license, you may need to provide additional proof of your identity. Your driver's license and identity document may expire on the same date. If so, you will be required to provide a valid identity document. If you are a minor, your parent or guardian must sign the application. Once you receive your replacement card, your old card is no longer valid. If you find the old card, destroy it.

Extend Your Driver's License

If you are out-of-state and cannot renew, you may request a one-year extension of your driver's license. Before your driver's license expires, submit a request with your name, driver's license number, birth date, California residence address, and out-of-state address to **dl-extensions@dmv.ca.gov**.

NOTE: Limited-term driver's licenses are not eligible for this extension.

SECTION 5. *An Introduction to Driving*

Your health may affect your driving.

Vision – You must be able to notice hazards in different types of lighting, judge distances, adjust to traffic speed, and read road signs.

Hearing – You must be able to hear horns, sirens, motorcycles, or screeching tires that may alert you of hazards. It is illegal to wear a headset or earplugs in both ears while driving.

Fatigue and Drowsiness – Can affect your vision and increase reaction time to hazards.

Physical and Mental – You must be alert to quickly decide the correct course of action in any type of traffic situation, including unexpected ones.

Medications – Prescription and over-the-counter medications can make you an unsafe driver. Some medicines can make you sleepy. It is your responsibility to know the effects of the medications you take.

Health – Physicians are required to report patients, who are at least 14 years old, to DMV for medical conditions that may affect your ability to drive safely, such as lapse of consciousness.

Controlling the Vehicle

To control your vehicle, it is critical to keep both hands on the wheel whenever possible.

Hand-to-Hand Steering (Push/Pull)

To use this steering wheel method:

1. Start with your hands at 9 and 3 o'clock or 8 and 4 o'clock.
2. Do not cross your hands over the middle of the steering wheel.
3. Keep your hands in these positions, even when making turns.

Hand-Over-Hand Steering

Use this steering wheel method when you turn at low speeds, park, or need to recover from a skid. To use this method:

1. Start with your hands at 8 and 4 o'clock.
2. Reach across the steering wheel to grasp the opposite side.
3. Let go of the steering wheel with your other hand.
4. Reach across the arm still holding the wheel, grip the wheel, and pull up.

One-Hand Steering

There are only two situations that may require steering with one hand:

- When you are turning while backing up to see where you are going behind you. Place your hand at the 12 o'clock position on the steering wheel.
- When you are operating vehicle controls that require you to remove a hand from the steering wheel.

SIGNALS, HORNS, AND HEADLIGHTS

Your signals, horn, and headlights are important for communicating with other drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Signaling

Always signal when you turn, change lanes, slow down, or stop.

You can signal using your vehicle's signal lights or using hand-and-arm positions. If your signal lights are not functioning, or bright sunlight makes your signal lights hard to see, use the hand-and-arm signals shown in the image below.



Bicyclists may signal a turn with their arm held straight out, pointing in the direction they plan to turn.

You should signal:

- At least 100 feet before you turn.
- Before every lane change.
- At least five seconds before you change lanes on a freeway.
- Before pulling next to the curb or away from the curb.
- Even when you do not see other vehicles around you.
- When you are almost through the intersection if you plan to turn shortly after crossing the intersection.

Remember to turn off your signal when you no longer need it.

Using Your Horn

Use your vehicle's horn to let other drivers know you are there or warn others of a hazard. Use your horn to:

- Avoid collisions.
- Alert oncoming traffic on narrow mountain roads where you cannot see at least 200 feet ahead.

Using Your Headlights

Your vehicle's headlights help you see what is in front of you. They also make it easier for other drivers to see your vehicle. Dim your high-beam headlights to low beams within 500 feet of a vehicle coming toward you or within 300 feet of a vehicle you are following. It is illegal to drive using only parking lights. Use your headlights:

- When it is too dark to see from 1,000 feet away.
- Beginning 30 minutes after sunset.
- Until 30 minutes before sunrise.
- In adverse weather. If you need to use your windshield wipers due to fog, rain, or snow, you must turn on your low-beam headlights.
- When conditions (such as clouds, dust, smoke, or fog) prevent you from seeing other vehicles.
- On mountain roads and tunnels (even on sunny days).
- When a road sign states that headlights must be on.
- To help other drivers see your vehicle, especially when the sun is low on the horizon.

Using Your Emergency Flashers

If you can see a collision or hazard ahead, warn drivers behind you using these methods:

- Turn on your emergency flashers.
- Lightly tap your brake pedal three or four times.
- Use a hand signal when slowing and stopping.

