COLORADO
Department of Revenue
Division of Motor Vehicles

COLORADO

# DRIVER HANDBOOK

What every motorist needs to know about driving in the Centennial State



COLORADO
Department of Revenue
Division of Motor Vehicles

DMV anywhere.
Yes, anywhere.

# With DMV online services, you can skip the trip and get back to living life!

- Request a Driver Record
- Pay Citation (Traffic ticket)
- View/Submit a Medical Certificate (DOT)
- Begin Application for a New Driver License or ID
- Renew a Driver License or ID (if eligible)
- Pay a Reinstatement Fee
- Upload Reinstatement Documents
- Schedule an Appointment
- Manage International Registration Plan
- Change Driver License or ID Address
- Add/Change Renewal Reminders
- Update Emergency Contacts
- Check Eligibility to Renew by Mail
- Upgrade Permit to a Driver License
- Extend an Expiration Date, if Eligible
- Submit a Subpoena
- Reschedule a Hearing

**Visit *myDMV.Colorado.gov***
**and Save Time!**

# Table of Contents


GETTING A DRIVER LICENSE....1
MINOR DRIVERS....2
HOW YOU CAN LOSE YOUR LICENSE....2
SEAT BELT LAWS....3
DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE....3
BEFORE YOU DRIVE....5
BASIC DRIVING....6
TRAFFIC CONTROLS....7
TRAFFIC SIGNALS....7
TRAFFIC SIGNS....7
PAVEMENT MARKINGS....9
LANE CONTROLS....9
RIGHT-OF-WAY....11
SPEED....12
TURNING....12
PARKING....13
FREEWAY DRIVING....14
CHANGING LANES....15
PASSING....15
HILLS AND CURVES....16
NIGHT DRIVING....16
WEATHER....16
SNOW AND ICE....16
SEASONAL DRIVING....17
MOUNTAIN DRIVING....17
RURAL DRIVING....17
CONSTRUCTION ZONES....17
SAFE DRIVING TIPS....18
SHARING THE ROAD....19
RAILROAD CROSSING....21
LIGHT RAIL....21
BICYCLISTS....22
MOTORCYCLES....23
PEDESTRIANS....24
CARELESS/RECKLESS DRIVING....24
TIPS TO AVOID BECOMING AN AGGRESSIVE DRIVER....25
EMERGENCIES....25
VEHICLE EMERGENCIES....26
CRASH TIPS....26

## GETTING A DRIVER LICENSE

Anyone who operates a motor vehicle, motor-driven cycle or moped on Colorado's public streets and highways must be 16 or older and have a valid driver license. If you are a resident of Colorado (for example if you own or operate a business in Colorado or have resided within the state continuously for 90 days or have gainful employment within this state), you must get a Colorado driver license within 30 days of becoming a resident unless you are serving on active duty in the U.S. military, the dependent of an active duty military service member or residing in Colorado for the principal purpose of furthering your education. If you have a change to your address or name you must notify the Division of Motor Vehicles within 30 days. Identification requirements for U.S. citizens and permanent residents can be found at *DMV.Colorado.gov/documents*.

**Driving Knowledge Tests (written tests):** This test covers driving knowledge and safety. The test questions cover the contents of this handbook including road signs, driving under the influence, driving rules, safety rules and legal items. Practice quizzes are available online and through the myColorado app.

**Note:** Written tests are not given within 30 minutes of an office's scheduled closing time. Please plan your visit with this in mind.

**Name & Address Changes**
You have 30 days to notify the DMV of a name or address change.

**Instruction permits:** After passing a written test, you are eligible for an instruction permit. An instruction permit allows limited driving privileges for people learning to drive. When you are driving with an instruction permit, you must have a person who is 21 years or older who has a valid Colorado license in the front passenger seat.

**Driving Skills Test (drive test):** This test covers practical driving skills and abilities. This is the most important part of the licensing process because it allows you to show that you can drive safely. You cannot schedule a drive test at a State driver license office at this time. However, this could change and you are encouraged to visit the DMV website to see if we are currently offering drive tests. Some county-operated offices offer drive tests, please refer to your county website for updated information on testing. Drive tests are primarily being given by Certified Commercial Driving Schools. A link to the current list of schools conducting drive tests can be found *here* (or at the website listed below). More information can also be found on the DMV website *DMV.Colorado.gov/drivereducation*.

When you take the drive test at a state-approved, certified commercial driving school, the school may provide a vehicle for you to drive or it may require you to provide a vehicle that has current insurance and registration. Regardless of who provides the vehicle, the examiner will check the vehicle for safety including brake lights, turn signals, seat belts, the windshield and tires. Examiners will also check whether the vehicle's doors and windows open from inside the automobile. For safety reasons, only the driver and the examiner are allowed in the vehicle during the test. Interpreters/Translators, family, friends or pets are not allowed. Remove weapons from your vehicle before taking the drive test. Turn off any electronic devices in your vehicle, including the radio and your cell phone. Remove objects from the dashboard and the rearview mirror. If you fail the drive test, you must wait until the next business day before retaking the test.

The drive test measures your skill and knowledge of legal and safe driving practices. You will not be asked to do anything illegal. You may ask the examiner questions before the test begins. After that, any unnecessary talking will only interfere with the test. You will be scored during the entire test.

The drive test will be administered using guidelines from the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). The skills measured will be an assessment of all three of the following categories:

**Perceptual:** The ability to perceive characteristics of the many highway traffic environments in a way that permits safe vehicle operation, e.g. judging gaps or identifying hazards.

**Motor:** The ability to manipulate controls in order to maneuver the vehicle, e.g. ability to rotate the steering wheel in relation to the motion of the vehicle and intended path when turning a corner.

**Attentional:** The ability to focus and shift attention, e.g. to monitor traffic ahead and the side in a merge.

Your drive test score will be based upon how well you perform the following maneuvers:

- Left and right turns
- Stopping at intersections
- Through intersections
- Lane changes in traffic
- General driving behavior
- Merging into and leaving traffic

**Specific maneuvers have grading factors that are associated with the performance requirements. These are:**

**Lane selection:** Enter/exit traffic from the proper lane, approach intersections in the proper lane, end the maneuver in the proper lane.

**Lane management:** Remain entirely within the turning lane, keep both hands on the wheel. Use approved method of steering control (hand-over-hand or push-pull-slide). Choose the correct portion of the lane for making your turn (when turning right, always turn from the right-most portion of your lane or when turning left, always turn

from the left-most portion of your lane). After completing the turn, ensure the vehicle is centered in the appropriate lane. Start/finish the turn in the proper lane, do not drive over lane markings or over curbs.

**Turn Signals:** Turn signal is turned on continuously 100 feet before turning or changing lanes in urban areas and 200 feet before turning or changing lanes on 4-lane highways. Turn signal is cancelled within 3 seconds of turning or changing lanes.

**Speed control:** Smooth deceleration does not hold up traffic, adjust speed to react to traffic or conditions, maintain steady speed during lane change, approach intersection at a speed that allows the turn to be made without stopping or braking during the turn.

**Stopping:** Come to a complete stop, no forward motion of the vehicle. Do not encroach over the stop line and, crosswalk; keep the vehicle's wheels pointed straight ahead while stopped, do not turn the wheels until beginning to make the turn and maintain an adequate distance between vehicles (If you can see the rear wheels touching the ground of the vehicle in front of you, you are at an adequate distance).

**Acceleration:** Accelerates smoothly without jerking, doesn't lug the engine, coast, impede traffic, clash gears or stall the vehicle.

**Searching:** Observes the traffic environment, looks over shoulder before changing lanes, uses mirrors, scans for traffic when approaching an intersection, looks left, right, left before entering intersections, looks behind after each turn. During the test, use of safety-critical technologies such as back-up cameras, and blind spot and lane departure warnings are allowed but do not take the place of physical searching skills.

**General driving behavior:** Steering, braking, acceleration, searching, lane usage, and obeying all traffic laws, signs and signals.

## MINOR DRIVERS

**Minor instruction permits:** Requirements to obtain and restrictions on an instruction permit vary by age.

**Affidavit of Liability and Guardianship:** If you are under 18, your application must be accompanied by an Affidavit of Liability (DR2460) signed and verified by your parent, stepparent, grandparent with power of attorney, legal guardian, spouse older than 18, or any other responsible adult willing to accept legal liability.

The affidavit must be signed in front of the driver license office employee or a notary public. Whoever signs the affidavit agrees to take legal responsibility for your actions as a driver. If the signer decides to no longer accept responsibility for your driving, that person may withdraw their signature and your permit/license will be canceled. Minors in foster care are exempt from this requirement, provided certain conditions are met, additional information can be found at *DMV.Colorado.gov/foster-children-driver-licenses*.

**Application for driver license:** Colorado law requires minors to have an instruction permit for 12 months before applying for a driver license and to submit a completed and signed driving log showing 50 hours of driving experience (10 of which must have been at night). If younger than 16 and 6 months, you must also complete 6 hours of behind-the-wheel training with an approved driver education instructor. If there is not an approved driving school offering at least 20 hours of behind-the-wheel training per week within 30 miles of your residence, 12 additional hours of driving with your parent/guardian/alternate permit supervisor may be substituted for the 6 hours of behind the wheel training with a driver education instructor. If you live more than 30 miles from the nearest commercial driving school you must bring a printed map of the route from your home to the driving school when you go to the driver license office.

**Passenger restrictions:** While you are younger than 18, you have passenger restrictions based on how long you have had your driver license. For the first six months after your license is issued, you cannot have any passengers under 21, unless a parent or another licensed adult driver is in the vehicle. After 6 months, you may have one passenger younger than 21. Siblings and passengers with medical emergencies are exceptions. After 1 year, you may carry as many passengers as there are seat belts in the vehicle.

**Curfew:** For your first year as a licensed driver, driving between midnight and 5 a.m. is not allowed unless you are accompanied by an instructor, parent or legal guardian. Exceptions include driving to and from school or work (with a signed statement from school or work), medical emergencies and emancipated minors.

## HOW YOU CAN LOSE YOUR LICENSE

Having a driver license is a privilege. Protect that privilege by driving with care and consideration for others. Some examples of ways your driving privilege may be suspended, revoked or canceled are:

- Meet or exceed the minimum point accumulation for suspension.
- Are convicted of driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Refuse to be tested for alcohol or drug content.
- Are convicted of failing to report a crash or leaving the scene of a crash without stopping, exchanging information and rendering aid.
- Fail to report a crash to the Division of Motor Vehicles according to the Financial Responsibility Law.
- Give false information on your driver license application.
- Fail to settle a judgment against you as a result of a crash while operating a vehicle.
- Lend your license to someone else or misuse it.
- Fail to appear for a re-examination requested by the Division of Motor Vehicles.
- Are convicted of vehicular homicide as a result of a motor vehicle crash.

- Fail to pay ordered child support.
- Fail to provide valid evidence of insurance when requested by a law enforcement officer. Drivers are required to have proof of insurance while operating a vehicle.
- Are convicted of purchasing or possessing alcohol while you are younger than 21.

**SEAT BELT LAWS**

Colorado law requires a fastened seat belt to be worn in all motor vehicles with a factory-equipped seat belt system while in operation on public roadways by:

- The driver
- Front seat passengers
- Children under 16

The only exceptions are:

- Emergency personnel
- Passenger buses and school buses
- Farm equipment
- The driver of delivery vans while on the job
- Anyone carrying a written medical statement from a physician stating they are not physically or psychologically required to wear seat belts

The Colorado child passenger protection law requires children to be properly fastened into an appropriate child restraint system. If a parent is not in the motor vehicle, it is the driver's responsibility to ensure that each child is properly fastened into one of the following:

- **Children less than 2 years old and weighing less than 40 pounds:** must be properly secured in the rear seat of the vehicle in a rear-facing child restraint system.
- **Children less than 2 years old and weighing 40 pounds or more:** must be properly secured in a rear-facing **OR** forward-facing child restraint system.
- **Children 2 years of age, but less than 4 years of age and weighing at least 20 pounds:** must be properly secured in a rear-facing or forward-facing child restraint system in the rear seat of a vehicle if one is available.
- **Children 4 years of age or older, but less than 9 years of age and weighing at least 40 pounds:** must be properly secured in a child restraint system or booster seat in the rear seat of a vehicle, if a rear seat is available.
- **Children between 9 and 18 years old:** must be properly restrained in a seat belt or child restraint system according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Passengers in motor vehicles driven by anyone younger than 18 must be properly restrained or wear seat belts. The number of passengers in vehicles driven by persons younger than 18 must not exceed the number of seat belts.

**DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

Driving while impaired by alcohol, other drugs, or drug combinations is one of the greatest factors in roadway crashes and fatalities. Every year, tens of thousands of people are killed by impaired drivers. But the facts and statistics do not tell the whole story. Behind the numbers are thousands of lives cut short, permanent or disabling injuries, and families devastated because someone drove while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

When you drive while impaired, safe driving is not possible and you are more likely to take risks such as speeding or turning abruptly. Alcohol is a depressant drug that reduces brain function, which impairs thinking, reasoning, and muscle coordination. Depressants may slow reflexes and reaction times while reducing your ability to make the decisions necessary to safely operate a motor vehicle. As the amount of drugs in your body increases, your judgment worsens and skills decrease.

It is unlawful for someone to either possess an open container of alcohol or possess an open container of marijuana while in the passenger area of a motor vehicle that is on a public road.

A driver may be convicted of either DWAI (Driving While Ability is Impaired) or DUI (Driving Under the Influence) depending on the level of the driver's mental or physical impairment. DWAI means the driver is impaired to the slightest degree. DUI means the driver is substantially incapable of safe driving. Impaired driving convictions are not proven only by the driver's Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC), but by the impaired driving behavior and a totality of circumstance. This is usually documented by the driver's operation of the vehicle and/or observed impairment during the law enforcement officer's contact with the driver and the driver's performance on Standardized Field Sobriety Tests. A driver may also be convicted of DUI per se if the driver's BAC is greater than 0.08%. Licenses may be revoked if the driver refuses a toxicological test, set forth in Colorado Statute, or based on a BAC over .08 or over .02 if the driver is under 21, or over .04 for a CDL driver.

Alcohol in the body affects people differently, even if they have consumed the same amount of alcohol over the same time period. A person's BAC depends on several factors:

- The amount of alcohol consumed
- Body weight
- The period of time in which the alcohol was consumed
- The amount of time since the last drink was consumed
- The person's sex



It does not make a difference whether a drink is beer, wine or liquor. Standard servings of each contain about the same amount of alcohol. A standard drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits, all of which contain the same amount of alcohol. Once alcohol is in the bloodstream, only the passage of time will make person sober as the body eliminates it through normal bodily processes. On average, a person's BAC will drop by 0.015% per hour.




