

# Oregon Driver Manual

2007 – 2009



Driver & Motor Vehicle Services

# **AMBER ALERT**

**ON OREGON ROADWAYS**

AMBER stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response. It was named after Amber Hagerman, a 9-year old girl who was kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas, in 1996. Her tragic death had a profound impact on her community and throughout the entire state of Texas. It prompted law enforcement agencies and broadcast associations to develop an innovative emergency alert plan to help recover abducted children quickly.

The Oregon AMBER Alert Plan is a voluntary partnership among Oregon law enforcement agencies, Oregon Department of Transportation, and Oregon Broadcasters. The Oregon AMBER Alert sends out an emergency alert to the public when a child has been abducted and is believed to be in grave danger. There is an established criteria to initiate an Amber Alert. An AMBER Alert may only be initiated by a law enforcement agency.

The AMBER Alert uses electronic highway signs and the Emergency Alert System to notify the public of an abduction. Highway signs will flash "AMBER ALERT...TUNE TO LOCAL NEWS" to direct the public to listen to an emergency broadcast over a local radio station, and/or news related to the abduction, providing information on the victim, suspect information, and vehicle description.

# **HOW YOU CAN HELP**

When you see an electronic highway sign flashing "AMBER ALERT...TUNE TO LOCAL NEWS", turn your car radio to a local station and listen for the broadcast information. If you observe the vehicle mentioned in the alert broadcast, contact law enforcement by dialing 911. Note your location and direction of travel.

**Your cooperation  
may help recover an  
abducted child and  
lead to the arrest of  
a suspect.**



1-800-THE-LOST  
[www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)

This manual condenses and paraphrases language in the Oregon Revised Statutes. It also provides safety advice not included in the law. This manual is not a proper legal authority to cite and should not be relied upon in a court of law. Traffic regulations in cities, towns, counties, and federal territories may go beyond state laws, as long as they do not conflict with state law.

Changes may have been made to the information contained in this manual since it was last revised. Please check the DMV Web site [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com) for updates, office locations and hours, fees, and additional information.

Address your thoughts regarding the contents of this manual to: Driver Programs, DMV, 1905 Lana Avenue NE, Salem, Oregon 97314.



*Visit us at our Web site*

***[www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com)***

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**Help conserve our resources! Keep this manual in your vehicle for future reference. When you finish using the manual, please recycle or return it to a local DMV field office. Thank you!**



# Oregon

Ted Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Transportation

DMV Services

1905 Lana Avenue NE

Salem OR 97314

DMV is one of the few places where, sooner or later, nearly everyone is a customer – more than 3 million Oregonians in their teens and older. And while customers often think of DMV as the “store” where you get your driver license or plates for your car, DMV’s true product is something far more valuable – your safety.

Driving is a privilege. You earn it at DMV by demonstrating in a DMV knowledge test that you know traffic safety laws and by driving safely in a behind-the-wheel test.

You keep that privilege by driving safely for the rest of your life. Your safety – and that of your passengers, other drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists – depends on you. Driving safely is a never-ending responsibility on your part. DMV’s responsibility also includes suspending or revoking driving privileges for unsafe driving behavior – Oregon’s safe drivers expect no less.

Indeed, the three biggest factors in Oregon traffic-related deaths are driving under the influence of intoxicants, driving at excessive speeds, and the failure to use safety restraints properly – including child seats. All of those factors are under your control.

If these three errors disappeared, more than half the 477 people who died on Oregon’s roads in 2006 would have survived – or the crashes would have been avoided entirely.

DMV wants to assist you in becoming a safe driver. This manual is your guide for learning how. It will help prepare you for your driver license tests and help you develop good driving habits for life. Study it carefully and use what you learn as you practice your driving skills.

Whether you’re new to driving or new to Oregon, please become familiar with Oregon’s traffic laws and obey them when you drive. Always remember to wear your seat belt, insist that your passengers use safety belts, use proper safety restraints for your children, and never drive if you’re under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Together, Oregonians can make our roadways enjoyable and safe.

Tom McClellan  
Oregon DMV Administrator

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## Section 1

# A License to Drive

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More than three million of us share Oregon's streets and highways. We ask that you always drive safely and courteously. Remember, **driving is a privilege you earn, not a right**. Be careful to drive in a way that allows you to keep that privilege.

While driving a motor vehicle on highways or premises open to the public in Oregon, you must have either a valid driver license or instruction permit in your possession. You must get an Oregon driver license or instruction permit when you become a resident, even if your out-of-state license or instruction permit has not expired. When DMV issues an Oregon driver license or instruction permit, you must turn in any license or instruction permit you have from another state.

If your Oregon driving privileges are suspended or revoked, you cannot drive in Oregon with a license or instruction permit from another state.

Residents of other states who drive vehicles in Oregon must be at least 16 years of age and have a valid out-of-state driver license, **or** be at least 15 years of age and have a valid out-of-state instruction permit. Out-of-state instruction permit holders must abide by the same restrictions as persons with an Oregon instruction permit.

If you are in the military on active duty, you do not need an Oregon license if you have a valid license from your home state. A spouse of someone in military service may drive in Oregon with a valid license from another state.

### Oregon Driver License / ID Card Fee Schedule

*(All fees are non-refundable)*

#### CLASS C (Non-Commercial)

- First-time License..... \$59.00
- Instruction Permit..... 22.50
- Renewal ..... 39.00
- Replacement..... 25.50

#### IDENTIFICATION CARD

- First-time ID Card ..... \$33.50
- Renewal ..... 29.50
- Replacement..... 28.50

## TEST FEES (Class C)

- Drive Test ..... \$9.00
- Knowledge Test ..... 5.00

**Note:** DMV will charge a test fee each time you take a test. You must pay test fees in advance. Please bring a separate payment for your **issuance** fee. For example, bring two checks: one for your test(s) and one for your license or permit.

Fees are subject to change. Visit DMV's website at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com) for current information.

## Licenses, Permits, and Identification (ID) Cards

Oregon issues several classes of driver permits, licenses, and endorsements. Each class or endorsement defines what vehicles you may drive.

### ***Class C Instruction Permit***

You must be at least 15 years of age to apply for an instruction permit. This permit allows the operation of the same vehicles that a Class C license allows. A licensed driver who is at least 21 years old must be seated beside you in the vehicle. For the driving experience to count toward the 50 or 100 hour requirement to get a provisional driver license, the supervising driver must have had a license for at least three years.

- Class C instruction permits are valid for 24 months.
- You should check with any other state in which you may be traveling to find out if your Oregon instruction permit allows you to drive in that state.

### ***Class C License***

A Class C license allows a person who is at least 18 years old to drive:

- A car or any single vehicle (mopeds, passenger cars, vans, and pickups) with a loaded weight of not more than 26,000 pounds or a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of not more than 26,000 pounds that is exempt from CDL or motorcycle requirements.
- A recreational vehicle—including motor homes, campers, and travel trailers—for personal use.
- A fire or emergency vehicle.

You may also tow:

- A single vehicle, including a trailer or travel trailer, that has a loaded weight of 10,000 pounds or less or a GVWR of 10,000 pounds or less.
- A trailer over 10,000 pounds, if the combined weight of the towing vehicle and trailer is not more than 26,000 pounds.

Before DMV can issue any other class of license, permit, or endorsement, you must first qualify for a Class C license. A first-time driver license will expire on your birthday in eight years.

### ***Class C Provisional License (under 18 years of age)***

DMV issues a Class C Provisional license to persons 16-17 years of age. A Class C Provisional license allows the operation of the same vehicles that a Class C license allows. DMV closely monitors provisional drivers to ensure safe driving practices. Read Section 6 carefully and be aware of the effect certain actions can have on your provisional driving privilege, including: tobacco offenses; possession, use or abuse of alcohol; possession, manufacture, delivery or use of any controlled substance; not attending school; and traffic convictions.

To apply for a provisional license you must:

- Have had an instruction permit from Oregon, another state, or the District of Columbia for **at least six months**. If you do not have an Oregon instruction permit, you must take the Driver Knowledge Test.
- Certify, and have your parent or legal guardian certify, that you have either:
  - 50 hours of supervised driving experience and have taken an ODOT-approved traffic safety education course, **OR**
  - 100 hours of supervised driving experience.

For your driving experience to meet this requirement, it must have been supervised by someone at least 21 years of age who had a valid license for at least three years.

- Pass a Safe Driving Practices Test. There is no fee for this test.
- Pass a behind-the-wheel drive test.

If you are 16 and already have a valid driver license from another state, you are not required to have an instruction permit for six months or certify supervised driving experience. DMV may also waive the behind-the-wheel drive test. You must pass the Driver Knowledge Test and the Safe Driving Practices Test. The provisional license restrictions still apply once you receive your provisional license.

### ***Restrictions on a Class C Provisional License (Graduated Licensing)***

It is unlawful to operate a mobile communication device if you are under 18 years of age. This includes texting and talking on a cell phone.

**For the first six months** you cannot drive with a passenger under 20 years of age who is not a member of your immediate family AND you cannot drive between midnight and 5 a.m. unless for a reason in the list of exceptions below.

**For the second six months** you cannot drive with more than three passengers under 20 years of age who are not members of your immediate family AND you cannot drive between midnight and 5 a.m. unless for a reason in the list of exceptions below.

**Exceptions** to driving between midnight and 5 a.m. for the first year:

- Driving between home and your place of employment,
- Driving between home and a school event for which no other transportation is available,
- Driving for employment purposes, or
- Accompanied by a licensed driver at least 25 years of age.

The passenger restrictions do not apply while you are driving with an instructor as part of a certified traffic safety education course, or with a parent or stepparent who has valid driving privileges. The passenger and night driving restrictions apply for one year or until you turn 18, whichever comes first.

### ***Other Privileges***

DMV also issues the following driving privileges:

- **Mopeds**

You can operate a moped with a Class C license or a moped-restricted license (see the Oregon Motorcycle & Moped Manual.) If the moped is more than 50cc **or** if it goes over 30 mph on level ground, it is no longer considered a moped and you need a motorcycle endorsement to operate it.

- **Motorcycles**

To operate a motorcycle, you must have a motorcycle instruction permit or a driver license with a motorcycle endorsement. See the *Oregon Motorcycle and Moped Manual*.

- **Commercial driver licenses (CDL)**

To operate certain trucks and buses, or vehicles carrying passengers or hazardous materials, you must have a commercial driver license. See the *Oregon Commercial Motor Vehicle Manual* for more information about commercial driver licensing.

### ***Identification (ID) Cards***

DMV issues non-driver ID cards to Oregon residents who do not have a valid driver license or instruction permit and who need some form of acceptable identification. You must show DMV the same identification documents to obtain an ID card as are required to obtain a driver license. You cannot have both a driver license or permit **and** an ID card. An ID card will expire on your birthday in eight years.

# How To Apply For A Permit Or License

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The process to obtain any permit, license, or endorsement includes:

- Completing an application
- Providing proof of legal presence, full legal name, identity and date of birth
- Providing proof of your current legal name or legal name change, if needed
- Providing proof of your Social Security Number
- Providing proof of current residence address
- Successfully completing required knowledge/drive/vision tests
- Paying applicable fees; and
- If you are under 18 years old, complying with provisional licensing requirements, including proof of school attendance, completion, or exemption.

## ***The Application Process***

To apply for an instruction permit, license, or ID card, complete a *Driver License / ID Card Application*. This form is available at all DMV offices or on DMV's Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

If you are under 18 years old, you must have a parent or guardian's signature on all applications, unless you are emancipated or married. If you are an emancipated minor or a married minor, bring the legal document proving your emancipation or your marriage.

As part of the application process, DMV will check your driver record through a national computer system. If your privileges are suspended, revoked, or canceled in Oregon or any other state, you will need to take care of the problem before Oregon DMV can issue a license or permit.

If you are convicted of giving a false statement on your application, using a false or fictitious name or document, or giving a false address or age, you may be fined, sentenced to jail, or both. DMV will suspend your driving privileges for one year due to a conviction or if DMV determines you did any of the above.

## ***Proof of School Attendance, Completion, or Exemption***

If you are under 18 years old and applying for a first-time Oregon license or permit, you are required to show proof of school attendance, completion, or exemption before DMV can issue driving privileges.

Your school can provide you with a completed *Statement of Enrollment* form as proof of attendance. This form is required even when the school is not in session, such as spring break and summer. If you plan to visit DMV

during these times, obtain the required form before school breaks or prior to the end of the school year. A student body card is not acceptable proof of school enrollment.

Acceptable proof of completion includes a high school diploma or General Education Development (GED) certificate.

### ***Proof of Legal Presence, Full Legal Name, Identity and Date of Birth***

You are required to provide acceptable proof of legal presence, full legal name, identity and date of birth any time you conduct business at DMV related to your driver license, permit, or ID card.

Acceptable proof of **legal presence, full legal name, identity and date of birth** includes, but is not limited to:

- U.S. or U.S. Territorial government-issued birth certificate;
- U.S. passport or passport card, valid or expired no more than 5 years;
- U.S. territorial passport, valid or expired no more than 5 years;
- Tribal ID card from a federally recognized tribe located in Oregon or a federally recognized tribe with an Oregon affiliation, approved by DMV;
- Valid foreign passport, not expired, containing an Arrival/Departure Record (I-94, CBP I-94A or I-797A) with appropriate entry endorsement by the Department of Homeland Security (USCIS);
- U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USCIS) issued documents, not expired, (I-551, I-688, I-688A, I-688B, I-766, N550, N560, N561, N570, and N578);
- Re-entry Permit form (I-327);
- Refugee Travel Document form (I-571)

### ***Proof of Current Full Legal Name***

When you apply for an original, renewal or replacement driver license, instruction permit or identification card you are required to provide proof of your full legal name. Your full legal name is the name recorded on the proof of legal presence document. If your current full legal name is different than the name shown on your proof of legal presence, you will be required to provide additional proof of identity or legal name change documents.

Examples of acceptable identity documents that can be used to prove your current full legal name include: current driver license, instruction permit or identification card; military identification or common access card; out of state driver license, instruction permit or identification card. For a complete list of acceptable identity documents visit [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

Acceptable proofs of legal name change include: an official government-issued marriage certificate/license, certificate of registered domestic

partnership issued by vital statistics, U.S. court issued divorce decree, judgment of dissolution or annulment of marriage or domestic partnership, adoption decree or court order name change. All documents must be signed by a government official of the issuing agency and include a stamp or seal signifying that the document has been filed with the state and/or county.

### ***Proof of Social Security Number***

When you apply for an original, renewal, or replacement driver license, instruction permit, or identification card you are required to provide proof of your Social Security Number (SSN) issued by the U.S. Social Security Administration. The SSN you provide will be verified with the Social Security Administration. Acceptable proof of your SSN includes but is not limited to your SSN card, tax forms filed with the IRS or state tax agency, or military documents.

If you are not eligible for a SSN, you are required to provide proof of ineligibility for an SSN and sign a Statement of Not Eligible for Social Security Number form. If you sign a Statement of Not Eligible for Social Security Number form you are certifying that you are not eligible for a SSN and to the best of your knowledge you are legally present in the United States. If you knowingly supply a false statement you may be fined, imprisoned, or both and DMV will suspend your driver license, permit or identification card.

The SSN on an application is confidential information. It will not be printed on your driver license, permit or identification card and will not be released on DMV records. Access to your SSN is allowed only to qualified government agencies.

### ***Proof of Address***

Along with proof of legal presence, full legal name, identity, date of birth and SSN, you must also provide one document to prove your current residence address. Oregon law allows you to use a **mailing** address, such as a post office box or business address, **in addition to a residence address**, but never in place of one.

Acceptable proof of **residence** address includes:

- A document from the acceptable proof of legal presence, identity and date of birth list that contains your current residence address;
- Mortgage document, such as property tax, payment statement, or closing document, dated within the last year;
- Oregon vehicle title or registration card containing your current residence address only;
- Payment booklet, dated within the last year;

- Voter registration, selective service, medical, or health card;
- Utility hookup order or statement of account, dated within 60 days of application;
- Educational institution transcript, for the current year;
- Unexpired professional license issued by a government agency in the U.S.;
- Your parent, legal guardian, spouse, domestic partner, or roommate may certify your residence address. Your parent, legal guardian, spouse, domestic partner, or roommate must reside at the same address as you, appear in person with you, and show acceptable proof of their residence address.
- Mail dated within 60 days of application. Mail must be from a utility company, U.S. Treasury, Social Security Administration, Revenue Department (state or federal), or other government agency, insurance company, educational institution or clearance letter from another state. Please note that mail from DMV is not acceptable if it contains a mailing address in addition to the residence address.

**All documents serving as proof of legal presence, full legal name, identity, date of birth and residence address must be original or certified copies. DMV has discretion to require additional proof.**

**These lists can change. Be certain you possess documents that are acceptable before you come to DMV. Please check the DMV Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com) or contact us at (503) 945-5000.**

### ***Photographs***

When you go to a DMV office to apply for a license, permit, or identification card, be prepared to have your photograph taken.

Hats and sunglasses are not allowed. You can remove your prescription glasses for the photo, if you desire. Photos are taken against a blue background, so wear appropriate clothing for the best photo effect. The DMV employee will decide when the photo is acceptable. If you don't like the photo taken, you must pay the fee for a replacement license, permit, or identification card before DMV will take a new photo.

### ***Interim Card***

If you meet all the requirements to obtain an Oregon driver license, permit or identification card, you will be issued an interim card at the DMV office. Your permanent license, permit or ID card will be produced in a central location and will be mailed to the address you provide at the time of application. Because you will receive your license, permit or ID card in the mail, it is important that your address is correct. You should receive your permanent card within 5 to 10 business days.

## ***Renewals***

Driver licenses are renewed for eight years from the expiration date. You must renew in person at a local office. You must present documentation proving legal presence, full legal name, identity, date of birth, social security number and current residence address in addition to paying the renewal fee.

If you are 50 years old or older, you will be required to take and pass a vision screening test at the time of renewal.

## ***Replacement Licenses, Permits and Identification Cards***

DMV will issue a replacement driver license, permit, or identification card if:

- Your license, permit, or identification card is lost, stolen, or destroyed; or,
- Your residence address changes and you choose to get a new card; or,
- You have a name change; or,
- You are exchanging a valid-without-photo license for a license or identification card with a photograph; or,
- You are replacing a license or identification card with an error; or,
- You are obtaining a license or identification card after reinstatement of a suspension; or,
- You are replacing a license or identification card confiscated by law enforcement or the courts and you once again have become eligible for driving privileges.

You must provide documentation proving legal presence, full legal name, identity, date of birth, social security number and current residence address in addition to paying the replacement fee prior to issuance.

## ***Name and Address Changes***

If your name or address changes, **you must notify DMV within 30 days of the change.**

To change the name on your license, permit, or identification card, you must bring proof of your current full legal name and the replacement fee to a DMV office and apply for a replacement license, permit, or identification card.

To change your address, notify DMV by mail, on the DMV Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com), or at a DMV office. DMV will mail you an address change sticker to affix to your license, permit, or identification card. There is no charge for an address change sticker.

To receive a replacement license, permit, or identification card with your new address on it, you must bring proof of the address change (see page 7) and pay the replacement fee at your local DMV office.

## **Oregon Donor Program**

If you are at least 15 years old and wish to be a designated organ, eye, and tissue donor, DMV will add a “D” restriction code to your license, permit or identification card. It is important that you also inform your family of your decision to be a donor. Confirming your commitment to be a donor by signing up on Oregon’s Donor Registry at [www.donatelifenw.org](http://www.donatelifenw.org) ensures your intent is known and honored by your family and the organ, eye, and tissue recovery agencies. For more information about becoming a donor, please visit the website above or contact Donate Life Northwest at (800) 452-1369.

## **Voter Registration**

If you are 17 years of age or older, you may register or re-register to vote when you are issued a driver license, instruction permit, or identification card. DMV will forward your voter registration application to the registrar in your county of residence.

## **Examinations**

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**For an original license of any type or upgrade to a different class of license, DMV will test your:**

- Vision
- Driving Knowledge
- Driving Skill

If you are 16 or 17 years old, you must also pass a Safe Driving Practices test.

You must **pay test fees prior to testing** (see *Fee Schedule*, page 2). If you fail a written or drive test, you need to **pay the test fee again each time you take the test**. In addition, **every time you test**, DMV requires you to present the **same proof of age, identity, and address** as required to obtain a license.

DMV may waive the drive test for new residents surrendering a valid out-of-state license or an out-of-state license that is expired less than one year. If you no longer have the out-of-state license in your possession, you may be required to obtain a letter from your previous state verifying the expiration date.

You may take the vision, knowledge, and drive tests at most regular DMV offices. For more information, call the phone numbers listed on page 112, or on the DMV Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

### ***Vision***

DMV will check your eyesight to confirm you can see well enough to drive safely. DMV conducts tests for visual acuity and field of vision. If you take the test while wearing glasses or contacts, your license will carry a restriction for corrective lenses.

If the test shows your eyesight does not meet the licensing standard, DMV may issue you a license for daylight driving only. DMV may also require an examination with a vision care specialist before you are issued a license.

### ***Driver Knowledge Test***

This test asks questions about road signs, traffic laws, and other information a driver needs to know. This manual includes all the information necessary to pass this test. The test is usually taken at a computer kiosk with a touch-screen monitor. Most of the questions will be different each time you take a particular test. For a sample knowledge test, see page 110, or visit the DMV Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

### ***Safe Driving Practices Test***

This is an additional knowledge test required for persons under 18 years of age applying for their driver license. It checks your knowledge of safe driving practices gained through driving experience and information covered in this manual. Before taking this test, it is a good idea for you to read the manual again.

### ***Tips for Taking the Knowledge and Safe Driving Practices Tests***

- The knowledge test and safe driving practices test are closed book tests. With permission, you may use a foreign language translation dictionary.
- No talking is allowed and you may not use a cell phone or any other electronic device during a test.
- No writing or note taking during the test is permissible other than marking answers on a paper test.
- Check office hours prior to taking your test. Offices do not conduct knowledge tests if the applicant is not assisted at the counter at least one hour before closing times. In addition, smaller offices may close during lunch hours. See [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com) for more information on office testing hours.
- Each required test has a mandatory waiting period between failures. If you fail your knowledge or safe driving practices test, you must wait at least one day before trying a test again. If you fail your test a fourth or subsequent time, however, you must wait at least 28 days before taking the test again.
- Do not allow someone else to take a licensing test for you. Your driving privileges will be suspended if DMV determines someone else has taken a licensing test for you.

**If you cheat** on a test by using a prohibited aid or by getting the answer to a test question from another person, DMV will stop your test immediately. You will not be allowed to take any test again for 90 days.

## **Drive Skill Test**

During the behind-the-wheel drive test, you show your driving skills and how you obey traffic rules, highway signs, and signals. The test includes turning, signaling, backing, lane changes, speed control, road courtesy, and general driving ability.

DMV requires you to show evidence of insurance for your vehicle before the drive test. Proof of insurance includes a valid insurance card with specific information for the vehicle you will use on the drive test. If you do not have the necessary insurance information, you will have to reschedule the drive test.

The driver examiner will inspect your vehicle to make sure the vehicle equipment needed during the drive test is safe, legal, and in working order. The examiner will check the equipment listed in Section 7, page 105, titled *Mandatory Vehicle Equipment*, along with other equipment items. This will include a working passenger door handle, a reasonably clean front passenger seat, and valid license plates or a temporary permit. If your vehicle is not properly licensed or does not pass the vehicle inspection, you will have to reschedule the drive test.

## **Tips for Taking the Drive Test**

- Only you and the examiner can be in the vehicle during a drive test. Interpreters, family, friends, or pets cannot be in the vehicle during a test.
- Remove weapons from your vehicle before taking a drive test; store them at home or at some other safe location.
- Turn off any electronic devices in your vehicle, such as the radio, cell phone, or pagers. Remove objects from the dashboard or rearview mirror.
- If you are under 18 years of age and you fail the drive test, you must wait 28 days after each failure before retaking the test. You must have a valid instruction permit for 28 days between tests. If you fail a fifth test, you must wait one year before taking another test.
- If you are 18 years of age or older and you fail the drive test, you must wait seven days before taking your next test. If you fail the second time, you must wait 14 days before the third test. Subsequent tests may be taken 28 days apart. If you fail your fifth test, you must wait one year before taking another test.

Drive tests are conducted by **appointment only**. To schedule a drive test appointment, call the phone numbers listed on page 112, or on the DMV Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

## Section 2

# Highway Signs, Signals, and Markings

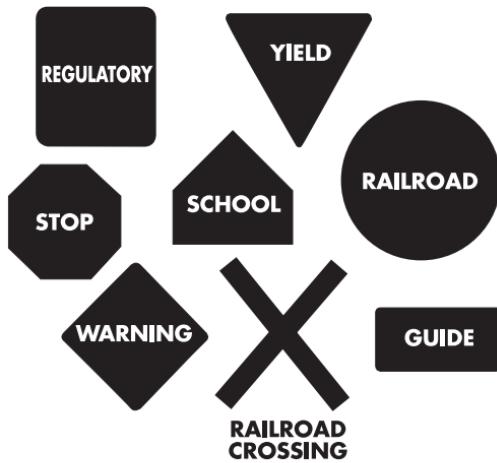
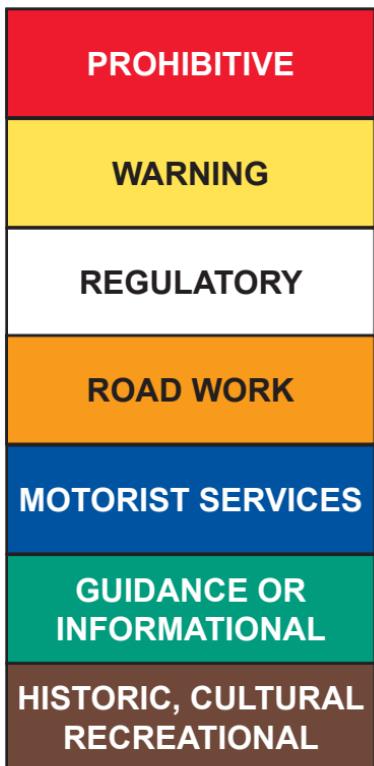
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## Signs

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Oregon's traffic signs, signals, and pavement markings follow the national standards. Signs often use easily recognized symbols or pictures, rather than words. You must obey all official highway signs, signals, and markings unless you see a police officer or road worker redirecting traffic.