If you need to stop because of vehicle trouble:

- Turn on your emergency flashers. If your vehicle does not have emergency flashers, use your turn signals.
- If possible, pull off the road away from all traffic.
- If you cannot get completely off the road, stop where people can see you and your vehicle from behind.
- Do not stop just over a hill or just around a curve. Other drivers may not see your vehicle in time to avoid a collision.
- Call for emergency roadside assistance and stay in your vehicle until help arrives.

SECTION 6. *Navigating the Roads*

TRAFFIC LANES

A traffic lane is a section of road for a single line of traffic.

Lane Markings

Lane markings on road surfaces help drivers know which part of the road to use and understand traffic rules.

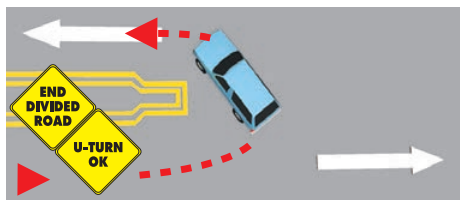
Single Solid Yellow Line

A single solid yellow line marks the center of a road with two-way traffic. Do not pass a vehicle in front of you if there is only one lane of traffic going your direction and a solid yellow line on your side of the road.

Double Solid Yellow Lines

Do not pass over double solid yellow lines. Stay to the right of these lines unless you are:

- In a high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) carpool lane that has a designated entrance on the left.
- Instructed by construction or other signs to drive on the other side of the road because your side is closed or blocked.
- Turning left across a single set of double yellow lines to enter or exit a driveway or private road or make a U-turn.



Two sets of solid double yellow lines spaced two or more feet apart are considered a barrier. Do not drive on or over this barrier, make a left turn, or make a U-turn across it, except at designated openings.

Broken Yellow Line

A broken yellow line indicates you may pass if the broken line is next to your driving lane. Only pass when it is safe.

Single Solid White Line

A single solid white line marks traffic lanes going in the same direction. This includes one-way streets.

Double Solid White Lines

Double solid white lines indicate a lane barrier between a regular use and a preferential use lane, such as a carpool (HOV) lane. You may also see double solid white lines in or near freeway on and off ramps. Never change lanes over double solid white lines. Wait until you see a single broken white line.

Broken White Lines

Broken white lines separate traffic lanes on roads with two or more lanes in the same direction.

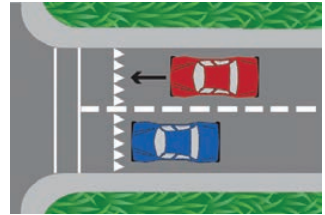
End of Lane Markings

Ending freeway and street lanes are usually marked with large broken lines. If you are driving in a lane marked with broken lines, be prepared to exit the freeway or for the lane to end. Look for a sign that tells you to exit or merge.



Yield Line

A yield line is a line of solid white triangles that shows approaching vehicles where to yield or stop. The triangles point towards approaching vehicles.



Choosing a Lane

Traffic lanes are often referred to by number. The left (or fast) lane is called the Number 1 Lane. The lane to the right of the Number 1 Lane is called the Number 2 Lane. Then the Number 3 Lane, etc.



Example of numbered traffic lanes.

Here are some tips for choosing a lane:

- Use the left lane to pass or turn left.
- Use the right lane to enter or exit traffic or when you enter the road from a curb or shoulder.

Changing Lanes

Before you change lanes:

- Signal.
- Check your mirrors.
- Check traffic behind and beside you.
- Look over your shoulder in the direction you plan to move to make sure the lane is clear.
- Check your blind spots for other vehicles, motorcyclists, and bicyclists. Do not let the vehicle drift into another lane.
- Be sure there is enough space for your vehicle in the next lane. It is not necessary to slow down before a lane change.

Stay in one lane as much as possible. Do not weave in and out of traffic. Last minute lane or direction changes may increase the risk of collisions. Once you start moving through an intersection, keep going. If you start to make a turn, follow through. If you miss a turn, keep driving until you can safely and legally turn around.

Types of Lanes

Passing Lanes

On a multilane road, the passing lane (far left lane) is the lane closest to the center divider and is used to pass other vehicles.