**Table 1**

| Conviction | Blood Alcohol Content | Points Toward Suspension | Fine | Jail | Public Service |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st Driving While Ability Impaired (DWAI) | 0.05% | 8 | $200-$500 | 2-180 days | 24-48 hours |
| 1st Driving Under the Influence (DUI) | 0.08% | Revocation: 9 months | $600-$1,000 | 5-365 days | 48-96 hours |
| 2nd DWAI or DUI | 0.08% | Revocation: 1 year | $600- $1,500 | 10-365 days | 48-120 hours |
| 3rd or subsequent DWAI or DUI | | Revocation: 2 years | $600- $1,500 | 60-365 days | 48-120 hours |

Table 1: Possible Penalties for Impaired Driving for 21 and Older (for more information on additional fees, education and treatment please visit *https://noduicolorado.org/court/*)

**Driving under the influence while younger than 21:** Any driver younger than 21, convicted of DUI or DWAI, is subject to revocation of their driver license for the first conviction if they fail to complete a court-ordered evaluation or program. A second or third conviction is a mandatory revocation of their license.

Anyone younger than 21 is convicted of buying or possessing alcohol is subject to revocation of their driving privilege even if driving is not a factor.

**Drugs and driving:** Driving while impaired by drugs, including illicit drugs, marijuana, prescription medications and over the counter medications, is illegal and subject to the same penalties as driving while impaired by alcohol. They can have effects similar to alcohol or even worse. The fact that marijuana or other drugs were used for medicinal purposes is not a defense for DUI or DWAI.

Besides alcohol, other drugs can affect a person's ability to safely operate a vehicle. Like alcohol, impairment from these drugs is dose dependent and varies among individuals. Prescription drugs, such as tranquilizers, pain killers and over-the-counter medications for allergies and colds can impair safe driving skills. Drivers must check medication labels for warnings about the medication's effects before driving. If the label is missing or unclear, check with your doctor or pharmacist about any possible side effects.

The National Safety Council advises that the active ingredients in marijuana cause changes in cognitive effects

(knowing, thinking, judging, evaluating and planning) and psychomotor effects (coordination, reaction time, motor skills, and tracking). It is unsafe to operate a vehicle while impaired by marijuana due to the increased risk of death or injury to the operator and the public.

Like with alcohol, the degree of marijuana impairment depends upon the dose consumed, time since consumption, and differences between individuals. The degree and duration of marijuana impairment depends upon the method of consumption. Unlike with alcohol, there is no correlation between levels of Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) in the blood, breath or oral fluid (or saliva sample) and the degree of individual impairment.

There is a permissible inference that a driver was DUI if the driver's blood contained 5 nanograms of THC per milliliter (ng/ml) of blood. There is no THC permissible inference level for DWAI. Most marijuana impaired drivers are convicted based upon behavioral symptoms, as well as blood THC levels.

**Polydrug Impairment:** Polydrug impairment is caused by using two or more drugs simultaneously, including using alcohol, marijuana, prescription medications, over-the-counter medications or any other drugs in any combination. Mixing drugs can increase the substance's effects. Colorado's data shows that polydrug impairment is more common than impairment by any single drug other than alcohol, and also more dangerous.

Illegal drugs such as LSD, methamphetamine and heroin also affect a person's reflexes, judgment and alertness along with their many other dangerous side effects. These drugs can give a false sense of alertness and self confidence or make you drowsy and unable to react to simple situations.

Law enforcement officers are trained to identify, document and testify to the impairment of driving skills, regardless of cause, including medical issues, alcohol, marijuana, prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, illegal drugs or any combination of these. Drivers are routinely convicted of Colorado's impaired driving laws regardless of the drug or drugs causing the impairment and regardless of the level of any drug that may be found in the blood or saliva.

**Express Consent Law (C.R.S. 42-4-1301.1):** Colorado has an express consent law, which means when you operate a motor vehicle in the Centennial State, you agree to take a chemical test to determine the presence of alcohol and/or drugs in your blood.

If you are suspected of driving while impaired or under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, law enforcement officers can require you to take a chemical test of your blood, breath, saliva or urine.

If you refuse to take the test or do not comply with being tested, your driver license will be revoked for one year and you will be required to install an ignition interlock device on any motor vehicle you drive for two years.

An ignition interlock is  is a device that is installed on motor vehicles to prohibits you from operating a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. It requires your breath sample before the engine will start, and you are periodically required to provide breath samples while driving. If the device detects an elevated alcohol concentration level, the vehicle will not start.

If other suspensions or revocations come about from this same incident, they will be added onto the end of the revocation (consecutively).

Because driving under the influence is exceedingly dangerous, penalties for alcohol or drug related violations are very tough and can include jail, fines and suspension of driving privileges.

Colorado law does not allow you to plea bargain out of an alcohol or drug related driving offense. The only sure way to avoid the consequences is not to use alcohol or drugs at all when driving.

**BEFORE YOU DRIVE**

Being a safe driver depends on being able to see clearly, not being overly tired, not driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, being generally healthy, and being mentally and emotionally fit to drive. There are many environmental sights and sounds to be aware of while driving such as weather, time of the day, lighting conditions, honking, sirens, screeching tires, people shouting, etc. Using all of your available senses to assist you with alertness and awareness of one's surroundings can help warn you of danger.

**Vision:** Good vision is a must for safe driving. You drive based on what you see. If you cannot see clearly without corrective lenses, you may have trouble identifying traffic and road conditions, spotting potential hazards, recognizing smaller road users like pedestrians or bicyclists and reacting in a timely manner. It is important to have your eyes checked every year or two by an eye specialist. If you have a corrective lens restriction on your license, you need to wear glasses or contact lenses while driving.

**Hearing:** While your hearing levels can be helpful to alert you to your surroundings, it must be noted the ability to hear (or not) does not guarantee you will hear environmental sounds. Music may be playing, passengers may be talking, and/or the car may be so well-insulated to the outside world that environmental sounds are muted. It is also common for people to experience declines in their hearing levels as they age and/or due to exposure to loud noises. These declines can happen so slowly that a person may not immediately notice an issue. If you suspect that your hearing levels have declined, it is recommended you have your hearing tested by an audiologist. Note — You may not operate a motor vehicle while wearing earphones. The definition of earphones include any device or headset which covers all or a portion of both ears. Earphones do not include hearing aids, cochlear implants, assistive listening devices, speakers or other listening devices that are built into protective headgear or a device that only covers all or a portion of one ear and that is connected to a wireless device.

**Fatigue:** When you are tired, you cannot drive as safely as when you are rested. Your reactions and decision making skills are greatly reduced. Break long driving periods into two-hour segments. If you become drowsy, pull off the road and rest.

**Health:** Many health problems, such as a bad cold, infection or a virus, can affect your driving. Even little problems such as a stiff neck, cough or sore leg can affect your driving. Some conditions, such as epilepsy, diabetes and heart conditions can pose risks that make it unsafe to drive a vehicle. Check with your doctor if you think your health condition could affect your driving.

**Emotions:** Emotions can greatly affect safe driving. You may not drive well if you are overly worried, excited, afraid or angry. Do not give in to road rage.

**Distractions:** Distractions are the leading cause of driver error. A distraction is anything that takes away your attention, even momentarily, from the task of driving. Driving requires your full attention. Before beginning a trip, adjust your seat, mirrors, radio, temperature and secure any loose objects in the car. Be sure everyone in the vehicle, particularly children, are wearing age-appropriate restraint devices. Do not allow yourself to become distracted by your cell phone, conversations with passengers, children or rubbernecking (staring at something of interest). Safely pull over to address distracting or urgent situations.

**Vehicle:** The vehicle you drive impacts your ability to drive safely. Motorists are responsible to ensure the vehicles they drive are safe to operate. A vehicle in poor operating condition is unsafe, costs more to drive and can cause an emergency situation, such as a breakdown or wreck. It can also result in a citation from law enforcement. Follow your vehicle owner's manual for routine maintenance. A few simple checks will prevent trouble on the road and ensure your vehicle complies with Colorado motor vehicle laws:

- **Braking system:** If the brakes do not seem to be working properly, have a mechanic check them immediately.
- **Lights:** Make sure turn signals, brake lights, tail lights and headlights are operating properly.
- **Windshield and wipers:** Get your windshield replaced if the glass is damaged because damaged glass can break easily or obstruct vision. Windshield wipers keep the rain and snow off the windshield. Make sure they are in good operating condition. If the blades have not been working well, replace them. Keep the windshield clean inside and out, and keep your window washer fluid tank full. Clear snow, ice or frost from all windows.
- **Tires:** Worn or bald tires can increase your stopping distance, make turning more difficult, can cause hydroplaning when the road is wet, and increase the chance of having a flat tire. Unbalanced wheels and low tire pressure increase tire wear, reduce fuel economy and make the vehicle harder to steer and stop. If the vehicle bounces, the steering wheel shakes, or the vehicle pulls to one side, have a mechanic check your tires.
- **Steering system:** If the vehicle is hard to turn, have the steering checked by a mechanic.
- **Suspension system:** If the vehicle bounces excessively, keeps bouncing after a bump or after you stop, you may need new shocks or other suspension parts. Have a mechanic check it out.
- **Exhaust system:** Fumes from a leaky exhaust system can cause death in a very short time. Never run the motor in your garage or sit in the car with the motor running without opening a window. Most exhaust problems are easily heard; have them repaired.
- **Engine:** A poorly tuned engine can lose power needed for normal driving and emergencies, may not start, get poor fuel economy, pollute the air, and could stall on you when you are on the road, causing problems for you and other traffic.
- **Horn:** The horn should be checked regularly.
- **Mirrors:** Adjust your rear view mirror and side mirrors before you begin to drive. To adjust the driver's side mirror place your head against the left side window and set the mirror so you can barely see the side of the car in the left side of the mirror. To adjust the passenger's side mirror position your head so that it is centered under the inside rearview mirror or just above the center console. Set the mirror so you can just see the side of the car in the right side of the mirror.
- **Loose objects:** Make sure there are no objects on the rear shelf or back seat that could injure someone during a sudden stop or crash. Ensure there are no objects on the floor that could roll under the brake pedal or accelerator and interfere with your safe driving.
- **Head rests:** They should be adjusted so the head restraint touches the back of your head.

## BASIC DRIVING

**Starting the engine:** How you start your vehicle will depend on its make and model. Check the vehicle owner's manual for how to start the vehicle. No matter your make and model, your right foot should be on the brake before starting the vehicle. Check indicator lights and gauges to be sure your vehicle does not need maintenance.

**Moving the vehicle:** Look for a safe path and check for traffic or pedestrians to the sides and behind. Signal, and if safe, press the accelerator gently with the ball of your foot on the pedal and the heel of your foot on the floor.

**Stopping the vehicle:** Check your mirrors for traffic to the rear of your vehicle. Move your foot from the accelerator to the brake pedal. With steady pressure, press until your vehicle comes to a stop.

**Steering:** The steering wheel is always turned in the direction you want the vehicle to move, whether moving forward or in reverse.

**Hand position:** You have better vehicle control when you place both hands on the outside of the steering wheel, on opposite sides, at the 3 and 9 o'clock positions or the 4 and 8 o'clock positions. Your grip on the steering wheel should be firm but gentle. Use your fingers instead of the palms of your hands and keep your thumbs up along the face of the steering wheel. Never grip the inside of the steering wheel when turning it.

**Backing up:** To safely back up your vehicle, you should:

- Check behind your vehicle before you get in. Children and small objects cannot be seen from the driver's seat.
- Place your foot on the brake and shift to reverse.
- Grasp the steering wheel at the 12 o'clock position with your left hand. Place your right arm on the back of the passenger seat and look directly over your shoulder through the rear window.
- Use your mirrors for backing up but keep in mind these mirrors do not show the area immediately behind your vehicle. If you have a rear view camera, use it in addition to checking over your shoulder and using your mirrors.
- Accelerate gently, smoothly and slowly. Steer slightly in the direction the rear of the vehicle should move. If backing up while turning, make quick checks to the front and sides. Continue looking to the rear until coming to a complete stop.

**Traffic Signals & Road Sign Groups**
Visual representations of traffic signals and road signs are grouped together by relevance on pages 7, 8 and 9.

## TRAFFIC CONTROLS

Traffic controls include traffic signals, traffic signs, and pavement markings. Traffic control also can be provided by law enforcement, highway personnel, or school crossing guards. You must obey directions from these persons.

## TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Traffic signals are lights that tell you when or where to stop and go. Traffic lights are usually at intersections and are (from top to bottom) red, yellow, and green. There are intersections and other locations where there are single green, yellow or red lights. If the traffic signal is not operating or is malfunctioning, treat the intersection as a four way stop.



**Steady red light:** Stop until a green light appears. After stopping and yielding to pedestrians and other traffic, and if not prohibited by a traffic sign, you may turn right while the light is red. Also, you may turn left on a red light if you are turning from a one-way street onto another one-way street, unless prohibited by a sign.



**Steady yellow light:** A red light is about to appear. Stop unless you are already in the intersection.



**Steady green light:** After yielding to any vehicle or pedestrian within the intersection or adjacent crosswalk, you may proceed straight through or turn right or left unless a sign prohibits such turns.



**Red Arrow:** A lighted red arrow means you must stop and may not turn in the direction shown.



**Green arrow:** A lighted green arrow, by itself or along with a red, green or yellow light means you may turn in the direction shown by the arrow. If the green arrow goes off, but the circular green is on, you may still turn after yielding to through vehicles and pedestrians, unless prohibited by a sign or red arrow.



**Yellow arrow:** A lighted red arrow is about to appear. Stop if you are not already in the intersection.



**Flashing yellow arrow:** A flashing yellow arrow means the driver turning left should proceed with caution and must yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. Never rush through a flashing yellow arrow, take the time to check for a clear path through the intersection. The signal will then switch to solid yellow, telling the driver the light is about to turn red and to not enter the intersection if they can stop safely. Finally the signal will turn red, which means the driver must stop.



**Flashing red light:** A flashing red light means the same as a STOP sign. Stop; then go only after yielding to pedestrians and other traffic.



**Flashing yellow light:** A flashing yellow light is a warning of a hazard. Slow down and proceed with caution.

**HAWK signals (High Intensity Activated Crosswalk):** HAWK signals are traffic signals that allow pedestrians to cross the road safely. HAWK signals operate in a yellow red flashing sequence to alert motorists that pedestrians need to cross the road.

## TRAFFIC SIGNS

Traffic signs tell you about traffic rules, hazards, and your current location. They can also give directions and help you to locate services. The shapes and colors of these signs indicate the type of information they provide.

**Regulatory signs:** These signs tell you of laws and regulations that apply at a location. They are black or red on a white background. Failure to obey these signs is a traffic violation.




**Speed limit signs:** These signs show the maximum or minimum speed that is allowed. The maximum limits are for ideal conditions and you must reduce your speed when conditions require it.




**Stop signs:** These signs mean you must come to a complete stop. You must stop at a clearly marked stop line, but if none, before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection, or if none, then at the point nearest the intersecting roadway where the driver has a view of approaching traffic.




**Yield signs:** These signs indicate you must slow or stop to yield to all pedestrians and any vehicle with right of way.

**Do Not Enter/Wrong Way signs:** These signs warn and redirect drivers who are heading the wrong way on streets or freeway ramps. Do not proceed past one of these signs.







**One Way signs:** These signs indicate you may only travel in the direction indicated by the sign's arrow.







**Lane control signs:** These signs give direction and information about where you can turn and often use an arrow symbol. The signs are along the side of the road or hang over the road. Sometimes arrows may be painted on the road.







