



Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities



Home Office

# Welcome Workshops

Cultural Orientation Programme

## Road Safety and Driving in the UK

With thanks to the Department for Transport

## Today's session will cover...

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# 1: Road safety for children and responsibility of the parent



# Road safety for children

## On the pavement:

- **Hold your child's hand** - don't let them run ahead
- Look out for and encourage your child to be **aware of hidden entrances or driveways** crossing the pavement
- Make sure your child **walks on the side of the pavement away from the traffic**
- Children are generally not ready to cross roads on their own until they are at **least eight years old** - and many will not be ready even then.



# Road safety for children

## Crossing the road:

- **Set a good example by choosing a safe place to cross** and explaining what you are doing
- Tell your child that it's **safest to cross at a pedestrian crossing**
- Explain that they **should not try to cross a road between parked cars**; drivers won't be able to see them and the cars might start moving
- Explain that you have to stop at the kerb, then look both ways and listen for traffic before crossing
- When it's safe to cross, walk straight across the road and keep looking and listening out for traffic
- Make sure that anyone looking after your child follows the same road safety rules that you do



# Road safety for children

## Pedestrian crossings

- You might feel that pedestrian crossings are safe, but they can still be dangerous for children if they don't take care.

Remember to:

- explain that pedestrians have to **wait on the pavement** until all the **traffic coming from both directions has stopped** - only then is it safe to cross
- explain that if there is an **island in the middle of the road**, your child should treat each half of the crossing as a **separate crossing**
- tell your child it's important to keep **looking and listening while crossing**, in case a driver has not seen them
- warn your child to watch for **cyclists or motorcyclists** who might not have seen them
- make sure your child can be seen easily - **bright or fluorescent clothes** are best during the day and **reflective materials** work well at night
- always use a **zebra or light-controlled crossing**, or a **school crossing** patrol if there is one



## Responsibility of the parent

- Teach your children about road safety on the pavement, crossing the road, and at pedestrian crossings
- Always stay with your child, and hold their hand, while they cross the road
- Do not let children go on busy roads on their own
- Teach your children about the importance of road safety and the differences in road safety in the UK and Afghanistan



## 2: Existing driving licence holders and applying for a driving licence

You must do several things before you drive a car or ride a motorcycle, including getting a driving licence, registering, insuring and taxing your vehicle, and getting an Ministry of Transport (MOT) test.

# Existing driving licence holders

## Minimum Requirements

You may use your national driving licence to drive in the UK but you must have reached the minimum age to drive a vehicle in the United Kingdom. You must be:

- 17 years or over to ride a motorcycle with a cylinder capacity not exceeding 125cc, or power not exceeding 11kW
- 19 years or over to ride a motorcycle not exceeding 35kW, and
- 21 years or older to ride a motorcycle unlimited in size/power
- 17 years old or more to drive a car
- A provisional (learner's) driving licence issued abroad is not valid for use in the United Kingdom.

## Motor Insurance

You must have motor insurance to drive a vehicle on UK roads, whether a UK registered vehicle or a foreign imported vehicle. This requires Third Party insurance which is the legal minimum. This ensures that your insurance will cover you if you have an accident-causing damage or injury to any other person, vehicle, animal or property. However, it does not cover any other costs including the repair of your own vehicle.

Further information: <https://www.gov.uk/vehicle-insurance> for Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

## Existing driving licence holders

- Individuals who hold a valid driving licence or International Driving Permit (IDP) issued in Afghanistan may drive small vehicles provided entitlement is shown on their licence, for a period **of 12 months from the date they become resident in Great Britain (GB)**.
- **Once the 12-months has expired**, drivers in England, Scotland and Wales **must apply to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for a provisional licence and pass the theory and practical driving tests** if they wish to continue driving in the UK.
- In the event that an individual is stopped by the Police, they must be able to produce their foreign driving licence when requested to avoid prosecution for driving without a licence.
- For Northern Ireland: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/exchanging-your-foreign-driving-licence>

### 3: Applying for a Driving Licence

In the United Kingdom, a driving licence is the official document which authorises its holder to operate motor vehicles on highways and other public roads.