Carpool/High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

An HOV lane is a special lane reserved for carpools, buses, motorcycles, or low-emission vehicles with decals. To use an HOV lane, one of these must apply:



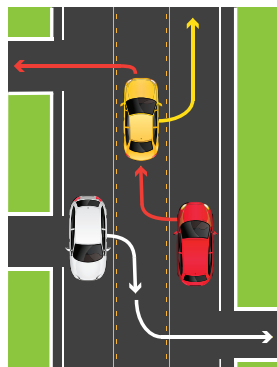
- You have a certain number of people in your vehicle. There will be signs at the on-ramp or along the road to tell you the minimum number of people. Road signs also list the hours when the HOV rules apply.
- You are driving a low emission or zero emission vehicle. You must display a special DMV-issued decal.
- You are riding a motorcycle (unless otherwise posted).

The road surface in an HOV lane is marked with a diamond symbol and the words Carpool Lane. Do not cross over double solid lines to enter or exit an HOV lane. Use designated entrances and exits.

Center Left Turn Lanes

A center left turn lane is located in the middle of a two-way street. It is marked on both sides by two painted lines. The inner line is broken and the outer line is solid. Use the center left turn lane to prepare for and make a left turn or U-turn. It is not a regular traffic lane or passing lane. You may only drive for 200 feet in the center left turn lane. To turn left from this lane:

- Look for other vehicles coming toward you in the center left turn lane.
- Signal.
- Look over your shoulder to check your blind spots.
- Merge completely into the center left turn lane so you do not block traffic.
- Turn when it is safe.



Turnout Areas or Lanes

Some two-lane roads have special turnout areas or lanes. Merge into these areas or lanes to allow cars behind you to pass.

You must use a turnout area or lane to let other vehicles pass when you are driving slowly on a two-lane road, where passing is unsafe, and there are five or more vehicles following you.



Bicycle Lanes

Bicycle lanes are for bicyclists only and run alongside vehicle traffic. They are typically marked by a single solid white line and signs. They are sometimes painted bright green to make them easier to see.

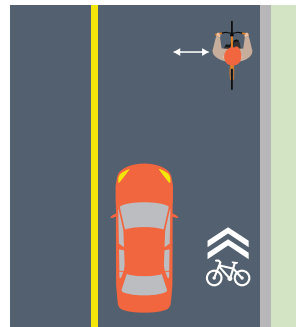
It is illegal to drive in a bicycle lane unless you are:

- Parking (where permitted).
- Entering or leaving the road.
- Turning (within 200 feet of an intersection).

There are multiple types of bike lanes and markings:

- **Bike lane:** Established along streets adjacent to vehicle traffic. Typically marked by a single solid white line that turns into a dash-line near an intersection.
- **Buffered bike lane:** Uses chevrons or diagonal markings to provide greater separation from traffic and on-street parking.
- **Bike route:** Uses bike route signs and shared road markings to designate a preferred route for bicyclists on streets shared with vehicle traffic.
- **Bicycle boulevard:** Prioritizes bicycle travel on streets shared with vehicle traffic.
- **Separated bikeway:** Is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic and for exclusive use of bicyclists. They are also known as a cycle track or protected bike lanes. The separation may include flexible posts, grade separation, inflexible barriers, or on-street parking.
- **Shared roadway bicycle markings:** Alert drivers that bicyclists can occupy the lane and help bicyclists maintain a safe lane position in traffic.

NOTE: Check your blind spots before entering a bike lane. If you drive a motorized bicycle, use caution to avoid other bicyclists. Travel at a reasonable speed and do not endanger the safety of other bicyclists.



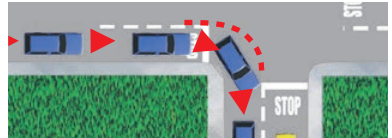
Example of shared roadway. Three (3) feet of distance must be maintained between the car and cyclist.

TURN

Right Turns

To make a right turn:

- Drive close to the right edge of the road.
 - If a designated right turn lane is available, enter at the opening.
 - You can drive in a bike lane within 200 feet from the turn. Check for bicyclists in your blind spots.
- Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists, or motorcyclists between your vehicle and the curb.
- Start signaling about 100 feet before the turn.
- Look over your right shoulder and reduce your speed.
- Stop behind the limit line. A limit line is a wide white line that shows the drivers where to stop before an intersection or crosswalk. If there is no limit line, stop before you enter the crosswalk. If there is no crosswalk, stop before you enter the intersection.
- Look both ways (left-right-left) and turn when it is safe.
- Complete your turn in the right lane. Do not turn wide into another lane.



Example of a right turn.

Right Turn Against a Red Light

You may turn right at a red light after a complete stop unless there is a NO TURN ON RED sign. Follow the same steps listed above for right turns.