Each type of sign has a special color to help you recognize the sign at a glance. The colors are illustrated below on the left. In addition to color, the shape of a traffic sign also helps you identify the sign and what you must do to obey it. In poor visibility conditions, such as heavy fog, you may be able to make out only the shape of a sign. It is important for drivers to get to know both the colors and shapes of highway signs.



# Regulatory Signs—Prohibitive

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## Intersection Traffic Control Signs

Intersections may be dangerous. Traffic control devices, such as signs that prohibit certain actions or movements, are shown on this page. These signs help increase safety by controlling the flow of traffic through intersections. Remember: at intersections, red means stop, yield, do not enter, or wrong way.



**STOP—OCTAGON:** This eight-sided sign means just what it says—STOP. You must stop at a marked stop line or crosswalk on the pavement, if there is one. If there is no stop line or crosswalk, stop before the unmarked crossing area. If there are no pedestrians, pull forward until you can see traffic coming from your left and right, but before you get into the intersection. You may cautiously drive through the intersection or enter the intersection and make your turn, after looking both ways for oncoming traffic. Yield right of way to traffic (including people walking or riding bikes) in the intersection.

**YIELD—TRIANGLE:** This sign means you should reduce speed and, if needed for safety, stop the same as you would for a stop sign. Yield right of way to traffic (including people walking or riding bikes) in the intersection.

**DO NOT ENTER—SQUARE:** This sign warns you not to enter a road or freeway in the wrong direction. You will see this sign if you are going the wrong way.

The signs below prohibit certain actions. When you see a sign with a red circle and a red slash mark across a black arrow or symbol, it means don't do whatever is shown.



No Left Turn



No Right Turn



No U Turn

## **Regulatory Signs—Other**

These signs tell you what to do. They show the driver's maximum speed or other required action. The signs shown are examples of regulatory signs, but there are many more such signs in use. Regulatory signs are rectangular with black words or symbols on a white background. They may be posted alone, with other traffic signs, or with traffic signals. You must obey the rules on all regulatory signs.



### **Speed**

This indicates the maximum speed that you may travel on the road. It begins where this sign is posted and ends where a different speed sign is posted.



### **Right Turn Permitted Without Stopping**

This sign is displayed below stop signs. Traffic turning right may turn without stopping. Other traffic must stop and yield right of way.



### **Keep Right**

A traffic island, median, or obstruction divides the road ahead. Keep to the side indicated by the arrow.



### **Do Not Pass**

This sign indicates that you should not pass because sight distance is restricted and other conditions may make overtaking and passing unsafe.



### **No Turn on Red**

You may not turn during the red light. You must wait for the signal to turn green.



### **One Way**

Traffic flows only in the direction of the arrow.



### **Lane-Use Control**

These signs are used where turning movements are required or where turning movements are permitted from lanes as shown.



### **Center Lane Turn Only**

Share the center lane for left turns from both directions.



### **Railroad Crossbuck**

These signs identify a railroad crossing. Slow down and be prepared to stop if a train is close by or crossing.

# Warning Signs

Warning signs alert you to possible hazards or a change in road conditions ahead. As a driver, you are ultimately responsible for recognizing and reacting correctly to changing conditions.

There are many yellow warning signs. Not all warning signs are shown here.



## Pedestrian Crossing

Be alert for people crossing your path. Slow down and be ready to stop.



## Right Curve (with safe speed indication)

There is a curve ahead to the right. A suggested safe speed for the curve may appear just below the sign.



## Multiuse Path Crossing

Bicyclists and pedestrians regularly cross the road in the area. Drive with caution and be ready to stop.



## Sharp Right Turn

There is a sharp turn to the right in the road ahead.



## Crossroad

A four-way intersection is ahead. Be alert for cross traffic entering the roadway.



## Railroad Advance

A railroad crossing is ahead. Look, listen, and slow down because you may have to stop.



## Side Road

Indicates traffic is coming from your right or left as shown on the sign. Be alert for vehicles entering the roadway you are traveling on.



## Winding Road

The road ahead is winding, with a series of turns or curves.



## Right and Left Curves

The road ahead curves to the right, then left.



## Two-Way Traffic Ahead

The one-way street or roadway with a median or divider in the middle joins a two-way roadway ahead. You will then be facing oncoming traffic.



### Divided Highway

#### Begins or Ends

A median or divider splits the highway into two separate roadways, and each roadway is one-way. Keep to the right. The signs are opposite of each other and determine the beginning or end of a divided highway.



### Stop Ahead

There is a stop sign ahead. Slow down and prepare to stop.



### Speed Limit Ahead

There is a reduced speed limit ahead. Prepare to slow down.



### Deer

Deer may cross the road in this area. Be alert. Slow down if you see deer or other wildlife.



### Advisory Speed

The safe speed on a freeway entrance or exit ramp. Slow down to the speed shown.



### Signal Ahead

Traffic signal lights are ahead. Slow down and be ready to stop.



### Chevron

A sharp change in the direction of the road is at the sign, such as a sharp curve that is not completely visible, or a lane swerves around an obstacle in the road.



### Roundabout Ahead

There is a roundabout (intersection) ahead. Slow down and prepare to yield to traffic in the roundabout (see page 50).



### Merge

Traffic is merging from the side shown on the sign. Drivers on the through lane have the right of way, but drivers in both lanes are responsible for merging smoothly.



### Low Clearance

The overpass ahead has a low clearance. Do not proceed if your vehicle is too tall to pass under.



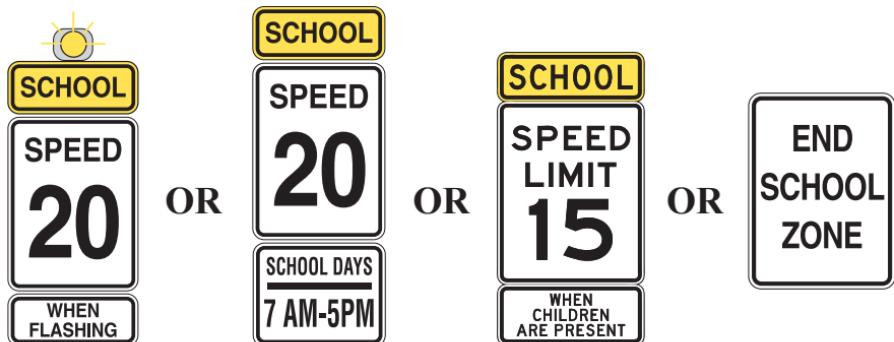
### Lane Reduction

The indicated lane ends soon. Drivers in that lane must merge into the through lane. Drivers in the through lane should allow vehicles to merge smoothly.

## School Zone Signs

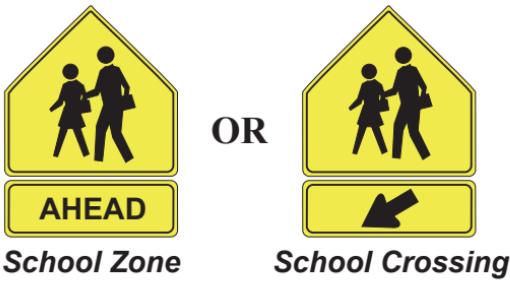
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A school zone is a section of street or road where a reduced speed of 20 mph applies, as posted at the bottom of the school speed sign.



The following apply to school zones:

- A school zone starts with a SCHOOL SPEED sign and ends at the END SCHOOL ZONE sign or other posted speed sign, such as SPEED 30.
- Some beginning school zone signs are marked with flashing yellow lights in addition to the speed signs.
- Signs will be posted to notify you of when the reduced speed applies or if the reduced speed applies when children are present.
- Signs may be posted to notify you that traffic fines are higher in a school zone.



***School Zone***

***School Crossing***

Other school signs are pentagon-shaped warning signs. A pentagon-shaped warning sign with **AHEAD** means you are approaching a school or school crossing. A pentagon-shaped sign with crosswalk lines or an arrow pointing at a crosswalk means you are at a school crossing. These signs are very important. Slow down. Look for children and be ready to stop. Remember, children are often very unpredictable.

The signs shown above are a bright yellow/green in color. They may also be yellow.

**For additional information on driving through school zones, refer to *School Zones* on page 74.**

## Work Zone Signs

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Orange signs are used in temporary traffic control zones, such as for road-work or emergency response zones. **Slow down and pay complete attention when you see these signs.** A sign for a flagger ahead may show



a symbol of a flagger holding a sign or the words: "FLAGGER AHEAD."

Flaggers use signs and hand signals to tell you which direction to travel, to slow down, or stop. Follow their instructions.



Drums, cones, barricades, and tubes are used to keep traffic out of hazardous roadwork areas. Along with signs and road markings, they guide you safely through the work area. Obey them as you would any other traffic control device.

Barriers may be used to keep drivers from entering closed roads or other areas where it is dangerous to drive.

Temporary traffic signals may be used in work zones. A warning sign showing a symbol of a traffic signal is used to alert you. A white line on the road shows where to stop at the red light.



## Railroad Crossing Signs and Signals

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The Railroad ADVANCE WARNING sign (Fig. A) has a special shape to give you advance warning that a railroad crossing is ahead. It means look, listen, and slow down because you may have to stop. Remember: a train may come at any time! Pay attention to crossing signals and obey them.

A railroad CROSSBUCK sign (Fig. B) is a regulatory sign used at the crossing itself. It has the same meaning as a YIELD sign unless a STOP sign is posted at the crossing. If there is more than one track, a sign below the crossbuck indicates the number of tracks.

Flashing red lights are used with CROSSBUCK signs (Fig. C) at many crossings. When these lights begin to flash, **stop**.

Some crossings also have gates that are used with the flashing red lights (Fig. D). Stop before the gates lower across your side of the road. Do not try to beat the gates or go around gates that have lowered or are going up.

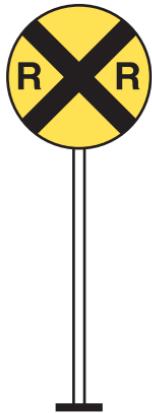


Fig A



Fig B



Fig C



Fig D

## Route, Guide, and Information Signs

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Route signs show you which route you are on and if the road is an interstate highway, U.S. route, or a state highway.



Interstate  
Route



U.S.  
Route



State  
Route



The green signs shown are examples of guide or information signs. These signs route you off a highway at the correct exit or show you the direction of roads or cities. The number on an exit sign helps you know which exit you need to take.

## Safety Corridors

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Safety corridors are stretches of state and local highway with more fatal and serious injury crashes than the statewide average for that type of roadway.

Safety corridors ask drivers to pay extra attention and carefully obey all traffic laws when driving in these areas. Typical actions taken in safety corridors to increase safety include more frequent enforcement, low cost engineering improvements, and education efforts such as media events, brochures, and poster distribution.

Signs with diamond flags above them will always identify safety corridors. In most cases, there will be a second sign asking drivers to turn on their lights for safety. Traffic fines double in safety corridors where signs indicating this are posted.

## Historic, Cultural, and Recreational Signs

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Brown signs point to historic and cultural locations. They also point to scenic areas, picnic grounds, and parks.



## **Motorist Service Signs**

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Blue signs tell you about services or facilities along the highway. These signs may indicate that gas, food, and lodging are available at the next exit, that a rest area is ahead, or that a phone is available. A blue sign also may indicate the road to a hospital. A sign with a wheelchair symbol means a facility or parking area is handicapped accessible.



## **Traffic Signals**

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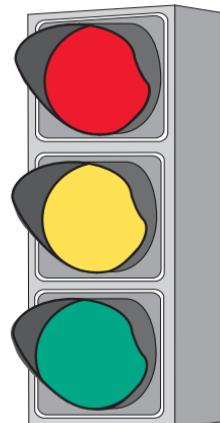
Traffic signals control drivers of vehicles and pedestrians at some intersections and mid-block crosswalks. Signals promote better movement of traffic on busy roads by assigning right of way. Common courtesy says the driver who stops first should get to go first. However, stay cautious and be sure it is safe to proceed even when you are the first vehicle to reach the intersection. Generally, if a signal is not working, **stop as you would if there were stop signs in all directions**, or the same as a four-way STOP intersection.

- **A steady red signal** means “STOP.” **The same rules that apply to a steady red light apply to a steady red arrow.** Stop before a stop line on the pavement. If there is no stop line, stop before entering the nearest crosswalk or before entering the intersection if there is no crosswalk. Pedestrians facing a red light must not enter the street unless a pedestrian signal directs otherwise.

**When entering a two-way street**, you may cautiously turn right, after stopping for the red light. You may make this right turn unless a sign or police officer tells you not to turn against the red light. Yield to pedestrians, bicyclists, and traffic in the intersection.

**When entering a one-way street**, you may cautiously turn right or left in the direction of traffic, after stopping for the red light. Yield, if needed.

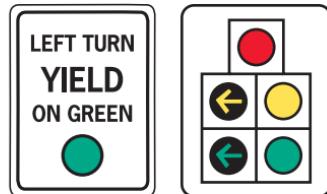
- **A steady yellow signal** means that you should prepare to stop since the signal is about to turn red. Do not enter an intersection against a steady yellow light if you can stop safely. The same rules apply to a steady yellow arrow. Pedestrians facing a yellow light must not start across the street unless a pedestrian signal directs otherwise.



- A **steady green signal** means “go”. Cautiously enter the intersection. Look both ways for oncoming or cross traffic that may run a red light. A green arrow means you have a “protected” turning movement. If there is no green arrow, left and right turning traffic is “permitted” (see *Protected/Permitted Signals* below). Pedestrians facing a green light may cross the street in a marked or unmarked crosswalk, unless directed by other signs or a pedestrian signal.

### **Protected/Permitted signals**

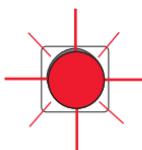
At many street and highway locations, drivers may see what is called a “protected/permitted” traffic signal. **Protected** (green arrow) means your vehicle movement has the right of way. **Permitted** (round green light) means you may make the movement shown by the signal but, if you are making a turn, you must yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. A white regulatory sign reminds you that turns are permitted, but NOT protected, when only a round green signal is shown. You must yield to other traffic and pedestrians.



**Round Red** – A red signal means **STOP**. Stop and remain stopped, except for allowed turns on red.  
(Review page 22 again).



**Red Arrow** – A red arrow means **STOP**. Stop and remain stopped, except for allowed turns on red.  
(Review page 22 again).



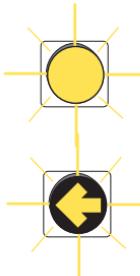
**Flashing Round Red** – A flashing red light means the same as a stop sign. Come to a complete stop. Look both ways and to the front, yield to traffic and pedestrians, and proceed when it is safe to do so.



**Round Yellow** – A steady yellow signal warns you that the signal is about to turn red. All movement facing this light is being stopped. Clear the intersection. Do not enter the intersection if you can stop safely.



**Steady Yellow Arrow** – If this signal follows a green arrow, it means a **protected** turn is about to end. If this signal follows a flashing yellow arrow, it means the permissive turn is about to end. Vehicles should stop if safe to do so, or clear the intersection. Be prepared to obey the next signal. This could be the red arrow, which means **STOP**.



**Flashing Round Yellow** – A flashing round yellow signal means slow down and proceed with caution.

**Flashing Yellow Arrow** – This signal means turns are **permitted** (unprotected), but you must first yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians and then proceed with caution.



**Round Green** – A green light means you may proceed, but first you must let any vehicles, bicycles, or pedestrians remaining in the intersection get through before you move ahead. All movements—straight ahead, left or right turns—are **permitted**. Remember, if you are making a left or right turn, you must yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.



**Green Arrow** – The green arrow displayed in conjunction with a red or green signal allows you to make a “protected” turn; oncoming traffic must stop. Do not go straight.

### ***Red Light Photo Radar***

Some cities in Oregon have photo radar programs for traffic signals. Signs must be posted in these areas. The photo radar equipment takes a photo of the vehicle and driver if the driver fails to obey traffic control devices. If you receive a citation and if you were not the driver of the vehicle, contact the court for the steps you can take with the court to contest the citation.

### ***Ramp Meters***

Ramp meters are placed on freeway on-ramps to help prevent slowdowns and stop-and-go traffic conditions that occur at certain times of the day.

Ramp meters look like a traffic signal you see at an intersection, except they only have red and green lights. Ramp meters alternate between red and green every few seconds. Only one vehicle can pass each time the green light comes on. For multi-lane on-ramps, each lane has a ramp meter.

Waiting on the on-ramp may take a few extra minutes, but that wait will usually pay off when you enter the freeway. You may find that traffic is moving quicker and smoother because the ramp meter reduces the number of vehicles trying to enter the freeway at the same time.

## Pedestrian Signals – Don’t Walk/Walk

These are special stop and go signals for pedestrians. When used, pedestrians must obey these signals rather than red-yellow-green traffic lights. Pedestrians facing a WALK or “walking person” signal (white) may legally start to cross the street. If a DON’T WALK or “raised hand” signal (orange) is flashing or showing, pedestrians may **not** start to cross the intersection. Pedestrians in the crosswalk when the DON’T WALK or “raised hand” signal begins flashing should continue crossing the street.



## Pavement Markings

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Markings painted on the road tell you where to drive, inform you about conditions ahead such as a stop or crosswalk, or indicate what kind of traffic is allowed.

A **crosswalk** marking is white lines that outline an area where pedestrians cross the roadway. Drive with caution and be ready to stop when a pedestrian is in the crosswalk.

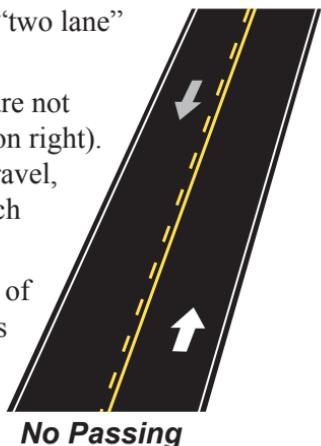
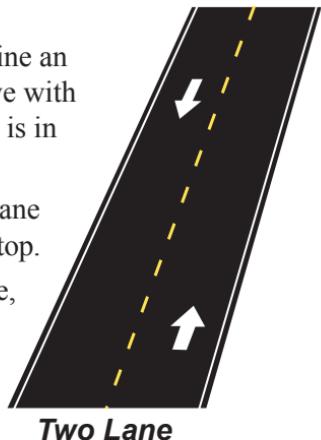
A **stop line** is a solid white line across your lane to show the point at which you are required to stop.

A **yield line** is a row of triangles on your lane, pointing toward your vehicle to indicate the point at which you are required to yield.

A **yellow center line**, dashed or solid, marks the center of a two-way road used for traffic traveling in opposite directions (see “two lane” illustration on right).

A **solid yellow line** in your lane means you are not allowed to pass (see “No passing” illustration on right). If passing is prohibited for both directions of travel, you will see two solid yellow lines—one in each opposing lane of traffic.

Do not cross a solid yellow line on your side of the road to pass another vehicle. You may cross it if the right side of the road is blocked, or if you are turning left into or from an alley, intersection, private road, or driveway.



**White dashes** separate lanes for traffic going in the same direction (such as one-way streets).

**Solid white lines**, edge or fog lines, are guides to help drivers stay on the road, especially at night or in bad weather. Wide solid white lines may also be used to channel or direct traffic into specific lanes or at intersections. Only cross a solid white line with caution.

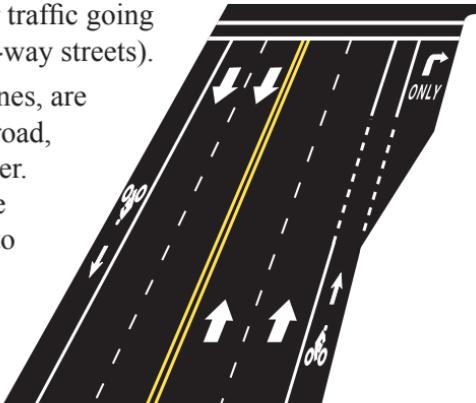
**A double solid white line** means you are not allowed to change lanes. Stay in the lane you are in until the lane separation line changes to the normal line style.

**A solid white line with a bicycle symbol** on the side of the road means this is an area for bicycle traffic only. Bicycles must travel in the same direction as adjacent traffic.

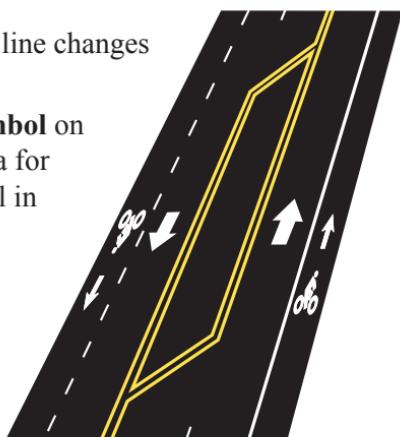
**Yellow or white lines and diagonal stripes** may be used to inform you of fixed objects or islands in the road ahead such as a crosswalk or railroad crossing.

**A painted median with double yellow stripes on both sides** is the area between the roadways of a divided highway. You may make a left turn across such a median into an intersection, alley, private road, or driveway after waiting for oncoming traffic to clear. Unlike a two-way, left turn lane, you may **not** use a painted median as a refuge to drive into.

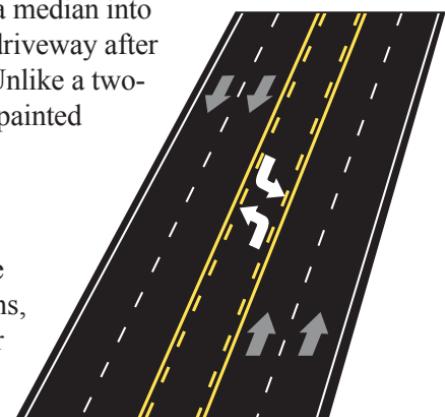
**A two-way (shared) left turn lane** is provided for making left turns (see illustration on right). If a left turn lane has been provided for making left turns, do not make a left turn from any other lane. Enter the left turn lane just before you want to make the turn. If you enter too soon, you may



**Lane Control**



**Painted Median**



**Two-Way Left-Turn Lane**

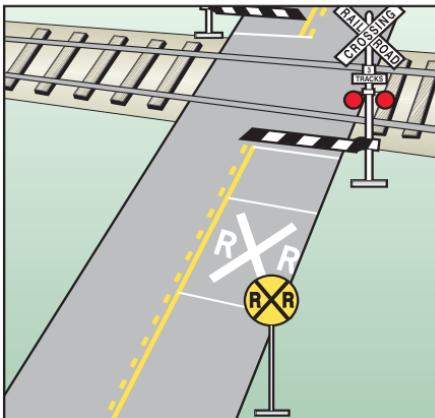
interfere with another driver's use of the lane. Wait in the left turn lane until traffic clears and you can safely complete the left turn.

You may turn from a side street or driveway into a left turn lane and stop to wait for traffic to clear before merging into the lane to your right. Make sure the left turn lane is clear in both directions before turning into the lane. While waiting to merge into traffic, you should be alert for vehicles driving head-on in the same lane as they start to make their left turn. It is **illegal** to travel in a median with double yellow stripes or a two-way left turn lane; do **not** use these lanes to speed up to merge with traffic or for passing cars to access a turn lane at an intersection.

## Railroad Crossings

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Railroad crossings have pavement markings that include a large "X", the letters "RR", a no-passing zone stripe, and a stop line. Railroad crossing collisions should not happen. When they do, it usually means drivers are not paying attention to signs, pavement markings, and other warning devices. Trains are moving much faster than they appear. Do not try to cross the tracks unless you can get in the clear on the other side well ahead of the train's arrival at the crossing. Never stop on tracks, even for a moment.



Signs and signals are used to mark railroad crossings. When you see one of them, slow down, look, and listen because you may have to stop. **Remember — trains are large and heavy and cannot stop quickly!**

### Stop before railroad tracks if:

- Flashing red lights are activated.
- A crossing gate is lowered.
- A flagger signals you to stop.
- A train is clearly visible or is so close to the crossing that it would be hazardous for you to try to cross.
- A stop sign is posted, even if you do not see a train coming.

When required to stop, do so at the clearly marked stop line. Some collisions occur when drivers stop on or too close to a track. If there is no stop line, stop at least 15 feet from the nearest rail.

After stopping, do not start across the tracks until you are sure you can do so safely. **When it is down or being opened or closed, it is illegal to go through, around, or under a crossing gate or barrier.**

Some vehicles, such as school buses or trucks carrying hazardous materials, must stop at all railroad crossings. If you are following this type of vehicle, be prepared to stop.

### ***Light Rail Trains and Streetcars***

Light rail trains and streetcars run on tracks in the road. Overhead wires usually power them. You need to exercise caution when crossing rail tracks or sharing the road with a light rail train or streetcar. These vehicles cannot stop quickly or swerve out of the way of cars.