If you are new to driving or you have been a resident for more than 12 months, you must get your provisional licence, book a theory test, take practical lessons and book your practical test



## Applying for a Driving Licence

- To apply for your provisional driving licence you must:
  - be at least 15 years and 9 months old
  - be able to read a number plate from 20 metres away
  - have legally lived in the UK for at least 185 days in total in the past 12 months
- Individuals may apply for a provisional driving licence by using a D1 form available to collect at local **Post Offices** or ordered from the DVLA: <https://www.gov.uk/dvlaforms> sent with supporting documentation including proof of identity and proof of lawful residency.
- Individuals can also **apply online** for provisional license: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-first-provisional-driving-licence>
- If you are in Northern Ireland, drivers must instead apply to the Driver and Vehicle Agency at: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/driver-licensing/apply-northern-ireland-driving-licence>
- To apply for a GB driving licence, applicants must have been granted indefinite **leave to remain in the UK** by the Home Office. Applicants will also need to provide **evidence of their identity** before a driving licence can be issued.
- Further information for Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

## Applying for a Driving License

- Acceptable forms of evidence for your identify include:
  - A UK issued Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)
  - A non-UK Passport with appropriate VISA/Vignette valid for more than 185 days
  - A View and Prove Share Code
- A full list of documents that the DVLA will accept, to confirm the applicant's identity and residency status in the UK can be found at this web page: <https://www.gov.uk/id-for-driving-licence>
- If the document(s) you provide is not in English, you will need to provide a translation issued in the UK and signed by an official translator belonging to the Institute of Linguists or the Institute of Translation & Interpreting
- Passports containing a visa/residency stamp must show indefinite leave to remain. Applicants in possession of a BRP card must send them with the application to: *The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Swansea, SA99 1BT*
- For Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

## 4: Learning to Drive

- You can take driving lessons anywhere in the UK
- You must have a provisional driving licence when you are learning to drive or ride
- You must be supervised when you are learning to drive a car. This can be by a driving instructor or someone else who meets the rules, for example family or friends

## Learning to Drive

- After you receive of your provisional UK driving licence you will need to take lessons with an approved professional driving instructor or school. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-driving-schools-and-lessons>, or in Northern Ireland at this website: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/choosing-driving-instructor>
- Once your driving instructor thinks that you are ready to undertake the driving test, you should book to sit a theory test at an approved test centre, which you can do online at: <https://www.gov.uk/book-theory-test>
- Once you pass the theory test you can book the practical driving test, also online: <https://www.gov.uk/book-driving-test>
- After passing your driving test you can apply for your full UK driving licence: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-your-full-driving-licence>
- If you are learning to ride a moped or motorcycle, the process is different. After obtaining your provisional licence you must complete Compulsory Basic Training (CBT), following which you must undertake riding lessons and complete a theory and practical test.

More information: <https://www.gov.uk/learn-to-drive-a-car>



Further information is found here: <https://www.gov.uk/ride-motorcycle-moped>  
For Northern Ireland: [www.nidirect.gov.uk](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk)

# Any questions about road safety or driving in the UK?

## 5: Annex

**Includes:**

- General Driving Guidance
- Road Limits
- Stopping Distances
- Road Signs
- Traffic Lights
- Speed Limit
- Motorways and Breakdowns
- Highway Code
- Further Links

## General Driving Guidance

- Make sure the vehicle you drive is **roadworthy, insured, and taxed** and that you hold the correct category of driving licence for the vehicle before you drive on UK roads
- Remember that in the UK we drive on the **LEFT**  side of the road.
- Observe the **speed limit** of the road you are driving on. Look for the speed limit sign but if you are not sure but there are streetlights, it is probably a **30mph speed limit. Do not exceed the limit.**
- Do not drive if you feel **tired or unwell**. If you become tired or unwell while **driving, stop and take a break or seek assistance.**

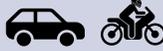
## General Driving Guidance



- You must give consideration of **vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders while driving.**
- **Give priority to cyclists and pedestrians** who are crossing or waiting to cross the road you are turning into. If you are stopped at a junction, allow them to cross.
- When overtaking cyclists make sure you leave a gap of at least **1.5 meters between you and the cyclist as you pass**
- When passing horses either being ridden or led along a road, slow right down, allow a wide gap of at least 2 meters as you pass, and do not sound your horn or rev your engine
- Avoid **distractions** whilst you are driving, **switch off mobile phones and always concentrate**
- **Do not overload** your vehicle either with passengers or goods. Its an offence to do so and will affect the handling and braking efficiency of the vehicle
- In the rain or reduced **visibility** always drive with dipped headlights on and in fog, use the vehicle's fog lights.

