THE STATE OF ALABAMA

ALABAMA DRIVER MANUAL

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Organ Donation.

Giving life a second chance.

When you obtain your driving license, you will be asked, "Do you wish to be an organ donor?" If you say "yes", what does that mean?

- "Yes" means that you want to give someone a very special gift…a second chance at life. It means that you have decided to give organs or tissues after your death to people who urgently need a transplant. The title "organ donor" with a red heart will appear on your license.
- The urgent need for organ transplants grows daily with tens of thousands of people waiting nationally. Someone is added to the list every ten minutes, and approximately 18 people will die each day while waiting for an organ. Your choice to become an organ donor can make a life-saving difference for these critically ill people.
- The decision to donate is a personal one, but one which should be shared with your family. If you have questions, call the Alabama Organ Center at 1-800-252-3677.

Common Myths about Donation

Myth: Becoming a donor will affect my medical care if I am in an accident.
Fact: If you are admitted to a hospital, the number one priority is to save your life.

Myth: Organ donation disfigures the body.
Fact: Organs and tissues are removed in an operation performed by specially trained medical professionals. Your body is treated with respect and an open casket funeral is possible after donation.

Myth: If you agree to donate your family will be charged.
Fact: There is no financial cost to the donor's family or estate for organ or tissue donation. Funeral costs and the costs incurred in saving your life remain the responsibility of the family.

Myth: Having "organ donor" on your driver's license or carrying a donor card is all you have to do to become a donor.
Fact: While donation can legally occur with these documents, it is important to discuss your decision with your family to ensure they understand your wishes. All people who indicate their donation wishes on their driver's license will have their name added to the Legacy Organ and Tissue Donor Registry.

For more information or to add your name to the registry, call 1-800-252-3677 or visit www.legacyalabama.org

MAKE THE CHOICE NOW TO HELP SAVE LIVES LATER.

Alabama
Driver Manual

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Driver License Division

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STATE OF ALABAMA

Dear Valued Friends and Residents:

I hope you will take to heart the information provided in this Alabama Driver Manual. The purpose of this manual is to provide every driver in our state the necessary knowledge to operate a vehicle safely on our busy roadways, and to ensure the safety of others.

We owe it to our loved ones, our fellow citizens and ourselves, to carefully read this manual while practicing the safe driving behavior it prescribes. Safety on our roadways affects us all. Improving roadway safety requires and demands the commitment of all who travel in our state. It is important to remember the state law requires that seat belts must be worn for safety, and mixing the consumption of alcohol with driving is prohibited.

The State of Alabama is blessed with beautiful scenery throughout the state. Let's strive to make driving a pleasure for all to enjoy and continue to make our roadways the safest in the country.

Sincerely,

Bob Riley
Governor

Colonel J. Christopher Murphy

Director

Alabama Department of Public Safety

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF

PUBLIC SAFETY

Dear Alabama Driver:

The privilege of operating a motor vehicle on Alabama's streets and highways is reserved for people who drive responsibly. You are encouraged to study this manual and to make every effort to become a safe and courteous driver.

This manual has two main purposes: (1) to help you qualify for an Alabama driver license and (2) to help you become a more informed and safer driver. The information in this booklet is not intended to be an official legal reference to all Alabama traffic laws. It is intended to explain in common language those laws and driving practices you will need most often. In addition, the procedure for obtaining your learner's license or regular license is discussed.

Alabama's troopers and other law enforcement officers patrol our streets and highways to make your travel safe and pleasant. Cooperate with them by following the suggestions outlined in this manual as well as the rules of common courtesy while you drive.

The Department of Public Safety's Driver License Division welcomes your inquiry if you need assistance in securing an Alabama driver license.

Sincerely,

Colonel J. Christopher Murphy
Director

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CHAPTER 1

YOUR LICENSE TO DRIVE

Under the laws of Alabama, every person (with some exceptions) must be licensed to operate a motor vehicle upon public streets and roadways. The Alabama Department of Public Safety issues driver licenses.