When driving on a street shared by light rail or streetcars:

- Wait for the left turn signal—a train or streetcar may be coming from behind on your left.
- Check for trains before changing lanes. Do not swerve suddenly into a lane with tracks to pass another vehicle.
- When parking on roadways with light rail or streetcars, park behind the line separating the parking area from the track to avoid being struck by a train or streetcar. If no stripe is present, allow at least four feet outside of the rails.
- Use caution when passing a stopped train or streetcar. Unloading passengers may cross in front of the train into your lane of traffic.
- Pay special attention to bicyclists traveling along or crossing rail tracks. Rails can cause bicyclists to lose control.

When approaching rail tracks at an intersection:

- Slow down and look both ways before crossing.
- **Never** stop on the track or within the area protected by the crossing gates. Stay behind road markings.
- Do not go around crossing gates when they are down.
- For non-gated rail crossings, stay well behind the stop lines marked on the pavement.
- **Never** try to “beat the train” through the intersection. Trains cannot stop quickly.

## Section 3

# Rules of the Road

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Even on a short trip, you may be faced with dangerous driving conditions. Statistics show that half of all vehicle crashes occur within 25 miles of home.

The rules of the road are those laws and practices that provide safe and efficient movement of vehicles. They include such things as starting, signaling, turning, overtaking, passing, and stopping.

The following will help you avoid the need to make quick decisions and sudden moves:

- Learn the traffic rules and follow them.
- **Be willing to yield to others** to avoid a crash.
- Always watch carefully for advance warning and information signs.
- **Be a courteous driver.**

## Speed Regulations

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The speed at which you drive determines how much time you have to act or react and how long it takes to stop. The higher the speed you are traveling, the less time you have to spot hazards, judge the speed of other traffic, and react to avoid the mistakes of other drivers.

### *The Basic Rule Law*

The basic rule states **you must drive at a speed that is reasonable and cautious for existing conditions**. The basic rule applies on **all streets and highways at all times**.

To obey the basic rule, you need to think about your speed in relation to other traffic (including pedestrians and bicycles), the surface and width of the road, hazards at intersections, weather, visibility, and any other conditions that could affect safety. Use posted speed signs to help you determine what is a reasonable and prudent speed for present conditions.

If you drive at a speed that is unsafe for existing conditions in any area, at any time, even if you are driving slower than the speed limit, **you are violating the basic rule**. The basic rule does **not** allow you to drive over the speed limit.

## **Speed Limits**

In addition to the basic rule, Oregon has maximum speed limits inside city limits, school zones and on interstates. A speed limit is the maximum speed considered safe for the area **under ideal driving conditions**. You may be cited if you drive at a speed above those limits. Fines are higher and your driving privileges may be suspended if you drive more than 30 miles per hour over the speed limit or 100 miles per hour or greater.

The following speeds are set in law for the specified areas, whether posted or not. Speed signs may or may not have LIMIT on them. **They apply unless some other speed is posted.**



### **15 MILES PER HOUR**

- When driving in alleys.
- Narrow residential areas.



### **20 MILES PER HOUR**

- In any business district.
- When passing school zones (see *School Zones*, page 74).



### **25 MILES PER HOUR**

- In residential district (unless posted otherwise).
- In public parks.
- On ocean shores (if vehicles permitted).



### **55 MILES PER HOUR**

- On all roads and highways not meeting any other definition.



### **INTERSTATE SPEED LIMITS**

- Speed limits will vary on interstate highways, but may be posted up to 70 MPH.

**Motor trucks and passenger transport vehicles** – These vehicles have a separate speed limit established by law. The maximum posting is 65 miles per hour, but may be posted lower.

## ***Photo Radar (Speeding)***

Some cities and work zones in Oregon use photo radar for speed enforcement. The photo radar equipment takes a photo of the vehicle and driver if the vehicle is exceeding speed laws.

## **Slow Drivers**

When you drive slower than the normal speed of traffic, you must use the right lane or drive as closely as possible to the right curb or edge of the road, unless you are getting ready to make a left turn.

Watch for congestion behind you if you drive slower than the designated speed. Pull off the road at the first area safe to turn out and let the traffic behind you pass. The overtaking driver must obey the speed law.

## **Racing**

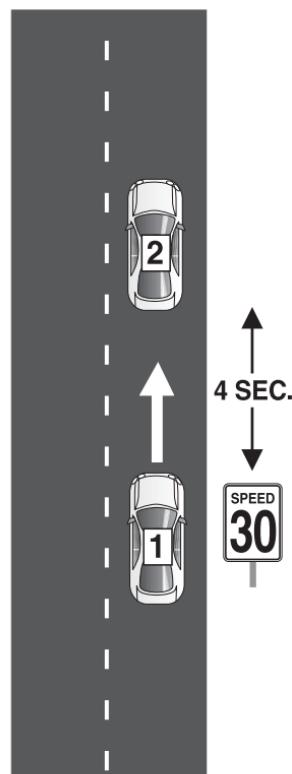
It is illegal to race with another vehicle or to organize a speed race event. Racing is not necessarily driving at high speeds. It can be any contest between two or more drivers and vehicles, such as an acceleration contest or the making of a speed record.

## **Following Distances**

To share the road safely, always maintain a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you. You will have a better view of the road to anticipate problems and you will give yourself an emergency “out.” Rear-end crashes are very common. The number one cause is drivers **following too closely**. They are unable to stop before hitting a vehicle ahead that suddenly stops.

A safe following distance is defined as 2-4 seconds. For speeds greater than 30mph a safe following distance should be 4 seconds or more. Generally, it takes 3 seconds to react to a situation, which leaves 1 second of reaction time. Use the following tips to determine if you are following too closely:

- Watch for when the rear of the vehicle ahead passes a sign, pole, or any other stationary point. Count the seconds it takes you to reach the same spot by: “one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two”, etc.
- You are following too closely if you pass the mark before you finish counting **at least** two seconds.
- If so, drop back, and then count again at another spot to check your new following distance. Repeat until you are no closer than two seconds behind the other vehicle.



When stopping behind another vehicle at a stop light, make sure you leave enough space to see where the rear tires of the vehicle in front meet the road. When the light turns green, wait and count at least two seconds before you start to go. This gives you visibility and a good following distance.

There are situations, such as those below, where you need even more space between your vehicle and the one in front of you. In these situations, you should increase your following distance:

- **On slippery roads.** You need more distance to stop your vehicle on slippery roads.
- **When the driver behind you wants to pass.** Slow down to allow room in front of your vehicle for the passing vehicle to complete the pass sooner and more safely.
- **When following bicycles or motorcycles.** You need extra room in case the rider loses control of the bicycle or motorcycle.
- **When following drivers who cannot see you.** The drivers of trucks, buses, vans, or vehicles pulling campers or trailers may not be able to see you when you are directly behind them. These large vehicles also block your view of the road ahead. More room allows you to see ahead.
- **When approaching railroad crossings.** Leave extra room between you and vehicles required to stop at railroad crossings, including school buses or vehicles carrying hazardous materials.
- **When you have a heavy load or are pulling a trailer.** The extra weight increases your stopping distance.
- **When it is hard for you to see.** In bad weather or darkness, increase your following distance to make up for decreased vision.
- **When following emergency vehicles.** Some police vehicles, ambulances, and fire trucks need more room to operate. You should not follow closer than 500 feet behind a fire truck or other emergency vehicle.
- **When stopped on a hill.** The vehicle ahead may roll back when it starts up.
- **When you are learning to drive.** As a new driver, you need extra room when learning driving skills, such as steering, turning, lane changes, and reading traffic signs or signals. Leave extra room between you and the vehicle ahead. The extra room provides you time to make critical decisions as you learn.

### ***Stopping Distances***

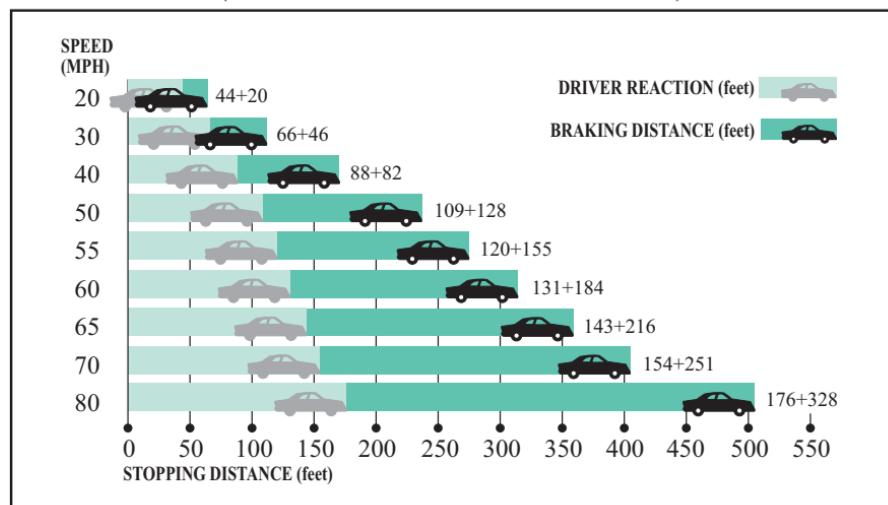
You need to know how long it takes to stop any vehicle you drive. Stopping distance can depend on road and weather conditions, the speed you are traveling, your reaction time, and the braking ability of your vehicle.

Large trucks and combinations of vehicles cannot stop as quickly as passenger vehicles. Give them more room than a car, such as when you pull out in front of one of these vehicles.

The braking ability of vehicles can vary widely due to type and condition of the pavement surface, the type and condition of tires and brakes, and other factors. Study the table below. It takes longer to stop than you think.

### **Stopping Ability of Standard Passenger Cars on Dry, Clean, Level Asphalt Pavement**

(You will not be tested on distances in this table)



This table developed for educational use only. Driver reaction distance is based on a reaction time of 1.5 seconds.

## **Lane Travel**

When driving on a road with no center line, where vehicles come from each direction, drivers must give at least half the road to others going in the opposite direction.

At any time when you cannot avoid driving to the left of the center line, you must yield to oncoming traffic.

Avoid frequently changing lanes. Change lanes only when you can do so safely.

## **Keeping Right**

Drive on the right half of the road except when:

- Passing another vehicle going in the same direction as you.
- Driving to the left of center to pass an obstruction.
- A road is marked for one-way traffic.

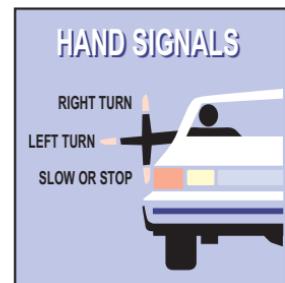
- A road has 3 marked lanes and the center lane is a passing lane.
- You are turning left.

## Driver Signals and Turns

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### *Driver Signals*

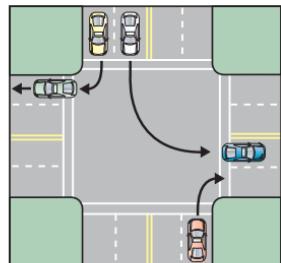
You must signal **before** you turn, change lanes, move right or left, or pull away from a curb. Before making such a move, be sure you can do so safely. Check traffic ahead, behind, and to the side. If your vehicle is moving in traffic, use your turn signal **at least** 100 feet before the turn or lane change. When you are parked at a curb and about to re-enter traffic, use a signal long enough to alert oncoming traffic that you are moving into a traffic lane. You also should signal before you slow down or stop. Gently put your foot on the brake. Your stop lights will alert drivers behind you, and signal them that you are slowing down.



Use hand-and-arm signals (shown above) only in daylight when you need them and can clearly see people and vehicles at a distance of 1,000 feet. At night or when visibility is poor, you must use turn signal lights, not hand-and-arm signals. Hand-and-arm signals are not enough any time you are driving a wide or long vehicle.

### *Turns*

The general rule for turning is to turn from the closest lane in the direction you are traveling to the **closest legal lane in the direction you want to go**. Do not change lanes while turning. Rules for turning apply at all locations, such as driveways and alleys, not just at intersections. Turn smoothly and at a lower speed for safety. The diagram on the right illustrates the lanes to use when making left and right turns.



### *Right Turns*

Well ahead of the turning point, check for traffic behind and beside you. Turn on your right turn signal at least 100 feet before the turn and before you need to brake. Get as close as is practical to the right curb or edge of the road without interfering with pedestrians or bicyclists. A bicycle lane is considered the edge of the roadway. Do not move into a bicycle lane in preparation for a right hand turn. Just before entering

the intersection, look to the left, front and right for oncoming traffic and cross traffic that may also be turning. Always check for bicycles in your blind spot on your right before turning, especially ones you have just passed. Pay special attention to the crosswalk on your right. Check and stop for pedestrians. Do not swing wide before or while turning.

### **Left Turns**

When preparing to make a left turn, keep your wheels pointed straight ahead. Do not turn your wheels to the left until you actually begin to make the turn. If your vehicle is struck from behind while you are waiting to turn and your front wheels are turned left, your vehicle will be forced into oncoming traffic.

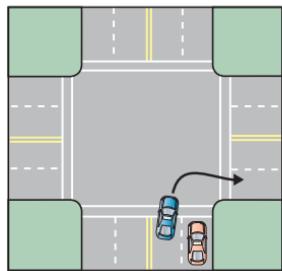
Well ahead of the turning point, check for traffic behind or beside you. Turn on your left turn signal at least 100 feet before the turn and before you need to brake.

On a two-way road, approach the turn with your vehicle in the lane just to the right of the center line. Just before entering the intersection, look to the left, front, and right for cross traffic on the intersecting street and oncoming traffic that may also be turning. Be especially alert for bicycles because they are harder to see than most other vehicles. Pay special attention to the crosswalk on your left. Check and stop for pedestrians before crossing the oncoming travel lanes. Begin the turn when you enter the intersection. Turn just before the imaginary center point in the intersection. Drive **just to the right of the center line** of the street you're entering. This avoids conflict with other traffic making either right or left turns.

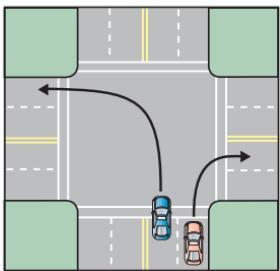
If a lane is signed or marked for making left turns, do not make this turn from any other lane.

In some areas, you may make turns from more than one lane. Signs and pavement markings will tell you if this is allowed. Signs may also prohibit turns at some locations.

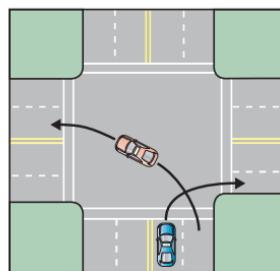
## **TURNING ERRORS**



**Last minute decisions**



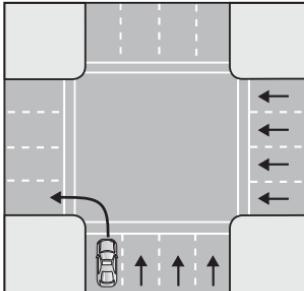
**Into wrong lane**



**From wrong lane**

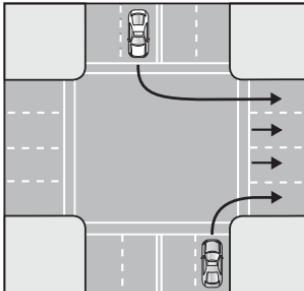
## **Left Turn: One-Way Road to One-Way Road**

Approach the turn in the traffic lane that is nearest the left curb. Turn without swinging wide. Bring your vehicle into the **nearest left lane** for traffic on the road you are entering unless a lane use control sign or pavement markings direct you otherwise. You may make this turn against a red light after stopping and yielding to traffic and pedestrians.



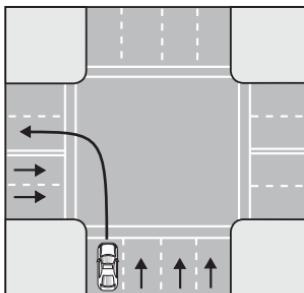
## **Left or Right Turn: Two-Way Road to One-Way Road**

Approach the turn in the lane for traffic in your direction that is closest to the direction of the turn. As you enter the intersection, turn into the **nearest** lane for traffic on the road you are entering unless a lane use control sign or pavement markings direct you otherwise. You may make this turn against a red light after stopping and yielding to traffic and pedestrians.



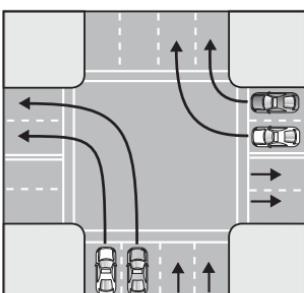
## **Left Turn: One-Way Road to Two-Way Road**

Approach the intersection in the lane for traffic closest to the left curb. Turn into the **lane just to the right of the center line**. Do not move to the right lane without signaling for a lane change and checking traffic to your right and in your blind spot. You cannot make this turn against a red light.



## **Dual Left or Right Turn Lanes**

A vehicle in the second lane can make the same turn as a vehicle in the first lane only when a lane use control sign permits it. You may also see white channel lines and arrows on the pavement. These lines are used to direct you into the correct lane when turning. Lane use control signs or pavement markings may allow you to make turns into lanes other than those shown.



## ***U-Turns***

Reverse or U-turns are **prohibited** in these locations:

- In any intersection controlled by a traffic signal, **unless a sign permits the turn.**
- Between intersections in a city.
- At any other urban location where you cannot see traffic coming from both directions for 500 feet.
- In rural areas if you cannot see approaching traffic from either direction for 1,000 feet.
- At any location where U-turns are prohibited by official signs or markings.

## **Yielding Right of Way**

There will be many times when you need to yield or slow down so another vehicle can proceed safely. Yielding simply means you must slow or, if necessary, stop your vehicle to allow another vehicle or a pedestrian to continue on their way safely.

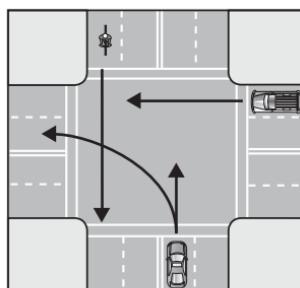
The right of way law does **not** give anyone the right of way; it only says **who must yield**. Stop signs, yield signs, and traffic signals control traffic at busy intersections. They tell drivers who may go without stopping or who must stop and yield right of way to other drivers, bicyclists, or pedestrians.

At an intersection where there are no signs or signals, you must look and yield the right of way to any vehicle in the intersection or approaching from your right at the same time.

The diagram on the right illustrates a right of way situation. The car yields to the truck if the car is going straight ahead. If the car turns left, it yields to both the truck and the bicyclist. The truck yields to the bicyclist.

Here are some important rules and guidelines about right of way. Study them carefully:

- Stop before you enter or cross a road from an alley, private road, driveway, or other place not controlled by signal lights or yield signs. Stop at the point nearest the roadway you are entering. If there is a sidewalk, stop **before** crossing the sidewalk.
- If you must cross a sidewalk, such as when entering or leaving an alley or driveway, stop **before** reaching the sidewalk and yield to pedestrians and bicyclists.



- When you make a left turn at an intersection or into an alley, private road, driveway, or any other place, you must yield the right of way to oncoming traffic until it is safe to turn.
- If an intersection does not have signs or signals and pedestrians are crossing in the same lane or in the lane next to your vehicle, you must stop and remain stopped before entering a marked or unmarked crosswalk, until they have passed out of your lane or the lane next to you.
- At school crossings protected by a school traffic patrol guard, you must stop when students enter the crosswalk from either side of the street or if the patrol guard signals you to do so. Be safe: stop for students even when there is no patrol guard.
- At any intersection with stop signs in all four directions, it is common courtesy to allow the driver who stops first to go first. If in doubt, yield to the driver on your right. The important thing to remember is to be careful. To avoid the risk of a crash, never insist on the right of way; be a courteous driver.
- When you approach a roundabout, yield to vehicles traveling within the circulating road. Within a roundabout, yield to vehicles turning in front of you from the inside lane (if any) to exit the roundabout.
- When you use an acceleration or merging lane to enter a freeway or other highway, you must give the right of way to vehicles **already on the freeway or road**.
- If you are the driver on a road that ends at a “T” intersection with no signs or signals, you must yield to the driver on the through road.

### ***Blocking Traffic***

Before you start through an intersection, crosswalk, or railroad grade crossing, be sure there is room on the other side for your vehicle. Even if you have a green light, do **not** start across an intersection if it causes your vehicle to stop in the intersection and block other traffic or a pedestrian crosswalk.

### **Overtaking and Passing**

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Passing another vehicle is a normal part of driving, but it can be very dangerous. Before you start to pass, be sure you have enough room to complete the maneuver. If you have to cut back into your lane too soon, you risk sideswiping the vehicle you are passing. If you do not cut back into your lane soon enough, you risk a head-on collision with an oncoming vehicle.

When overtaking and passing another vehicle traveling in the same direction on a two-lane road, you should pass only to the left of the vehicle.

### ***How to Avoid Trouble When Passing:***

- Know the speed and acceleration ability of your vehicle, and be able to estimate the speed of the vehicle you are passing and of any oncoming traffic. As a rule, if you can recognize any movement of an oncoming vehicle, it is too close for you to risk a pass. When in doubt, stay in your lane.
- Watch ahead for intersections and do not pass while in an intersection.
- Stay well back of the vehicle you want to pass, especially large vehicles such as trucks and trailers, to give yourself a good view of the road ahead.
- Signal and check your rearview and sideview mirrors **before** you change lanes. Check your blind spot. Move to the left **only** when it is safe to do so.
- Complete your pass as soon as possible. When you can see the entire vehicle you passed in your rearview mirror, signal and return to your lane.

Do not exceed the posted speed limit when passing another vehicle; it is against the law to exceed posted speed limits.

Do not flash your bright lights to signal that you want to pass. It is illegal to flash your bright lights when following a vehicle closer than 350 feet.

### ***Passing on the Right***

You may pass on the right **only** when:

- There is room ahead on the road;
- Your lane or pavement is wide enough for two lanes of traffic going the same direction; **and**,
- The driver you are passing has stopped, is making or has signaled for a left turn.

You may not pass on the right if any part of your vehicle will be off the paved part of the highway or into a bike lane. A vehicle may not drive in the bicycle lane to pass on the right. Use extra care when you pass on the right. Other drivers do not expect to be passed on the right.

### ***No Passing***

Do **not** cross the center line to pass when:

- You are in an area that is marked for no passing by a solid yellow line in your lane. A “DO NOT PASS” sign also may be posted.

- Your view of oncoming traffic is blocked because you are on a hill or in a curve.
- You are approaching an intersection, railroad crossing, or other area where your view of oncoming traffic is limited.
- You are at or in an intersection.
- You are at or on a railroad crossing.
- The vehicle ahead is stopped at a crosswalk.

You may cross the center line in a no-passing zone only if the right side of the road is blocked or if you are turning left into or from an alley, intersection, private road, or driveway.

### ***DO NOT PASS AT THESE LOCATIONS***



*Solid Yellow Lines*



*No Passing Zone*



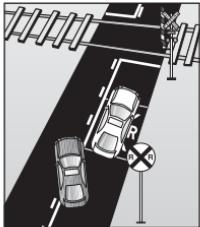
*Hills*



*Curves*



*Intersections*



*Railroads*



*Crosswalk*

### ***Being Passed***

When another driver tries to pass you, there are many chances for a collision. The driver may cut in too sharply, you may change lanes, or the driver may be forced back into your lane if he/she has misjudged the distance of oncoming traffic.

You can help the other driver pass you safely by checking oncoming traffic and adjusting your speed to let the driver move back in the right lane as soon as possible. When another driver starts to pass, stay to the right and do not speed up until the other driver has passed. **Do not** use your hands or lights to signal other drivers when to pass. The law prohibits flashing any of your lights at drivers to let them know when to pass.

## **Stopping, Standing, and Parking**

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Do not stop or park in the traffic lanes of a road, unless you are in a business or residential area. This applies whether you are in the vehicle or away from it. This rule does not apply if your vehicle breaks down and you cannot get it out of the traffic lanes or there is not enough room off the road on the shoulder for you to stop or park.

Except to avoid a conflict with other traffic, to obey a law, police officer, traffic sign or signal, or to momentarily allow traffic to pass before turning, you cannot stop, stand, or park your vehicle in these locations:

- On the road or street side of any parked vehicle.
- In a tunnel.
- On a sidewalk.
- On or within 7½ feet of railroad tracks.
- Within an intersection.
- On a throughway where access is controlled.
- On a crosswalk.
- In a bicycle lane or path.
- Between separate roads of a divided highway, including crossovers.
- Between a safety zone and the adjacent or nearby curb.
- Alongside or opposite a street excavation or obstruction, if stopping, standing, or parking would interfere with traffic.
- On a bridge or overpass.
- At any place where official signs or pavement markings prohibit parking.

### ***Other Locations***

You cannot stand or park a vehicle (except momentarily to pick up or drop off a passenger) in any of these locations:

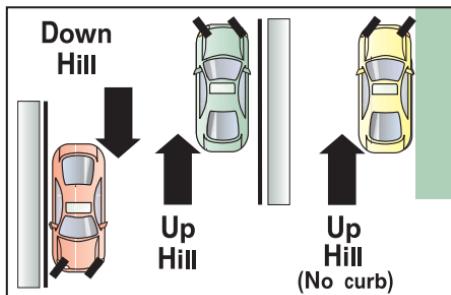
- In front of a public or private driveway.
- Within 10 feet of a fire hydrant.
- Within 15 feet of a fire station driveway on the same side of the street.
- Within 20 feet of a marked crosswalk at an intersection.
- Within 30 feet of the nearest corner of the intersection, if there is no marked crosswalk.
- Within 50 feet of a flashing signal, stop sign, yield sign, or other traffic control device located at the side of the road, if your vehicle hides the signal from view.