**Prohibited signs:** These signs indicate you cannot do something, for example, no U-turn or no left turn.





**Warning signs:** These signs are yellow or fluorescent green with black symbols, school zone, curves, slippery surfaces, merging traffic, or pedestrian-dense areas. For instance, a merging traffic sign warns of vehicles entering from a side street.











**Advisory speed signs:** These cautionary signs show the safe speed around curves, corners and off-ramps in ideal conditions.







**Railroad crossings:** These signs show information about railroad crossings and can be a variety of shapes. Never try to beat a train across the tracks. Never start to cross the tracks until there is enough room for your vehicle to clear the tracks on the other side. Do not shift gears when crossing the railroad tracks in case your vehicle stalls.







**Railroad emergency notification system (ENS) Signs:** These blue signs are at every highway-rail grade crossing and provide the public with a telephone number to report problems or emergencies at these railroad locations. Directly below the dispatch number on the ENS sign is a Department of Transportation number that identifies the exact location of the crossing in question.







**Work zone signs:** These signs have an orange background with black letters or symbols. They are used with other traffic control devices or flag persons to help direct traffic safely through work areas and to protect roadway workers.




**Guide signs:** These signs have a green background and provide directional and mileage information to specific destinations.







**Service/recreation signs:** These signs have blue or brown backgrounds. Signs with blue backgrounds provide directions to service facilities. Signs with brown backgrounds indicate recreational, historic or cultural areas.






**Route signs and markers:** The shape of the sign indicates the type of roadway: Interstate, U.S., State or County highway.




**Bicycle and pedestrian crossing signs:** These signs have a yellow background with black symbols. They are used where both bicyclists and pedestrians might be crossing the roadway, such as at an intersection with a shared use path.

**Pass 3 ft min signs:** These signs have a white background with black letters and symbols. Motorists, when passing or overtaking bicyclists, must allow for clearance of 3 feet to avoid sideswiping on all roadways even if a sign is not posted.




**Bicycle may use full lane signs:** These signs have a white background with black letters and symbols. They remind drivers that bicyclists have a right to ride in the center of the lane if they feel their safety is compromised by hazards or poor visibility if they were to ride in the right side of the lane.




**Slow moving vehicle marker:** A reflective orange triangle on the rear of a vehicle means it is designed to travel at speeds slower than 25 miles per hour.





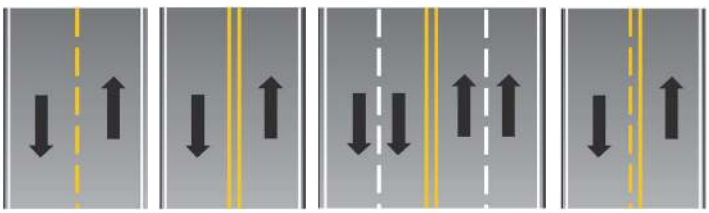
**Disabled parking signs:** These signs mark special parking areas for only those vehicles displaying a disabled parking permit. Disabled parking indicators may also appear on the pavement in designated parking spaces.

Crosshatched sections are for van access only and parking is not allowed at any time. In order to park in a disabled parking space, the person who owns the disabled placard must be entering or exiting the vehicle.




If you park illegally in a designated disabled parking spot without a placard or plate, you could be charged with a misdemeanor, and if convicted, subject to a $350-$5,000 fine, possible jail time, loss of driving privileges and/or your car being impounded. If you park in one of these spaces with someone else's placard or plate, you will be subject to jail time, loss of driving privileges and towing as well as fines double those listed above.

## PAVEMENT MARKINGS



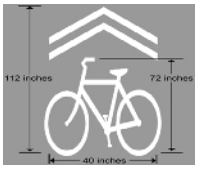
Lines and symbols on the roadway divide lanes, tell when you may pass other vehicles or change lanes, indicate which lanes to use for turns, define pedestrian walkways, and mark where you must stop for traffic signals or signs.

**Yellow lines:** Separate traffic moving in opposite directions.

- **Broken yellow line:** Passing is permitted.
- **Solid yellow lines:** No passing is permitted, unless to pass a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet of space when the oncoming travel lane is clear.
- **Double solid yellow lines:** Neither side can pass, unless to pass a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet of space when the oncoming travel lane is clear.
- **Solid and broken yellow lines:** You may not pass if the solid yellow line is on your side. If the broken yellow line is on your side, you may pass if it is safe to do so. You must return to your lane before the broken lines turn solid. You may cross a solid yellow line for a left turn into an alley, private road or driveway or to pass a bicyclist with a minimum of three feet of space when such movement can be made safely.

**White lines:** Separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction.

- **Broken white line:** You may change lanes if it is safe.
- **Solid white line:** Requires you to stay within the lane and also marks the shoulder of the roadway.
- **Green Paint:** A lane or area on the roadway designated for bicyclists, and increases visibility of bicyclists.
- **Sharrows:** Some streets have shared lane markings or "sharrows" painted on them letting road users know that the lane may be too narrow for drivers and bicyclists to travel side-by-side. Bicyclists may ride in the center of a lane with a sharrow or in any situation where they need to avoid obstacles or increase visibility for their safety.



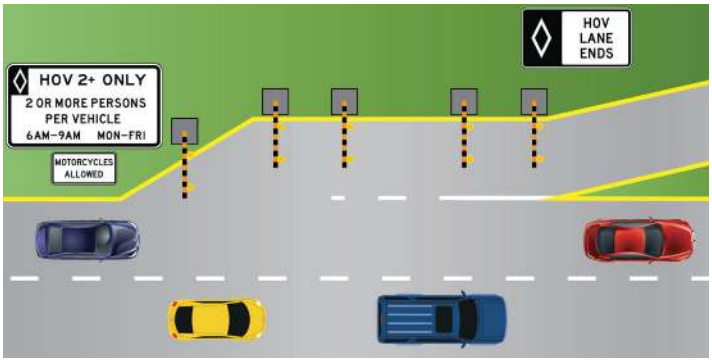

- **Crosswalks:** A crosswalk is a marked or unmarked part of a road where pedestrians have the right-of-way to cross. The driver of a vehicle shall yield the right-of-way by slowing down or stopping, if need be, for pedestrians crossing the roadway within a crosswalk. Whenever you approach a vehicle from the rear that is stopped at a crosswalk, you must not pass and must stop behind the vehicle or behind the crosswalk in the adjacent lane if a multi-lane roadway.




- **Conflict Zones:** Broken lines in a bike or bus lane that alert drivers and bicyclists that they will be crossing each other's path.

## LANE CONTROLS

As a general rule, you must drive your vehicle on the right half of the road. Use only one lane, do not straddle lanes.




On roads without marked lanes, drive just to the right of the center of the road.

**Restricted lanes:** One or more lanes may be restricted for special use. Restricted lanes are marked by signs or pavement markings stating that the lane is restricted for special use. There will be a white diamond painted on the road within the lane, and/or a sign posted at the side of the road which specifies its use. Some examples are transit or bicycle lanes.

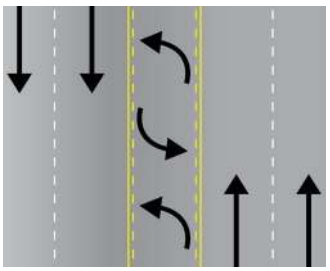
**Bike lanes:** Bike lanes are for the exclusive use of bicyclists and other authorized users. These users have the right-of-way in a bike lane and drivers are prohibited from driving, idling or parking in or otherwise obstructing a bike lane. A bike lane extends through an intersection regardless of whether paint connects the bike lane on either side.

**Transit lanes:** Transit lanes are where a portion of the street, designated by signs and markings, is reserved for the preferential or exclusive use of transit vehicles (for example bus or light rail), sometimes allowing limited use by other vehicles.

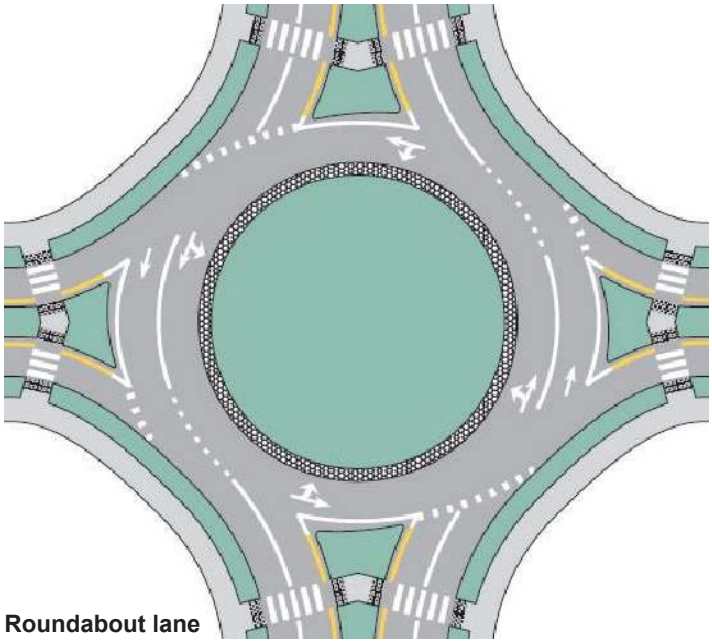
**High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes:** These lanes are identified by a white diamond painted on the roadway. Signs will identify the types of vehicles and the number of occupants required per vehicle to use the lane.




**Two-way left-turn lane** (*Sometimes also referred to as center turn lane*): This lane is for the exclusive use of left turning vehicles and may be used by drivers making a left turn in either direction. It shall not be used for passing or travel by a driver except to make a left turn. You may stop in this lane until it is safe to complete the turn. When a street has a shared center turn lane, you may not turn left from any other lane and you may not drive in this lane.



**Unmarked lane:** When there are no signs or pavement markings to control the use of lanes, drive just to the right of the center of the road. Do not drive on the shoulder of the road. The same rules for passing and turning on marked roads apply with unmarked roads.



**Roundabout lane**

**Roundabout lane:** A roundabout or traffic circle is a circular intersection. Vehicles travel to the right around a center island while entering traffic yields the right-of-way to circulating traffic. When you approach the roundabout, read signs and roadway markers to help you navigate.

Before entering the roundabout, Colorado law requires drivers to yield the right-of-way to the driver of a truck, bus, emergency vehicle or recreational vehicle (large vehicle) when entering, exiting or driving in a roundabout. The law also requires when two drivers of large vehicles enter, exit or drive in a roundabout at the same time, the driver on the right must yield the right-of-way to the driver on the left. As you approach a roundabout, if no large trucks are present, you must yield to approaching traffic on the left. Do not stop completely unless existing traffic prevents you from merging. Check crosswalks for any pedestrians. Yield to any pedestrians waiting to cross. As you enter or leave a roundabout, you must yield to pedestrians or bicyclists in any crosswalk and to any traffic already inside the roundabout. Drive to the right and watch for directional signs and signals. Once you are clear to proceed, merge into the roundabout lane. To alert traffic of your intentions, please use your turn signals when changing lanes and exiting the roundabout.

**Reversible lanes:** Some travel lanes are designed to carry traffic in one direction at certain times and in the opposite direction at other times. These lanes are separated by a barrier or marked by double-broken yellow lines. There may be signs posted by the side of the road or overhead. Sometimes special lights are used.

**Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI):** A diverging diamond interchange crosses traffic to the opposite side of the road across an interchange so vehicles have uninterrupted movements onto the freeway ramps. Left-turn movements, which are a typical challenge with standard

four-way interchanges, are eliminated with a DDI, which allows for fewer conflicts with other vehicles.

**RIGHT-OF-WAY**

Where drivers or pedestrians meet one another, and there are no signs or signals to regulate traffic, there are rules that say who must yield the right-of-way. These rules tell drivers who proceeds first and who must wait in different traffic situations.

The law states who must yield the right-of-way, but it does not give anyone the right-of-way, even if your traffic signal is green. You must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians, bicyclists, and other drivers who are already in an intersection you are approaching.

**Pedestrians:** When driving, you must always yield the right-of-way to pedestrians. Be very watchful for children, seniors and people with disabilities. Do not assume that pedestrians can hear or see you and/or your vehicle or any visual or audible crossing signals as some pedestrians may be deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or blind. Most blind or deaf-blind people are easily recognized by the white cane they carry and/or by their guide dog. Pedestrians have the right-of-way at all intersections and crosswalks. You must come to a complete stop and let the person pass safely.

**Bicycles:** Bicycles on the road are considered vehicles and have many of the same rights and responsibilities as motor vehicles. Drivers must yield the right-of-way to bicyclists in a designated bike lane when merging with or crossing a bike lane to turn. Bicyclists riding on a sidewalk or crosswalk have the same rights and responsibilities as pedestrians.




**Four-way stop:** You must yield the right-of-way to the vehicle that reached the intersection first. When more than one vehicle reaches the intersection at the same time, the vehicle on the left must yield the right-of-way and allow the vehicle on the right to go first. Regardless of who has the right-of-way, you are always responsible for avoiding a crash.

**Uncontrolled intersection:** An uncontrolled intersection is an intersection that does not have control devices such as stop signs or traffic lights. When more than one vehicle reaches an uncontrolled intersection at the same time, the vehicle on the left must yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right and allow the vehicle on the right to go first.

**Turning left:** Before proceeding through a left turn, always be sure to look for and yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk and other smaller oncoming vehicles such as bicyclists and motorcyclists and take time to properly judge their speed and distance. You must yield to all oncoming traffic, unless you have a green arrow or arrived first at a four-way stop.

**Changing lanes and passing:** You must yield the right-of-way to vehicles already occupying the lane you wish to enter or use for passing. Do not change lanes if another vehicle must slow down for you.

**Merging:** You must yield to all vehicles on the roadway you are merging with. Do not merge if another vehicle must slow down for you.

**Reversing:** You must yield the right-of-way to all vehicles close enough to be a hazard.

**Narrow mountain road:** When vehicles meet on a steep, narrow road that is not wide enough for two vehicles, the vehicle going downhill must yield the right-of-way by backing up to a wider place or by stopping, then leaving enough space for the vehicle going uphill, except where it is more practicable for the vehicle going uphill to return to a wider space or turnout.

**Emergency vehicles:** You must yield the right-of-way to all emergency vehicles using a siren, air horn and/ or flashing red, blue, white or yellow lights. Where possible, you must pull to the right edge of the road and come to a stop. If you are in an intersection, drive through the intersection, then pull over. If you are approaching an emergency vehicle stopped along the side of the road, try to leave at least one lane between your vehicle and the emergency vehicle. If the road only has one lane on your side or you cannot change lanes, slow down to a safe speed and use care and caution as you pass. Unless directed otherwise by emergency personnel or conditions prohibit the lane change, you should slow down to:

- 25 MPH if the posted speed limit is 45 MPH or less

  Or
- 20 MPH under the posted speed limit if the posted speed limit is above 45 MPH

**Maintenance vehicles:** You must yield right of way to service vehicles and maintenance equipment when in use and flashing yellow and blue warning lights. Use extra caution when approaching, overtaking or passing maintenance vehicles.

**Snow plows:** Be especially cautious around snow plows because their size and speed can create clouds of blowing snow that can conceal the plow. It is illegal to pass an authorized snow plow when it is working in a formation in which the plows are staggered diagonally.