Right Turn Against a Red Arrow

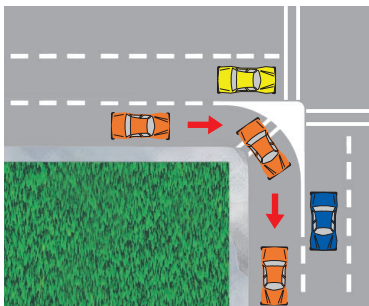
You may not turn right if you are stopped at a red arrow light. Wait until the light changes to green before making your turn.

Right Turn at a Public Transit Bus Lane

It is illegal to drive, stop, park, or leave a vehicle in an area designated for public transit buses. Signs will be posted to indicate the lanes are for bus only use. However, you may cross a bus lane to make a right turn.

Right Turn onto a Road with a Dedicated Lane

A dedicated right turn lane does not merge into another lane and allows you to make a right turn without stopping. You may make your turn even if there is a red light for vehicles going straight through the intersection. If there is a traffic light or sign on the right curb of the right turn lane, you must obey that light or sign. Always yield to pedestrians in a crosswalk when turning.



Left Turns

To turn left:

- Drive close to the center divider or into the left turn lane.
 - Enter a designated left turn lane at the opening. Do not cross any solid line.
 - Enter a two-way center left turn lane within 200 feet of the turn. Respect the right-of-way of any vehicle, bicyclist, or motorcyclist already in the lane. Always yield to pedestrians.
- Start signaling 100 feet before the turn.
- Look over your left shoulder and reduce your speed.
- Stop behind the limit line. If there is no limit line, stop before you enter the crosswalk. If there is no crosswalk, stop before you enter the intersection.
- Look both ways (left-right-left) and begin your turn when it is safe.
- Proceed into the intersection while turning to complete your turn in the left lane.
- Do not turn the steering wheel too soon and enter the lane of oncoming vehicles.
 - Keep your wheels pointed straight ahead until it is safe to start your turn. If your wheels are pointed to the left and a vehicle hits you from behind, you could be pushed into oncoming traffic.
- Accelerate smoothly during and after the turn.
- Allow the steering wheel to straighten in the new lane.



Example of a left turn.

Left Turn Against a Red Light

You may turn left against a red light when you are turning from a one-way street onto a one-way street. Make sure there is no sign prohibiting the turn. Yield to other vehicles, pedestrians, or bicyclists who have a green light. Look both ways and turn when it is safe.

U-TURN

A U-turn is when you turn your vehicle around to go back in the direction you came. To make a U-turn, signal and use the left turn lane or far-left lane. You may make a U-turn:

- Across a double yellow line.
- In a residential district if no vehicles are approaching you within 200 feet.
- At an intersection on a green traffic light or green arrow, unless a NO U-TURN sign is posted.
- On a divided highway if a center divider opening is provided.

Never make a U-turn:

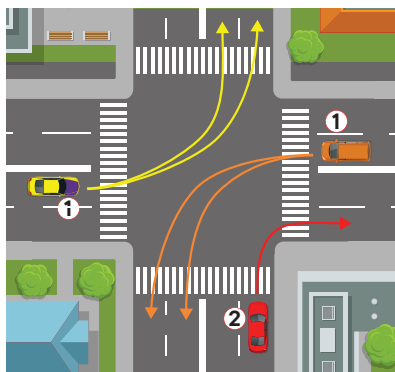
- Where a NO U-TURN sign is posted.
- At or on a railroad crossing.
- On a divided highway by crossing a dividing section, curb, strip of land, or two sets of double yellow lines.
- When you cannot see clearly for 200 feet in each direction.
- On a one-way street.
- In front of a fire station. **Never** use a fire station driveway to turn around.
- In business districts (the part of a city or town where most offices and businesses are).
 - Except at an intersection, or on a divided highway where an opening has been provided.

Examples of Turns

The descriptions below refer to the numbers next to the cars in the images. Watch for pedestrians, motorcycles, and bicycles between your vehicle and the curb. When making turns, there may be signs or arrows that indicate you can turn from or end in more than one lane.

1. Left turn from a two-way street.

Start the turn in the left lane closest to the middle of the street. To reduce the risk of collision, end the turn in the left lane closest to the middle of the street going in your vehicle's direction.

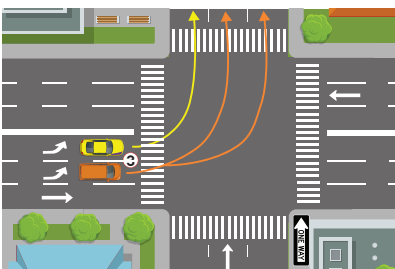


2. Right turn.

Begin and end the turn in the lane closest to the right edge of the road. Do not swing wide into another lane of traffic.