- Within 75 feet of a fire station driveway on the opposite side of the street.
- At any place where official signs or pavement markings prohibit stopping or parking. For example, a curb in a no-parking area may be painted yellow.

## **Parking on Hills**

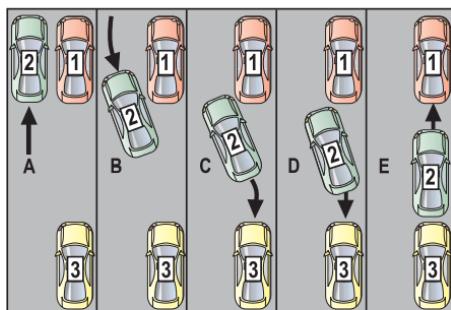
Always set your parking brake and leave your vehicle in gear when parking on a hill. To prevent your vehicle from rolling downhill in case the brake fails while your vehicle is parked; turn your front wheels in the proper direction:

- **Downhill Against a Curb** – Turn your wheels **inward**, toward the curb.
- **Uphill Against a Curb** – Turn your wheels **outward**, toward the travel lane.
- **No Curb** – Turn your wheels **inward**, toward the edge of the road.



## **Parallel Parking**

Park in the direction vehicles are moving in the lane. Park parallel to and within 12 inches of the curb. If there is no curb, park as close as possible to the edge of the shoulder. Your wheels must be within marked spaces.



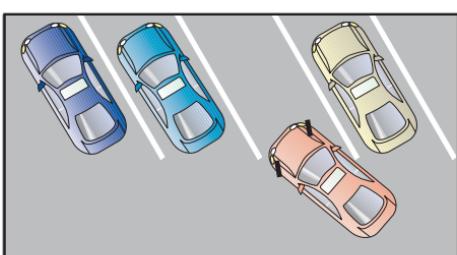
- A. Car 2 pulls even with Car 1
- B. Car 2 maneuvers backing gently toward the space
- C. Car 2 turns wheels sharply
- D. Car 2 begins straightening wheels
- E. Parallel parking is complete

## **Angle Parking**

This type of parking is common in parking lots, shopping centers, and wide streets. A courteous driver never parks too close to another vehicle. Parking too close could result in damage to your vehicle.

## **Emergency Parking**

If your vehicle has broken down and you have no choice, you may



temporarily stop or park a vehicle in areas where it usually is not allowed, as long as the vehicle does not create a hazard. If you must stop or pull off the road, use the four-way flashers. This will help warn other drivers of the hazard.

If necessary, you may park a vehicle on the shoulder of a highway if passing traffic has enough room to get by and if your vehicle can be seen from 200 feet in each direction. If it cannot be seen from 200 feet in each direction, you need to warn approaching traffic. This can be done with a flagger, flag, flare, sign, or signal placed at least 200 feet in each direction from your vehicle.

### ***Unattended Vehicles***

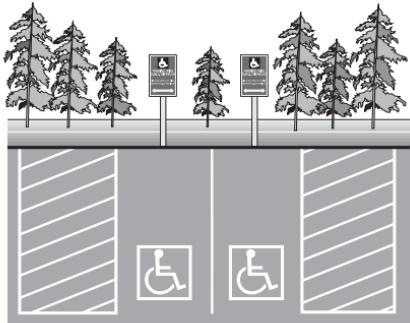
If you have an emergency and must leave your vehicle unattended on a highway, turn off the engine, lock the ignition, remove the key, firmly set the brakes, and turn on your emergency flashers.

If a police officer finds a vehicle parked in an area where it is not allowed or if it creates a hazard, the officer may have it moved or require you or a person in charge to move it to a legal stopped or parked position.

If you abandon a vehicle on the highway, police may have it removed and you will be responsible for towing and storage costs. You also may get a ticket for abandoning a vehicle.

### ***Parking Spaces for Persons with Disabilities***

Oregon issues special parking permits to persons with disabilities or groups that transport persons with disabilities. You must have a driver license or identification card and the signature of a medical professional to apply for a disabled parking permit.



In addition, Oregon also issues a wheelchair disabled parking placard or decal to persons with disabilities who use wheelchairs or similar low-powered motorized devices. These placards or decals allow the user to park in "Wheelchair User Only" parking spaces. Traditional disabled parking permits are not valid in these spaces.

Only a person who has a disability or someone who is transporting persons with disabilities may use either type of disabled parking space. Only vehicles that display these permits may park in specially designated parking spaces for persons with disabilities. This applies on both public streets and private property, such as shopping center parking lots.

It is illegal to do any of the following:

- Park, even for a few minutes, in a space marked for the use of persons with disabilities, if you do not display the required valid disabled parking permit.
- Use a disabled parking permit when you are not entitled to the permit or use an invalid disabled parking permit. This includes using a permit that has been altered, photocopied, reproduced, mutilated, reported lost or stolen, or is not clearly readable.
- Park on the diagonal stripes next to a disabled person parking space, even if you hold a disabled parking permit. Persons with disabilities use this access area to enter and exit their vehicles.
- Block a disabled parking space or access area next to a disabled parking space with a vehicle or an object.



### ***Re-entering Traffic***

When entering traffic from a standing, stopped, or parked position, turn on your signal, check your blind spots and mirrors, and yield to all other traffic on the road. Use hand and arm signals, if other vehicles hide your turn signals. Be especially alert for bicycles and motorcycles, because they are narrower than most other vehicles and harder to see.

When entering a public road from a private road, driveway, or alley, you must stop for pedestrians. After stopping and looking for traffic at the roadway entrance, you must continue to yield to oncoming vehicles until there is enough time and space to enter the road safely.

## **Additional Rules of the Road**

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### ***Slow Moving Vehicle***

Vehicles that travel at speeds of 25 miles per hour or less—such as farm equipment or low-speed vehicles—must display this SLOW MOVING VEHICLE emblem when using a public highway. Be prepared to adjust your speed or position when you see this sign.



If it is built for use at speeds of less than 25 miles per hour, a vehicle must have this sign mounted on the rear. The sign must be a standard type recognized nationwide. It has a red reflectorized border and a fluorescent orange-red center.

Farming and construction machinery and equipment must display this sign except when guarded by a flagger or warning sign.

The sign must also be on the rear of mopeds or golf cart type vehicles driven by persons with a disability. These vehicles may only travel on streets with a top designated speed of 25 miles per hour.

Do not use this sign in any other way except on these vehicles and machinery.

### ***Funeral Processions***

Funeral processions are exempt from certain rules of the road. Vehicles in a funeral procession may enter an intersection without stopping, may get free passage through tollgates, and do not have to obey traffic control devices. Other vehicles must yield right of way.

An escort vehicle must accompany a funeral procession, and the escort may exceed the maximum speed limit by 10 miles per hour. Escort and lead vehicles must have proper lighting.

If you are not a member of the funeral procession, it is against the law for you to join the funeral procession or drive between vehicles in the funeral procession.

### ***Tow Vehicles***

Drivers of wreckers or tow vehicles who are hooking up to another vehicle must warn other drivers when they need to block the road. They do this by putting signs or signals (approved by the Oregon Department of Transportation) at a reasonable distance in each direction from the hookup area.

Tow trucks must have a revolving flashing amber or red light for use when connecting to and moving a disabled vehicle onto a highway, or while helping a disabled truck.

Tow vehicle drivers must remove glass or other material that could cause a hazard or injury, if the material gets on the road while a wrecked or damaged vehicle is being moved. Check with DMV if you need more information about equipment for tow vehicles or tow truck permits.

Depending upon what types of vehicles are being towed, some tow truck operators may have to obtain a commercial driver license. Refer to the *Oregon Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Manual* to find out if this applies to you.

## ***Overlength and Overwidth Loads***

A red flag, at least 12 inches square, must be shown at the end of any load that extends four feet or more beyond the rear of the bed or body of a vehicle. A red light, visible for 500 feet to the rear and sides, must replace the red flag when limited visibility conditions exist.

Passenger vehicles must not carry loads that extend beyond the sides of the fenders on the left side. Loads may not extend more than six inches beyond the sides of the right fenders. Loads may not extend more than four feet in front of any vehicle.

## ***Pilot Vehicles***

Pilot vehicles are specially marked vehicles that serve as a warning to other motorists. Pilot vehicles lead or follow a vehicle carrying an especially large load. If you see pilot vehicles, be extra cautious. The loaded vehicle they are leading or following could be over nine feet wide and more than 75 feet long. Reduce your speed and position your vehicle as far to the right as possible, while staying in your lane. Be very cautious if you attempt to pass a pilot vehicle or the vehicle that it leads or follows. It's a good idea to increase your following distance.

## ***Animals***

Wild or tame animals are unpredictable along roads. Slow down and move away from animals as you pass them. Deer can be especially dangerous at night, when they may freeze in the beam of your headlights. Watch for signs warning of deer crossings, and be prepared to brake.

Use caution when you approach or pass someone who is riding, leading, or herding livestock on the highway. Stop your vehicle if a person on horseback or leading an animal raises a hand or it is obvious the animal is frightened, unless stopping would cause an accident. A raised hand means the animal is frightened. Unless absolutely necessary, do not use your horn or make other loud, sudden noises near the animal. Drivers must yield right of way to livestock when someone is stationed at both sides of the herd to warn drivers. Reduce your speed and pass cautiously.

If you ride, drive, or lead any animal on a road, you must follow the same rules of the road as motorists, except those which by the animal's nature cannot apply.

If you hit and injure an animal, stop and make an effort to check the extent of injury. Give reasonable attention to the animal. What you can do may vary with traffic hazards at the time or the animal's demeanor.

If possible, you should try to get the animal out of the way of traffic. Immediately report the animal's injuries to its owner. If you are unable to locate the owner or the accident results in the death of a large game animal, such as a deer or bear, report the incident to the nearest police agency.

### **Littering**

Do not throw any rubbish, trash, garbage, or refuse from a vehicle. Throwing away lighted or burning materials, such as cigarettes, is against the law. Conviction of these charges may result in a fine, jail sentence, and suspension of your driving privileges.

It costs thousands of dollars to clean up litter each year. Cigarettes or other burning materials often times result in extensive damage to range and forest land. In addition, if you are caught and convicted of causing a fire through littering, you may be charged for the costs of putting out that fire.

### **Guns**

Never shoot a gun or discharge a bow and arrow on or across a highway. Only police officers in the line of duty are exempted from this law.

Any person 13–17 years of age who is convicted of intentionally possessing a firearm in a public building will be denied driving privileges, among other penalties.



# Get noticed.

**TURN YOUR LIGHTS ON.**



**Drive Safely. The Way to Go. Transportation Safety — ODOT**

# See red.

**DON'T RUN IT.**



**Drive Safely. The Way to Go. Transportation Safety — ODOT**

# Space out.

**KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE.**



**Drive Safely. The Way to Go. Transportation Safety — ODOT**

## Section 4

# Defensive Driving

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The most important part of defensive driving is avoiding crashes and traffic violations by being alert for potentially dangerous situations. Use all of your senses, and constantly be alert for potential hazards.

Watch for illegal acts and driving errors by other motorists. Also, watch for pedestrians, bicyclists, and animals. Be willing to defensively adjust your own driving to avoid a crash.

Know how to adjust your driving to allow for problems in your vehicle, the type of road surface, poor weather, heavy traffic, poor lighting, and your own physical, mental, and emotional condition.

Think about what is going to happen or what might happen as far ahead of the situation as possible. Never assume everything will be all right.

Know the rules of the road.

You will be constantly making decisions every mile that you drive. There is a right way to make these decisions. It is known as **defensive driving**.

## Intersections

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Never assume another driver will yield the right of way to you. Be prepared to stop.

Look both ways and to the front as you near an intersection. Look first to the left to make sure cross traffic is yielding right of way, then look right. As you enter the intersection, check again for unusual or unexpected actions to the front, right, and left. (Review *Driver Signals and Turns*, page 34, and *Yielding Right of Way*, page 37.)

### **Five Rules for Intersection Safety:**

1. Know and obey the rules of the road on right of way, and obey traffic signs, signals, and pavement markings at intersections.
2. Know your route and plan ahead. Turns from or into the wrong lane are dangerous. If you are in the wrong lane for a turn, go to the next intersection. It is safer to go around the block rather than risking a crash due to a last-minute lane or direction change.
3. Slow down for intersections and be alert for other drivers who may turn from or into the wrong lane.

- Let other drivers and road users know, by the position of your vehicle and signals, what you plan to do.
- Go with care. After you have stopped for a red light, use the tips on *Following Distances*, page 31 in this manual. This will give you a safe following distance in case the vehicle ahead suddenly stops.

## **Signs and Signals**

A defensive driver does not assume a stop sign or a traffic light will stop approaching traffic. Some drivers deliberately run stop signs or traffic lights. Others may be daydreaming and not see the sign or light.

## **Traffic Circles and Roundabouts**

Traffic circles are usually ordinary intersections where circular islands were added to the middle but without other changes. A circle is used to discourage drivers from using neighborhood streets for commuting routes, to slow speeds, and to reduce accidents. Always drive around a traffic circle to the right.

A roundabout (or rotary) differs from a traffic circle in several ways. Roundabouts have the following characteristics:

- A central island
- Splitter islands (entry/exit points)
- A circular roadway on which all vehicles travel counter clockwise
- Slow speeds
- Yield signs at the entry

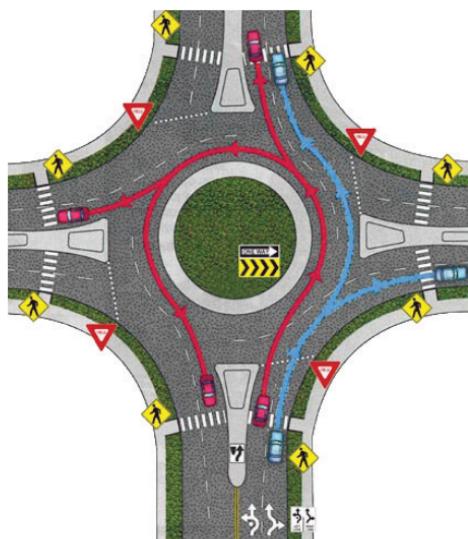
Roundabouts can improve safety, operation, and aesthetics.

When approaching the roundabout, stay in your lane and to the right of the splitter island.

Upon reaching the roundabout, yield to pedestrians, vehicles within the circulating road, and bicyclists. You may have to stop.

Within the roundabout, proceed slowly. Don't try to pass bicyclists within the roundabout, as your speeds should be nearly equal.

Continue until you get to your exit. On a multi-lane roundabout, **do not overtake or pass any vehicles**. Be prepared to yield to vehicles turning in front of you from the inside lane to exit the roundabout.



Exit carefully; **always indicate your exit using your right turn signal.**  
Watch for pedestrians in or approaching the crosswalk and stop for them.

## The Driver's Role

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### ***Human Error***

Human error is the single most common cause of traffic crashes. The leading factors in crashes are:

- Excessive speed;
- Lack of concentration; and,
- Improper evasive action.

Your mental and emotional state, as well as your physical condition, affects the way you drive a vehicle. Anger, worry, frustration, fatigue, and minor illnesses such as a cold are a few of the temporary conditions that can make you an unsafe driver.

### ***Fatigue and Drowsy Driving***

Fatigue may account for the fact that there are more crashes during evening rush hour traffic than during the comparable morning traffic rush. Drivers going home from work are tired, less alert, and slower to react than during the morning rush. Fatigue also can cause a driver to lose his or her temper or make a rash decision.

Signs that you need to stop and rest include difficulty focusing or keeping your head up, frequent blinking or yawning, and drifting in your lane.

Any loss of sleep can contribute to drowsy driving. Make sure you get plenty of sleep before leaving on a trip. Drive only during the hours you are normally awake. Never try to push through to your destination rather than finding a safe place to stop and rest. Talk with your passenger to stay alert. Take turns driving to allow each driver to rest. Make sure both people in the front seats are awake. A driver who needs rest should go to the back seat, buckle up, and nap.

When most people think about someone being unfit to drive, they usually think of someone drunk or physically unable to drive. In fact, most people are at some time unfit to drive because they are too tired and not alert to changing road and traffic conditions.

### ***Alertness***

Driving is not the time to solve business or family problems, plan a trip, daydream, or read something other than posted signs. You need to continually concentrate on what is happening in front of you, behind you, and on both sides of you.

Safe and defensive drivers have an alert attitude. As an alert driver, you should scan around you and ahead of your vehicle. Note potential hazards, such as the curve down the road, the slow-moving truck on the hill ahead, or the vehicle driving toward the street from a shopping center or side road.

If you find yourself just going through the motions of driving, without really being aware of what you are doing or what is happening around you, it is time to quit for a rest or maybe for the day.

### ***Hearing***

Hearing plays a more important role than many drivers think. Sound can tell you a great deal about your vehicle and the traffic around you. A sudden change in the hum of tires on pavement can tell you the road surface or the tires have changed. The sound of your engine tells you if it is working right. Sound also can tell you when another vehicle may be in your blind spot, or a truck, ambulance, or fire engine is coming. Drivers with poor hearing must compensate for this fact. One way to help compensate for poor hearing is to make sure you have sideview mirrors on both sides of your vehicle.

### ***Vision***

The importance of vision to driving is obvious. Good vision makes it possible for you to read signs, even at highway speeds, in time to react to the message. The ability to judge the distance of oncoming vehicles is vital to such actions as passing. Seeing out of the sides of your eyes—peripheral vision—helps you spot other vehicles, pedestrians, or bicycle riders coming toward you from a cross street.

No one sees as well at night as during the day. Some people have trouble adjusting to the dark. Glare from the headlights of oncoming traffic affects some people more than others. When you combine headlight glare, neon lights, and wet pavement, drivers may have a real vision problem. Studies have shown that the human eye takes about seven seconds to recover from headlight glare. At 60 miles an hour, you travel about 616 feet in those seven seconds, and you actually may be driving blind during that time.

As people age, they may have changes in vision that affect driving and other daily activities. It may be more difficult to change focus from distant to near objects and vice versa. After about age 45, many people may need glasses to see well either at a distance, close up, or both. If you need to wear glasses to drive, your license should indicate that fact.

### ***General Health***

There are many temporary medical conditions that should cause a driver to think twice before driving. If you are sick or recovering from an illness,

ask yourself if you really feel up to the job of driving, especially on a long trip. In addition, some long term medical conditions may cause serious problems that impact safe driving. These problems may include loss of muscle control, decreased reaction time, confusion, or an unpredictable loss of consciousness. Talk to your doctor about the effect your condition may have on driving. Follow your doctor's advice. DMV may require you to get a medical clearance or pass DMV knowledge and drive tests to obtain a license or permit or to retain driving privileges.

Some medications seriously impair driving ability by lowering your ability to make judgments, reducing vision, or slowing reactions. If you are taking medications, including such drugs as antihistamines, amphetamines, barbiturates, or tranquilizers, ask your doctor about the side effects and how they could hurt your ability to drive safely.

## **Driver's View** ---

You must be able to see what is to the front, sides, and rear of your vehicle. Do not load or equip your vehicle in any way that blocks or interferes with what you can see or with the control of your vehicle. Do not place stickers or other objects on your vehicle's windows that can obscure your vision of the road.

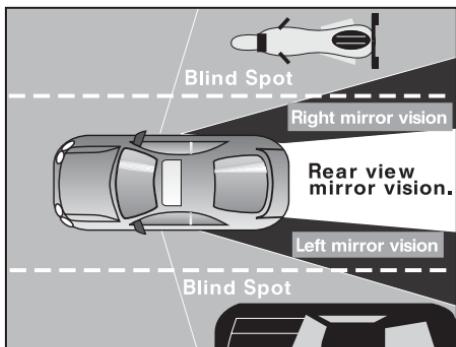
### ***Looking Ahead***

Expert drivers try to scan the entire driving scene **at least 12 seconds** ahead. In the city, 12 seconds is about one block. On the highway you should scan 12 to 15 seconds ahead, which is about a quarter of a mile. It is especially important for drivers to look for trouble spots as far ahead as the eye can see. Doing this will help you avoid the need for last-minute moves. It also will be easier to keep your vehicle on a steady path, rather than weaving in its lane. Scanning does not mean looking at the middle of the road. It means taking in the entire scene, including the sides of the road. Scanning the road ahead and to the sides helps you see potential hazards ahead, vehicles that may enter your path, signs warning of a hazard ahead, or signs routing you to another street or road. It also helps keep you awake and alert.

If a vehicle ahead stops suddenly, you are in trouble unless you are alert. Look for clues that a driver ahead may be going to stop, such as slowing down, a vehicle exiting a driveway ahead, a bicyclist on the road ahead, a child playing to the side of the road, turn signals blinking, or brake lights coming on. Do not rely on the turn signal of another driver. The driver may signal to turn right and then turn left, or may not turn at all.

## **Blind Spot**

If you are changing lanes, preparing to pass another vehicle, or entering traffic, signal and check for passing traffic by first using your mirrors. Once the mirrors reveal safe conditions for the lane change, check your vehicle's blind spot by glancing over your shoulder to the rear in the direction of the lane change. Be especially alert for bicycles and motorcycles as they are narrower than most other vehicles and can't be easily seen.



## **Space Cushions**

When a driver makes a mistake, other drivers need time to react. The only way you can be sure you have enough time to react is by leaving plenty of space between your vehicle and the vehicles around you. That space becomes a “space cushion”. It protects you from others. You should try to keep a cushion of space on all sides of you—ahead, to each side and behind.

### **Cushion Ahead**

Rear-end crashes are more common than any other kind because many drivers follow too closely. For tips to help you determine if you are following too closely, refer to *Following Distances* on page 31.

### **Side Cushion**

A space cushion to the side will give you room to react defensively to sudden moves toward your lane by other vehicles. You should:

- Avoid driving alongside other vehicles on multi-lane streets. Someone may crowd your lane or try to change lanes and pull into you. If possible, move ahead of the other vehicle or drop back a little. However, avoid driving in another driver's blind spot.
- Keep as much space as you can between your vehicle and oncoming vehicles. If you can, stay out of the lane next to the center line. That way you will have more room to avoid an oncoming vehicle that suddenly swerves toward you. This is most important at intersections where another driver could turn left without giving a signal.
- Make room for vehicles entering freeways. If there is no one next to you, move over a lane. Help other drivers signaling for a lane change make the move safely by slowing down your vehicle or speeding up a little, if needed.

- At freeway exits, try not to drive alongside other vehicles. A driver on the freeway may pull off suddenly or a driver who has started to leave may swerve back onto the freeway.
- Keep a space between your vehicle and parked vehicles, especially on residential streets with on-street parking. A vehicle door may open in your path or someone may step out of the vehicle or from between parked vehicles. For example, a child playing may run into the road chasing a ball.
- Keep plenty of room between your vehicle and bicyclists.

### ***Cushion Behind***

You can help the driver behind you keep a safe distance from your vehicle. Keep a steady speed, and signal in advance when you have to slow down or stop. Check your rearview mirrors about every five seconds to keep alert to what is happening behind you.

If a vehicle behind you is following too closely and there is a right lane, move over to the right. If there is no right lane, or you cannot move over, begin to slowly reduce your speed as the approaching traffic provides a safe passing opening. This may encourage the tailgater to go around you or to stop tailgating. Do **not** tap your brake as a signal to the person behind you. You could get rear-ended.

### ***Additional Cushion***

In addition to cushions ahead, to the side, and behind, there are some drivers to whom you should give lots of room. For example, some drivers may not be able to see you and may get in your way without knowing you are there. Here are some situations where this could be a problem:

- At intersections or driveways. Buildings, trees, or other vehicles often block their view. (If you drive a van or pickup with a camper, you may help prevent a collision for someone else if you avoid parking near an intersection.)
- Vehicle windows covered with snow or ice, or fogged-over windows.
- Distracted or confused drivers because they are looking for an address (such as a delivery van) or a certain route (such as someone with out-of-state plates).

### ***Backing Up***

Backing a vehicle is a small part of driving, but it is dangerous because you cannot see what is immediately behind you. Before you back up, you must be sure it is safe to do so and that it will not interfere with other traffic. It is a good idea to go behind the vehicle to make sure a child, pet, or toy is

not in the way. Back slowly from a driveway into a street. Turn your head so you can look through the rear window. Do not depend on your mirrors. Be on the lookout for children, pedestrians, and bicyclists behind your vehicle or on the sidewalk. Back the vehicle no farther than needed.

## **Communicating With Other Drivers**

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Collisions often happen because one driver does not see another driver. If a driver does something the other driver does not expect, a collision can happen. It is important that you let other drivers know where you are and what you plan to do.

You can let other drivers know where you are by:

- Using your headlights.
- Using your horn.
- Putting your vehicle where it can be seen.
- Using your hazard lights when needed.

You can let other drivers know what you plan to do by:

- Signaling before changing direction.
- Signaling before and during slowing or stopping.

### ***Opening Doors***

When you open a vehicle door on either the street or curbside, you must first be sure it is safe to do so. The open door must not interfere with passing traffic, bicyclists, or with pedestrians. Open the door only long enough to load or unload passengers. Drivers should make sure that passengers do this as well.

### ***Using the Horn***

People cannot see you unless they are looking your way. Your horn can get their attention. Use it when it will help prevent a collision, **not** to display temper or irritation. If there is no immediate danger, a light tap on the horn should be all you need. If there is real danger, do not be afraid to sound a sharp blast on your horn.