**School bus:** You must stop your vehicle at least 20 feet before reaching a school bus that is stopped with its red lights flashing, and you must stop until the lights stop flashing. You must stop whether it is on your side of the road, the opposite side of the road or at an intersection you are approaching. You must remain stopped until the flashing red lights are no longer flashing. Carefully watch for children near the school bus and children crossing the roadway before proceeding. You are not required to stop if there is a median or other physical barrier separating the bus from your vehicle.

**Transit buses:** You must yield right-of-way to a transit bus if it is signaling to enter a traffic lane and the yield sign on the rear of the bus is illuminated.

**Road work/Construction zone:** When driving in a work/ construction zone, keep construction crews and fellow road users safe by adjusting your lane position away from workers and slowing down to navigate any obstacles or changes in

the flow of traffic with caution. Stay alert and prepared to respond to any unpredictable events.

For safety reasons, normal speed limits may be reduced in work/construction zones. Any reduced speed limits will be clearly marked. Failure to follow the speed limit in a work/construction zone can result in double fines.

**SPEED**

Speed is the greatest factor influencing the severity of a crash. Many fatal collisions on Colorado highways involve motorists driving to fast.

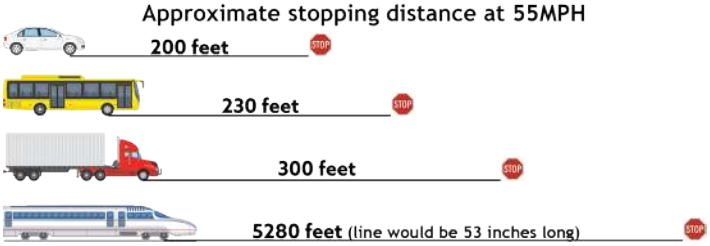
**Limits:** Speed limit signs show the maximum speed allowed in ideal conditions. Some roads, such as freeways, have minimum speed limits posted. Driving slower than the minimum speed limit is a traffic violation, unless due to road or weather conditions. It is important to slow down in certain conditions, for example, during poor weather, or near railroad tracks, pedestrians or bicyclists, animals, and school buses. However, driving much slower than the posted speed in normal conditions can affect the flow of traffic and create unpredictable, potentially unsafe, situations.

**Reduced speed zones:** Regardless of the posted speed limit, it may be necessary to reduce your speed to keep yourself and others safe. Signs will show when a reduced speed limit is in effect.

Unless otherwise posted, Colorado speed limits are as follows:

- 20 mph on narrow, winding mountain highways and blind curves
- 25 mph in any business district
- 30 mph in any residence district
- 40 mph on open mountain highways
- 45 mph for vehicles in the business of hauling trash
- 55 mph on urban interstate and highways
- 65-75 mph on designated rural interstate and highways
- City or towns may by ordinance adopt lower speed limits in their jurisdictions.

**Stopping distance:** Stopping distance is the distance your vehicle travels from the time you realize you must stop until your vehicle actually comes to a stop. Many factors affect your stopping distance including speed, the time it takes you to recognize you need to stop, how quickly you react and the time it takes for your brakes to slow and stop your vehicle. Be alert and give yourself space behind other motorists so you can assess well ahead of time when you will need to stop. By slowing down or changing lanes, you may not have to stop at all, and if you do, it can be a more gradual and safer stop. Stopping suddenly is dangerous and is often the result of a driver who was not paying attention or trailing another motorist too closely. If you brake too quickly, you could skid, lose control of your vehicle, and/or make it difficult for drivers behind you to stop without hitting you.



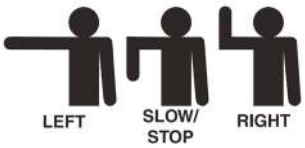

According to the National Safety Council, a lightweight passenger car traveling 55 mph can stop in about 200 feet. Other vehicles require different stopping distances. The chart below shows stopping distances, under ideal conditions.

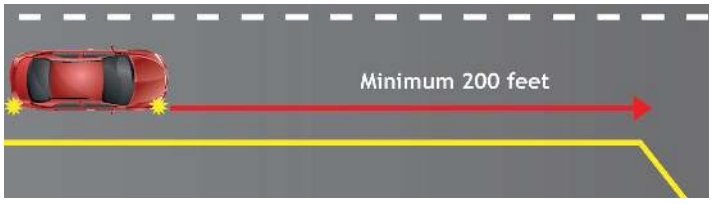
**TURNING**




Completing a turn properly requires you to signal for an appropriate amount of time before to the turn, search for hazards or other road users crossing your path, turn into and from the correct lane, and turn in a correct path. Accelerate out of turns until you reach the speed limit or flow of traffic.

**Signaling:** Failure to signal is a traffic violation. Before making any turn, whether onto another roadway, into a parking lot, into another lane of traffic, or leaving a parked position, it is extremely important that you signal. Your signal lets other drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians know your intentions. In urban areas, you must signal continuously for 100 feet before making a turn or lane change. On four lane highways where the posted speed limit is faster than 40 mph, you must signal for 200 feet before making a turn or lane change. A typical rule of thumb is to have your turn signal on for at least 3 seconds before making a turn or changing lanes. If your vehicle's turn signals do not work, you must use hand signals. End your hand signal before starting to turn so that you can complete the turn with both hands on the wheel.




**Turning from the proper lane:** When turning right you should turn from the right most part of your lane and as close to the curb as possible. When turning left you should be in the left side of your lane. To make a right turn, you must begin in the right most lane. In locations where turning from more than one lane is permitted, traffic signs, signals and/or lane markings will clearly indicate correct turning lanes.

**Turning in a correct path:** Complete your turn in the center of the correct lane on the new roadway — usually the lane closest to you on your side of the street. In intersections with multiple turn lanes, use the white lines

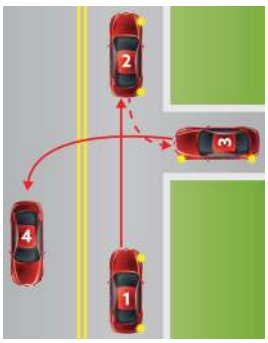
in the intersection to identify the correct path. Avoid short turns (cutting corners), wide turns, late turns and straddling lanes.

**Left turns:** Crashes are very common during left turns as drivers must see, judge and navigate oncoming traffic and pedestrians also navigating the intersection. When turning left, you should wait at the stop line or crosswalk until there is enough of a gap in oncoming traffic large enough to allow you to complete your turn safely. Always look for pedestrians and other smaller oncoming vehicles such as bicyclists and motorcyclists and take time to properly judge their speed and distance before turning left. Pulling into the intersection while waiting to turn left blocks the intersection for emergency vehicles, limits visibility for oncoming traffic and puts you in a position to get in a collision if the light changes and oncoming traffic runs the red light while you turn. Never turn the front wheels toward the left while you are waiting to turn. If you are rear ended, you would be pushed into oncoming traffic.

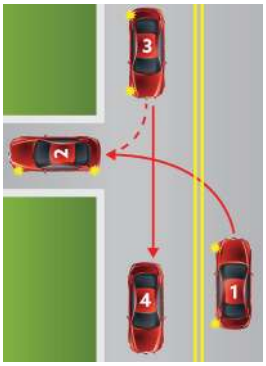
**U-turns:** A U-turn is a turn made in a U shape so as to face in the opposite direction on the same roadway. U-turns are forbidden unless they can be made without endangering other motorists and their passengers, and are not allowed in locations marked by No U-turn signs. If you cannot safely make a U-turn, continue to the next street or turn around area. Never try to make a sudden U-turn in front of traffic traveling in either direction.

**Two-point turnabout:** In this type of turn, a street, alley or driveway is used to reverse the direction you are traveling when it is not practical or possible to drive around a block.

**Reverse two-point turnabout:** Signal your intention to turn right. Stop and check traffic to the sides and rear of your vehicle. Move back until the rear bumper of your vehicle reaches the near edge of the driveway. While backing slowly, steer rapidly all the way to the right. As your vehicle centers in the driveway, straighten the wheels and stop. Shift to drive and check in both directions; if clear, signal and turn left into the proper lane and accelerate.




**Forward two-point turnabout:** Check your mirrors and signal your intention to turn left. Move close to the center of the road and turn into the driveway or alley as near as possible to the right side. Stop as the rear of your vehicle clears the curb or the driveway's edge. Check in all directions for traffic, signal a right turn and shift to reverse. When clear, move back slowly while turning the steering wheel quickly all the way to the right. As your vehicle centers in the nearest lane, straighten the wheels and stop. Then, shift to drive, cancel the right signal and move forward.




**Three-point turnabout:** This type of turnabout is used to reverse direction on a roadway that is too narrow to allow completion of a U-turn and where there is no way to go around the block or utilize a two-point turn. Only use a three-point turnabout on a two-lane roadway.




**To perform a three-point turnabout:** Check the mirrors and activate the right turn signal to communicate your intention to pull off to the right side of the road. Stop on the right side of the road.

Activate your left turn signal at least 200 feet before the turn, or a minimum of three seconds, and check traffic and any blind spots. When traffic is clear, turn hard left toward the other side of the road. Stop when you have reached the other side.

Check traffic and blind spots on both sides, then turn the wheel sharply to the right and reverse to the other side of the road. When traffic is clear, turn hard right to the other side of the road and stop. Place your vehicle in drive, activate the left turn signal and check traffic and blind spots. When traffic is clear, turn sharply to the left and drive forward into the right lane of traffic heading in the new direction. Make sure your turn signal has canceled. Continue driving straight in the new direction.

## PARKING

Leave the vehicle in park if it has an automatic transmission. If it's a standard transmission, leave the vehicle in low gear when headed uphill and in reverse gear when headed downhill. Set the emergency brake and remember to remove the ignition key when leaving the vehicle.

There are several locations where you can not to park a vehicle. These include:

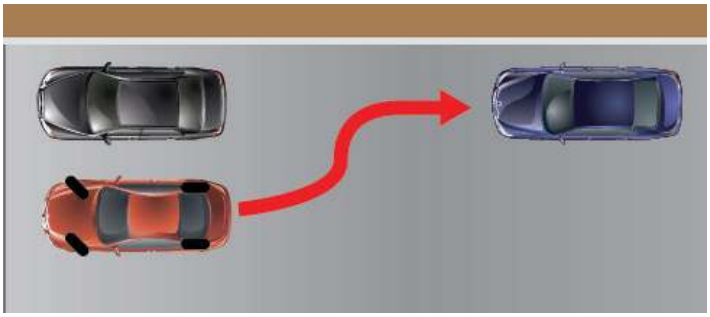
- On a crosswalk, sidewalk, bridge, elevated structure, railroad tracks or any controlled access highway
- Within 30 feet of a traffic signal, stop sign, railroad crossing or within 15 feet of a fire hydrant
- Within an intersection, tunnel, runaway truck ramp, on/off ramp or blocking a driveway
- In a bike lane

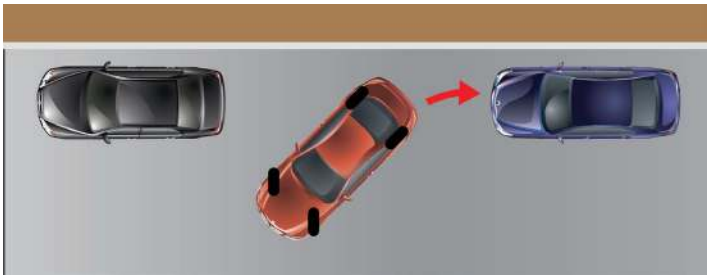
**Parallel parking:** Stop even with the vehicle ahead. Turn the wheel sharply right and back slowly toward the vehicle behind.

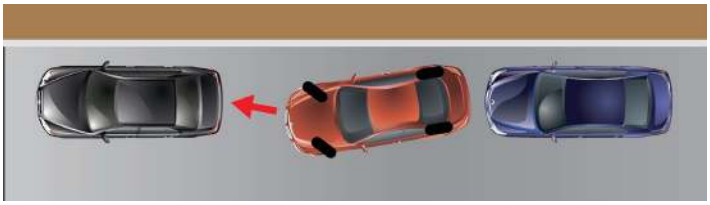
When clear of the vehicle ahead, turn the wheel sharply to the left and back slowly toward the vehicle behind. Turn the wheel sharply right and pull towards the curb in the center of the parking space.

To pull away from a parallel parked position, activate your signal, check your mirrors and blind spots, and pull away when safe.

Where parallel parking is permitted, your vehicle must be within 12 inches of the curb or as close as possible to the outside edge of the shoulder, so traffic will not be blocked or slowed.









Uphill parking

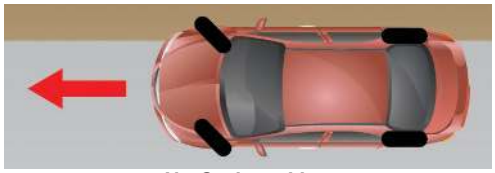
**Downhill:** When you stop your vehicle while headed downhill, turn your front wheels toward the curb. Let your vehicle roll slowly until the front tire rests against the curb using it as a block.

**Uphill:** When headed uphill where there is a curb, turn the front wheels away from the curb and let your vehicle roll backwards slowly until the rear part of the front wheel rests against the curb using it as a block.



Downhill parking

**No curb:** When headed uphill without a curb, turn your front wheels to the right so that if your vehicle moves, it will roll off the highway, not into the roadway. When headed downhill with no curb, also turn your wheels to the right.



No Curb parking

## FREEWAY DRIVING

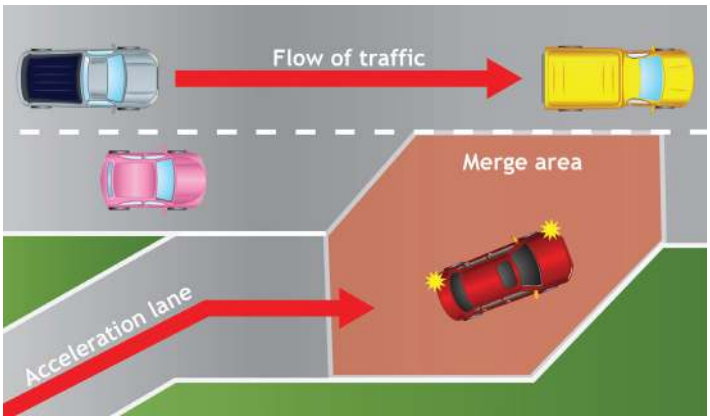
High-speed roadways such as freeways can be dangerous due to the speeds at which people are driving. It's important to be aware of your surroundings at all times when driving, especially on freeways.

**Entering the freeway:** High-speed roadways generally have acceleration ramps so you can build up speed. When entering a freeway from an on-ramp, try to increase your speed to match freeway traffic.

Before entering a highway from a side entrance ramp, signal properly, look for an opening in traffic, accelerate to the speed of traffic and merge into traffic when it is safe.

Do not merge into traffic until the solid white line has ended. Do not stop in the acceleration lane unless absolutely necessary. Remember, you must yield the right-of-way to freeway traffic.