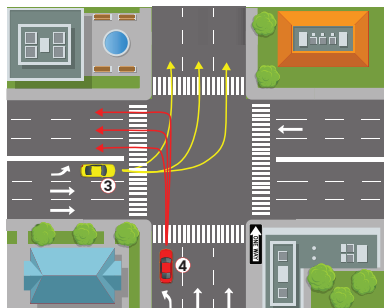
3. Left turn from a two-way street onto a one-way street.

Start the turn from the lane closest to the middle of the street (far-left lane). If there are three or more lanes in your direction of travel, you may end your turn in any lane that is open.

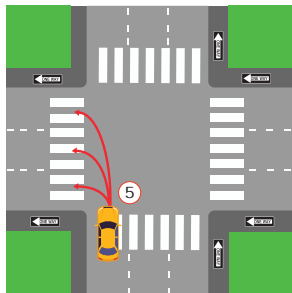


4. Left turn from a one-way street onto a two-way street.

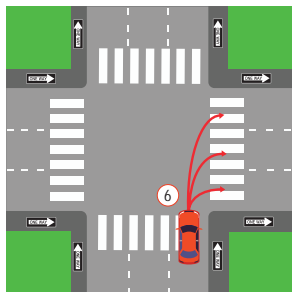
Start the turn from the far-left lane. To reduce the risk of collision, end the turn in the left lane closest to the middle of the street going in your vehicle's direction.



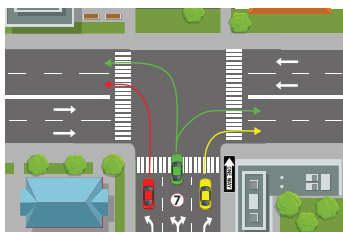
5. **Left turn from a one-way street onto a one-way street.** Start the turn from the far-left lane. Bicyclists can legally use the left turn lane for their left turns. If there are three or more lanes in your direction of travel, you may end your turn in any lane that is open.



6. **Right turn from a one-way street onto a one-way street.** Start the turn in the far-right lane. If safe, you may end the turn in any lane.



7. **Turn at a “T” intersection from a one-way street onto a two-way street.** Traffic going straight through the intersection has the right-of-way. You may turn either right or left from the center lane.



Braking

- Remove your foot from the accelerator and allow the vehicle to slow down. Lightly press the brake until you come to a full stop. Give yourself enough space and time to perform this maneuver.
- When stopping at a limit line, do not cross over the line. If stopping behind a vehicle, leave enough space to see their rear wheels.

MERGING AND EXITING

Merging

Highway traffic has the right-of-way. For more information, see Right-of-Way Rules: Who Goes First in Section 7. When you enter a highway, you will need to:

- Be in the proper lane on the on-ramp.
- Be at or near the speed of traffic.
- Merge into highway traffic when safe to do so. Do not stop unless absolutely necessary.
- Merge into a space large enough for your vehicle to safely join the lane.
- Use your mirrors and turn signals.
- Turn your head quickly to look over your shoulder before changing lanes or merging into traffic.
- Make sure you can stop safely by leaving three seconds of space between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Make sure you do not cross over any solid lines when merging. If you need to cross several lanes, signal and cross them one at a time. Check your blind spots for vehicles, motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians each time.

Exiting

To exit a highway safely:

- Know your exit and be aware of when it is approaching.
- If you plan to change lanes, do so one at a time. Signal and look over your shoulder to check your blind spots.
- When in the proper lane, signal five seconds (approximately 400 feet) before you exit.
- Make sure you are at a safe speed to exit.
- Do not cross over any solid lines when exiting.

Crossing or Entering Traffic

When entering traffic from a full stop, signal and leave a large enough space to get up to the speed of traffic. To merge, enter, or exit traffic, you need a space that is:

- Half a block on city streets, which is about 150 feet.
- A full block on the highway, which is about 300 feet.

Even if you have a green light, do not start across the intersection if there are pedestrians or vehicles blocking your pathway.

When turning left, do not assume that an oncoming vehicle with its right turn signal on is turning before it reaches you. The driver may have their signal on by mistake or plan to turn just beyond you. Wait for the vehicle to start its turn before beginning the left turn.