### ***Road Rage and Aggressive Drivers***

These high risk drivers climb into a vehicle and take out their frustrations on anybody at any time. Their frustration levels are high and their level of concern for other motorists is low. They run stop signs and red lights, speed, tailgate, weave in and out of traffic, pass on the right, make improper and unsafe lane changes, make hand and facial gestures, scream, honk, and flash their lights at motorists who are in front of them. These are symptoms of something commonly called road rage.

Don't be an aggressive driver. If you are angry, you shouldn't be driving. Give other drivers a break and share the road. The few extra seconds it takes to be courteous could save lives. Aggressive driving could lead to a citation from law enforcement or loss of your driving privileges.

If you encounter an aggressive driver, make every attempt to get out of the driver's way. Put your pride in the back seat. It's a battle with no winners. Wear your seat belt, avoid eye contact, ignore gestures, and refuse to return them.

## Avoiding Collisions

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When it looks like a collision may happen, many drivers panic and fail to act, or they do something that does not help reduce the chance of the collision. Almost always, there is something you can do to avoid the crash or reduce the results of the crash. A driver has three tools to use to avoid collisions—stopping quickly, turning quickly, and speeding up.

**Stopping quickly** – Many newer vehicles have ABS (*Antilock Braking Systems*). Be sure to read your vehicle owner's manual for how to use the ABS. The ABS system will allow you to stop without skidding. In general, if you need to stop quickly:

- With ABS – Press on the brake pedal as hard as you can and keep pressing on it. You may feel the brake pedal pulsing and hear the ABS system when the ABS is working. Do not let up on the brake pedal. The ABS system will only work with the brake pedal pushed down.
- Without ABS – You can cause the vehicle to skid if you brake too hard. Apply the brakes as hard as you can without locking them. If the brakes lock up, you will feel the vehicle start to skid. Ease off the brake pedal until the vehicle stops skidding.

**Turning quickly** – In most cases, you can turn the vehicle quicker than you can stop it. If you see that you will not stop in time to avoid a collision, turn away from it. Make sure you have a good grip with both hands on the steering wheel. Once you have turned, be ready to keep the vehicle under control. Some drivers steer away from one collision only to end up in another. It is generally better to run off the road than to crash head-on into another vehicle. Always steer in the direction you want the vehicle to go.

- **With ABS** – You can turn your vehicle while braking without skidding. This is very helpful if you must turn and stop or slow down.
- **Without ABS** – You must use a different procedure to turn quickly. You also step on the brake pedal, but then you let up and turn the steering wheel. Braking will slow the vehicle some; it puts more

weight on the front tires and this allows for a quicker turn. Do not lock up the front wheels while braking or turn so sharply that the vehicle can only plow ahead.

**Speeding up** – Sometimes it is best to speed up to avoid a collision. This may happen when another vehicle is about to hit you from the side or from behind and there is room ahead of you to get out of danger. Be sure to slow down once the danger has passed.

### ***Running Off the Road***

You can get in serious trouble if one of your front wheels runs off the pavement. If you should run off the road because of inattention or be forced off the road by another driver, you need to know how to safely get back on the pavement. The wrong reaction could result in a head-on or run-off-the-road crash. Here's what to do:

1. Don't panic and don't brake hard.
2. Grip the steering wheel firmly.
3. Slowly reduce speed and keep your vehicle on a straight course.
4. When you have slowed down and have steering control, check traffic behind you. When it is safe to do so, turn the front wheels enough to safely get you back on the road and into traffic. Do not oversteer, or you might go across the road into opposing traffic or shoot across the road into the opposite ditch.

### ***Curves***

Slow down before you enter a curve. Use the speed shown below a curve sign as a guide, if posted. Look through the curve to where you want to go and then check the lane position of approaching vehicles. Stay to the right in the middle of your lane and be alert for bicyclists, pedestrians, or other slow-moving vehicles hidden around the curve. As you come out of a curve, increase your speed gradually.

### ***Meeting a Vehicle***

If an oncoming vehicle is drifting into your lane, pull to the right as far as possible, slow down, and warn the other driver with your horn or lights. Never pull into the opposing lane, because the oncoming driver may pull back sharply into that lane. In most cases, steering to the shoulder or ditch is safer than risking a two-vehicle head-on crash. A defensive driver always has some idea of the shoulder and ditch on the right because that may be an escape route.

## ***Protecting Yourself***

You may not always be able to avoid a collision. If nothing works, try to keep the injury from being too serious.

- If you are hit from the rear, be ready to apply your brake so you will not be pushed into another vehicle. Brace yourself between the steering wheel and the back of the seat.
- If you are hit from the side, brace yourself with the steering wheel to keep from being thrown against the inside of the vehicle. Get ready to steer quickly so that if you spin around, you can try to control the vehicle.
- If you are hit from the front, and if you are wearing a shoulder strap, use your arms and hands to protect your face. If you are not wearing a shoulder strap, throw yourself across the seat so you will not hit the steering column or windshield.

## ***Freeway Driving*** ---

Traffic on freeways usually moves more safely and efficiently because access is controlled. There are few sharp curves, no railroad crossings, and no traffic lights. Even so, freeways require good driving skills and habits for you to safely get where you are going.

### ***Plan Your Trip***

Know your exact route—the entrances and exits you need to take. Check your gas gauge before getting on a freeway.

### ***Entering a Freeway***

In most driving situations, you slow down or stop before you enter a busy road, but when entering a freeway you do the opposite. Use the merging or acceleration lane to speed up and merge with fast-moving traffic already on the road. Try to reach freeway speed by the time you start merging.

If you are entering a freeway from a merging lane, **you must yield to traffic already on the freeway**. If you already are on the freeway, you are obligated to help merging traffic. Adjust your speed to permit a safe, smooth merge.

Keep moving if at all possible. A stop might cause a slow, dangerous start into faster traffic. Even slowing down as you approach an entrance can result in a rear end collision with a driver behind who expected you to pick up speed, not slow down.

If a freeway has an entry ramp with a red-and-green signal to regulate traffic entering the freeway, obey the signal. Stop and go with the light. Then, speed up in the acceleration lane to merge with traffic on the freeway. (Review *Ramp Meters* on page 24.)

If you start to enter a freeway the wrong way, a DO NOT ENTER sign will warn you of your mistake. A second sign, WRONG WAY, is an added warning. Immediately pull off to the side of the freeway exit ramp and stop. Put your emergency flashers on to warn other vehicles of your presence. Cautiously back off the exit ramp. Do not make a U-turn. A driver exiting the freeway at a high speed may not have enough time to react to your unexpected presence.

### ***On Freeways***

Speeds traveled on rural interstate freeways are higher than on other roads. There also are fewer stop-and-go situations. Try to keep pace with traffic on the road, but do not be lured into exceeding the posted speed to “stay with the flow of the traffic”.

A slowpoke on a freeway can be as dangerous as a speeder. Remember, if you drive at a speed below the flow of traffic, you **must** use the right lane.

Freeways often have several lanes in each direction. On these roads, you should leave the extreme left lane for faster traffic. If you drive at an even speed, you will have less need to change lanes. Remember, lane-hopping any time is dangerous, annoys other drivers, increases the risk of collision, and seldom saves time. Sudden bursts of speed also waste gasoline.

If you are traveling in the left lane and someone comes up behind you at a faster speed, move one lane to your right. Do not tie up traffic in the left lane.

There are times, especially in major cities, when freeways get jammed by heavy traffic or tie-ups caused by collisions during rush hour traffic. Be alert for any hint that traffic on the freeway ahead is not moving at a normal pace. Otherwise, you might have to slam on your brakes to avoid a rear-end crash with the vehicle ahead. If you spot a tie-up ahead that will cause you to slow down or stop, lightly tap your brake pedal several times to alert drivers behind you.

### ***Vehicle Trouble***

If you have vehicle trouble on a freeway, move to the right shoulder or emergency stopping area as soon as you can. Turn on your emergency flashers to warn other traffic. If possible, it is better to stay in or near your vehicle on the side away from traffic. Walking along a freeway is dangerous. If you stay with your vehicle, a police patrol will stop to help you when they come by if they are not on another call.

## ***Leaving a Freeway***

When you leave a freeway, signal your move well ahead of time. Maintain your speed until you move into the exit lane. As you leave the freeway and move onto the exit ramp, begin slowing to the slower speed limit posted on the ramp. Most exit ramps require much slower speeds than you have been driving on the freeway. Yellow speed signs posted at exits warn drivers of the speed needed to safely leave a freeway.

Most freeway exits are numbered to help you quickly spot the exit you want to take. Exit numbers correspond to the nearest milepoint along the freeway. To reduce your chance of missing an exit, you should know the exit number in advance. If you do miss your exit, go to the next one. **Never** stop or back up on a freeway. You should stop on the shoulder only in an emergency and then get as far off the road as possible.

## ***Expressways (Parkways or Beltways)***

An expressway looks like a freeway in many ways, but there is one important difference—an expressway may have intersections with cross traffic and traffic lights. This difference means extra care is required.

## ***Restrictions***

Bicyclists, parades, other non-motorized traffic, power-driven cycles, mopeds, or motor bicycles may be banned or restricted from using certain sections of freeways. Signs placed on the approach to and along the freeway may indicate the restrictions.

## ***Cruise Control***

When driving conditions such as heavy traffic, winding or hilly roads, icy, snow-covered, or slippery roads do not permit maintaining a constant speed, cruise control is not recommended. Also, it is a good defensive measure to turn off the cruise control when there is heavy rainfall and/or where water is standing on the roadway. Cruise control can be dangerous on slippery roads. Also, be cautious on overpasses during cold weather. Fast changes in tire traction can cause needless wheel spinning, and you could lose control.

## ***Night and Bad Weather Driving*** ---

### ***Using Lights***

Headlights must be turned on from sunset to sunrise. Lights also must be on at any time conditions make it difficult to see people or vehicles 1,000 feet ahead. By using your headlights on rainy, snowy, or foggy days, you will help other drivers see you and give yourself an extra safety

margin. Headlights turned on during daylight hours will make your vehicle more visible to oncoming vehicles and pedestrians. Use headlights when driving at dusk. Even if you can see clearly, headlights help other drivers see you.

Do not drive a vehicle with only the parking lights on when driving at night or in bad weather. The small size of parking lights may cause other drivers to think your vehicle is farther away than it is. Using parking lights alone when there is limited visibility is not only unsafe, it is against the law. The law requires a vehicle stopped or parked on a road or shoulder to have parking lights on when limited visibility conditions exist.

It also is illegal to have auxiliary lights or fog lights on by themselves or on at times when you are required to dim your headlights. These very bright lights make it difficult for oncoming drivers to see.

### ***Dimming Headlights***

When your vehicle's high beam headlights are on, you must dim or lower the beam when an oncoming vehicle is within 500 feet. You also must turn off any auxiliary lights.

Dim the headlight beam when you are following another vehicle within 350 feet. Dimming headlights when following other vehicles is a practical safety step. Headlight glare in a rearview mirror can blind another driver.

### ***Night Hazards***

At night, your response to hazards is slowed because you cannot see what is beyond your headlights. You can reduce danger if you adjust your seeing and driving habits accordingly. Although there may be more crashes and heavier traffic during the day, the chances of a **serious or fatal** crash are much greater at night, especially late at night. Drivers who do not adjust to diminished light conditions are part of the night safety problem.

Fatigue or drowsiness is especially dangerous when driving at night. If you are too tired or sleepy, you are less able to react and less aware of changing road and traffic conditions. You could even fall asleep. Be sure you are alert and rested before and during nighttime travel.

Be especially alert for pedestrians and bicyclists at night or during dusk. Pedestrians wearing dark-colored clothes are especially difficult to see. Pedestrians may not realize how long it takes to stop a vehicle even at low speeds.

At night or during dusk, bicycles may not be highly visible. Be especially alert for bicycles and motor-assisted scooters coming from side streets.

## ***Reduce Speed***

Slow down after sunset. You need the extra reaction time that slower speeds allow. Well-adjusted headlights light about 350 feet of dark road. If you drive faster than about 60 miles per hour, you are actually driving blind—unable to see what is ahead of you, beyond the range of your lights.

Here are other safe driving suggestions for night driving:

- Look slightly to the right of oncoming lights and watch the road edge or fog line. This will help guard against headlight glare.
- Check your headlights, tail lights, and turn signal lights often to make sure they are working and that the lenses are clean.
- Be very careful when passing at dusk. If an oncoming vehicle does not have its headlights on, you may not see it until it is too late.

## ***Fog-Dust-Smoke***

If you drive into fog, dust, smoke, or any area of reduced visibility, reduce your speed. Use headlights on low beam so the light will be on the road where you need it.

Sometimes fog, dust, or smoke is in patches. Slow down before you enter a patch, and be prepared to **pull over and stop**. There may be a vehicle ahead of you, hidden in the fog, dust, or smoke that has slowed down or stopped because its driver could not see, or because of a collision ahead. If you choose to pull off the road, pull completely off the road as far as you can to the right and stop. Use your emergency flashers. Chain reaction collisions, especially on freeways, often take place in fog, dust, or smoke.

## ***Bad Weather***

Drivers often have to change driving habits to adjust to poor driving conditions caused by weather. Bad weather calls for slower speeds. You should follow other vehicles at a greater distance. Rain, snow, and ice impair your ability to see ahead and increase the braking distance required to stop your vehicle. In these conditions, apply the brakes sooner and more gently than usual. Even summer showers cause slippery roads when rain mixes with oil and dirt.

Increase your visibility and let other motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists see you; when your windshield wipers are on, also turn on your headlights.

Vehicle tires sometimes hydroplane, skim, or float over a wet road surface, leaving the vehicle without any road contact. When hydroplaning occurs, there is a loss of traction needed to safely steer and brake. Stopping distances may triple, and steering control can be reduced or lost. Speed and low tire inflation are the two biggest causes of hydroplaning.

How soon hydroplaning begins depends on speed, tire inflation, water depth (even 2/10 of an inch), road surface, and tire tread.

If you drive through water deep enough to soak the brake drums and linings, gently apply the brakes. If they get wet, they may not respond. Dry the brakes by driving slowly and gently applying the brakes until they begin to work. It is better to find this out before you need to brake for a curve, intersection, or for a pedestrian.

### ***Snow and Ice***

Drive at slower speeds on snow and ice. Be defensive. Leave more room between your vehicle and the one ahead. Keep windows clear of snow, ice, or fog.

Here are a few other ideas to help you drive safely on snow and ice:

- Keep a light, steady foot on the gas pedal. When your vehicle begins to move, too much power may cause the vehicle not to move at all or to start forward with its rear-end skidding to the right or left.
- Make turns at a reduced, steady speed to avoid a skid.
- Get the “feel” of the road away from traffic when you start driving. Try your brakes lightly so you will know what to expect.
- Do **not** slam on your brakes to stop on snow or ice. If you slam on the brakes, your vehicle will almost always skid. Instead, gently press the brakes and then release them.
- Watch for danger spots ahead. A bridge or shaded area freezes first and still may be icy after the rest of the road is free of ice.
- Remember that temperature plays a part in stopping ability. The road is likely to be the most slippery when ice is near the freezing point rather than at lower temperatures.
- When you go uphill on an ice-covered or snowy road, apply just enough power to maintain motion, without causing the wheels to spin.
- Pay attention to weather forecasts and police warnings. When police or highway officials say driving is very hazardous, stay off the road except for essential travel.
- Do not use cruise control.

### ***Controlling a Skid***

Skidding is one of the most dangerous driving situations. It will catch you by surprise. Skids are caused when the tires can no longer grip the road. Since you cannot control a skidding vehicle, it is best to prevent your vehicle from skidding in the first place. In the vast majority of cases, drivers traveling too fast for conditions cause skids.

If your vehicle begins to skid:

- **Stay off the brakes.** Until the vehicle slows, your brakes will not be effective. Using them could cause you to skid more.
- **Steer.** Turn the steering wheel in the direction you want the vehicle to go. As soon as the vehicle begins to straighten out, turn the steering wheel back the other way. If you do not do this, your vehicle may swing around in the other direction and you could start a new skid.
- **Continue to steer.** Continue to correct your steering, left and right, until the vehicle is again moving down the road under your control.

### ***Chains and Traction Tires***

When you drive along a highway in winter conditions, you may see signs telling you which vehicles should chain-up, and when traction tires are allowed or required. In some areas of the state, lighted message signs may also advise you about chaining up.

Under some conditions, traction tires may be used in place of chains on vehicles rated at 10,000 pounds or less and that are not towing or being towed.

- “Chains” are link or cable chains, or any other device that attaches to the wheel, vehicle, or outside of the tire, which is specifically designed to increase traction on ice and snow conditions.
- “Traction tires” are studded tires or tires that meet the tire industry definition as suitable for use in severe snow conditions. Tires designated by the tire industry display an icon of a three-peaked mountain and snowflake.

Because of the damage studded tires cause to roads, they are generally allowed in Oregon only from November 1 to April 1. Drivers should be aware that some states ban the use of studded tires.

Some vehicles may be exempt from the requirement to use chains or traction tires. These include police or fire vehicles, ambulances, and ODOT highway maintenance vehicles performing their duties. Although exempt, ODOT vehicles use mud and snow tires and chains in most winter situations. Studded tires are not used on ODOT vehicles because of the damage such tires cause to the highway.

A passenger vehicle or truck also does not have to use chains if it meets ***all*** of the following conditions:

- Has an unloaded weight of 6,500 pounds or less; and
- Is equipped and operated to provide power to both the front and rear wheels; and
- Is carrying chains; and

- Has mud and snow, all-weather radial, or traction tires on all its wheels; and
- Is not towing a trailer or another vehicle; and
- Is not being driven in a manner or under conditions that cause the vehicle to lose traction.

More information on chain and traction tire requirements is available from the ODOT Web site at [www.tripcheck.com](http://www.tripcheck.com) (go to *Winter Travel Info*).

## Safety Belts, Passengers, and Inside Distractions

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### *Safety Belts, Child Safety Systems, and Air Bags*

Proper safety belt use is mandatory in Oregon for all drivers and passengers in all available seating positions when the vehicle is in motion.

A properly worn safety belt reduces the chance of a crash injury by 45–65% depending on the type of vehicle you are riding in. The pictures on page 67 show how a “properly” worn safety belt system should be placed across one’s body. Failure to properly use the system as shown may result in unnecessary injuries if you are in a crash. If you leave slack in either the lap or shoulder portion of your safety belt, you risk being thrown out of the vehicle during a crash or rollover. People who are ejected from a motor vehicle have a one in five chance of survival. Your best protection to avoid serious injury in a crash is to wear your safety belt. Safety belts keep you in the safest place—inside your vehicle.

You may be exempted from Oregon’s mandatory safety belt law if:

- Your vehicle was not manufactured with safety belts, and belts have not been added since that time. (If belts have been added, drivers and passengers must use them.)
- The driver and other passengers are in the seating positions. No additional belts are available for your use.
- You have been granted a medical exemption based on a doctor’s recommendation.
- You are delivering newspapers or mail in the regular course of your work.
- You are an ambulance attendant giving medical aid.
- You are reading meters in the regular course of your work.

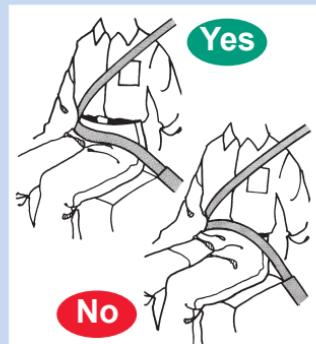
Child passengers under one year of age, regardless of weight, or a child who weighs 20 pounds or less must be properly secured in a child safety system in a rear-facing position. Child passengers who weigh 40 pounds or less must be properly secured in a child safety system. Children weighing more than 40 pounds and who are four feet nine inches

# The Correct Way to Wear a Safety Belt

## WEAR IT LOW

The lap portion of the safety belt should be two to four inches below the waist, snug across your hip and pelvic bones — NOT across your stomach.

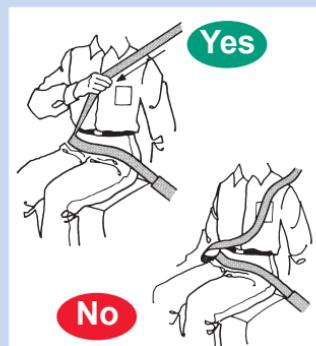
In a crash, a belt worn too high places you at high risk of potentially fatal internal injuries.



## WEAR IT SNUG

The shoulder portion should rest smoothly over your collarbone and across your chest and shoulders. Pull the belt out and let it retract to remove slack.

Safety belt webbing will stretch slightly in a crash. If not snug before the crash, you may slide under and out or up and over the belt.



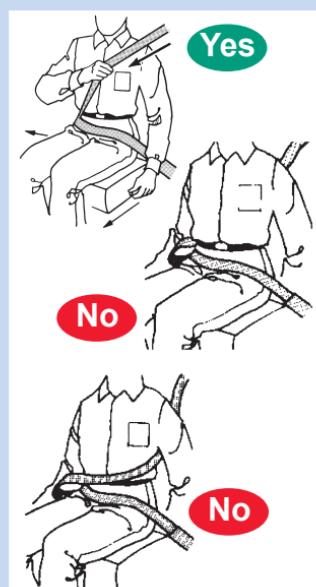
## WEAR IT RIGHT

If the belt rubs against your neck, try changing the seat position or the way you sit.

Some vehicles have shoulder belt adjusters which you slide up or down to provide a correct, comfortable fit. Belt extenders may also be purchased.

Some cars feature a shoulder belt that automatically comes across your chest, but you must fasten the lap portion manually to achieve proper use and compliance with Oregon law.

Safety belts should be worn over the front of the shoulder, never behind your back or under your arm.



or shorter, must ride in a child safety system which elevates them (i.e. booster seat) so the lap and shoulder belt fit them properly. Children eight years of age or older need not be secured with a child safety system, but must be properly secured with a safety belt or safety harness.

National statistics indicate that children twelve years of age and under are at least 30% less likely to receive crash-related injuries when riding in the back seat. Child safety systems must meet all federal standards. For help in obtaining, selecting, or installing a child safety system, contact ACTS Oregon at 1-800-772-1315 or [www.childsafetyseat.org](http://www.childsafetyseat.org).

Most cars today have airbags in one or more locations inside the vehicle. Safety belts **must be worn properly** in order for the airbag to protect you. A properly worn safety belt holds you back against your seat so the airbag has room to fully inflate around your body during a crash. Please refer to your vehicle owner's manual to learn the locations of these systems since airbag locations may vary widely among different vehicles. Rear-facing child safety seats should never be placed in the front seat when an airbag is located in the dashboard. Information regarding airbag deactivation or on/off switches may be obtained by calling the US Department of Transportation at 1-800DASH2DOT.

### ***Inside Distractions***

Being alert is an essential part of safe driving. The following are some distractions that might keep you from paying attention while driving:

- **Do not hold a package, pet, or person in your lap or arms.** This could interfere with driving control, especially in an emergency, or with your view to the rear, front, or sides. If you are involved in a crash while holding a person or animal while driving, the person or animal may sustain serious injuries or death. Likewise, holding a package could cause the driver to sustain serious injuries or death.
- Children and pets can be noisy or demand your attention while you are driving. **It is dangerous to take your eyes off the road to turn around to deal with the needs of children or pets.** If you must give attention to young passengers or animals, try to wait until you are at a red light or stop sign. If possible, pull over to the side of the road and park your vehicle before dealing with your passengers or animals.
- **It is very dangerous to remove a coat or jacket while driving.** Other activities such as applying makeup, reading maps, or reading the newspaper while driving are also dangerous. These types of activities can place you in serious danger of a crash.
- **It is dangerous to eat and drink while driving.** A hectic schedule can put pressure on you to grab a quick lunch at a drive-up window, but you

are far safer to pull over and park while eating in your vehicle than to eat while you drive. Your reaction time is slowed if an emergency arises while you have one hand on the wheel and your other hand around a sandwich or a soft drink you are worried about spilling.

- **Mobile (cellular) telephones** can be very useful and allow prompt summoning of emergency aid during disasters. The safest way to use a mobile telephone is to **pull off the road when you need to make a call**. Studies suggest that drivers who use cell telephones increase their risk of a crash. The crash risk of using a hands-free model is just as great as using a hand-held phone. The key to using mobile telephones is to remember that driving is your primary mission while behind the wheel. You must pay attention at all times.  
Any person under 18 years of age may not use a mobile telephone while operating a vehicle.
- **It is illegal to play a radio or other sound system so loud that it can be heard 50 feet or more away from your vehicle.** Do not play a radio so loud that you cannot hear the sounds your vehicle is making or the horns or sirens of other vehicles. It is particularly dangerous to wear headphones while driving. You may not realize your turn signal is still clicking, or you may not hear a noise that means something is wrong with your vehicle's engine. If you cannot hear other vehicles' horns or sirens, you may interfere with emergency vehicles or have a collision that you can otherwise avoid.
- **It is illegal to have a TV or video monitor that is visible to the driver while he or she operates a vehicle.** This includes TV broadcasts or images from a digital video disc (DVD) or video cassette. Do not be tempted to watch a miniature TV on a long drive. Anything that distracts your eyes or attention from the road is dangerous.

### ***External Passengers***

Oregon law prohibits anyone under 18 years old to ride on the hood, fender, running board, or other external part of a vehicle, including a pickup bed.

Adults should not ride in a pickup bed. If you are in an accident, adults in the pickup bed who are not restrained are likely to be thrown from the vehicle, causing serious injury or even death.

You cannot carry a dog on an external part of a vehicle, including a pickup bed, unless it is protected by framework, carrier, or other device to keep it from falling from the vehicle. A dog should ride in the back seat in a secured carrier or animal safety belt. Do not hold an animal in your lap or arms when driving.