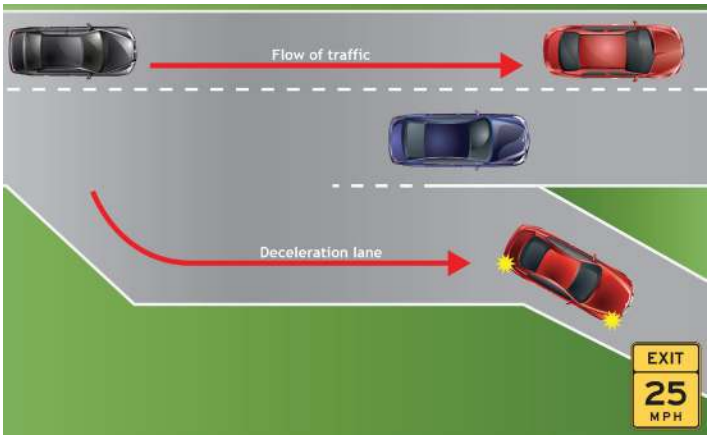
Some freeway entrance ramps have traffic signals which make merging easier and improves traffic flow. On metered ramps, you must stop and wait to be released on a green light to enter the freeway.




**Freeway driving:** Freeway driving is different from driving on a regular street or a highway, mainly because it is designed to move a greater volume of traffic at faster speeds. It is important to be aware of your surroundings at all times.

- Drive in the rightmost lane when you are driving slower than the normal speed.
- The passing lane (the leftmost lane) is reserved for passing vehicles in non-passing lanes, left turns and conditions where the traffic volume does not allow merging into non-passing lanes.
- Move over, if it is safe to do so, when approaching a merge area to make room for vehicles entering the freeway.
- Observe traffic ahead of, around and behind you. Be aware of vehicles traveling in your blind spots.
- Plan ahead, use directional and guidance signs.
- Signal at least 200 feet before you change lanes, avoid frequent lane changes.
- Do not drive across, over or within any median or island.

**Leaving the freeway:** When exiting the freeway, use the deceleration lane, which is designed to allow you to slow down before reaching the exit ramp. Activate your turn signal 200 feet before the beginning of the deceleration lane. Maintain your speed until you enter the deceleration lane, then slow down to the speed advised for the exit ramp.



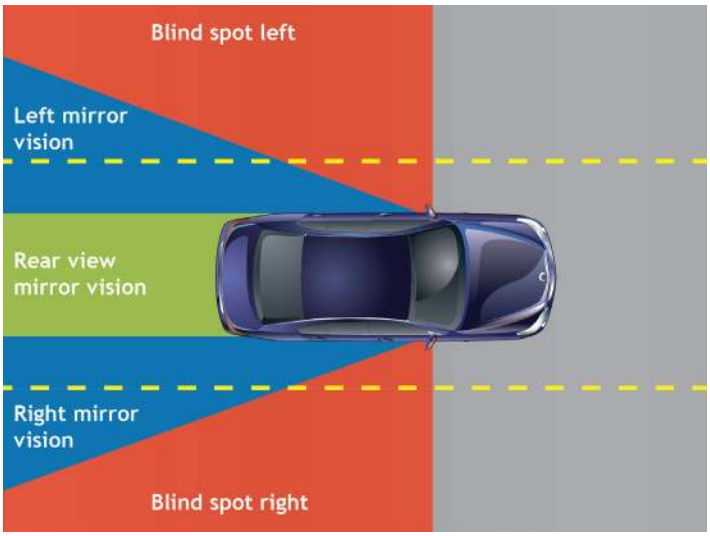

Remember these important tips when exiting a freeway:

- Keep your speed consistent with the flow of traffic while on the freeway.
- Do not exit at the last second.
- Slow down after turning into the deceleration lane and do not exceed the posted speed limit for the exit ramp.

## CHANGING LANES

**Changing lanes includes:** changing from one lane to another, passing another vehicle, merging onto a roadway from an entrance ramp and entering the roadway from the curb or shoulder. You must check for hazards or vehicles in the lane you want to enter. This means you must check for traffic ahead, to the side and behind your vehicle before you change lanes.

Be aware of any blind spots, which are areas you cannot see in your rear view or side view mirrors and are located slightly to the sides and the rear of your vehicle.




When changing lanes, you should:

- Activate your turn signal. Leave it active for a minimum of 3 seconds or 200 feet before leaving your lane.
- Check for possible hazards or vehicles in the lane you want to enter.
  - Check traffic ahead.
  - Use your mirrors to check for traffic behind your vehicle.
  - Look over your shoulder to check your blind spot, which is the area slightly to the rear and side of your vehicle that you cannot see in your mirrors.
  - When it is safe, move into the new lane.
  - After you are centered in the new lane check the mirror for traffic behind you.
- Deactivate your turn signal within 3 seconds of completing the lane change.

## PASSING



**How to change lanes while passing another vehicle**

Signs and road markings indicate areas where you are and are not allowed to pass another vehicle. Typically, you should pass on the left. You are only allowed to pass on the right on one way streets and on roadways with two or more lanes of travel in each direction. You are not allowed to pass another vehicle by driving off of the pavement or on the shoulder of a roadway.

Before deciding to pass another vehicle, including bicyclists, judge whether you will have enough time and room to pass safely by observing the traffic ahead, beside and behind you. If you have enough time and space to pass, begin by making a lane change, as directed above. Accelerate past the vehicle you wish to pass. When you can see both headlights of the vehicle you passed in the rearview mirror, change one lane to get back into your previous lane.

If passing a bicyclist, you must have a minimum of three feet of space between the outermost part of your vehicle, including any projections such as mirrors or trailers, and the bicyclist. You can briefly cross a solid yellow line when there is no oncoming traffic and you have a clear view ahead. Be aware of wind blasts that can knock a bicyclist off their bike and safely pass by giving them more space on rural roadways, when operating a large vehicle or driving in windy conditions.

Do not count on being able to pass several vehicles at once. To be safe, only pass one vehicle at a time. Do not pass:

- If you cannot safely return to the right-hand side before coming within 200 feet of an oncoming vehicle, including a bicyclist in the oncoming lane or shoulder.
- If you cannot safely return to the right-hand side before a solid yellow line begins.

- On a curve or hill where your view is obstructed.
- Within 100 feet of an intersection or railroad crossing.
- Within 100 feet of any bridge, viaduct or tunnel when your view is obstructed.
- A bicyclist unless you can allow a minimum three foot buffer zone between the bicyclist and your vehicle, including any projections such as mirrors. If passing a bicyclist, you may briefly cross a solid yellow when there is no oncoming traffic and you have a clear view ahead.

Please note, the following behaviors are illegal when passing:

- Pass in any marked no-passing zones.
- Exceed the posted speed limit when passing.
- Pass a school bus with flashing red lights and its stop arm extended.
- Pass within 100 feet of any intersection.
- Pass within 100 feet of any railroad crossing.
- Pass on any hill, curve or bridge where vision is obstructed.

**HILLS AND CURVES**

Hills and curves can hide obstructions in the road, even on familiar roads. Be prepared to stop when approaching a curve or hill that obscures your view of the road.

If you cannot see over the top of a hill, slow down to an appropriate speed until you crest the hill and regain sight of the roadway.

Always slow down before entering a curve. If you go through a curve too fast, your tires will not be able to grip the road and your vehicle will skid. Begin your acceleration only after reaching the middle of the curve.

**NIGHT DRIVING**

Driving at dawn and dusk can be more hazardous than driving during the day. This is due to limited visibility, the limited area illuminated by your headlights and the blinding effect of headlights with fog lights. Colorado law requires you to drive with your headlights on from sunset to sunrise or when visibility is less than 1,000 feet. One way to reduce risk is to drive with your low beam or daylight running lights on at all times.

Any vehicle parked alongside the roadway, whether attended or not, must have parking lights turned on from sunset to sunrise or whenever visibility is less than 1,000 feet. Do not drive with only your parking lights on.

**Tips for driving at night:**

- Use your high beam lights when driving in rural areas and on open highways away from urban and metropolitan areas.
- If you are driving with your high beam lights on or your low beam lights with fog lights on, you must dim them before coming within 500 feet of any oncoming vehicle so the oncoming driver is not blinded by the glare.
- When following another vehicle, you must use your low beam lights, with your fog lights off, if you are within 200 feet of the vehicle ahead of you.
- Never look directly into an approaching car's headlights. As the vehicle draws near, drop your sight below the glare and use the painted edge lines to guide your vehicle. Lift your gaze back up when you have passed the oncoming vehicle.
- Use your low beam lights and/or fog lights when driving through fog at night for better visibility. Using high beam lights in these conditions is like shining your lights on a mirror.
- Increase your following distance when driving at night or on unfamiliar roads.
- Be alert to vehicles, including bicyclists, traveling after sunset without their lights on.
- Slow down and stay alert in poorly lit areas where vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists or animals might be traveling.
- Look for the single front light of bicyclists and motorcyclists traveling at night.

**WEATHER**

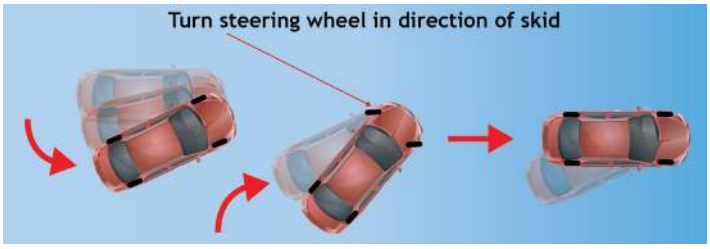
Weather can significantly affect how your vehicle drives regardless of whether your vehicle has front wheel, rear wheel, four-wheel drive or all-wheel drive. In weather conditions such as rain, fog, ice, high winds and dust, the two most important actions you can take are to slow your speed and increase your following distance. Some additional inclement weather driving tips include:

- Use your headlights if visibility is poor.
- If the highway is wet or icy, do not use cruise control.
- Do not drive through large bodies of standing water on the road. If you see a flooded roadway, find another route to get to your destination.

In wet weather, your tires can begin to ride on the water that is on top of the road pavement. This is called hydroplaning and can cause complete loss of traction and control of steering. Tires that have more wear can be at increased risk so be sure to check your tires' tread depth regularly. If it feels like your tires have lost traction, or contact with the surface of the road:

- Take your foot off the gas pedal to allow the vehicle to slow down.
- Slowly begin steering in the direction you are hydroplaning until you have control. (although this seems contradictory, this actually helps your tires to realign with your vehicle so they are both going the same direction)
- Steering needs to be slow. Don't jerk the wheel or you could flip your car due to overcorrecting.
- Do not try to stop or turn until your tires are gripping the road again.

**SNOW AND ICE**




Streets and highways covered with snow, snowpack or ice are extremely hazardous. They are most hazardous

when the snow or ice begins to melt. When the road is slippery, your tires do not grip as well and it will take longer to stop. Overpasses, bridges, shaded areas and snow packed portions of the road can be icy even when other pavement is not. If you lose traction take your foot off both the brake and the accelerator pedal and then turn the front wheels in the direction you want the car to go.

Drivers should be extra careful when approaching or passing a snowplow or other snow removal equipment that has flashing yellow lights and is clearing snow. It is illegal to pass a city, county or state-operated snow plow while it's working with its yellow lights flashing and is driving in tandem with one or more other snow plows.

**SEASONAL DRIVING**

- Vehicles with 4-wheel drive have increased traction, but they cannot stop any sooner than a conventional car.
- Whenever your car starts to skid, take your foot off both the brake and the accelerator pedal.
- Make sure your tires have good tread for adequate traction. In winter, chains, snow tires or alternative traction devices are preferable and may be required on highways. (However, remember that even chains and snow tires will slip on slick pavement).
- Make sure your brakes are in good condition and properly adjusted so that the braking power of each wheel is uniform.
- If you have anti-lock brakes: If you begin to skid, let up on the accelerator and push on the brake, then turn the front wheels in the direction you want the car to go.
- If you don't have anti-lock, use threshold braking when skidding or in slippery conditions. Apply brake pressure to a point just short of locking up the brakes. Note: You can use threshold braking on a vehicle with anti-lock brakes, but you cannot use anti-lock braking techniques on a vehicle without an anti-lock brake system (ABS).
- Keep the windows clear by ensuring the defrosters and windshield wipers are working properly. Use a good window scraper to remove all ice, snow and frost even if you are just traveling a short distance. Fogging or condensation on the inside of the windshield can quickly be removed by opening a window.
- Be alert for snow plows and sanding trucks. They use flashing yellow and blue lights as a warning for you to use extreme caution when approaching or passing them.
- Maintain an extra large space between you and the vehicle ahead, especially when driving in conditions that affect stopping distance such as snow and ice and don't forget to slow down.
- Give pedestrians and bicyclists extra space because they might need to maneuver around snow or ice on sidewalks or in the roadway.

**MOUNTAIN DRIVING**

Mountain driving can be very different from normal driving conditions. As a driver, you should be aware of steep hills, changing weather, bicyclists, wildlife and rocks on the roadway. Shift to lower gears to control speeds when driving down steep hills or mountains.

It is illegal to use the oncoming travel lane to pass others if you are approaching the crest of a hill, a curve or in any other situation where visibility of oncoming traffic is obstructed.

Be prepared for intersections hidden by trees, brush or crops and for animals on or near the roadway. If your vehicle has difficulty traveling up steep roadways, pull off the road at the first place you can do so safely or stay in the right lane to allow other vehicles to pass. Remember, vehicles going uphill have the right-of-way over vehicles going downhill.

**For more information** on traction and chain laws, please visit the Colorado Department of Transportation's website.

**RURAL DRIVING**

Rural highways are the most dangerous roads and have the highest fatality rate per mile driven of any roads in the U.S. When driving in rural areas, there are some special situations that require your attention:

- Rural roads can have a lot of sharp curves, blind curves, steep hills and dips.
- Rural roads may not have adequate guide signs, and some of the signs might be hidden by trees or bushes.
- Rural roads are narrow, which can make it difficult to pass other vehicles.
- Many rural roads have no shoulders.
- Some rural roads have no guard rails.
- There are blind driveways, T-intersections, side streets that are not visible due to trees, crops and bushes.
- There may be obstacles on the road such as rocks, debris, animals, farm vehicle crossings, unmarked railroad crossings and slow moving or smaller vehicles like bicycles.
- Rural road pavements are usually rough and may be in need of maintenance. In some areas, the rural roads are unpaved (dirt or gravel) resulting in less traction.
- Washboarding, which is a series of potholes that can affect steering and vehicle control, can often be found on gravel roads.

Roads with potholes may cause your vehicle to bounce or jolt as you drive over them and can cause your tires to lose traction.

Many bicyclist fatalities happen on rural roads due to higher speeds. Stay alert and watch for bicyclists who might be riding on the shoulder, or riding in the travel lane if there is no shoulder or it has debris. Slower speeds and more than the required three feet of passing distance are also advised when passing bicyclists on rural roads due to dangerous wind blasts that can cause vehicles to hit bicyclists.

**CONSTRUCTION ZONES**

Drivers regularly encounter roadway construction and maintenance projects, which are designed to improve the safety and efficiency of our transportation systems.

Every construction or maintenance project creates a work

zone with equipment, workers and, in some cases, daily changes to the routes. Signs, cones and other warning devices are placed before construction projects and hazards to warn you about the changing conditions. These changes require you to stay alert and focused at all times while driving. Be prepared to stop suddenly and do not tailgate in a work zone.