PASSING

You must judge whether you have enough space to pass whenever you approach:

- An oncoming vehicle or bicyclist.
- A hill, curve, intersection, or road obstruction. To safely pass, the hill or curve should be at least one-third of a mile ahead.

Before you pass, look ahead for road conditions that may cause other vehicles to move into your lane.

Do not pass:

- If you are approaching a hill or curve and cannot see if other traffic is approaching. This is very dangerous on one and two lane roads.
- Within 100 feet of an intersection, bridge, tunnel, railroad crossing, or other hazardous area.
- At crossroads and driveways.
- Unless you have enough space to return to your lane.

How to Pass

When you are going to pass on an open highway:

- Signal that you plan on passing.
- Look over your shoulder to check your blind spots.
- Drive into the passing lane.
- Speed up to pass the vehicle.
- Signal and return to your original lane.

You may pass on the right only when:

- An open highway has two or more lanes going in your direction.
- The driver ahead of you is turning left and you can safely pass on the right. Never pass on the left if the driver is signaling a left turn.
- You are on a one-way street.

Never drive off the paved or main-traveled part of the road to pass.

Being Passed

If a vehicle is passing you or signals that they plan on passing, allow the vehicle to pass. Maintain your lane position and your speed.

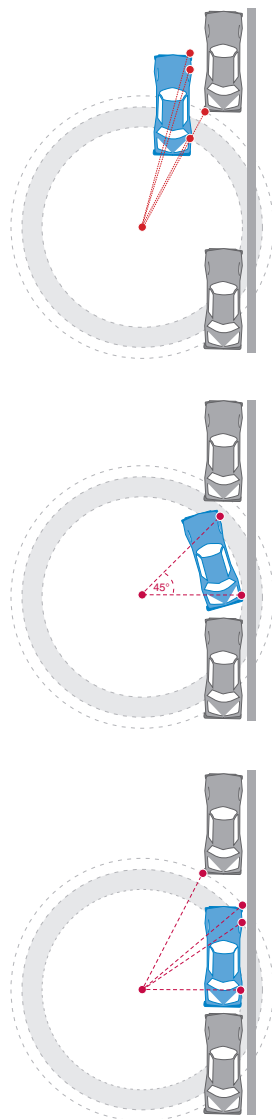
PARKING

Parallel Parking

Parallel parking is when you park in line with the road and other parked vehicles. To parallel park:

- 1. Find a space.** Look for a space at least three feet longer than your vehicle. When you find a space, turn on your signal to show that you plan on parking.
- 2. Pull up alongside the vehicle in front of the space.** Leave about two feet between your vehicle and the vehicle next to you. Stop once your rear bumper is aligned with the front of your parking space. Keep your signal on.
- 3. Check your blind spots.** Look in your rearview mirror and over your shoulder for approaching vehicles and pedestrians.
- 4. Begin backing up.** Turn your steering wheel to back into the space at about a 45-degree angle.
- 5. Straighten out.** Begin turning the steering wheel away from the curb when your rear wheel is within 18 inches of the curb. You may need to pull forward and backward to straighten out. Your vehicle should now be parallel and within 18 inches of the curb.

Turn off your vehicle and set the parking brake. Before you exit your vehicle, look carefully for passing vehicles, bicycles, and motorcycles. Exit when safe.



Straight Line Backing

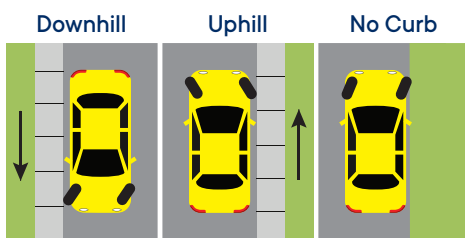
To back up in a straight line:

1. **Traffic check.** Observe traffic and check appropriate blind spots.
2. **Signal.** Activate the turn signal before pulling up to the curb. Cancel the turn signal once completed.
3. **Check your blind spots.** Look in your rearview mirror and over your shoulder for approaching vehicles and pedestrians.
4. **Begin backing up.** Back in a straight line for three vehicle lengths while remaining within three feet of the curb. Stay aware of what is behind you when backing up.
5. **Control.** To maintain control of the vehicle, back at a smooth, safe speed and adjust the steering wheel when needed. Practice until you can keep the vehicle straight. Repeat steps 1 and 2 to pull away from the curb.