## **Dealing With Emergencies**

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Although most equipment failures can be avoided by good maintenance, there are times when equipment may still fail, resulting in a driving emergency that calls for you to take fast action.

A vehicle needs maintenance. Otherwise, it becomes unsafe to drive and wastes fuel. Tires, brakes, steering, and lights should be checked often. Know your vehicle. Check your vehicle owner's manual. An engine tune-up at regular intervals will improve fuel economy and lessen the risk of an engine failure that could tie up traffic or even cause a crash.

Check your tires for correct tire pressure, uneven tread wear, and cuts or bumps that might cause a blowout. Bald tires skid easily and require more stopping distance on wet roads. Maintain tires at recommended pressures for both safety and fuel economy. Routinely check tire pressure when tires are cold.

Any of the following signals may warn you of trouble with your brakes:

- The pedal, when depressed, is less than 1–1/2 inches from the floor.
- The vehicle pulls right or left when you apply the brakes.
- An intermittent cricket sound may come from disc brakes.
- A metal-to-metal grinding sound occurs when you depress the brake pedal.
- The brakes tend to grab or take hold violently.

### ***Blowouts***

If a front tire blows, there may be a strong pull toward the side with the blowout. A rear blowout causes the back of the vehicle to weave or sway. Grip the steering wheel firmly and steer straight down the center of your lane. Do not oversteer. Slow down. Then brake smoothly. Move slowly to the shoulder and limp along until you find a safe place to stop and change the tire.

### ***Brakes Fail***

If your brakes fail, what you should do depends on what type of brakes you have. That is one reason you should always study your vehicle owner's manual before you drive. If you cannot get your brakes to work, and the way ahead is clear, slowly apply the parking brake. You may need to shift to a lower gear so the engine can help slow you, but keep the transmission in gear. On a hill or mountain grade, look for something to sideswipe—a curb, roadside brush, snow bank, or guardrail—anything that will help you slow down. Use your horn or lights to warn others that you are out of control.

### ***Headlights Go Out***

Try your dimmer switch, flick the headlight switch, turn signals, or emergency flashers. This may give you enough light to guide you off the

road. Slow down immediately and ease off onto the shoulder as soon as possible. Once stopped, warn other traffic by using your four-way flashers, if they work, or flares or reflective devices.

### ***Power Steering Fails***

If your power steering fails because your engine has stopped, you should grip the steering wheel firmly, as steering will be hard. Steer the vehicle onto the side of the road and stop the vehicle. You may have to push the brakes hard if your vehicle also has power brakes.

### ***Steering Wheel Locking Device***

Never turn your vehicle's ignition to the "lock" position while it is still in motion. This will cause the steering to lock if you try to turn the steering wheel, and you will lose control of your vehicle.

### ***Hood Flies Up***

Brake smoothly, ease onto the shoulder, and stop. You will have to depend on the view from your left window for steering reference, but on some vehicles, you may be able to peek through the gap under the hinge edge of the hood. Make it a habit after a service station stop to check to see that the hood is securely latched.

### ***Accelerator Sticks***

Keep cool. You may be able to handle the problem fairly easily. In general, it is a good idea to leave the vehicle in drive and apply your brakes with steady moderate pressure. Signal and steer off the road to the shoulder. Once you have stopped, you may turn your ignition off. If applying your brakes does not work, shift the vehicle transmission into neutral. You risk engine damage. However, this is a safer alternative than running into something at a high speed. If you are on the open highway and there is room ahead, use the toe of your shoe to try to pull up the pedal. Do not reach down and try to release it with your hands. You need to see where you are going to control the vehicle.

### ***Engine Overheats***

If your engine overheats, stop in a safe place off the road. Set the brakes and move the shift lever to neutral or park. Raise the hood, but do not try to remove the radiator cap. Idle the engine to increase air flow. Turn on the heater or, if the vehicle is air conditioned, turn off the air conditioner and turn on the heater until the temperature gets back to normal. If after a short time the temperature does not begin to drop, turn off the engine. Your vehicle may need to be towed to a service center.

## ***Utility Pole Collision***

If your vehicle crashes into a utility pole, **always** assume there is a power line down and it is energized and extremely dangerous. If possible, stay in the vehicle. Do not open the door. As long as you remain in the vehicle, you should be safe.

If the vehicle is on fire and you have to get out, stay calm. **Do not touch the vehicle and the ground at the same time.** Open the door, but do **not** step outside. Jump free of the vehicle, keeping your feet together and your arms and hands close to your body. Continue jumping until you are away from the vehicle.

If you witness a collision involving a utility pole, stay away from the vehicle, do not touch any of the passengers in the vehicle, and avoid touching any nearby fences or wires. The safest course of action is to call 911 to report a collision involving power lines and wait for the power company to arrive.

## ***Fuel Saving Techniques***

Drivers can improve their gas mileage and save on fuel consumption and expense by adopting simple steps. By following the tips below, you can save as much as 50% compared to your current monthly costs.

Drive more efficiently: avoid exceeding posted speed limits, aggressive driving, “jack rabbit” starts, and unnecessary idling or morning warm-ups (more than a minute). Drive steadily and when a red light is seen ahead of you allow vehicle to slow down to minimize or avoid stopping. Combine errands, use cruise control when appropriate, and use air conditioning conservatively and keep windows closed at high speeds. Remove excess weight from the trunk and avoid packing items on top of your car. Put automatic transmissions in neutral for long waits at traffic lights, railroad crossings, etc. Commute in a car or vanpool.

Properly maintain your vehicle: do maintenance according to your owner’s manual, checking spark plugs, oil, and air filters. Inflate, rotate and balance tires according to your vehicle manufacturers’ recommendation.

Use the recommended fuel: most cars require regular octane-using a higher-octane offers no added benefit. Keep your fuel tank at least a quarter full but do not “top off” the gas tank the fuel needs room to expand. Purchase fuel at the coolest times of day.

For more helpful tips go to:

<http://www.fueleconomy.gov/>

<http://www.drivelesssavemore.com/>

<http://www.epa.gov/donttopoff/>

## Section 5

# Sharing

## the Road

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Drivers of passenger vehicles share the road with many other users: pedestrians, bicyclists, moped and motorcycle riders, trucks and buses, recreational vehicles, and other passenger vehicles of all shapes and sizes. As a driver or user of the road, you need to know and practice the rules of the road. You should always be aware of the traffic around you and be prepared for emergency situations.

There are many vulnerable users of a public way, crosswalk or shoulder of the highway. A pedestrian, highway worker, a person riding an animal or an individual operating a bicycle are a few of these individuals. A person commits the offense of careless driving if the person causes serious injury or death of a vulnerable user of a public way.

### Pedestrians

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Drivers must recognize the special safety needs of pedestrians. Drivers should be especially alert for young, elderly, pedestrians who are disabled and intoxicated pedestrians. They are the most frequent victims in auto-pedestrian collisions.

Generally, pedestrians have the right of way at all intersections. There is a crosswalk at every intersection, even if it is not marked by painted lines.

To determine where an unmarked crosswalk is, imagine that the sidewalk or shoulder at the corner extends across the road and meets the sidewalk or shoulder on the other side. By law, the area included in the unmarked crosswalk is not less than six feet wide and exists even if there is no sidewalk or shoulder.

Drivers must not block the crosswalk when stopped at a red light. You can not stop with a portion of your vehicle overhanging the crosswalk area. Blocking a crosswalk forces pedestrians to go around your vehicle, and puts them in a dangerous situation.

You **must stop and remain stopped** for a pedestrian crossing at a crosswalk (marked or unmarked) when the pedestrian is:

- In the lane in which your vehicle is traveling;
- In a lane next to the lane in which your vehicle is traveling;
- In the lane into which your vehicle is turning;

- In a lane adjacent to the lane into which your vehicle is turning, if you are making a turn at an intersection that does **not** have a traffic signal;
- **Less than six feet** from the lane into which your vehicle is turning, if you are making a turn at an intersection that has a traffic signal; or
- In a school crosswalk where there is a traffic patrol member and the traffic patrol member signals you to stop.

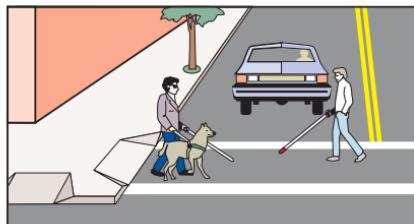
You are not required to stop for a pedestrian in a crosswalk if you are traveling along the half of the roadway on the other side of a safety island from the pedestrian.

You **must stop and remain stopped** for pedestrians on the sidewalk when entering or leaving an alley, driveway, or private road.

Remember there is a crosswalk at every intersection regardless of whether it is marked or unmarked.

### ***White Canes and Guide Dogs***

Pedestrians who are blind or partially blind may carry a white cane or use the assistance of a guide dog. You must give the right of way to a pedestrian with a guide dog or who is carrying a white cane, with or without a colored tip. **Stop and stay stopped** if the person is attempting to cross or is in the process of crossing the road. At regulated intersections, remain stopped until the pedestrian is out of the road, even if you have a green light.



### ***Stopped Vehicles***

Do not pass a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk. This is a frequent cause of death to pedestrians, especially if the passing vehicle is traveling at a high speed. When stopping for a crosswalk on a multi-lane road, you should stop about 30 feet before a crosswalk so you don't block visibility to a driver in a second lane.

### ***School Zones***

Be particularly alert at all times for children and pedestrians in a school zone. Follow the signs or flashing lights that warn you that you are approaching a school or a school crossing. School hours are not the only time children are present. You must obey the slower posted speed limit of 20 mph in school zones:

- At any time a yellow light on a school speed sign is flashing, indicating that children are arriving at or leaving school;
- Between the hours of 7 A.M. and 5 P.M. on school days, as posted on signs in a school zone adjacent to school grounds; or,
- At any time children are present at a school crosswalk not adjacent to school grounds, which means:
  - children are waiting at a crosswalk;
  - children are occupying or walking within a crosswalk; or,
  - a traffic patrol member is present to assist children at a crosswalk.

Stop and yield to students who are crossing or if a traffic patrol member signals you to do so. Police may cite you if you do not stop or yield the right of way to students who are crossing. If you are unsure of whether or not it is a school day, when entering a school zone it may be prudent to slow down to 20 mph.

Signs may be posted in school zones notifying drivers that traffic fines are higher in a school zone.

### ***Children at Play***

As a driver, be extra careful in residential areas and at times and places where children are likely to be around, such as a park. Do not drive too close to parked cars that may block your view. Teach your own children the basics of being a safe pedestrian at an early age. Always be extra watchful when backing in or out of a driveway. Children may run behind or be playing behind your vehicle.

### ***You as a Pedestrian***

Although drivers must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, pedestrians must not suddenly leave a curb or other safe waiting place and walk into the path of a vehicle if it is so close that it is an immediate hazard. Vehicles cannot stop instantly.

When walking, do all you can to make yourself visible to help drivers prevent collisions. You should wear bright clothing and use clothing reflectors or carry a light at night. Pedestrians must:

- Use crosswalks at intersections.
- Yield to traffic on the road if crossing at a location other than a crosswalk.
- Look in both directions before crossing any street.
- Walk on the sidewalk next to the road.
- If no sidewalk, walk or jog on the left shoulder facing oncoming traffic.
- Walk as far as possible from the edge of the road.

- Yield to motor vehicles when there is no sidewalk or shoulder.
- To get help on a freeway, walk to the nearest exit. Pedestrians may walk in either direction on the side of the freeway where the vehicle is disabled.
- If you jog, use jogging paths where provided. After dark or in bad weather, jog in well-lighted areas and wear plenty of reflective clothing.

## Bicycles

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Bicycle use on streets and highways is growing daily, both for exercise and transportation in city areas. **The same traffic rules and regulations apply to both bicyclists and vehicle drivers.**

A major problem for drivers is the ability to see bicyclists, especially at night. Sometimes they may be in the blind spot of your vehicle. When you approach a bicyclist, keep on the lookout and slow down. Give them plenty of room when passing and be prepared to stop suddenly. Bicyclists have the same rights and duties as drivers of motor vehicles, except those which obviously cannot apply to a bicycle rider. In addition, bicyclists have some special rules to follow. To avoid conflict, drivers of motor vehicles need to know the rules:

- Do not drive on a bicycle lane. You may **cross** a bicycle lane, such as when turning or when entering or leaving an alley, private road, or driveway. Do not move into a bicycle lane in preparation for a turn.
- You may use a bicycle lane as part of an official duty, such as delivering mail. Farm equipment may briefly use a bicycle lane to let other traffic pass.
- You must yield to bicyclists in a bicycle lane or on a sidewalk, before you turn across the lane or sidewalk.
- You must yield to bicyclists at intersections, the same as you do for other types of vehicles.
- When you are traveling at a speed of 35 mph or greater, you may only pass a bicyclist when the passing distance is sufficient to prevent contact with the person operating the bicycle if the person were to fall into the driver's lane.
- Do not honk at a bicyclist, unless you have good cause to warn the rider you are close by. The loud noise could startle the rider. There may be a good reason for the bicyclist to be riding in the travel lane, such as roadway hazards not visible to motorists.
- Operators of motorized wheelchairs, scooters, and personal assistive mobility devices are permitted to use bicycle lanes and paths. These vehicles can not exceed a speed limit of 15 mph. You must yield to these operators before you turn across the bicycle lane or path.

Drivers need to remember that road hazards not easily seen by drivers of cars or trucks may hamper a bicyclist. These hazards could include potholes, glass, litter, storm grates, and railroad crossings, as well as opened doors of parked vehicles. Any of these items could cause a bicyclist to move into your path or to slow down. Give bicyclists plenty of clearance on the street so they will have room to move around these hazards.

The actions of an inexperienced bicyclist will be less predictable. Look for signs that tell you a bicyclist is inexperienced, such as whether the bicycle rider is riding in a smooth and straight manner, riding against traffic, or is weaving and wobbling.

Children on bicycles should be given extra consideration. They cannot see things out of the corner of their eyes as well as adults, so they may not see you even when they glance back before pulling out in front of you. They also have trouble judging the speed and distance of oncoming vehicles. They believe adults will look out for them, and lack a sense of danger. Be aware that their actions could be very unpredictable.

### ***Collisions with Bicyclists***

Five common errors can cause you to strike a bicyclist:

- Turning left without noticing an oncoming bicyclist.
- Turning right at an intersection or driveway without checking for a bicyclist on the right who is continuing straight ahead or a bicyclist coming in the wrong direction from in front of you.
- Entering or crossing a street without checking for a bicyclist in the street or on the sidewalk.
- Opening a vehicle door into the path of a bicyclist or swerving into a bicycle lane.
- Trucks, RVs, and vehicles pulling trailers with wide mirrors passing too close to a bicyclist.

### ***Bicycle Helmets***

Oregon law requires anyone under 16 years old to wear approved protective headgear when riding or being carried on a bicycle. As a parent or person with legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of a child, you will be held responsible. The law does not require bicycle helmets for persons 16 years old and over; however, they are strongly recommended.

### ***Riding Rules***

To become more confident in your riding skills, please obtain the *Oregon Bicyclist Manual* at your local DMV office, or the online version at: <http://egov.oregon.gov/ODOT/HWY/BIKEPED>.

As a bicyclist in Oregon, you must be aware that bicycles are considered vehicles. You have the same rights, duties, and responsibilities as vehicle drivers.

Bicyclists must ride in the direction of traffic and as near to the right side of the road or street as is practical. On a one-way street in a city, a bicyclist may ride as near as possible to either the right or left side of the street or roadway.

There are some exceptions to this rule, such as when a bicyclist is overtaking and passing another bicycle or vehicle, when a bicyclist is getting ready to make a left turn, or when a bicyclist is riding at the same speed as traffic. A bicyclist also does not need to keep right if a lane is too narrow to let a bicycle and vehicle travel side-by-side, or if riding close to the edge of the roadway is unsafe because of parked vehicles, fixed or moving objects, animals, or road surface hazards. When lane width permits, bicyclists may ride side-by-side along Oregon roads.

Bicyclists must not ride more than two side-by-side, except on paths or parts of the roadway designated for bicycles. When riding side-by-side, you may not get in the way of normal and reasonable movement of traffic.

Increase your visibility. It will help protect you on the road. Brightly colored clothing during the day and white or reflectorized clothing at night will help you be seen. At night, you must have a headlight and rear reflector on your bicycle; a red taillight and additional reflectors are also helpful.

Other rules include: always keep at least one hand on the handlebars, don't carry more passengers than there are seats available, yield to pedestrians, have adequate brakes, and never perform stunts while riding on streets or highways.

Signal your intentions clearly and in plenty of time. There are two ways you may signal a right turn. Use the standard, upturned left arm signal (see *drawing on page 34*), or extend the right arm straight out to the right. The signal does not need to be given continuously for the last 100 feet.

## **Motorcycles and Mopeds**

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Motorcycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities on public roads as other highway users.

There is no question that a motorcycle or moped is more difficult to see than other vehicles. They are easily hidden in a vehicle's blind spot and can be easily overlooked in heavy traffic.

It is difficult to judge how far away a motorcycle is or tell how fast it is going. Being alert to these special visual problems and how motorcyclists

react to some situations can help you avoid colliding with a motorcyclist in traffic.

Tailgating is a hazardous practice. When following a motorcycle, always allow more distance between your vehicle and the motorcycle, three to four seconds is best. Both rider and driver should know what a safe following distance is and how to maintain it under various road conditions.

When passing a motorcycle, a driver should allow a full lane to the motorcycle. A motorist should never share a lane with a motorcyclist, although it may seem there is enough room.

Intersections are the most likely places for crashes. The most frequent causes of collisions between motorcycles and other motor vehicles are drivers who fail to yield right of way or who make a left turn in front of an oncoming motorcycle. Look once, then look again. Remember, you have the same duty to yield to an oncoming motorcycle as for any other type of vehicle when you are making a left turn.

Turn signals do not automatically cancel on many motorcycles. At times, the rider may forget to turn the signal off. Before you make a turn in front of a motorcycle, be sure the rider is turning and did not forget to turn the signal off.

Bad weather and slippery roads cause even greater problems for motorcycle and moped riders than for other vehicles. Wet roads cause traction problems. Skilled motorcycle riders will slow down. Strong crosswinds can move a motorcycle out of its lane of travel. As the driver of a vehicle, you need to be aware of these situations and the possible problems they could create.

Road surfaces that do not normally affect other vehicles can create problems for the cyclist. Gravel, debris, pavement seams, grooved pavement, small animals, and even manhole covers may cause the rider to change speed or direction.

Be aware of these situations and follow the laws and these suggestions to share the road safely with motorcycles and mopeds.

### ***Motorcycle and Moped Riders***

Knowing how to operate a motorcycle or moped safely takes experience and skill. If you ride a motorcycle or moped, you need to study the *Oregon Motorcycle and Moped Operator Manual* before you apply for a motorcycle endorsement on your driver license, or before you apply for a Class C Restricted (moped only) license.

Oregon law requires all motorcycle operators and their passengers and moped operators to wear motorcycle helmets at all times, when operating motorcycles and mopeds on public streets.

## **Recreational Vehicles**

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Most recreational vehicles (RVs)—including motor homes, campers, and travel trailers—are longer, higher, and wider than other passenger vehicles. They take longer to accelerate and to stop, and require much more room to turn.

Drivers of recreational vehicles (RVs) used for personal, non-commercial purposes need only a Class C license.

### ***Driving Courtesy***

When you drive a pickup with a camper, drive a motor home, or tow a travel trailer or boat trailer, you should often check your speed and the traffic behind you. If traffic is stacking up behind you, it is safer for everyone if you pull off at the first safe turnout to let other traffic pass. Use the right lane on roads with two or more lanes of traffic going in the same direction.

### ***Corners and Curves***

Trailer wheels do not follow the path of the towing vehicle's wheels. The greater the distance between the front wheels and the rear wheels, the greater the "off track". This means you should steer wider on corners, so the trailer will clear the curb and other vehicles.

Stay away from the pavement edge on sharp right curves and keep away from the center line on left curves. On sharp or tight curves, you should lead the turning arc of the front wheels according to how sharp the curve is and the amount of off-track of your vehicle or combination of vehicles. Take curves at a reduced speed that is consistent with your ability to see ahead, the sharpness of the curve, and other road and traffic conditions.

### ***Passing***

Trailers give you extra weight and length. Acceleration will be sluggish and you will need more overtaking room than usual. When you pass, be sure you do not cut in too soon or you will clip the vehicle you just passed.

### ***Stopping***

Avoid situations that call for a sudden stop. Increase the following distance between your vehicle and the traffic ahead of you. Trailer brakes should be adjusted to the load and activated by the towing vehicle's brakes.

### ***Backing***

Try to minimize situations where you have to back up. If you must back up, try to position your vehicle so you can back in a straight line. If you must back on a curved path, try to get yourself in a position so that the

trailer turns to the left where you can see it from the driver's side. Before you start backing, make sure nothing is behind you. The best approach is to have someone stand outside to help guide you. Check your mirrors on both sides while backing.

When backing a trailer, turn the steering wheel of the vehicle towing the trailer in the opposite direction you want the trailer to go. Once the trailer starts to turn, you must turn the steering wheel the other way to follow the trailer.

If the trailer starts to drift off course, correct this by turning the steering wheel in the direction of the drift.

### ***Passengers***

It is against the law to allow passengers to ride in a travel trailer or camper, a manufactured structure, or any other type of trailer, except a commercial bus trailer, an independently-steered trailer, or a trailer towed with a fifth-wheel device. The fifth-wheel trailer must have safety glazing materials in windows and doors with windows. It must also have a way for passengers in the trailer to get the driver's attention by a sound or noise. At least one unobstructed exit that opens from both inside and outside is also required.

### ***Towing Trailers***

Oregon law allows you to tow a maximum of one boat, general utility trailer, or other vehicle behind a passenger or recreational vehicle. You cannot tow a second trailer or vehicle behind a travel trailer or fifth-wheel trailer.

### ***Towing on Wet Roads***

On a wet road, narrow tires on small-wheeled trailers can hydroplane while the tow vehicle runs normally. On a curve, a hydroplaning trailer may fishtail or even tear loose. Gusty winds also can be a problem when you are towing a trailer. Watch your speed, especially in wet or windy weather.

## **Low-Speed Vehicles**

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Low-speed vehicles come in various designs. Basically, a low speed vehicle is a motor vehicle with four wheels designed not to exceed a maximum travel speed of 25 mph.

Drivers of low-speed vehicles need only a Class C license. An operator of a low-speed vehicle is not exempt from any other rules or laws of the road that apply to persons operating a motor vehicle, including insurance requirements and displaying a SLOW MOVING VEHICLE sign (*see illustration on page 44*).

## **Large Vehicles and Trailers**

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If you are operating a large truck, such as a rented moving van, or pulling a trailer, you should be extra cautious. Be aware that it takes more time to stop safely. Allow more space between yourself and other vehicles. It's a good idea to follow the safety recommendations in the next section titled *Trucks and Buses*.

All trailers must have lights and safety chains. Certain trailers must display registration plates. In Oregon, trailer brakes are not required, but are strongly recommended. You must be able to stop your combined vehicles within a reasonable distance. Properly working trailer brakes increase your combined vehicle's ability to stop. For more information, check the following Web site [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/Veh\\_Equipment.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/Veh_Equipment.shtml). To be safe, know the tongue weight and hauling capacity of your trailer and the maximum capacity of the towing unit to be sure you don't operate the vehicle overloaded.

## **Trucks and Buses**

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It may sound obvious, but trucks and buses are not large cars or pickups. Most people realize that it is more difficult to drive a truck or bus than a car or pickup, but many don't know exactly what limitations apply to a large truck or bus. Generally, the bigger the vehicle, the bigger its blind spots. It needs more room to maneuver. It takes longer to stop or pass.

To share the road safely, avoid driving directly behind a truck. Keep a reasonable distance between your car and the truck ahead. You will have a better view of the road to anticipate problems, and you will give yourself an emergency "out".

Many motorists falsely assume that they can see the road better from a truck or bus because they sit twice as high as the driver of a small vehicle. While a truck or bus does enjoy a better forward view and has bigger mirrors, it has serious blind spots into which a small vehicle can disappear from view. An excellent rule for motorists sharing the road with trucks and buses is: if you can't see the truck or bus driver in the side mirror of the truck or bus, the driver probably can't see you. Another good tool is the No-Zone. The No-Zone represents danger areas around trucks where crashes are more likely to occur (*see illustration at right*).



- **Side blind spots** – Trucks and buses have much larger blind spots on both sides of their vehicles than small vehicles. When you drive in these blind spots (No-Zones) for any length of time, truck and bus drivers cannot see you. If the truck or bus driver needs to swerve or change lanes for any reason, a serious crash could occur if any vehicle is in the No-Zone.
- **Rear blind spot** – Unlike small vehicles, trucks and buses have deep blind spots directly behind them. Avoid following too closely in the No-Zone. The truck or bus driver cannot see the vehicle in this position, and you severely reduce your own view of traffic flow. Following too closely greatly increases your chance of a collision with a truck or bus.
- **Unsafe passing** – Another No-Zone is just in front of trucks and buses. When small vehicles cut in too soon after passing, then abruptly slow down, trucks and buses are forced to compensate with little time or room to spare.

It takes longer to pass a large vehicle. Maintain a constant speed and be sure you can see the entire cab of the truck or bus in your rearview mirror before pulling in front of the truck or bus. Also, do not linger when passing a truck or bus. By remaining in the No-Zone too long, you make it impossible for the driver to take evasive action, if an obstacle appears in the road ahead.