# Speed Limits

This table shows the maximum legal speeds for the different types of road in the UK. Often a lower speed is a safer choice, especially in bad weather.

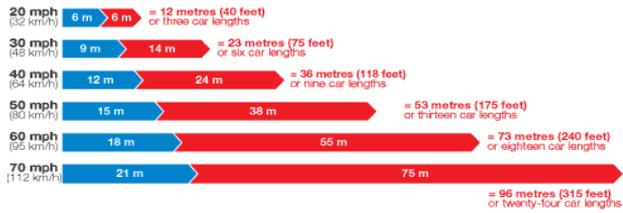
Vehicle type	* Built up areas	† Single Carriageway	† Dual Carriageway	† Motorways	
 Cars and motorcycles (including car derived vans up to 2 tonnes maximum laden weight)	48 30	96 60	112 70	112 70	Km/h mph
 Cars towing caravans or trailers (including car derived vans and motorcycles)	48 30	80 50	96 60	96 60	Km/h mph

- \* The 48 km/h (30 mph) limit applies to all traffic on all roads with street lights unless signs show otherwise.
- † The National Speed Limit Sign may be displayed and for the majority of vehicles it means 60mph on single carriageway roads and 70mph on dual carriageway roads unless otherwise indicated. Some vehicles are restricted to lower speed limits indicated in the table above.

# Stopping Distances

Allow at least a **two-second gap** between you and the vehicle in front. The gap should be at least doubled on wet roads and increased still further on icy roads.

## Typical Stopping Distances



The distances shown are a general guide. The distance will depend on your attention (thinking distance), the road surface, the weather conditions and the condition of your vehicle at the time.

Thinking Distance    Braking Distance

Average car length = 4 metres (13 feet)

# Road Signs

There are three main types, circles, triangles and rectangles and are similar to those found across Europe, but there are a few exceptions.

## Signs that order

Circular signs are orders:

**Red = You MUST NOT**

**Blue = You MUST**



You must stop



You must give way

A red circle means you MUST NOT, such as:-



40 in a red circle means you must not exceed 40 miles per hour



No overtaking



No stopping on main carriageway

# Road Signs

A blue circle means that you **MUST DO** as the sign shows, such as:-

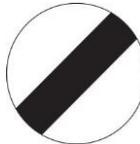


Vehicles passing the sign must keep to the left of the sign



Vehicles must proceed in the direction indicated by the arrow

There are exceptions, such as:-



National speed limit applies (see Speed limits table)

You can find information on all road signs used in the UK at this website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/know-your-traffic-signs>

# Road Signs

## Signs that warn

These are mostly triangular, but there are some exceptions. Sometimes a plate underneath the sign gives more information e.g.:-



Other danger - the plate indicates the nature of the danger e.g. icy roads, a hidden dip in the road



Distance to stop line ahead

An exception :-



Level crossing without barrier

# Road Signs

## Directional signs

These signs are mostly rectangular, coloured blue on motorways, green on primary routes, black and white on non primary and local routes :



Motorway sign showing distance to next junction and junction number



Primary route sign showing destination, road number and restriction



Non primary and/or local route sign

# Road Signs

## Information signs

These are rectangular, and are mainly blue or brown, however there are exceptions:-



Advance warning of restriction or prohibition ahead

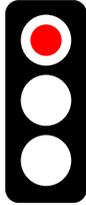


Tourist information point

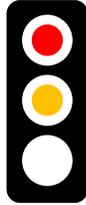


This sign informs you there is no stopping on the road at two set times of the day

# Traffic Lights



RED means 'Stop'. Wait behind the stop line on the carriageway



RED and AMBER also means 'Stop'. Do not pass through or start until GREEN shows.



AMBER means 'Stop' at the stop line. You may go on only if the AMBER appears after you have crossed the stop line or are so close to it that to pull up might cause a collision.



GREEN means you may go on if the way is clear. Take special care if you intend to turn left or right and give way to pedestrians who are crossing.

# Speed limit enforcement

## In the UK speed limits can be enforced by the use of road side speed cameras

Exceeding the speed limit by too much is illegal.

If you are caught by a speed camera or police officer, any of the following could happen:

- You may be given a verbal warning. This may happen if an officer stops you on the road.
- You may be asked to attend a speed-awareness course, which you will be expected to pay for. This may not be an option on repeat offences.
- You may be prosecuted (including paying a fine or punishment)

Speed limits are not a target. Please drive within the speed limit and appropriately for the prevailing weather conditions and visibility.