Parking on a Hill

When you park on a hill, your vehicle could roll due to equipment failure. Remember to set the parking brake and leave the vehicle in park, or in gear for manual transmission. To park:

- **On a sloping driveway:**
Turn the wheels so the vehicle will not roll into the street, leave the vehicle in park and set the parking brake.
- **Headed downhill:** Turn your front wheels into the curb or right toward the side of the road.
- **Headed uphill:** Turn your front wheels away from the curb (left-towards the center of the road) and let your vehicle roll back a few inches. The wheel should gently touch the curb.
- **Headed either uphill or downhill when there is no curb:** Turn the wheels to the right so the vehicle will roll away from the center of the road if the brakes fail.



Downhill: turn the wheels toward the curb.
Uphill: turn the wheels away from the curb.
No Curb: turn the wheels toward the shoulder of the road.

Parking at Colored Curbs

Painted colored curbs have special parking rules.

- **White:** Stop only long enough to pick up or drop off passengers.
- **Green:** Park for a limited time. The time limit may be posted on signs or painted on the curb.
- **Yellow:** Load and unload passengers and freight. Do not stop longer than the time posted. If you drive a noncommercial vehicle, you are usually required to stay with your vehicle.
- **Red:** No stopping, standing, or parking. Buses may stop at a red zone marked for buses only.
- **Blue:** Parking for a disabled person or someone driving a disabled person with a special placard or special license plate.
 - To learn more about disabled parking placards and license plates, visit dmv.ca.gov/disabled-person-parking.



Example of crosshatched (diagonal lines) area.

Illegal Parking

Never park or leave your vehicle:

- Where a NO PARKING sign is posted.
- On a marked or unmarked crosswalk.
- On a sidewalk, partially blocking a sidewalk, or in front of a driveway.
- Within three feet of a sidewalk ramp for disabled persons.
- In front of or on a curb that provides wheelchair access to a sidewalk.
- In the crosshatched (diagonal lines) area next to a designated disabled parking space.
- In a space designated for parking or fueling zero-emission vehicles, unless you are driving a zero-emission vehicle.
- In a tunnel or on a bridge, unless permitted by signs.
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant or fire station driveway.
- Within 20 feet of an unmarked or marked crosswalk, or within 15 feet of a crosswalk where a curb extension is present.
- Between a safety zone and curb.
- Double parked.

- On the wrong side of the street or on a freeway, except:
 - In an emergency.
 - When a law enforcement officer requires a stop.
 - Where a stop is specifically permitted.

If you must stop on a freeway, park completely off the pavement and stay in your vehicle with the doors locked until help arrives. A vehicle that is stopped, parked, or left standing on a freeway for more than four hours may be removed.

Electric Vehicles

Local authorities can reserve parking spaces on public streets for electric vehicle charging.



DRIVING GREEN

Maximize your fuel efficiency while helping to lower emissions by following these practices:

- Speed up and slow down smoothly. Drive at a steady speed.
- Regularly inflate your tires, get oil changes, and check filters.
- Get rid of extra weight in your vehicle.

For more information, visit fuelconomy.gov.

LAW ENFORCEMENT STOPS

During a Law Enforcement Stop

- Turn on your right turn signal to acknowledge that you see the officer.
- Move completely onto the right shoulder, even if in the carpool/HOV lane. Stop in a well-lit area when possible.
- Turn off your radio.
- Remain inside your vehicle unless directed to get out by the officer.
- Roll down your window after stopping your vehicle and before the officer makes contact with you.
- The driver and all passengers should place their hands in clear view before the officer makes contact with them.

Law enforcement officers must state the reason for a traffic or pedestrian stop before they begin any questioning related to a criminal investigation or traffic violation. An exception is made if an officer reasonably believes withholding the reason is necessary to protect life or property from imminent threat. The reason for the stop must be documented on the traffic citation also known as a traffic ticket issued or law enforcement report completed for violating traffic laws.

Your Rights During the Enforcement Stop

If an officer asks your permission to do something, you have a right to say no. However, if you say no and the officer says they are going to do it anyway, you do not have a right to interfere with their actions. For example, an officer may request to search part or all of your vehicle. You have a right to decline that request, but the officer may have the legal authority to search your vehicle under certain circumstances. If you do not want the officer to search your vehicle, you should clearly say that you do not give your permission, but you do not have a right to resist or obstruct the officer if they search your vehicle.

The driver of a stopped vehicle must produce a driver's license, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration when stopped by law enforcement. If a driver does not produce these documents, officers may conduct a limited search for them. An officer may also request the names or identification of passengers. Passengers can decline that request, but under some circumstances the passengers may be required to identify themselves. If passengers do not want to produce their identification, they should clearly say so. Passengers should not interfere with the officer's duties in conducting the traffic stop, and if an officer demands identification, passengers should not interfere with the officer's actions. During a traffic stop, an officer can legally require the driver and all passengers to exit or stay inside the vehicle. If you are told to exit the vehicle or stay inside, you must do so.