- **Turns** – Truck and bus drivers often cannot see vehicles directly behind or beside them when they are attempting to safely negotiate a right turn. Observe their turn signals. Cutting in between the truck or bus and the curb or shoulder to the right increases the possibility of a crash. Also, when you see a truck or bus making a turn, do not crowd the intersection. Allow the vehicle to complete the turn without backing up.
- **Backing up** – When a truck is backing up, it sometimes must block the street to maneuver its trailer accurately. Never cross behind a truck that is preparing to back up or is in the process of backing up. Remember most trailers are eight and a half feet wide and can completely hide objects that suddenly come between them and a loading area. Automobile drivers attempting to pass behind the truck enter a No-Zone for both drivers.

Some other things you need to know about trucks and buses include:

- **Braking** – Trucks and buses take longer to stop than small vehicles traveling at the same speed. It takes a fully loaded truck with a trailer about three times the distance to stop than the average passenger

vehicle. If roads are wet or slippery, trucks with trailers cannot firmly apply their brakes without risking a jackknife.

- **Maintaining a safe cushion and maneuverability** – Trucks and buses need more maneuvering room than small vehicles. Don't cut in front of a truck or bus. Otherwise, you remove the driver's cushion of safety. When following a truck or bus, it is a good idea to add more following distance. If rain or water is standing on the road, the spray from a truck passing you, or one you are trying to pass, will seriously reduce your vision. You should move as far away from the truck as you can, while staying in your lane. Do not pull up too close behind a stopped truck or bus. They may roll back slightly when starting forward. Don't drive too close to trucks that carry hazardous materials, since they may make frequent stops, such as at railroad crossings.
- **Hills or mountain roads** – Beware of dangers caused by slower moving trucks or buses on hills or mountain roads. Watch for slow moving trucks or buses going both up and down hills. Heavy vehicles cannot maintain speed when climbing hills and must go slowly down hills to stay under control. Watch for trucks or buses that may be in trouble. Smoking wheels or a high speed can be a sign of a brake loss. If you encounter this situation, fall back, and **do not pass**.
- **Runaway ramps** – These ramps are designed to stop out-of-control trucks or buses. Small vehicles should never be stopped or parked in these areas.

## **Licensing Requirements**

A person operating any of the following vehicles will need a commercial driver license:

- A single vehicle with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of more than 26,000 pounds.
- A vehicle towing a trailer with a GVWR of more than 10,000 pounds, if the gross weight rating of the combined vehicle(s) is more than 26,000 pounds.
- A vehicle designed to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver).
- Any size vehicle used in transporting a quantity of hazardous materials that requires a placard.

Additional testing is required to operate these vehicles. If you wish to study for a commercial driver license, the *Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Manual* is available at all DMV offices, or on our Web site at: <http://www.odot.state.or.us/forms/dmv/36.pdf>

# School, Transit, Church, and Worker Buses

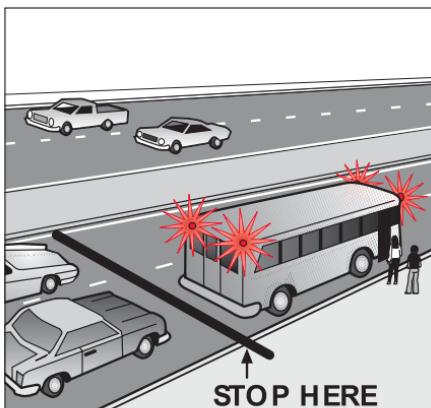
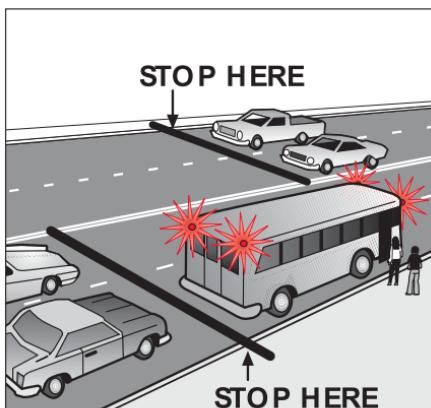
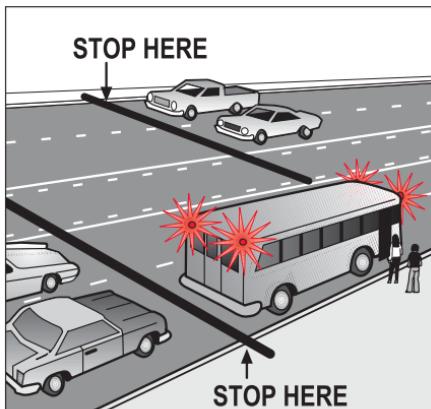
## *Stopping for School Buses*

Oregon school buses have flashing amber and flashing red lights near the top of the bus on the front and rear. School buses are also equipped with a stop arm that extends out from the left side of the bus near the driver's window. The stop arm will be extended when the red lights begin to flash.

School bus drivers turn on flashing amber lights to warn other traffic that the bus is about to stop on the road to load or unload children. You should get ready to stop. When the red lights begin to flash, this means drivers meeting or overtaking the bus from either direction must stop before reaching the bus. You must remain stopped until the bus driver turns off the flashing red lights.

The school bus stop law applies on any roadway with two or more lanes of traffic. There is one exception to the law. If you are on a divided highway with two roads separated by an unpaved median strip or barrier, you must stop only if you are on the same side of the road as the bus. A painted median strip or a center lane used only for left turns does **not** create two separate roads. Where this situation exists, **all** lanes of traffic must stop.

School bus drivers may report vehicles that improperly pass school buses. The report may be forwarded to the local law enforcement agency for investigation.



All school buses and some school activity vehicles must stop at railroad crossings. The driver must open the bus door and be sure the tracks are clear before proceeding.

### ***Church and Worker Buses***

Flashing amber and red lights also are permitted on church buses used to carry children and on buses used to transport workers. If these buses are equipped with these lights and use either the flashing amber or red lights, other drivers must either get ready to stop or stop the same as for school buses.

### ***Public Transit Buses***

Public transit buses often pull to a curb to load or unload passengers. To help protect these buses and their passengers when they re-enter a traffic lane, drivers of other vehicles approaching from the rear must yield to these vehicles if:

- A city, mass transit, or transportation district bus driver signals to re-enter a traffic lane; and
- There is an electric sign flashing “yield” on the back of the bus.



Police may cite a driver who does not yield right of way to the bus.

### ***Bus Drivers***

A person operating any of the following vehicles will need a commercial driver license:

- A school bus, regardless of size.
- A vehicle designed to transport 16 or more passengers (including the driver).

Additional testing **is required** to operate these vehicles. The *Commercial Motor Vehicle Operator Manual* is available at all DMV offices, if you wish to study for a commercial driver license.

Oregon's Department of Education regulates school bus drivers and school activity vehicle drivers. If you want to drive a school bus, you must take tests specifically for school bus operators. The Department of Education, Pupil Transportation Section, will provide you the information about the specific certification and testing requirements when you seek employment at a school district or with a pupil transportation contractor to operate a school bus or school activity vehicle.

## **Emergency Vehicles**

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Drivers of emergency vehicles, such as a police vehicle or fire fighting apparatus, must drive with regard for the safety of other highway users. They may break some traffic laws, however, if the drivers are on their way to an emergency or chasing a violator. Drivers of emergency vehicles and ambulances must stop—the same as other traffic—for a stopped school bus, church bus, or worker transportation vehicle that has its flashing red lights in use.

### ***Stopping for Police Vehicles***

Police vehicles attempting to stop drivers will do so by means of a visual, flashing blue or flashing blue and red lights, or audible signal. When being stopped by a police vehicle, police recommend:

- Drive as close as is safely practical to the right-hand edge or curb of the road, clear of any intersection, stop, and park.
- Limit the movements of the driver and/or passengers while stopping your vehicle.
- Drivers should keep their hands on the steering wheel and passengers should keep their hands in plain view.
- Obtain your driver license and/or vehicle registration only when requested.
- Keep all vehicle doors closed as the officer approaches, and remain in the vehicle unless requested to get out.
- If at night, turn on the vehicle's interior light after stopping and before the officer approaches.

If enforcement action is taken against you that you disagree with, do not argue with the officer at the scene. Traffic violations and traffic crimes charged against you are decided in court.

### ***Emergency Vehicles and Ambulances***

You must yield right of way to emergency vehicles, such as fire trucks, police vehicles, and ambulances, when these vehicles approach you from any direction using a light or siren.

When you see or hear an emergency vehicle warning, you **must** immediately drive as close as is safely practical to the right-hand edge or curb of the road, clear of any intersection, and **STOP**. Stay stopped until the emergency vehicle has passed or until a police officer tells you to move.

If you are on a road with two or more lanes of traffic and you approach an emergency vehicle that is stopped and the warning lights are on, you

must change lanes so you do not drive next to the stopped emergency vehicle. If making a lane change is unsafe or you are on a road with one lane in each direction, you must reduce your speed and give the emergency vehicle as much room as safely possible.

Emergency vehicle drivers may:

- Park or stand in places where drivers otherwise could not do so.
- Go through a red light or stop sign after slowing down.
- Drive faster than a designated speed, if it does not endanger people or property.
- Disregard rules covering direction of movement or turning. To break these rules, emergency vehicle drivers must use emergency vehicle warning lights. When going through a stop sign or red traffic light, emergency drivers also must use a siren or other audible warning device, unless use would prevent or hamper catching a violator.

### ***Ambulances***

Ambulance drivers going to an emergency may exercise the same privileges as other emergency vehicle drivers, with one exception.

Ambulance drivers may exceed the designated speed for the area by 10 miles per hour. These privileges are granted to ambulance drivers only when there are reasonable grounds to believe an ambulance delay would jeopardize human life.

### ***Following Fire Trucks***

Follow no closer than 500 feet behind a fire or emergency vehicle answering an alarm. Do not drive or park in a way that interferes with fire or emergency vehicles responding to an alarm.

### ***Crossing Hoses***

Do not drive over unprotected fire hoses without first getting permission from a fire department official or police officer at the scene of a fire.

### ***Emergency Scenes***

When you approach emergency scenes, slow down and be prepared to stop.

## **Work/Construction Zones**

Driving through a maintenance, construction, or utility work zone is one of the most challenging tasks for drivers. Some **facts** you should know to make the trip through or around the work area safer.

- Inattention is the number one cause of vehicle crashes in Oregon work zones. That's why drivers need to pay extra attention when driving through a roadway work area. It's definitely **not** "business as usual". There may be narrow lanes or fewer lanes. Barrels, cones and barricades, or heavy machinery may be very close to traffic.
- Driving too fast is dangerous and contributes to work zone deaths and injuries. Driving too fast for conditions in the work area is an invitation for trouble. The faster you drive, the longer it takes to make a driving decision in case of a problem, the longer it takes to stop the vehicle, and the greater the injury if there is a crash.
- Over 40 percent of work zone crashes happen in the transition zone prior to the work area. That's the time after the ROAD WORK AHEAD sign and before the actual work area. This is where there may be lanes merging or narrowing, or a detour beginning.
- Although workers are very vulnerable as they work close to speeding traffic, it's actually drivers and their passengers who are most likely to be killed or injured in traffic-related work zone crashes.
- In Oregon, traffic fines double for all traffic offenses in maintenance, construction, and utility work zones, **at all times and on all roads, whether or not there are signs indicating the fact.**
- The same rules always apply in a construction zone, whether or not construction workers are present.
- If you fail to yield right of way to a worker in a construction/work zone, you could be cited by law enforcement. DMV can suspend your driving privileges for recklessly endangering a highway worker.

#### ***Other Roadway Work Zone Safety Tips:***

- Flaggers use hand signals to tell you to slow down, stop, or which direction to travel. Obey them as you would any other traffic control.
- Rotational beacons on top of highway worker vehicles are an indication to watch out for persons or obstructions in or near the roadway.
- Construction, utility, or work zones may have temporary speed zones posted that can change from day to day, or even by time of day. These are posted with black and white speed signs or by special messages on lighted message signs.
- Construction or work zones may have temporary pavement markers instead of permanent pavement markings.
- White lines or temporary markers separate lanes going in the same direction.

- Yellow lines or temporary markers separate lanes going in opposite directions.

Those who drive through work zones and those who work in them have families they want to go home to safely. Do your part to keep yourself and workers safe. **Give 'Em A Brake!**



# Give 'em A Brake. Slow Down.

**He's trying to save your life**

At first glance, you might not think so. It seems like there's construction everywhere. Maybe it feels like he's just slowing you down. That's the point . . . Every year, workers, drivers and their passengers are killed or seriously injured in work zone crashes – all because some drivers don't slow down or pay attention. So, remember, he's trying to slow you down to save your life – and maybe save you a fine.

Fines double for traffic violations in a work zone. So the next time you see a flagger, give 'em a brake and give yourself a brake too. Slow down.

**Give 'em A Brake. Slow Down.**  
**Oregon Department of Transportation**

## **Section 6**

# **Driver Safety and Responsibility**

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## **Alcohol and Driving Safety**

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### ***Drinking Drivers***

Even drivers who do not drink need to know how alcohol affects the body and why this effect is so important to highway safety.

When alcohol enters the stomach and intestines, it quickly gets in the bloodstream and is carried to all parts of the body. When it reaches the brain, it short-circuits the parts that control judgment, emotions, and confidence. The first effect of alcohol is on your ability to make judgments. This happens long before you show any outward sign of being drunk, such as staggering.

As you drink more, your vision also is affected, particularly at night. Your reaction time—the time it takes you to decide to step on the brake, or turn, or both—is slowed. Coordination decreases, so that you may have a hard time hitting the brake solidly with your foot. In a driving emergency, this slower reaction time, loss of coordination, reduced vision, and poor judgment are critical.

### ***How Much it Takes***

Studies show that **ANY** level of alcohol in your blood impairs your ability to drive to some degree. Medical authorities say that all people—regardless of experience or a so-called tolerance to alcohol—are impaired as drivers by alcohol.

Alcohol gives some drivers a false sense of confidence in their ability to handle a vehicle and any emergency that might arise. Some drinking drivers also become more aggressive or hostile than normal. Some research indicates that drivers who are normally aggressive are the most dangerous drinking drivers. In short, alcohol tends to make good drivers bad, and bad drivers worse.

### ***Debunking Some Myths***

Just as it is important to know the effects of alcohol on the human body, it also is important to know what is not true. Here are some common myths that get many drivers into trouble:

- **“It’s only beer.”** One 12-ounce can of beer or a 5-ounce glass of wine contains the same alcohol content as a mixed drink with a 1-1/2 ounce shot of liquor. Some beers have a higher alcohol content than others.
- **“Alcohol is a stimulant.”** Wrong. Alcohol acts as a depressant on the central nervous system.
- **“I drive better after a few drinks.”** Wrong. Even the driving ability of professional drivers is sharply reduced at levels above 0.05 percent. This is just a few drinks for the average person. Remember, judgment is affected. You may think you are driving better, but you actually are driving worse.
- **“I don’t mind riding with Joe after he’s been drinking. He can really hold his liquor.”** Often the man or woman who can hold so much is really developing a tolerance to alcohol. Tolerance is just another word for addiction. There is evidence that many people arrested for driving under the influence, even for the first time, already may be unrecognized problem drinkers.
- **“Make that one for the road coffee”.** Go ahead, but coffee will not sober you up. Cold showers and exercise do not work either. Only time gets alcohol out of your body, and that is done through normal body processes.

### *Alcohol’s Role in Fatal Crashes*

Alcohol is involved in about 40 percent of the traffic crashes in which somebody is killed. If you drink alcohol, even a little, your chances of being in a traffic crash are much greater than if you did not drink **any** alcohol. New drivers are more at risk because of their inexperience. No one can drink alcohol and drive safely, even those who have been driving for many years. The chance of being responsible for a fatal crash increases sharply as your blood alcohol level goes up. You can help save a life: Report intoxicated drivers anywhere in Oregon by calling 1 (800) 24DRUNK.

### *Don’t Drink and Drive*

Even if you try to drink in moderation, you may not realize to what extent your skills have suffered from alcohol’s fatiguing effects. Once you start, your resistance becomes weaker. Setting limits or pacing yourself are poor alternatives at best. Your ability to exercise good judgment is one of the first things affected by alcohol.



## **Oregon's Implied Consent Law**

This law means that by driving a motor vehicle you have implied that you will consent to a breath, blood, or urine test, if a police officer asks you to take such a test. The officer may ask you to take a test if the officer has arrested you for driving under the influence of intoxicants (DUII). Refusal to take a test is admissible as evidence in court. If you are under 21, you will fail the test if you have a reading of **any** percentage. If you are over 21, you will fail the test if your blood alcohol reading is 0.08 percent or more. An implied consent suspension is separate from any suspension you may receive as a result of a DUII conviction.

If you have a valid Oregon driver license in your possession, the officer will confiscate it and issue a 30-day temporary driving permit. After 30 days, the suspension is in effect. Suspension lengths vary. If you are arrested for driving under the influence of intoxicants, and you:

- **Take a breath test and fail it** – DMV will suspend your driving privileges for 90 days. If you have any prior alcohol-related entries on your driving record within five years, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for one year.
- **Refuse to take a breath test** – DMV will suspend your driving privileges for one year. Conviction of this charge may result in a fine up to \$1000. If you have any prior alcohol-related entries on your driving record within five years, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for three years.
- **Refuse to take a urine test** – DMV will suspend your driving privileges for one year. If you have any prior alcohol-related entries on your driving record within five years, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for three years. The suspension for refusing a urine test will not start until any other Implied Consent suspension (even from the same arrest) is over.
- **Refuse to take a blood test while receiving medical care in a health care facility following a motor vehicle crash** – DMV will suspend your driving privileges for one year. If you have any prior alcohol-related entries on your driving record within five years, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for three years.
- **Fail a blood test while receiving medical care in a health care facility following a motor vehicle crash** – DMV will suspend your driving privileges for 90 days. If you have any prior alcohol-related entries on your driving record within five years, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for one year.

## ***Driving While Intoxicated***

You may be found guilty and convicted of driving while under the influence of intoxicants (DUII) if you drive a vehicle while you are under the influence of intoxicating liquor, a controlled substance, an inhalant, or any combination of these substances.

You may be charged with DUII if you commit the offense any place open to the general public for use of motor vehicles. This includes both public and privately owned areas, such as shopping center parking lots, even if a fee is charged for use of the areas.

If you are arrested and take an implied consent test, a blood alcohol reading of less than 0.08 percent is indirect evidence that may be used, with other evidence, to decide if you were under the influence of intoxicants. A reading of 0.08 percent or more is enough to establish that you were under the influence of intoxicants. If a chemical test is not taken, you still may be convicted if the police have enough evidence to convince the judge or jury that you were driving under the influence of intoxicants.

## ***Diversion Agreement***

If you are cited for DUII and you have no other alcohol-related actions on your record in the past 10 years, and the court agrees, you may be able to enter a diversion agreement. If you complete the diversion requirements, you will not have a conviction for DUII on your driving record. The diversion agreement will show on your record.

The court cannot offer you diversion if you have a commercial driver license or the offense occurred in a commercial motor vehicle.

## ***DUII Conviction***

If you are convicted of DUII:

- **First Conviction** – Mandatory suspension of your driving privilege for one year.
- **Second Conviction** – Mandatory suspension of your driving privilege for three years, if the offense occurred within five years of another DUII conviction.
- **Third or Subsequent Conviction** – Permanent revocation of your driving privilege.

A fourth or subsequent DUII conviction is a felony offense, if the offense takes place within ten years of three other DUII convictions.

If you are under 18 years of age and you are convicted of DUII, DMV will suspend your driving privileges until you are 18 years old or until you are eligible for reinstatement, whichever comes later.

When a DUII suspension ends, you must meet several reinstatement requirements before you can obtain a valid driver license. These requirements include filing proof of future financial responsibility for three years, installing an ignition interlock device in your vehicle for one year, (two years for a second or subsequent DUII conviction), submitting a DUII Treatment Completion Certificate, and paying a reinstatement fee.

### ***Oregon's Open Container Law***

If you drink any alcohol or have an open bottle or other container with any alcohol in it while you are in a motor vehicle on any road or highway, you are breaking the law.

Any open bottles, cans, or other containers of beer, wine, or other alcohol can be stored in the trunk or in the living quarters of a camper or motor home.

### ***Drugs and Inhalants***

A court can order suspension of your driving privileges for six months for certain drug offenses. No hardship permit will be allowed during the suspension. The drug offense does **not** have to involve a motor vehicle.

One in four persons reportedly takes some kind of drug every day, primarily over-the-counter legal drugs. Almost any drug can affect your driving skills. Most drugs act on the central nervous system. Stimulants speed it up. Depressants slow it down. Hallucinogens affect your vision.

Alcohol is the most common drug that drivers use to become intoxicated. "Intoxicants", however, also include a wide range of inhalants and drugs, both legal and illegal. You may be arrested for driving under the influence of these drugs and inhalants, the same as for alcohol.

Here are some facts you need to know:

- Most drugs you take for headaches, colds, hay fever, allergies, or to calm your nerves can make you drowsy. This can affect your ability to control a vehicle.
- Studies have shown that people who use marijuana make more mistakes and are arrested for traffic violations more often than non-user drivers do. Marijuana poses risks for drivers because it affects reaction times, coordination, tracking behavior, alertness, and other basic skills needed for driving. Marijuana also makes it hard for your eyes to adjust to headlight glare.
- Crash data on driving and marijuana use is inconclusive so far. Marijuana and alcohol, however, are frequently found in combination in the blood of drivers, especially young drivers, who are killed in traffic crashes.

- Pep pills, speed, and diet pills may make you more alert—briefly. Later, they can make you nervous, dizzy, and unable to concentrate. They also can affect your vision.
- An inhalant is paint, glue, cement, or **any** other vapor-releasing substance that can cause intoxication.
- Drugs or inhalants may have unexpected effects, if taken together or with alcohol.

If the label on a drug warns that it may cause drowsiness or dizziness, you should not drive after taking it.

### ***Losing the Privilege to Apply for a Provisional License***

If you are between the ages of 13 and not yet 21, possession, use or abuse of alcohol will affect your driving privileges. In addition, if you are between the ages of 13 and 17, possession, manufacture, delivery, or use of any controlled substance will also affect your driving privileges. The judge must order DMV to deny you a license or instruction permit if you are convicted of being illegally involved with alcohol or drugs. You do not have to be driving or in a motor vehicle for this law to apply.

A first order will be for one year or until you reach 17, whichever is longer. A second order will be for one year or until you reach 18, whichever is longer. If you are between the ages of 18 and 21, the order will be for one year.

The judge may review the order and withdraw it after 90 days on the first offense. If the offense involved controlled substances, the judge cannot withdraw the order until after six months. If the order is for your second or subsequent offense, the judge cannot withdraw the order until after one year.

### ***Leave the Driving to Someone Else***

If you drive after you have been drinking or used drugs, it may get you into all kinds of trouble with police, courts, and DMV. The best way to avoid this trouble is to let someone who does not drink or does not use drugs do the driving. Or, you may decide to use public transportation to get home. A cab ride home is a lot cheaper than a fine and all the other costs involved in an arrest or conviction for DUII, including suspension of your driving privileges. **One DUII conviction can cost you thousands of dollars.**

### ***Step In to Protect Your Friends***

People who have had too much to drink are unable to make responsible decisions. It is up to others to step in and keep them from taking too great a risk. No one wants to do this—it's uncomfortable, embarrassing,

and you are rarely thanked for your efforts at the time. However, the alternatives are often worse.

There are several ways to keep friends from hurting themselves or someone else:

- **Arrange a safe ride**—Provide alternative ways for them to get home.
- **Keep them there**—Use any excuse to keep them from driving. Serve them food and coffee to pass the time. Explain your concerns about their risks of being arrested or hurt, or hurting someone else.
- **Keep the vehicle there**—If you can't control the driver, control the vehicle. Take the keys or temporarily disable the vehicle (e.g., loosen or switch the plug leads enough so they won't fire).

It helps to enlist support from others when you decide to step in. The more people on your side, the easier it is to be firm and the harder it is for the rider to resist. While you may not be thanked at the time, you never have to say, "If only I had..."

## Traffic Crashes and Insurance Requirements

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### *Accidents*

The common term for crashes, wrecks, and collisions is "accidents". However, the word "accident" is misleading. Almost every crash is preventable and is not truly an accident. It is not an accident if you crash because you were distracted, tired, or not driving defensively; it is a preventable crash.

Because true accidents are rare, the term "accident" is not frequently used in this manual. In its place, you usually will find the words "crash", "collision", or "wreck".

### *Your Responsibilities*

If you have a traffic crash or collision, you **must**:

- **Stop at once.** If there are no injuries and vehicles can be safely moved, they should be moved out of travel lanes as soon as possible. Information can be exchanged away from the actual crash scene. Needlessly blocking or endangering other traffic can result in secondary crashes.
- **Render aid.** Give any reasonable aid to injured persons. Remember, injured people should never be moved carelessly. In many cases, they should not be moved at all until it is possible to get an ambulance or someone trained in first aid to the scene. If a driver is involved in

an accident in which a person is killed or rendered unconscious, the driver is required to remain at the scene of the crash until a police officer arrives. Failure to do so is classified and punishable as a “hit and run”. “Hit and run” is a serious traffic crime. Conviction will mean your driving privileges will be revoked or suspended.

- **Exchange information.** Give to the other driver, passengers in the vehicle, or any injured pedestrian, your name, address, driver license number, license plate number of your vehicle, and your insurance information.
- Oregon law requires you to file an accident report with DMV if:
  - Damage to the vehicle you were driving is over \$1,500;
  - Damage to property other than a vehicle is over \$1,500;
  - Damage to any vehicle is greater than \$1,500 and any vehicle is towed from the scene of the crash;
  - There is injury or death resulting from the crash; or,
  - You are the owner of a vehicle involved in a reportable crash and the driver fails to report the crash.