Large construction projects can have complex work zones with flaggers, portable concrete barriers, complicated directional signing and reduced speed limits to safely direct you through the work zone.

Reduced speed limits are critical because they give drivers more time to understand and react to the information and allow more time to safely drive through the complex assortment of devices, workers and equipment. Watch for pedestrians and bicyclists who are also navigating construction and whose safest routes may be compromised.

Unfortunately, there is no way to completely separate drivers from work zone hazards leaving construction crews unprotected. Not only are these workers dealing with construction dangers associated with heavy equipment, excavation, power lines and other activities but they are constantly on guard for drivers that may stray into the work area.

Increased police enforcement is routinely added to construction projects to ensure drivers understand the importance of complying with work zone signs and directions. Like school zones, the fines are doubled in work zones.

Remember, if you encounter a work zone, for your own safety and the safety of the workers:

- Pay attention, use extra caution and stay focused on the driving task.
- Obey construction signs, including work zone speed limit signs, and flagger instructions.
- Watch the vehicle in front of you — most work zone crashes are rear-end collisions due to an inattentive driver.

Your safety, your passengers' safety, and the safety of these workers depends on you.

**SAFE DRIVING TIPS**

The purpose of this handbook is to keep you and others safe. If you obey every roadway rule and regulation, your chances of being involved in collisions will be greatly reduced. However, you can't be certain that other drivers are following every rule and regulation. You should always try to drive calmly and ignore aggressive drivers.

It is important that you become a defensive driver. Defensive driving protects you and others from unsafe and unexpected driving situations.

**Buckle up:** Ensure all people in the vehicle fasten their seat belts to help keep everyone safe in the event of a crash.

**Using a cell phone while driving:** Colorado law prohibits drivers from using a mobile device while driving, unless it is to contact law enforcement, the fire department, if it is an emergency or they are doing so with the use of a hands-free accessory. Colorado law also prohibits the use of mobile devices for text messaging while driving unless it is to contact law enforcement, the fire department or it is an emergency.

**Steering:** Keep both hands on the steering wheel. The most effective hand positions are 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock or 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock. When turning, the preferred methods are the "hand-over-hand" or "push-pull-slide" methods. Do not turn the wheel with the palm of your hand or let it slide through your fingers after making a turn.

**Scanning:** To be a good driver you must know what is happening around your vehicle. You must look ahead, to the sides, and behind the vehicle. Always look left, right and then left again when turning, driving through or entering an intersection. Scanning helps you see conditions ahead, such as vehicles and pedestrians that may be on or entering the road, warning signs and signs giving you directions. Be sure to look for smaller road users as you scan, including pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists.

**Look ahead:** In order to avoid last-minute braking or the need to turn abruptly, you should look down the road at least 10 seconds ahead of your vehicle (city — one block, open road — half a mile). By looking well ahead and being ready to stop or change lanes, you can drive more safely, save on fuel and help keep traffic moving at a steady pace.

**Look to the sides:** As other vehicles or pedestrians might cross or enter your path at any time, you should be looking for them on both sides and beyond the curb.

**Look behind:** You must check traffic behind you in your rear view mirror every 5 to 8 seconds. This is the only way to know if someone is following too closely or coming up too quickly, and it will give you time to react. You need to check more often when traffic is heavy. It is very important to look behind you when you change lanes, slow down, back up, exit an intersection or drive down a long or steep hill.

**Following another vehicle:** Following the vehicle in front of you too closely limits your vision of the road and does not allow you enough time to react to avoid a crash. Remember to stay aware of the vehicle in front of you and to maintain an adequate distance between your vehicle and theirs.

**Three-second rule:** Under normal conditions, use the three-second rule to gauge how much space you should leave between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. Watch the vehicle ahead of you; when it passes a reference point (such as a mile marker, sign or telephone pole) then count "one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three." If you pass the reference point before you finish counting, you are following too closely.

It is also important to consider weather, road conditions, the amount of traffic and time of day, because the stopping distance required is greatly increased.

**Adjusting to traffic:** Follow posted speed limits and keep pace with traffic in a reasonable and cautious manner to help avoid crashes. Traveling much faster results in frequent passing, increasing the opportunity for a crash. Driving considerably slower than other vehicles can also increase unpredictability and compromise safety by causing back-ups and more passing situations.

**Zipper Merge:** Merge points are specifically set up for vehicles to merge from two lanes into one lane in a zipper fashion. This keeps traffic flowing. Each car should alternate in zipper fashion into the remaining open lane until just before the point of closure. When there is a lane closure ahead, drivers should continue to drive in both lanes equally. Just before the lane ends, cars should take turns filling in the open lane carefully and resume full speed. In a Zipper Merge, please be respectful of those who wait to merge until just before the lane ends; they are doing it correctly.

**Slow Zones:** Places where people or traffic gather that require slower speeds and increased attention:

- Shopping centers
- Schools
- Parks/Playgrounds
- Residential streets
- Rush hour traffic
- Narrow bridges
- Toll plazas
- Rail crossings

**What to Do and Expect When Pulled Over by Law Enforcement:** Law Enforcement officers are responsible for conducting traffic stops when they have reasonable suspicion of a traffic violation or a criminal violation. Being stopped by an officer can be a stressful experience for the driver, any passengers, and for the officer, too. Knowing what to do during the stop will help ensure your safety and the safety of others.

When you see emergency lights behind you or hear emergency sirens, it is important for you and your passengers to stay calm and cooperate. Remember to:

- Activate your turn signal and pull off or to the right side of the roadway as soon as it is safe to do so. The officer might request you to pull farther off the roadway and away from moving traffic.
- Turn off the engine and any audio devices.
- Stay in your vehicle unless directed by the officer to exit.
- Turn on your interior lights if you are pulled over at night to assist with visibility. Officers may use a spotlight for additional visibility.
- Keep your hands on the steering wheel or in a visible location so they are easily observable.
- Follow all instructions the officer gives you or your passengers.

The officer may approach either side of the vehicle. When the officer approaches the vehicle, remember to:

- Lower the corresponding window so you and the officer can better communicate.
- Let the officer know if you have a weapon in the vehicle upon first contact, but do not reach for it or attempt to hand it to the officer.
- Wait for the officer's instructions before reaching for your driver's license or vehicle documents.

When conducting the stop, the officer will typically:

- Show their law enforcement credentials if they are not in uniform. If they do not show their credentials, you may ask to see them.
- Explain why you were stopped/ask questions about your trip.
- Ask for your driver's license, proof of insurance, and vehicle registration. If the documents are out of your reach, tell the officer where they are and wait for the officer's acknowledgement before reaching to retrieve the documents.

In some cases, the officer may:

- Ask you to exit the vehicle. In this case, keep your hands visible, exit the vehicle, and stand in a location as directed by the officer.
- Impose a sanction such as a warning, traffic ticket which may include a fine, or arrest. The officer will typically explain whatever action is being taken. If they do not, you may ask them to do so.

If you have questions, respectfully ask the officer to clarify. If you disagree with the officer's decision or course of action, do not prolong the contact by arguing with the officer. Rather, you may seek to contest the decision in court through established legal channels. Your acceptance and signature on a traffic ticket is not an admission of guilt. However, the refusal to sign a traffic ticket may result in your arrest.

If you believe the officer acted inappropriately or have questions regarding their conduct you may request to speak to a supervisor. This is best done as soon as possible after the stop.

Following these procedures can help make a traffic stop a safe experience for all parties involved.

**SHARING THE ROAD**

Sharing the road means that everyone has a right to use the road and a responsibility to follow the driving laws and look out for each other.

A courteous, alert and knowledgeable driver makes our road safer for all. Bicycles, motorcycles, buses and trucks operate differently. You should keep these differences in mind and share the road safely with all Coloradans.

**Motorcycles:** An operator of a two-wheeled motorcycle can pass other motor vehicles in the same lane as long as the other vehicles are stopped, motor vehicles in lanes next to the lane occupied by the two-wheeled motorcycle are stopped, and there is enough room for the two-wheeled motorcycle to pass safely at a speed no greater than 15 miles per hour. This is called lane filtering.

**Large trucks and buses:** Due to their size and weight, large trucks and buses create unique situations for smaller

motorists, and particularly, for people outside of cars.

Trucks and buses require more room than automobiles to turn, change lanes and perform other driving maneuvers. Stay behind white-painted stop bars at stop signs and traffic lights because many are carefully measured to give trucks the room they need for turns.

Trucks and buses have blind spots called “No Zones,” which are areas around trucks/buses where cars disappear into blind spots or are so close that they restrict the truck or bus driver’s ability to stop or maneuver safely. Vehicles traveling in No Zones cannot be seen and greatly increase the potential for a crash.

**Points to remember:**

- **Reversing:** Do not pass or stop close to a truck/bus that is preparing to or is backing up, as the trailer will obstruct objects in the No Zone.
- **Passing:** Pass trucks quickly and on the left when possible. Since trucks require longer distances to slow down than cars, do not pull in front of a truck or bus until you can see both headlights on the front of the vehicle in your rear view mirror.
- **Rear blind spots:** Trucks and buses have large blind spots behind them. Do not tailgate. The driver cannot see you and it also cuts off your own view of traffic.
- **Side blind spots:** Trucks and buses have much larger blind spots on both sides than cars. If the truck or bus driver needs to make an emergency maneuver or change lanes, they will not be able to see you and it could cause a collision.
- **Wide turns:** Because of their size, trucks and buses often need to move to the left lane to make right turns. Cutting in between the truck or bus and the curb or shoulder increases the possibility of a collision.
- **Runaway truck ramps:** Occasionally trucks and buses lose their ability to brake. Runaway truck ramps were built to prevent serious crashes from out of control vehicles. Never chain up, change a tire or park on the ramp or the entrance -- it’s both illegal and unsafe. One sign of a runaway truck or bus is smoke coming from the brakes. Get out of the way and do not get in front of the truck or bus.

**Bus-related tips include:**

- Buses frequently stop. Stay alert when driving behind a bus to allow for smooth and safe stopping of your vehicle.
- If you are passing a stopped bus, use care because the bus may start to move out into your lane of traffic.
- Buses have the right-of-way when leaving a drop-off location and merging into traffic.
- Look for pedestrians who might be exiting or waiting to board the bus.
- Watch for people walking and loading bikes in front of the bus.

**School Buses:** Use caution when driving near school buses, especially in neighborhoods and school zones, as these areas are likely to have students getting on and off as well as crossing roads.

**Overhead Yellow Warning Lights:** When a school bus is about to stop and load or unload children, the bus driver activates amber warning lights. The yellow warning lights will stay on until the bus door opens.

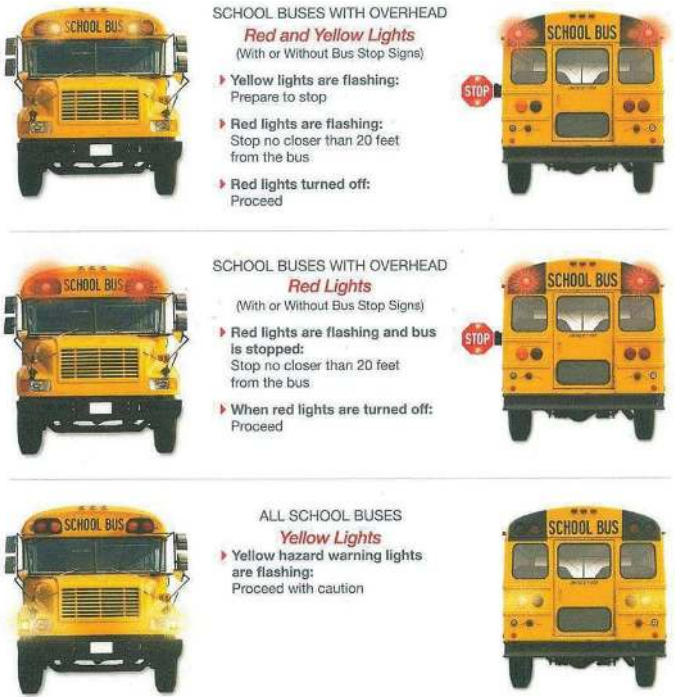
**Overhead Red STOP Lights/STOP Arm:** When the bus driver opens the bus door, the red STOP lights and STOP arm activates.

Stop and remain stopped until the bus driver retracts the stop arm and deactivates the red warning lights.

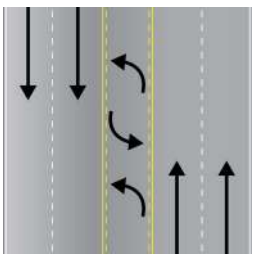
Vehicles must stop no less than 20 feet from the front or rear bumper of the school bus.

**You Must Stop:** It is illegal and dangerous to not stop when a school bus has its stop lights on and stop arm extended.

Always be alert for students on or near the roadway when a school bus is stopped.




If a school bus displays alternating flashing red light signals, visible from the front or rear, you must stop at least 20 feet before reaching the bus. Do not proceed until the flashing red lights stop, and then proceed with caution.



If you are traveling on a divided highway that has four or more lanes with a median separating the traffic, only the vehicles traveling in both lanes behind the school bus must stop, and not the traffic traveling in the opposite direction.

If you are traveling on a two-lane roadway, traffic in both directions are required to stop. If you are traveling on a four-lane road without a median, traffic in both directions must stop.

If you are traveling on a highway that has five or more lanes with a shared center turn lane, only the vehicle in both

lanes behind the school bus must come to a complete stop. In this case, vehicles traveling in the opposite direction are not legally required to stop.

Violating school bus traffic laws has serious legal consequences.

**RAILROAD CROSSING**

When approaching a railroad crossing, be cautious because a train can arrive at any time, day or night. Obey all warning devices, lights, gates and signs. When approaching a railroad crossing that is not marked with flashing lights or gates you should stop (if necessary) before reaching the crossing, to check for approaching trains. Never stop on the tracks. Stopping on the tracks is illegal and very dangerous. Do not drive onto the crossing until you are sure the tracks are clear and you have enough room on the other side of the tracks to clear a train, especially when there are multiple tracks as there may be a second train. If your vehicle stalls on a crossing, get everyone out and immediately move as far away as possible, even if you do not see a train approaching. Call the phone number on the blue Emergency Notification Sign located near the crossbuck sign or contact local law enforcement.

Take time to properly judge the train's speed and distance. Because of its large size, a train appears to be moving much slower than it appears. The average freight train traveling at 55 mph requires about one mile to stop.

**Advance warning signs:** A railroad crossing is ahead. The warning sign is at a sufficient distance to allow you to stop (if necessary) before reaching the crossing. It is the only round traffic sign.

**Pavement markings:** Consists of an "R X R" and a stop line and may be painted on the pavement in front of a crossing. Always stay behind the painted stop line while waiting for a passing train. If no line is visible, you must be at least 10 feet from the tracks. Trains overhang the tracks by 3 feet.

**Quiet Zone signs:** Crossings in designated quiet zones will have a "No Train Horn" sign posted below the Advance Warning signs. Train horns do not blow at these crossings. The flashing lights and gates warn you of an approaching train.