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# Motorways

## Planning and preparation

Before setting out on any journey, especially before long motorway trips, it is essential that you carry out a few basic checks on your vehicle. When did you last have it serviced by a professional mechanic, will it be due while you are away? If this is the case have the vehicle serviced before you leave.

## Risk prevention

➤ Check all the tyres, including the spare. Are they safe to use and have plenty of tread? Are they inflated correctly and do not have any visible damage such as bulges or cuts? Also check that you have a useable jack and wheel brace.

- Ensure that all of the vehicle's fluid levels are full e.g. engine oil, windscreen washer, cooling system, power steering, etc. and also that you have enough fuel for your journey.
- Check that all your lights and indicators work correctly and it's always a good idea to carry spare bulbs.



# Motorways and breakdowns

- If you have **trouble with your vehicle**, try to leave the motorway safely either at a service area or the next junction.
- If you **cannot avoid stopping on the motorway pull in as far to the left as possible on the hard** shoulder if available (emergencies only) and try to stop alongside an emergency telephone (situated at approximately 2km (1 mile) intervals), leaving your front wheels turned to the left.
- Use this phone to report your problem rather than your mobile phone as this can help **identify** your location. If you are on a motorway where every lane has moving traffic and there is no hard shoulder, try to reach an emergency area which are painted orange and are marked with blue signs featuring an orange SOS telephone symbol.
- If you cannot reach an emergency phone, use a mobile phone to call National Highways on 0300 123 5000, then a breakdown provider for help.
- Ensure that you have your hazard warning lights on. Ensure that everyone leaves the vehicle by the left hand doors and stays safely away from the road and moving traffic, ideally behind a safety barrier. Extra care will be needed if animals or children are present.
- Further information can be found here: <https://nationalhighways.co.uk/road-safety/breakdowns/>
- Further info can be found at NI direct link for NI motorways and breakdowns

# To be aware of while driving

## Seat belts and child seats

- Seat belts save lives. You must wear it both in the front and rear of the vehicle.
- Children under 12 years and under 135cms in height must use an appropriate **child restraint for their weight and age**. When they reach **135cms**, they may use an **adult belt**.
- It is dangerous and against the law to use a rear facing baby seat in the front seat of a car fitted with an active frontal airbag.



## Mobile phones

- It is **against the law** to use a hand held mobile phone when driving or riding a motorbike. You can be prosecuted.
- Wait until you have stopped in a **safe place** to retrieve any messages and make phone calls.
- The same rules apply to sending text messages or using other functions, 'switch off before you drive off... just drive'.



# To be aware of while driving

## Alcohol

- Drinking and driving kills... around **1 in 6 UK road deaths are caused by drivers who are over the legal limit.**
- We are all different and our bodies react in different ways to alcohol.
- If you know you are going to drive, it is strongly advised that you do not drink any alcohol at all, and be aware that if you do drink alcohol, you may still be unfit to drive the next morning.



## Drugs

- Drug driving carries the same penalties as drink driving.
- You can also be unfit to drive from taking prescription drugs as the law treats this the same as driving with illegal drugs in your system.
- So take advice from a Doctor or Pharmacist if you intend to drive while taking medicinal drugs, some are very powerful.
- The Police have equipment to test for the presence of drugs in the body.

Further information on UK driving laws can be found here:

<https://www.think.gov.uk/road-safety-laws/>

## Police Enforcement Powers

- UK residents without a current UK address and non-UK residents who commit traffic offences can be dealt with by means of an on the spot fine or by means of a Graduated Fixed Penalty Notice.
- Offences such as speeding, failing to wear a seatbelt or using a mobile phone will be subject to a fine of £60 which must be paid to the officer at the roadside in Pounds Sterling or by credit card.
- Multiple / serious offences could be subject to a fine of £300, £600, £900 or even arrest. If the driver is unable to make immediate payment then the vehicle could be immobilised until payment is made.



# The Highway Code



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All essential information on using roads safely whether as a pedestrian, cyclist, horse rider, motorcyclist, or driving a vehicle of any type, can be found in the Highway Code which applies in across Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales).

A digital version can be found on the UK Government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>

Northern Ireland has its own version of the Highway Code which can be found here:

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/highway-code>

You can also buy a copy from most bookshops and online: <https://www.safedrivingforlife.info/shop/official-dvsa-highway-code/>

Make sure you read and understand the Highway code, it is your responsibility to do so.

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