You must make the report within **72 hours**. If you do not report a crash when required to do so, **your driving privileges will be suspended**.

### ***Removing your Vehicle from a Highway Crash Site***

If you are involved in a crash or collision on a highway and you have no injury, your vehicle is operable, and it is safe to drive your vehicle to the shoulder of the highway or a designated parking area, **move your vehicle from the crash site**. This helps to minimize the obstruction of traffic and you will avoid being cited for failure to remove your motor vehicle.

### ***Reporting Crashes***

You can get report forms at your local DMV office, on the DMV Web site, a police department, or sheriff’s office. You must submit the report **to DMV only**.

**A police report does not replace your requirement to file a personal report with DMV.** You must fill out a personal report and return it to DMV, even if a police officer files a report. Be as accurate as you can. Give as much information as you can about where, when, **and** how the crash happened.

If you are the driver or owner of a vehicle in a crash that must be reported, your report must show the name of your liability insurance company and the policy number. Insurance coverage reported is checked by DMV with the insurance company shown on the report.

If you did not have liability insurance at the time of the crash, your driving privileges will be suspended for one year. After that, you will be under the future financial responsibility law for three years (*see page 100*). A suspension and insurance filing is required, even if you were not at fault in the crash. The same applies if DMV receives the information from an insurance company or agent. Insurance companies and agents must tell DMV about any crash where they have reason to believe a driver is uninsured. This law applies even if the damage is \$1,500 or less.

### ***Unattended Vehicles***

If you hit a vehicle no one is in, try to find the owner. If you cannot find the owner, leave a note that identifies you as the person who hit the unattended vehicle and how to contact you. By law, you are required to write your name and address on the note, **and** a brief description of what happened. If you damage property other than a motor vehicle, you also must try to find the owner or someone in charge to report the damage.

### ***Mandatory Insurance***

Each year, uninsured drivers throughout the nation cause millions of dollars in damage. This includes not only damage to the vehicles involved, but also medical care needed for those people who are injured or killed in those crashes.

Oregon's mandatory insurance law requires every driver to insure their vehicles. The minimum liability *Bodily Injury and Property Damage* in Oregon is:

- \$25,000 per person; \$50,000 per accident for bodily injury to others; and \$10,000 per accident for damage to the property of others.

State law also requires every motor vehicle liability policy to provide:

- *Personal Injury Protection*

\$15,000 per person for reasonable and necessary expenses one year after an accident, for medical, dental, and other services needed due to the accident.

- *Uninsured Motorist Coverage*

\$25,000 per person; \$50,000 per accident for bodily injury.

Driving without liability insurance could result in fines, suspension of your driving privileges, and in some areas your vehicle could be towed. If your vehicle is towed, you are subject to the towing and storage fees.

Whenever you purchase another vehicle, contact your insurance company before you drive it anywhere.

## **Ensuring Compliance**

Insurance companies are required by law to report to DMV when they issue a new policy or when a person or the insurer cancels or fails to renew a policy. This information is accessible to law enforcement officers, who use it as reasonable grounds to stop a vehicle. However, you still need to carry insurance information in your vehicle as proof that you have insurance.

Other insurance information you should know:

- You must provide the name of your insurance company and policy number each time you register a motor vehicle. You also must certify that you will comply with Oregon's motor vehicle insurance requirements as long as a vehicle is registered in your name.
- Every two to three weeks, DMV randomly selects vehicles and asks the owner(s) to provide the name of their insurance company and policy number. DMV verifies the information you provide with the insurance company you list. If you do not provide this information, or if the insurance company you listed denies coverage, DMV will suspend your driving privileges.
- DMV must notify the district attorney in the county where you live if DMV thinks you falsely certified insurance coverage. You may then be charged with a Class A misdemeanor. If you are found guilty, you may be fined, given a one-year jail sentence, or both.
- Oregon's ***future financial responsibility law*** means you will have to maintain proof of future financial responsibility with DMV for three years. If you cancel it or let it lapse by not paying the premium, your driving privileges will be suspended. There are several reasons why you may be subject to this law, such as when you do not have the insurance you claim to have on your vehicle registration or in the random sample survey, if you do not have insurance at the time of an accident, or if a judge convicts you of driving uninsured or DUII.

An insurance company can make a financial responsibility filing for you, if it is needed. The only way your insurance company may do this is to send an SR22 insurance certificate to DMV. Your insurance must cover all vehicles operated by you and/or registered in your name.

If your driving privileges have been suspended because you did not file proof of future financial responsibility, and you later get insurance, be sure you do not drive until the proof of future financial responsibility is on file with DMV and your driving privileges have been reinstated.

## ***Court Judgments***

If you damage property or cause injury to someone in a crash on public or private property, the property owner or injured person may go to court to get a judgment against you. If the judgment is granted by the court and you do not satisfy it within 60 days, and the court notifies DMV the judgment has not been satisfied, your driving privileges will be suspended. You must satisfy the judgment through the court.

## **Traffic Violations and License Suspensions** ---

### ***Violations***

If you get a ticket for violating nearly any rule of the road or driver licensing, registration, or vehicle equipment laws, the offense is called a traffic violation. You will be required to pay a fine if you plead guilty, no contest, or if a judge convicts you.

### ***Traffic Crimes***

Some traffic offenses are so serious that, if you break these laws, you are charged with traffic crimes. Punishment for a crime includes a jail sentence.

You do not need to be driving on a public highway to be charged with these offenses. You also may be charged in areas or premises open to the general public for use of motor vehicles, such as parking lots on either public or private property. You also may be charged with these offenses in some off-road areas.

Examples of traffic crimes are: driving while under the influence of intoxicants, failure to perform the duties of a driver involved in an accident, reckless driving, fleeing or trying to elude a police officer, and some driving while suspended or revoked charges.

### ***Failure to Appear / Failure to Comply***

A judge may order DMV to suspend your driving privileges if you fail to appear in court or fail to pay a traffic fine in Oregon or another jurisdiction. Your driving privilege will be suspended until the judge notifies DMV that the case has been cleared with the court or until five-years has elapsed from the date the suspension begins, whichever comes first.

### ***Suspensions and Revocations***

If a judge suspends or revokes your driving privileges, you may get a suspension or revocation order in court. The court will confiscate your driver license and return it to DMV.

If DMV suspends or revokes your driving privileges, DMV will send a notice to the address on your driving record. If you have a license in your possession, you must return it to a DMV office when the suspension begins.

After the suspension or revocation begins, you may not drive **any** motor vehicle on highways or premises open to the public.

### ***Reinstatement Fees***

There is a \$75 reinstatement fee to restore driving privileges that have been revoked or suspended. You also must pay a reinstatement fee for suspended identification cards. The reinstatement fee is separate from any DMV licensing or replacement fee.

### ***Use of False Identification by Minors***

A minor who uses a false driver license, permit, or other identification to buy alcohol may be required to perform community service, and could receive up to a one-year suspension of driving privileges. These penalties are in addition to any other penalties required by the law.

### ***Withdrawal of Parental Consent for a License or Permit***

The parent or legal guardian who signed the driver license application for an applicant under the age of 18 may withdraw consent for the child to have a permit or license at any time, until the child turns 18. DMV will cancel the child's license or permit until a parent or legal guardian again consents to the child having a permit or license, or until the child reaches 18 years of age, becomes emancipated, or is married.

### ***Suspensions for Students***

Your driving privileges may be suspended if you are at least 15 years of age and are expelled from school for bringing a weapon to school. Your driving privileges may also be suspended if you are suspended twice or expelled twice for:

- Assaulting or menacing a school employee or student;
- Willful damage or injury to school property;
- Use of threats, intimidation, harassment, or coercion against a school employee or student; or,
- Possessing, using, delivering, or being under the influence of any controlled substance on school property or at a school sponsored activity, function, or event.

A first offense will result in a suspension of up to one year. A second offense will result in suspension until your twenty-first birthday.

In addition, if you are at least 15 years old and under 18 years old, you cannot have unexcused absences for more than 10 consecutive school days or 15 school days total during a single semester. The superintendent or school board may ask DMV to suspend your driving privileges.

### ***Suspension for Tobacco Offenses***

It is illegal to purchase or attempt to purchase tobacco products if you are under 18 years old. DMV will suspend your driving privileges if you are under 18 years old and you are convicted of a second offense for purchasing or attempting to purchase tobacco products.

### ***Failure to Pay Child Support***

If you are either three months or \$2,500 behind in child support payments, the Division of Child Support or a district attorney may ask DMV to suspend your driving privileges. This type of suspension remains in effect until the Division of Child Support or a district attorney authorizes DMV to reinstate your driving privileges and you have paid a reinstatement fee.

### ***Driver Improvement Program***

The purpose of the Driver Improvement Program is to promote traffic safety—especially the reduction of traffic convictions and accidents. The program is designed for both provisional (under 18 years old) and adult drivers.

**Here's what happens to drivers *under 18*** – If you have two convictions, or two accidents, or a combination of one conviction and one accident, DMV will restrict your driving privileges for 90 days to drive only for work purposes with no passengers except your parent, stepparent, or guardian. These restrictions are in addition to the restrictions placed on a driver in the first year of a provisional license.

If you get **another** conviction or accident, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for six months, even if you turn 18 years of age during the suspension period.

**Here's what happens to drivers *over 18*** – If you have three convictions, or three accidents, or a combination that totals three, in an 18-month period, DMV will restrict your driving privileges for 30 days. The restriction will not allow you to drive between 12 midnight and 5 a.m., unless driving for work purposes.

If you have four convictions, or four accidents, or a combination that totals four, in a 24-month period, DMV will suspend your driving privileges for 30 days.

You can view listings of the traffic violations that count towards the Driver Improvement Program from DMV's Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com) (see Driver and ID info).

### ***Habitual Traffic Offenders***

Laws were established to revoke the driving privileges of individuals who are convicted of offenses that are either so severe or in such quantity that the individuals are determined to be "habitual offenders".

DMV will revoke your driving privileges for five years if you are convicted of three or more traffic crimes or 20 or more traffic violations within a five year period.

You can view the traffic crimes and a listing of the traffic violations that lead to revocation of your driving privileges as a habitual offender from DMV's Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

### ***Re-evaluations***

DMV may require any driver to come in for a re-evaluation if there is reason to question the driver's ability to drive safely. DMV will suspend the person's driving privilege if the person does not take the test(s) or fails to pass the test(s).

### ***Hardship and Probationary Permits***

For some suspensions of driving privileges, you may be able to get a hardship permit, or a probationary permit, if DMV revokes your driving privilege as a habitual traffic offender. Hardship and probationary permits allow you to drive to and from work, on the job, to seek employment, or to take part in an alcohol or drug rehabilitation program. There may be a waiting period that must pass before you are eligible for a hardship or probationary permit.

No hardship or probationary permit is available if your driving privileges are revoked for a traffic crime or to operate commercial motor vehicles.

### ***Driver Records***

Your driving record includes reports of convictions for traffic violations and crimes, as well as suspensions, revocations, and cancellations of your driving privileges and other notations, that may relate to these entries. It also notes crashes in which you were the driver, regardless of whether you were at fault. This record is very important to you. It helps decide how much your insurance will cost. It may also keep you from getting or keeping a job; it probably will help a judge decide how much to fine you for violating a traffic law; and, in some cases, it may cause you to have your driving privileges suspended, revoked, or restricted.

## Section 7

# Vehicle Equipment

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An unsafe vehicle—one that is not in good condition—is a road hazard. That is why the law says vehicles must not be driven or moved in an unsafe condition. If you think there is a problem with your vehicle, you should have it fixed right away. If the problem causes or contributes to a collision, and a death occurs, a grand jury or district attorney may charge you with criminally negligent homicide.

Some kinds of safety equipment, such as lights, are needed on all types of motor vehicles. Other equipment is prohibited, or its use is limited to certain types of vehicles, such as police vehicles and fire trucks. Trucks, buses, and combinations of vehicles must have more equipment than passenger cars. Motorcycles have different equipment requirements. Information in this section focuses on vehicles commonly operated as Class C-defined vehicles.

All required equipment must be in good working condition. A police officer who thinks a vehicle is unsafe may stop the vehicle to check the vehicle's condition and equipment.

## Mandatory Vehicle Equipment

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The following equipment is required for the legal operation of your vehicle on Oregon roadways **and** to take a drive test at a DMV office.

### Safety Belts

If your vehicle was manufactured with safety belts, you must maintain them in good working condition for all appropriate seating positions (See *page 66* for additional information on requirements and proper use of seat belts).



### Headlights

Two white headlights are required, at least one on each side of the front of the vehicle. Your headlights must be aimed correctly. Some new headlights may make it hard for oncoming drivers to see if they are not aimed correctly. Your vehicle owner's manual may contain information on how to correctly aim headlights. All headlights must meet federal safety standards.

### Taillights

A vehicle must have two red taillights, one on each side of the vehicle, visible from 500 feet to the rear.

## ***Registration Plate Lights***

Every vehicle must have a white rear license plate light. This light must make the rear registration plate clearly legible from a distance of 50 feet to the rear of the vehicle.

## ***Rear Reflectors***

Two red reflectors are required on the rear of every vehicle. One reflector must be on each side of the vehicle, either as part of the taillights or separate.

## ***Brake Lights***

Two red brake lights are required. They must be mounted on the rear of the vehicle and as far apart as possible. The brake lights must be visible from 500 feet in normal daylight.

## ***Turn Signals***

Every vehicle must have right and left turn signal lights on the front and rear. Turn signal lights on the front may be amber or white. On the rear, these signals may be red, amber, or yellow. The signals must be visible from 500 feet.

## ***Trailer Lighting***

All trailers must have taillights, brake lights, turn signals, rear red reflectors, and a license plate light. Larger trailers require more lighting equipment and reflectors depending upon their size. For more information on Federal lighting standards, visit:

<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cars/rules/standards/conspicuity/trlpstr.html>

## ***Registration Plates***

If only one registration plate is required for your vehicle, such as a motorcycle or trailer, you must display this plate on the rear of the vehicle.

If your vehicle is required to have two registration plates, such as a passenger car or truck, a plate must be displayed on both the front and rear of the vehicle.

## ***Brakes***

Every vehicle must have two separate brake systems in good working order. Each method must be capable of applying brakes. Brakes on any vehicle must be adequate to control movement of, and to stop and hold, the vehicle or the combination of vehicles.

## ***Tires***

For good traction, vehicle tires should have a minimum of 2/32 inch of tread. It is against the law to drive a vehicle on any tire that has body ply or belt material exposed or any tire that shows tread or sidewall separation.

## ***Exhaust System***

A vehicle must have an exhaust system that is in good working order and in constant operation. It must meet noise standards set by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. Your vehicle must not be driven if it causes more noise than is reasonably needed for good operation. If your vehicle produces too much smoke, you are breaking the law.

## ***Windows and Windshield***

You should keep the windshield and other windows clean (both inside and outside) so you have good visibility. Bright sun or headlights on dirty windows make it harder to see. If you smoke in the vehicle, a film will build up on the windows, so you need to clean the inside of the windows frequently.

No sign, poster, one-way glass, adhesive film, or glaze application is allowed on the windshield, windows forward of or on either side of the driver's seat, or on the rear windows, if the material prohibits or impairs the ability to see into or out of the vehicle.

Aftermarket tinting material may be applied to the side and rear windows if: the material has 50% or more light transmittance; 13% or less light reflectance; and 35% or more total light transmittance of the window, with the tinting material applied.

The installer must provide a certificate showing the name and address of the person installing the material and stating the tinting material meets the requirements of the law. Keep this certificate in the vehicle to show to any police officer that inquires about the tint.

Remember, most of what you do in driving is a reaction to what you see, so you should be sure you have a clear view out of the vehicle.

## ***Windshield Wipers***

Good working wipers are required. They are important to driving safely.

## ***Rearview Mirror***

The driver must be able to see at least 200 feet behind the vehicle at all times, and with all loads, on a straight, level road. If a trailer or load obstructs the rear view, then outside rearview mirrors on each side of the motor vehicle are required. These mirrors need to be extended beyond the width of the trailer or load so the driver can see 200 feet behind the vehicle.

## ***Horns and Sirens***

A vehicle must have a working horn you can hear from 200 feet away. Sirens or similar devices may be used only on authorized emergency vehicles.

## ***Fenders and Mudguards***

Most motor vehicles and trailers must have adequate fenders or mudguards behind all wheels. The exact requirements vary with the type of vehicle.

## ***Minimum Clearance***

No part of a passenger vehicle can have less clearance from the road than the lowest part of the rim of any wheel.

## ***Special Vehicle Lighting***

Some vehicles are exempt from most lighting requirements that others must meet. For example, antique vehicles have only the types of lights required when they were manufactured. Vehicles not required to have most types of lights must use at least one white light on the front and have at least one red light on the rear of the vehicle if you use the vehicles on streets and highways from sunset to sunrise, or when visibility is limited. This lighting requirement includes animal-drawn vehicles, farm tractors, and road machinery.

## **Optional Vehicle Equipment**

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### ***Spotlight***

A motor vehicle may be equipped with one spotlight. When used, it must be aimed toward the right side of the road when meeting other vehicles. The beam must strike the road not more than 100 feet ahead of the vehicle on which it is mounted.

### ***Cowl or Fender Lights***

A vehicle may have two non-glaring cowl or fender lights. These may be either an amber or white light.

### ***Backup Lights***

A vehicle may be equipped with white backup lights. Backup lights can only be on when your vehicle is in reverse.

### ***Fog Lights***

A vehicle may be equipped with two fog lights. The lights may be white or amber. The beam must strike the road not more than 75 feet ahead of the vehicle on which it is mounted. These lights are illegal to have in operation at times when you are required to dim your headlights.

## **Restricted Lights and Equipment**

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### ***Light and Registration Plate Covers***

Do not place covers over your registration plates or on any required vehicle light. Covers on vehicle lights, including brake lights and turn signals, are not legal if the cover is on while you are required to use the

lights. Registration plate covers, clear or tinted, are not legal in Oregon if it makes the plate unreadable or if it alters the appearance of the plate.

### ***Red Lights***

Red lights or flashing red lights that can be seen from the front are to be used only on fire department vehicles, police vehicles, ambulances, school buses, worker transportation buses, church buses, vehicles escorting funeral processions, tow vehicles, and vehicles used by ODOT Motor Carrier Transportation Division.

### ***Amber Lights***

Amber lights may be used on police vehicles, fire department emergency response vehicles, school buses, vehicles used in road construction or repair, mail delivery vehicles, pilot vehicles, commercial vehicles, public utility vehicles, worker transportation buses, and church buses as a pre-warning of a stop ahead.

Tow vehicles connecting to or servicing a disabled vehicle may use either red or amber warning lights.

### ***Blue Lights***

Blue lights, steady or flashing, are permitted only on police vehicles or fire department emergency response vehicles.

### ***Green Lights***

Fire vehicles operating as the command post in emergency incidents may use a flashing or revolving green light. Green lights may be used on the rear-mounted tricolor lighting system.

### ***Check Before You Buy***

Some after market (custom) accessories and lighting equipment may not be legal in Oregon. Be sure to check equipment for DOT or other markings showing the equipment is legal. If the after market accessory or equipment has the following marking or information on the product, they are most likely **not** legal for street use in Oregon:

- For Off-Road Use Only
- For Show Use Only
- Check local laws and ordinances for use
- DOT or SAE Certified (neither DOT nor SAE certify products, however, manufacturers can certify that their products meet these federal standards).

For more information on vehicle standards and equipment, such as trailer equipment, tinted windows, mud flaps, and other information, visit the Transportation Safety Division – ODOT Web site at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/Veh\\_Equipment.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS/Veh_Equipment.shtml)

# Sample Test Questions

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You may also take the online driver license Practice Knowledge Tests on the DMV Web site at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

**1. What type of vehicles can you drive with a Class C driver license?**

- A. Passenger vehicles, motor homes, fire trucks, and pickups towing small trailers.
- B. Heavy trucks only.
- C. Passenger vehicles only.
- D. Buses only.

(Page 2)

**2. What penalties may you face by providing false information on your application to DMV for a license or permit?**

- A. A one-year jail sentence.
- B. A maximum fine of \$6250.
- C. A one-year suspension of your driving privileges.
- D. All of the above.

(Page 5)

**3. What is the single most common cause of traffic crashes?**

- A. New drivers.
- B. Human error.
- C. Bad weather.
- D. Bad roads.

(Page 51)

**4. How many seconds ahead do expert drivers scan the entire driving scene?**

- A. 15 seconds ahead.
- B. 2 seconds ahead.
- C. 12 seconds ahead.
- D. 5 seconds ahead.

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**5. When do you have to stop for pedestrians?**

- A. At all times.
- B. Only when crossing streets where there are clearly marked crosswalks.
- C. In a crosswalk, whether or not the crosswalk is marked by painted lines.
- D. Not at any time.

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- 6. What does it mean when you see amber lights flashing near the top of a school bus?**
- A. The bus just finished loading or unloading children.
  - B. The bus is stopping to load or unload children. You should get ready to stop.
  - C. You must remain stopped until the amber lights stop flashing.
  - D. The bus is loading or unloading children, you may proceed slowly.
- (Page 85)*
- 7. Oregon's "Implied Consent Law" means that by driving a motor vehicle you have implied you will?**
- A. Maintain liability insurance as long as you drive.
  - B. Take a breath, blood, or urine test if arrested for driving under the influence.
  - C. Post bail or appear in court if arrested for a traffic violation.
  - D. Keep your vehicle's equipment in safe operating condition.
- (Page 93)*
- 8. If you are convicted of a first DUII, how long will your driving privileges be suspended?**
- A. 6 months.
  - B. 3 months.
  - C. One year.
  - D. Two years.
- (Page 94)*
- 9. What will happen if you crash and you do not have liability insurance?**
- A. You will be fined \$50.
  - B. Your driving privileges will be revoked for five years.
  - C. Your driving privileges will be suspended for one year.
  - D. You will be fined \$100.
- (Page 99)*
- 10. Oregon's law about safety belts means?**
- A. All passengers and drivers must wear safety belts.
  - B. All drivers and passengers under 16 must wear safety belts.
  - C. Nobody is required to wear safety belts.
  - D. Only passengers must wear safety belts.
- (Page 66)*

# **Important Contact Information**

## **DMV Customer Assistance—**

### **Information, Drive Test Appointments**

Outside Portland Area.....	(503) 945-5000
Portland Area.....	(503) 299-9999
DMV Web site .....	<i>www.OregonDMV.com</i>

TDD (for hearing and speech impaired) ..... (503) 945-5001

Adopt-A-Highway ..... (503) 986-3031

Alternate Transportation – Ride Share..... (888) 323-POOL

Child Safety Seat Information ..... (800) 772-1315

### **Road Information (*including construction*)**

Inside Oregon .....	511 or
(800) 977- ODOT	
Outside Oregon.....	(503) 588-2941

TEAM OREGON Motorcycle Safety Program ..... (800) 545-9944

Tourist Information (Local, or Out-of-U.S.) ..... (503) 378-8850  
(U.S. Only) ..... (800) 547-7842

U.S. Department of Transportation ..... (888) 327-4236 or  
..... (888) DASH2DOT

*(Vehicle recall information and reporting of safety problem  
on a vehicle, child safety systems and vehicle equipment)*

Vital Records – Oregon (*Birth Certificate Information*) .....(971) 673-1190

Report Crime, Fish & Wildlife Offenses

and Crashes to Oregon State Police ..... (800) 452-7888

Report Drunk Drivers (Inside City Limits).....911

Report Drunk Drivers (Outside City Limits).....911 or  
.....(800) 24DRUNK (800-243-7865)



*For information about the Oregon Donor Program  
call 1 (800) 452-1369. (Portland area call (503) 494-7888.)*

## Tips for wise car buyers

1. When possible buy from an Oregon certified vehicle dealer. A list of certified dealers is on DMV web site.
2. Have the seller show proof the miles on the vehicle are correct. A dealer should have a signed odometer statement from the previous owner.
3. Ask the seller to show you the vehicle title, if they have it. If there are any "brands" or other notations on the title, check with DMV to find out what they mean.
4. When purchasing from a private party, make sure the vehicle is registered to the person you are buying from and that they can produce the vehicle title.
5. Have your mechanic or body shop check the vehicle for previous damage or possible mechanical problems.
6. Get all promises in writing on the purchase agreement.

When you buy a vehicle from an Oregon certified dealer and feel you have a complaint, you can file your complaint using a "Request for Investigation" form which is available at your local DMV office or on the internet at [www.OregonDMV.com](http://www.OregonDMV.com).

You may wish to check the vehicle's history with an on-line service.

**We do not investigate issues involving sales practices or mechanical problems. For those issues, please contact the Department of Justice.**

## Vehicle Registration

Vehicles used on Oregon's roads and highways must be titled and registered in Oregon, unless they are properly titled and registered in the owner's home state.

Ensure your vehicle is properly registered. If the loaded weight of your vehicle exceeds 10,000 pounds, not including a camper, or if the vehicle tows a non-recreational trailer that has a loaded weight exceeding 8,000 pounds, you may need to register the vehicle as something other than a standard passenger vehicle, such as a truck, farm vehicle or commercial vehicle. Contact DMV for additional information.

# Drive Safely and Courteously



## It Could Save a Life!

This message is brought to you by your local DMV office



Oregon Department of Transportation

Form #735-37 (11-08) ©

STK #300011