In California, only federal law enforcement officers can ask you about your immigration status. California law prohibits state and local officers from asking drivers or passengers about their immigration status. If a California law enforcement officer asks you about your immigration status, you can decline to answer.

In general, the First Amendment protects the right of drivers and passengers to record interactions with law enforcement in public spaces.

If you are recording, you should immediately make that clear. You do not have a right to interfere with the officer's lawful duties during the enforcement stop, and you should not reach into concealed areas to retrieve your recording device without the officer's permission. If your recording is not interfering with the officer's ability to lawfully do their job, an officer cannot confiscate your recording device, delete the recording, or destroy the device just because you are using it to record. In general, you also have the right to deny a request to unlock a cellular phone or provide a password to it, though under some circumstances, such as if you are on parole, you may have to give permission in response to such requests. Finally, no government employee can retaliate against you just because you recorded something in public.

Even if you believe your rights were violated, you should not engage in physical resistance or violence against the officer.

If an officer does something that you believe violates your rights, you can voice your objection, but you should not physically resist. Everyone has the right to be safe during a traffic stop. Your safety and the officer's safety could be jeopardized if the situation escalates with physical resistance or violence.

All members of the public have a right to file a complaint against any law enforcement agency, and it is against the law for any government employee to retaliate against you for doing so. You can file a complaint with the law enforcement agency that employs the officer. You have a right to be free from discrimination based on your actual or perceived race, sex, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, medical condition, or citizenship status. You also have other rights guaranteed by the United States and California Constitutions, as well as California and federal laws. When you file a complaint, the agency that employs the officer must investigate the complaint. Links to contact information for California law enforcement agencies can be found at post.ca.gov/le-agencies.

DMV KIOSKS Offer Convenient Transactions

Available at:
Grocery Stores
DMV Offices



Find a kiosk near you
dmv.ca.gov/kiosks

- ✓ Complete your vehicle registration renewal
- ✓ Receive a replacement registration card or sticker
- ✓ Submit proof of insurance
- ✓ File for planned nonoperation (PNO) status
- ✓ Obtain your driver's record and vehicle record

Additional transactions will continue to be added for processing through the kiosks.

SECTION 7. *Laws and Rules of the Road*

TRAFFIC CONTROL

When at or approaching traffic signals or signs, yield to pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nearby vehicles that may have the right-of-way. See Right of Way Rules: Who Goes First, in this section.

Traffic Signals

Solid Red Light

A red traffic signal light means STOP. You can turn right at a red light, if:

- There is not a NO TURN ON RED sign posted.
- You stop at the stop or limit line, yield for pedestrians, and turn when it is safe.



Red Arrow

A red arrow means STOP. Do not turn at a red arrow. Remain stopped until a green traffic signal light or green arrow appears.



Flashing Red Light

A flashing red signal light means STOP. After stopping, you may go when it is safe.



Solid Yellow Light

A yellow traffic signal light means CAUTION. The light is about to turn red. When you see a yellow traffic signal light, stop, if you can do so safely. If you cannot stop safely, cautiously cross the intersection.



Yellow Arrow

A yellow arrow means the protected turning time is ending. The signal will change soon. If you cannot stop safely or you are already in the intersection, cautiously complete your turn. Pay attention to the next signal. It could be a:

- Green or red traffic signal light.
- Red arrow.



Flashing Yellow Light

A flashing yellow traffic signal light is a warning to PROCEED WITH CAUTION. Slow down and be alert. You do not need to stop.



Flashing Yellow Arrow

You can turn, but your turn is not protected from other traffic. Proceed to turn left after yielding to oncoming traffic and proceed with caution.



Solid Green Light

A green traffic signal light means GO. You should still stop for any vehicle, bicyclist, or pedestrian in the intersection. Only proceed if you have enough space without creating a danger to any oncoming vehicle, bicyclist, or pedestrian. Do not enter the intersection if you cannot get completely across before the traffic signal light turns red.



Green Arrow

A green arrow means GO in the direction the arrow is pointing. The green arrow allows you to make a protected turn. Oncoming vehicles are stopped by a red traffic signal light.



Traffic Light Not Working

When a traffic light is not working, stop as if the intersection is controlled by STOP signs in all directions. Then proceed cautiously when it is safe to do so.