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Traffic and driving

A Traffic problems

Traffic has been severely disrupted¹ on the M82 motorway, owing to an accident. Currently all traffic is being diverted² through the village of Oxtoe. Motorists are advised to avoid the area as heavy traffic is expected on many side roads for the rest of the day.



Traffic is very dense³ on all routes into the city at the moment because of this evening's football cup final. Lengthy delays are expected around the National Stadium area. The heavy traffic is not expected to die down⁴ till around 10pm. So walk or cycle to the match if you want to avoid getting stuck in traffic.

If you're thinking of using the N27 this morning, don't! Traffic is currently tailing back⁵ over ten kilometres, following an accident near junction 14. Police say traffic is building up on all approach roads and is not expected to ease off⁶ during the next three hours.

- ¹ prevented from continuing as usual
- ² made to take a different route
- ³ very close together
- ⁴ gradually become less
- ⁵ forming a long queue
- ⁶ gradually become less (similar to die down)

B Learning to drive

Hi Nina,
I'm learning to drive at last! All the jobs I want require a valid¹ driving licence, so I've no choice. I'm hoping to take my driving test in about four months' time, but the last lesson didn't go too well. I'm finding it really hard to change gear. Getting into reverse is particularly hard and I can sense my instructor flinching whenever I grind the gears². Perhaps I should have opted to learn on an automatic car! Paul

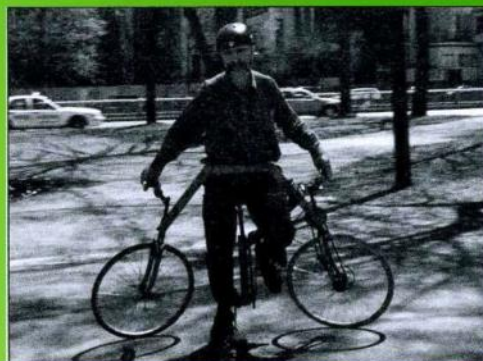
Hi Paul,
Much better to learn on a manual car – then you can drive anything after your test. Driving tests are awful. I remember mine when I came to the UK and needed a current UK licence. The examiner told me to bear left³ at a junction and I went right! I'd never driven a right-hand-drive car before. I had to remember to keep to the left instead of to the right. It was a nightmare. Nina

- ¹ currently in use or acceptable
- ² change gear roughly and noisily
- ³ change direction slightly towards the left

C A new kind of transport

A bike that travels sideways

It has been hailed as the first major development in bicycle design for 150 years. The Sideways Bike has a steerable wheel with a set of handlebars at either end. The cyclist sits sideways and operates a wheel with each hand. However, some people don't like the fact that the rider doesn't face the oncoming traffic. Its key advantage is that it's more manoeuvrable than a conventional bike. It's very like snowboarding because you're moving sideways. That affords you tremendous grace, though it will never win you the Tour de France!



Exercises

25.1 Choose the correct collocation.

- 1 After the accident the traffic *failed / tailed / held* back for more than five miles.
- 2 The traffic didn't die *back / up / down* until long after the rock concert.
- 3 Traffic is being *disrupted / dispensed / diverted* onto the B2534 because of an accident on the M73 motorway.
- 4 The traffic starts *rising up / building up / massing up* in the city centre around 4pm.
- 5 When the lorry broke down, traffic was severely *disrupted / diverted / disturbed* for several hours.
- 6 When you come into the town, *hold / maintain / keep* to the left, then *bear / drive / hold* left at the first roundabout.

25.2 Replace the underlined part of each sentence using a collocation from the opposite page with the opposite meaning.

- 1 There was light traffic on the motorway at the time of the accident. (give two answers)
- 2 The traffic built up after the match was over. (give two answers)
- 3 I have an outdated driving licence. (give two answers)
- 4 Brief delays are expected on all routes because of the start of the holiday weekend.
- 5 Bear right at the next junction.
- 6 I much prefer to drive an automatic car.
- 7 I don't know how he manages to change gear smoothly like that.
- 8 His invention was said to be a minor development in aeronautics.

25.3 Complete each sentence using a word from the opposite page.

- 1 I always find it difficult in this car to get into when I need, for example, to back into a parking space.
- 2 The handlebars on my bike got twisted in the accident – I'm going to have to get a new
- 3 Being able to get through rush hour traffic quickly is the key of travelling by bike.
- 4 Electric cars were hailed as a major in automotive engineering.
- 5 In an automatic car you don't need to gear manually.
- 6 The policeman pointed out that my licence was no longer – it expired last week.
- 7 I my driving test three times before I eventually passed it.
- 8 The traffic is always particularly on the main road coming into town in the rush hour.

25.4 Rewrite the underlined part of each sentence using the word in brackets in the appropriate form.

- 1 I was in a car with the steering-wheel on the right. (HAND)
- 2 Crabs are one of the few creatures that do not move in a forwards direction. (SIDE)
- 3 I took the examination to become a qualified driver in 1999. (TEST)
- 4 The jet engine was soon understood to be a major development in aircraft design. (HAIL)
- 5 The best thing about manual cars is that there is less that can go wrong with them. (KEY)
- 6 People were being delayed at the airport for hours because of the fog. (LENGTHY)
- 7 There were major traffic problems on the ring road this morning. (SEVERE)
- 8 I got held up by a traffic jam on my way to the airport. (STUCK)
- 9 Be careful and always be aware of the traffic that is coming towards you. (COME)