**Crossbuck signs:** These signs should be treated the same as a yield sign. If there is more than one track, a sign below the Crossbuck indicates the number of tracks at this crossing. They normally serve as caution signs, but become regulatory when a train approaches.

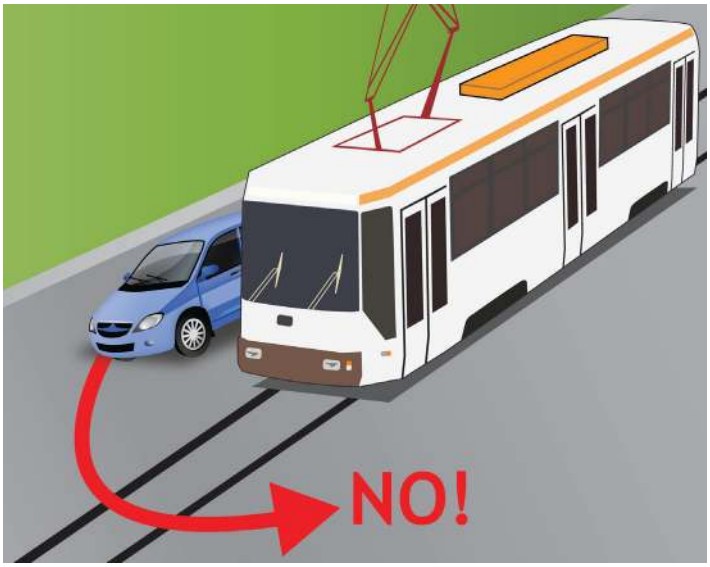
Commercial buses and trucks carrying hazardous materials must stop at most railroad crossings. Be prepared to stop if you are following one of these vehicles approaching a crossing.

**Flashing light signals:** Always stop when the lights flash. Do not attempt to cross until the lights have stopped flashing.

**Gates:** Gates are used with flashing light signals at certain crossings. Do not cross until the gates are raised and the lights have stopped flashing. While the gates are down, the road is closed.

**Emergency Notification System (ENS) sign:** All public highway-rail grade crossings have BLUE colored Emergency Notification System (ENS) signs that provide a 24/7/365 telephone number to call for reporting problems or emergencies at railroad crossing locations. The ENS signs are typically located on the railroad crossing posts below the crossbuck. The ENS signs are for emergencies that would require stopping a train due to an obstruction or any other problem at or near the crossing. By providing the DOT (X-ING) crossing number located on the sign, the railroad dispatcher knows exactly where the crossing is and can quickly notify trains moving in that direction to stop before the crossing or location of the problem when possible.

**LIGHT RAIL**




The Regional Transportation District (RTD) has Light Rail Vehicles (LRV) in its mass-transit fleet in the Denver Metropolitan area. In some areas, LRVs will operate on streets in the same direction as other motor vehicles. In other areas, LRVs will operate in the opposite direction from other traffic. The LRVs are governed by all traffic signals and signs and have the same rights and responsibilities as other motorists when operating on the streets. They also require additional attention from everyone on the road.




**Driver safety tips:** Each light rail car weighs up to 40 tons and can't stop quickly. Remember these important tips while driving in a light rail area:

- Never turn in front of an approaching LRV.
- Never turn across a set of light rail tracks without checking in all directions.
- Watch for people getting on and off a stopped LRV.
- Be especially alert in light rail areas as nearby buildings and foliage can make it difficult for motorists to see LRVs.

| Conviction | How to prevent |
|---|---|
| Motorist turning left in front of an oncoming bicyclist | Look for oncoming motorcyclists riding on the shoulder, edge of the lane or behind other oncoming vehicles and take time to accurately judge their distance and speed before turning |
| Motorist or motorcyclists running a stop sign or stop signal | Stop first, then proceed into intersection after looking for and yielding to others |
| Motorist opening a vehicle door without looking behind for a passing motorcyclists or vehicle | Always check behind you before opening a door into the roadway and try opening the door with your arm opposite the door |
| Motorist turning right in front of a motorcyclists traveling straight | Yield and let the cyclist clear the intersection first and make turns from close to the curb to prevent a cyclist approaching from behind from passing unsafely on your right |
| Motorist pulling out from a driveway and failing to look for a motorcyclists on road or sidewalk | Check both directions and beyond the curb or driveway when crossing a sidewalk, bike path, or road |

- Some light rail crossing areas can have regular traffic lights to communicate with motorists. Some have warning lights and some have gates with railroad type traffic arms. All these signals mean the same thing: Stop and do not cross the tracks.
- Never drive around traffic gates, even if an LRV has just passed. Another vehicle might be coming from the other direction.
- Be aware of your vehicle height. Overhead wires are a standard height of 18 feet, 6 inches above the center of the tracks. Always assume a wire hanging from overhead catenary is electrified so never touch the wire or anything it is touching.

Pay close attention to special traffic warning signs in connection with light rail.

If you find a wire hanging from overhead or if you think any safety devices are malfunctioning, please call 911 or RTD at 303-299-6000 and report the situation.

**BICYCLISTS**

Bicycles are considered vehicles on the roadway. People on bikes have many of the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as motorists, and they are generally required to follow the same rules of the road (see earlier sections for bike-specific pavement markings, signs and signals). Check your local ordinances for any laws that apply differently to bicyclists; for example, in some communities, bicyclists are allowed to ride on sidewalks and in crosswalks where they have the same rights, privileges and responsibilities as pedestrians.

Drivers must be alert, actively look for bicyclists and be cautious when approaching or passing bicyclists because bicycles are smaller and bicyclists are more vulnerable than people inside of motor vehicles. Like motorists, bicyclists have different levels of experience and skills, and some bicyclists are children. Keep these characteristics in mind as you look for and approach people biking.

Regardless of how we travel, everyone has a responsibility to help keep others safe and avoid crashes. Below are some laws and practices drivers should follow to interact safely with people on bikes.

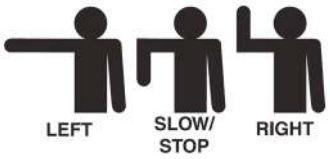
**For specific Colorado Bicycle laws,** see the Statewide Bicycle Manual.

**Colorado laws regarding motorists and bicyclists:**

- Bicyclists should ride as far to the right as judged safe. Be aware that bicyclists may ride in the center of the travel lane to increase their visibility and safety. Bicyclists may choose to ride in the center of the travel lane on narrow roads or to avoid obstacles such as the door zone of parked cars, broken glass or drainage grates.
- When passing bicyclists, including those in a bike lane, motorists are required to give a minimum of three feet from the outermost part of their vehicle or any attachments. It is legal to cross a double yellow line with no oncoming traffic if necessary to provide a minimum of three feet of passing distance. If you are unable to give three feet, slow down and remain behind the bicyclist until it is safe to pass.
- Bicyclists may ride side-by-side if they are not impeding the normal and reasonable movement of traffic. This can help them be more visible to drivers and decrease the time it takes to pass a group of bicyclists.
- Yield to bicyclists in intersections as you would for pedestrians and other vehicles.
- People on bikes have the right-of-way in a bike lane, and bike lanes continue through intersections, regardless of whether or not paint extends through the intersection.
- Do not stop, park or drive on a designated bicycle path or lane. Impeding bicycle traffic in a bike lane forces

bicyclists to ride into the main travel lane and can put them in an unsafe situation. You may cross a bike lane when turning, entering or leaving another road, driveway or alley.
- People on bikes may ride outside of a bike lane.
- Always use your turn signal to communicate before turning and keep it off when traveling straight.
- On a multi-lane, one-way street, know that a bicyclist can ride on the right or left side of the roadway.
- Make right turns from close to the curb and from a Conflict Zone when one is present. This helps prevent crashes with bicyclists who are approaching from behind and may otherwise try to pass on your right.
- Do not force a bicyclist off the road, this constitutes aggressive driving and has legal consequences.
- A new law was passed in 2022 which states when an intersection is clear and a bicyclist already has the right-of-way, bicyclists ages 15 and older may now treat stop signs as yield signs and treat stop lights as stop signs.

Additional practices to avoid crashes and help keep bicyclists safe:
- Treat people on bikes as drivers of vehicles who have a right to the road, and who are also more vulnerable.
- Take the time to actively look for people on bicycles and to accurately judge their speed and distance.
- Although bicyclists are required to ride in the same direction as motor vehicles, look for them riding anywhere on the roadway.
- Leave more than three feet of passing distance when driving larger vehicles or in rural or windy conditions to avoid dangerous wind blasts.
- Do not turn sharply, slow down or stop abruptly in front of a bicyclist. A motor vehicle's brakes are more powerful than a bicycle's and you could cause a crash.
- Be particularly careful around bicyclists when the roadway is wet or covered with debris. These conditions affect people on bicycles much more than people in vehicles.
- When parked on the street, check to the sides and rear for bicyclists before you open your vehicle door. Use your hand closest to the center of the vehicle to open your door, a behavior commonly known as the "Dutch Reach."
- Check for bicyclists in your path and blind spots before backing up, changing lanes or turning.
- Before making a left turn, actively look for people biking on the right side or on the shoulder and take time to accurately judge their distance and speed before turning.
- When driving alongside a bicyclist and preparing to turn right, slow down, yield and let the bicyclist clear the intersection before making your turn.
- Before turning right at a red light where it is legal, come to a complete stop. Look for bicyclists behind or next to your vehicle, making a left turn from the opposite side of the street or traveling in the lane with which you plan to merge.
- Avoid sounding your horn close to bicyclists unless there is an immediate risk of a crash. Using your horn may startle a bicyclist and cause them to crash.




**Hand signals for bicyclists:**
- Bicyclists are required to use hand signals, as shown, when turning and stopping. However, they may be unable to signal if their skill level or road or traffic conditions require them to keep both hands on the handlebars. Look for other clues of a bicyclist's intent, such as turning their head or looking over their shoulder before changing lane position.
- For a right turn, extend the right arm straight out or left arm upward at a right angle. For a left turn, extend the left arm directly out to the left.
- If slowing or stopping, drop the left arm down at the elbow.

**MOTORCYCLES**

Motorcyclists have the same rights and responsibilities as other drivers. With minimal crash protection, motorcyclists are very vulnerable to injury, even death, when hit by a larger vehicle.

Motorcyclists are entitled to the same full lane width as other vehicles. Motorcyclists frequently move around in their lane so they can see, be seen and avoid road hazards. Also, be aware that strong winds can unexpectedly move a motorcycle out of its lane. There are some additional situations and conditions you need to be aware of so you can safely share the road with motorcyclists:

- **Lane Filtering:** The driver of a two-wheeled motorcycle can pass another motor vehicle in the same lane as long as the other vehicle is stopped, motor vehicles in lanes next to the lane occupied by the two wheeled motorcycle are stopped, and there is enough room for the two-wheeled motorcycle to pass safely at a speed no greater than 15 miles per hour.
- Motorcycles are smaller than other motor vehicles, harder to see and can move faster and stop quicker than expected.
- Road defects and debris can create dangers for motorcyclists.
- Watch for motorcyclists, use extra caution when driving around them and increase your following distance.

**Avoiding Collisions:** Drivers can help to prevent collisions with motorcyclists by knowing the most common causes of motorist-motorcyclist collisions below and how to avoid them.

| Cause of collision | How to prevent |
|---|---|
| Motorist turning left in front of an oncoming bicyclist | Look for oncoming bicyclists riding on the shoulder or edge of the lane before turning |
| Motorist or bicyclist running a stop sign or stop signal | Stop first, then proceed into intersection yielding to others. |
| Motorist opening a vehicle door without looking behind for a passing bicyclist. | Always check behind you before opening a door into the roadway |
| Bicyclist riding the wrong way against traffic, toward the motorist | Ride bicycles in the same direction as traffic |
| Motorist pulling out from a driveway and failing to see a bicyclist on road or sidewalk | Check both directions when crossing a sidewalk, bike path, or road |

**PEDESTRIANS**

Pedestrians are the most vulnerable users of our roadways. They are people who are standing, walking, running or using mobility aids on public streets, highways and private property. As a driver, it is your responsibility to watch out for pedestrians because motor vehicles are heavy objects that can cause serious injuries or death. Here are some more things to remember to help keep pedestrians safe:

- Do not assume that pedestrians can hear or see your vehicle or any visual or audible crossing signals as some pedestrians may be deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or blind.
- Follow the speed limit or drive at a slower speed when necessary to help you to see and respond to pedestrians.
- Remember, some pedestrians like children or people using wheelchairs have a lower profile.
- Pedestrians have the right-of-way at all intersections and crosswalks, even if the lines are not marked or painted. Drivers must yield or come to a complete stop to let pedestrians pass safely.
- Look for pedestrians at all intersections, especially if you are turning.
- While turning at a red light, make sure you are in the correct lane and come to a complete stop. Check for pedestrians in all directions to make sure your path is clear before moving forward to check for vehicle traffic.
- Do not stop with any portion of your vehicle covering the crosswalk area.
- Watch for pedestrians entering or exiting their cars while passing parked vehicles.
- Drive very cautiously around schools, parks, parking lots, bus stops and special events where pedestrians are likely to be present.
- Never pass vehicles stopped at a crosswalk because the driver may be stopping for pedestrians that you can't see.
- Check blind spots and mirrors while backing your car out of a parking space or driveway.

**CARELESS/RECKLESS DRIVING**

Sharing the road is important not only for your safety and the safety of others, it is the law.

**Distracted Driving:** When you are driving a vehicle and your attention is not on the road, you're putting yourself, your passengers, other vehicles and pedestrians in danger. Distracted driving can cause crashes, resulting in injury, death, or property damage. A distraction is anything that takes your attention away from driving. Taking your eyes off the road, hands off the wheel or your mind off driving present obvious driving risks. Mental activities that take your mind away from driving are just as dangerous. Even seemingly simple tasks such as tuning a radio can be risky, especially in bad weather or heavy traffic. Do not attempt to eat or drink, read, smoke or vape, apply makeup, or adjust the music while you are driving. In the time it takes to change radio stations, lives can be changed forever. Additionally, many drugs, including alcohol and marijuana, reduce a driver's ability to manage multiple tasks. Distractions that could be merely hazardous for a normal driver may pose a life-threatening danger to an impaired driver as well as other drivers and pedestrians. Drivers are not allowed to use any mobile electronic device while driving unless it is with a hands-free device or in an emergency situation. If you drive carelessly because you were texting, or any manual use of a mobile device, you could be fined or charged with a misdemeanor. Pull off the road if you need to use your cell phone or other mobile electronic device.

**Tips to prevent distracted driving:**

- Do not use mobile devices.
- Avoid arguments and stressful or emotional conversations.
- Avoid smoking, eating and drinking.
- Be sure children are properly and safely restrained.
- Properly secure pets in a pet carrier or portable kennel.
- Become familiar with equipment in the vehicle. before you drive and practice performing basic functions such as adjusting the temperature or radio settings without taking your eyes off the road.
- Preprogram your radio stations for easy access and preselect a playlist on your portable device.
- Review maps and plan your route before you begin driving.

Make driving your priority. A momentary distraction can lead to a crash. Keep your hands on the wheel and your eyes on the road.

**Aggressive driving:** Aggressive driving is any behind-the-wheel behavior that places others and/or property in danger through willful action without regard to safety.

**Reckless driving:** Reckless driving is operating a vehicle in such a way that puts either people or property in danger, whether intentional or not.

If a law enforcement officer notes your actions as endangering another person or property (including the other motorist's vehicle) you can be charged under Colorado's reckless driving statute and if convicted, up to eight points can be assessed against your driving record.

Acts such as tailgating another driver, passing on the shoulder or running a red light could be seen by a law enforcement officer as aggressive if the officer believes the action is willful and places others in danger. A combination of acts, such as speeding, cutting off other vehicles, swerving toward another motorist, honking, flashing headlights, yelling and using inappropriate hand gestures can also be considered aggressive driving.

Some acts, such as displaying a weapon at another motorist, bumping or ramming another vehicle or high speed pursuit of a vehicle can result in criminal charges beyond a reckless driving charge.

**Protecting yourself from aggressive drivers:** To protect yourself from an aggressive driver, don't engage with that driver. Avoid eye contact and don't attempt to match an aggressive act. If the other driver is angry, back off, give way to the other driver and let the aggressive driver go. A few seconds engaged with an aggressive driver could change your life, or the lives of the loved ones riding with you - forever.

**Reporting aggressive or impaired drivers:** Dial *CSP (*277) to report aggressive drivers. The Colorado State Patrol has set aside this special cellphone number for motorists and bicyclists to use in reporting aggressive drivers. The call will be handled by the closest state patrol trooper, or will be referred to a participating local law enforcement agency. There is no charge for the call.

**Could I become an aggressive driver?:** Anyone is capable of becoming an aggressive driver. Some drivers may be more likely to become aggressive. Here are some questions to see if you have a greater potential to become an aggressive driver. Take a few minutes to ask yourself these questions and be honest with yourself. Do you:

- Mentally condemn other drivers as incompetent or stupid?
- Make negative comments about other drivers to your passengers?
- Close up space to stop other motorists from merging or changing lanes?
- Prevent another driver from passing?
- Tailgate a driver to get them to speed up or get out of your way?
- Angrily speed past another driver?
- Run a stop sign, red light or other traffic control device out of frustration or anger?
- Honk or yell at someone to express your anger or frustration?
- Make an obscene gesture at another driver?
- Pursue another vehicle to express your anger?
- Deliberately bump or ram another vehicle?
- Exit your vehicle to teach the other driver a lesson through either a verbal exchange or physical confrontation?
- Think about physically attacking another driver?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, even just a couple, you may be at risk to become an aggressive driver.

**TIPS TO AVOID BECOMING AN AGGRESSIVE DRIVER**

Leave early for any trip. Too frequently people don't allow enough time to get where they want on time. Expect others to make mistakes. Keep calm. Don't transfer the anger you may feel from other situations into your driving. Let people merge, even if they've done something uncourteous. Don't make their problem your problem.

**EMERGENCIES**

Should a driver encounter an emergency situation, being prepared and knowing how to respond can minimize the chance of more serious outcomes.

**Avoiding collisions:** When it looks like a collision may happen, many drivers panic and fail to act or act in a way that does not reduce the chance of the collision. There almost always is something you can do to avoid the crash or reduce the results of the crash.

To avoid a collision, drivers have three options:

- Slow down or stop
- Turn
- Speed up

**Stopping quickly:** Most vehicles have an Anti-lock Braking System (ABS) that will help you stop without skidding. Be sure to read the vehicle owner's manual on how to use the ABS. In general, if you need to stop quickly:

- **With ABS:** Apply the brakes with hard, firm pressure. You might feel the brake pedal pushing back 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 go into a 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. Slightly let up on the brake pedal. As soon as the vehicle stops skidding, press the brake pedal again. Keep doing this until the vehicle has stopped.

**Turning quickly:** In most cases, you can turn the vehicle quicker than you can stop it. You should consider turning in order to avoid a collision if it does not risk causing another collision. Make sure you have a good grip with both hands on the steering wheel. Once you have turned away or changed lanes, you must be ready to keep the vehicle under control.

- **With ABS:** One aspect of having ABS is that you can turn your vehicle while braking without skidding. This is very helpful if you must turn and stop or slow down.

- **Without ABS:** If you do not have ABS, you must use a different procedure to turn quickly. Step on the brake pedal, but then let up and turn the steering wheel. Braking will slow the vehicle some, the brake should be released before making an evasive turn. Do not lock up the front wheels while braking or turn so sharply that the vehicle can only plow ahead.
- Another consideration is that generally it is better to run off the road than to crash head-on into another vehicle.

**Speeding up:** Sometimes it is necessary, 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 to the front of you to get out of danger. Be sure to slow down once the danger has passed.

**Animals:** Always stay alert for animals in or near the roadway, particularly in rural and mountainous regions and between dusk and dawn when approximately 90% of crashes with deer and elk occur. Upon entering a designated animal crossing, the first precaution should be to slow down and look for animals.

If there are animals near the roadway, slow down and proceed with extreme caution. There may be occasions when an animal suddenly runs in front of your vehicle which can present a hazard, particularly large game animals that may cause the motorist to take drastic evasive action to prevent a collision that may result in losing control of the vehicle. This may result in a more serious crash than if the vehicle collided with the animal. Regretfully, the safest alternative for passengers may be hitting the animal. Concentrate on retaining control of the vehicle before, during, and after the collision with the animal.

**VEHICLE EMERGENCIES**

Following the recommended vehicle maintenance schedule in the vehicle owner's manual greatly reduces the chance that a vehicle will have a problem. The following section notes some possible vehicle failures and what you can do if they happen.

**Brake failure:** Take your foot off the accelerator. Pump the brake pedal several times. This will often build up enough brake pressure to allow you to stop. If that does not work, use the parking brake. Pull on the parking brake handle or push on the parking brake pedal slowly so you will not lock the rear wheels and cause a skid. Be ready to release the brake if the vehicle starts to skid. If that does not work, shift to lower gears and look for a safe place to slow to a stop. Make sure the car is off the roadway. Don't drive the vehicle without brakes.

**Tire blowout:** Hold the steering wheel tightly, and keep the vehicle going straight as you slow down gradually. Take your foot off the gas pedal and use the brakes lightly. Do not stop on the road if possible. Once you have slowed, pull off the road in a safe place.

**Power failure:** Keep a strong grip on the steering wheel. Be aware that the steering may be difficult to turn but you can turn it. Pull off the roadway. The brakes will still work but you may have to push very hard on the brake pedal.

**Headlight failure:** Pull off the road as soon as possible. Try the headlight switch a few times. If that does not work, put on the emergency flashers, turn signals or fog lights, if you have them.

**Jammed gas pedal:** Keep your eyes on the road. Quickly shift to neutral. Pull off the road when safe to do so. Turn off the engine.

**CRASH TIPS**

**Providing insurance information after a crash:** If you are involved in a crash, you must provide proof of insurance to law enforcement at the scene of the crash, or at the police station.

**The duties of occupants of vehicles involved in crashes resulting in personal injury:** If you are a passenger in a vehicle involved in a crash where the driver is physically incapable of reporting the crash you are required to report the crash and, if directed by law enforcement, to remain at the scene of the collision until the law enforcement arrives.

**In the event of a crash you should:**

- Stop immediately and never leave the scene.
- Check for injuries and where practical render reasonable assistance.
- Call law enforcement and emergency personnel.
- Exchange name, address, phone numbers, registration and insurance information.

**Under Accident Alert Status** (defined as those times when weather conditions are so severe that law enforcement officers are unable to respond to the large volume of motor vehicle crashes): If alcohol and drugs are not involved, there are no injuries and all vehicles are still drivable, exchange name, address, phone numbers, registration and insurance information. You must file an accident report with law enforcement within 24 hours.

**Involving a parked car:** If a crash involves a parked car and you cannot find the owner, call law enforcement and leave a note in a place where the owner of the car can find it.

**Move It Law:** State law requires motorists involved in a minor crash on a divided highway to move their vehicles off the highway when:

- The vehicle is drivable.
- No drugs or alcohol are involved.
- There are no injuries.

Once at a safe location, drivers can notify law enforcement and exchange information. Law Enforcement and insurance companies will not penalize you for moving your car off the road.




**Move Over Law:** When you encounter any stationary vehicle on a highway with its hazards flashing, you must move over one lane if you can do so safely. If it is not safe or you are traveling on a road that is one lane in each direction, you must slow down to at least 20 mph below the posted speed limit. Colorado's Move Over Law protects law enforcement, fire, maintenance, other emergency personnel, tow truck drivers and you.

**First aid:** Good Samaritan laws were developed to encourage people to help others in emergency situations. They require that the "Good Samaritan use common sense and a reasonable level of skill, not to exceed the scope of the individual's training in emergency situations." They assume each person would do best to save a life or prevent further injury.

When you respond to an emergency and act as a reasonable and prudent person would under the same conditions, Good Samaritan immunity generally prevails. This legal immunity protects you, as a rescuer, from being sued and found financially responsible for the victims' injury. For example, a reasonable and prudent person would:

- Move a victim only if the victim's life is in danger.
- Ask a conscious victim for permission before giving care.
- Check the victim for life threatening emergencies before providing further care.
- Summon professional help to the scene by calling the local emergency number or the operator and continue to provide care until more highly trained personnel arrive.

**Donate Life Colorado Organ and Tissue Donor Registry**

When applying for or renewing a Colorado driver license, permit or ID, you will be asked two important questions regarding organ and tissue donation.

- Would you like to sign up as an organ, eye and tissue donor?

Signing up as an organ, eye and tissue donor means you have made the decision to donate your organs and tissues at the time of your death. In Colorado, there are nearly 1,500 people waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant and thousands more in need of lifesaving and healing tissues.

If you say Yes, a heart with a "Y" will appear on the front of your license, permit or ID. Your name will be added automatically to the Donate Life Colorado Organ and Tissue Donor Registry. When you sign up as an organ, eye and tissue donor, your registration remains in effect unless you change it. The donor registry is managed by Donor Alliance, a non-profit, federally-designated organ and tissue recovery agency, and is accessible only to authorized donation personnel.

- **Would you like to donate to the Emily Keyes-John W. Buckner Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Fund?**

Another way for you to support organ and tissue donation is to make a voluntary monetary contribution to the Emily Keyes-John W. Buckner Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Fund. Your contributions to the fund go directly to public outreach and education about organ and tissue donation. Informational brochures are available at all Colorado driver license offices. For more information, call Donor Alliance at 303-329-4747 or 888-868-4747 or visit *www.DonateLifeColorado.org*.

## NOTES




# Saying Yes to Donation Can Save a Life Like Connor's.

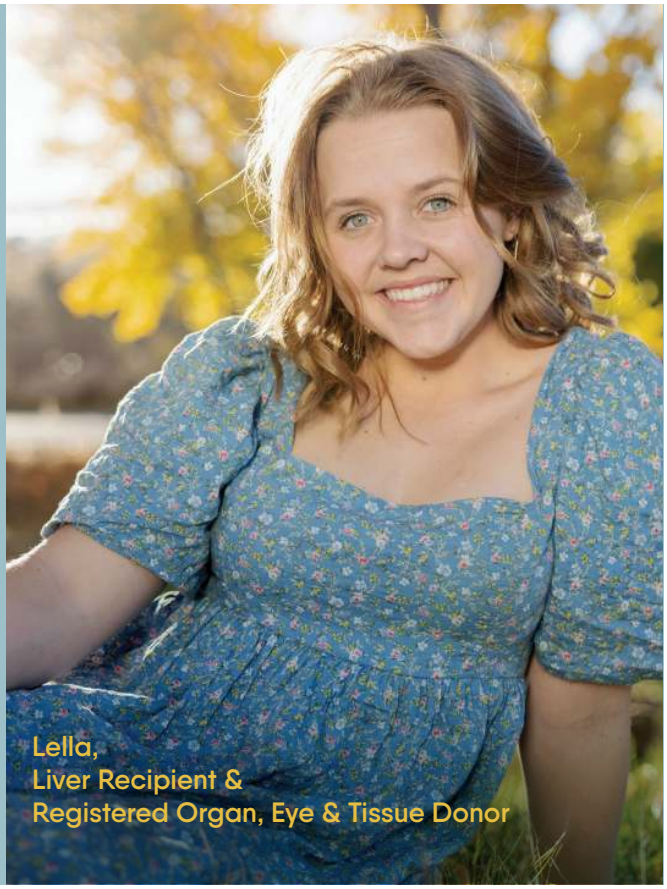
Connor was just 13 when he received his new heart thanks to his heroic donor. Say yes to organ, eye and tissue donation and discuss your decision with your family.

DONATE LIFE® Colorado

- **Nearly 1,500 people in Colorado** are waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant.
- **Every 9 minutes** someone is added to the national transplant waiting list.
- **Just one donor** can save up to eight lives through organ donation and save and heal more than 75 lives through eye and tissue donation.
- **Your decision to be a donor will not affect medical care.** Doctors and nurses caring for you before death are not involved in the donation process.
- **Anyone - regardless of age or medical condition - can register as a donor.** Patients with chronic conditions such as diabetes and hepatitis can potentially save and heal lives through donation.

Learn more and register at **DonateLifeColorado.org**

# 5 REASONS WHY LELLA CHECKED THE BOX TO BE AN ORGAN, EYE & TISSUE DONOR:



Lella,
Liver Recipient &
Registered Organ, Eye & Tissue Donor

1. **Everyone can register to be a donor.**
   There are no restrictions to registering to be an organ, eye & tissue donor. Anyone can register—including you!

2. **When you check the box YES, one day you can save someone's life.**
   One person's decision to be a donor can save up to 8 lives and heal 75 more lives. Think about the positive impact and legacy you can make by just saying YES!

3. **People in our community really need our help.**
   Every 8 minutes another person is added to the transplant waitlist. We need more people to register!

4. **Someday, it could be me or someone I know who needs a transplant.**
   Organ, eye & tissue donation saves and heals thousands of lives each year. I know I'll be grateful this exists if I ever need it.

5. **All you have to do is say YES and check the box.**
   You can register online or at the DMV, and you will receive a ♥ on your license that says "YES" I'm an organ, eye & tissue donor.

Donor Alliance
Organ & Tissue Donation

DONATE LIFE Colorado

**Learn More at DonorAlliance.org**

# Take your permit test at home!




**SCAN TO TAKE YOUR TEST NOW!**

COLORADO
Department of Revenue
Division of Motor Vehicles

@HOME DRIVING KNOWLEDGE TESTS

# DMV anywhere.

Yes, anywhere.

## Featured Online Services

- Upgrade your permit to a license
- Renew your license or ID
- Schedule your appointment
- Upload DOT Med Card
- Downgrade your license
- Renew your vehicle registration
- Emissions waiver
- Estimate your registration fees
- License extension
- International Registration Plan (IRP)
- Motor Vehicle Record (MVR)
- First-time vehicle registration
- Change your address (license & IDs)
- Change your address (vehicle registration)
- Preregister for 1st time CO license or ID
- Pay reinstatement
- Pay a traffic ticket
- Where's my license or ID?

COLORADO
Department of Revenue
Division of Motor Vehicles