This chapter tells you who may qualify and what you must do to obtain an Alabama driver license. If applying for a motorcycle license, you should study the motorcycle manual.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Every Alabama resident who operates any motor vehicle (except a farm tractor or implement of husbandry temporarily upon any street or highway) must have a driver license. All applicants who have not been licensed in Alabama or whose Alabama license has been expired for over three years must pass the required drivers examination. A holder of an out of state license which has not been expired over one year does not have to pass a driver examination.

AN ALABAMA DRIVER LICENSE IS NOT REQUIRED FOR THESE PEOPLE

The following persons may drive a motor vehicle upon the streets or highways in Alabama without an Alabama driver license.

- Any person in the employ or service of the United States Federal Government while driving or operating a motor vehicle owned or leased by the United States Federal Government.
- Any person while driving any farm tractor or implement of husbandry temporarily operated or moved on the highway.
- A resident at least 16 years old who has in his immediate possession a valid driver license issued to him in his home state or country. This includes military personnel from other states and their families stationed in Alabama, even though their assignment in Alabama may be of long duration.
- A non-resident at least 16 years old whose home country does not require licensing of drivers may operate a motor vehicle as a driver of not more than 90 days in any calendar year, if the vehicle operated is duly registered for the current year in the home country of the non-resident.
- A non-resident who has a valid driver license from the state of previous residence may drive without an Alabama license for 30 days after becoming a resident of the state.
- Any non-resident full time student properly enrolled and registered in a school, college, university, or trade school in this state, who holds a valid license from his home state or country.

WHO CANNOT BE LICENSED

An Alabama driver license shall not be issued to:

- Persons under 16 years of age.
- Any person whose driving rights or privilege is suspended or revoked in any state.
- Any person afflicted with or suffering from a physical or mental impairment which, in the opinion of the Director of Public Safety or examining officer, will prevent such person from exercising reasonable and ordinary control over a motor vehicle.
- Any person failing to pass the examination when required.
- Any person who is a habitual drunkard or addicted to the use of narcotic drugs.
- Any person who is under the age of 19 that is not in compliance with Alabama Act 93-368, which requires secondary school graduation or current attendance, with limited exclusions.

AUTHORIZED PRESENCE

All applicants for an original Alabama driver license or identification card must submit proof of authorized presence in the United States as authorized under federal law. This will help us safeguard the accuracy and integrity of Department of Public Safety documents and reduce the high cost involved as a result of using fraudulent identification in obtaining goods and services.

A. Identification Requirements

Applicants for an Alabama Driver License or Identification card must:

1. Present two (2) forms of identification, at least one of which contains a photograph, (one form must be from the "Primary Listing").
2. Present three (3) forms of non-photo identification (one form must be from the "Primary Listing").
3. Applicants transferring an Out of State driver license must present their Out of State driver license, Social Security card (or one of the other acceptable documents for social security number) **AND** one other form from the "Primary Listing".

For the purpose of administering the licensing of non-working authorized foreign national applicants for an Alabama driver license and non-driver identification cards, the Department of Public Safety presumes their status in the United States to be unauthorized until the applicant presents documents evidencing, to the satisfaction of the Department, that their presence in the United States is authorized.

In addition to the identification requirements above, an applicant who has been deported from the United States must present proof from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) that their legal presence status has been restored.

B. Legal Date of Birth Requirements

All applicants for any type of Alabama driver license or non-driver identification card must meet the age requirements relevant to the license or permit.

A record existing on the driver license database, as a result of a previously issued Alabama driver license of Alabama non-driver identification card may be considered proof of birth date. If no such record exists, only an original or certified copy of one of the "Primary Listed" documents could be accepted as proof of birth date.

C. Documentation Requirements

1. Only a document, which is an original or a copy certified by the issuing agency, will be accepted. If a document is a copy, the certification attached to it must be original.

2. A document would be unacceptable if:

(a) Correction fluid (white-out) has been used on pertinent information.
(b) Erasure markings appear on pertinent information.
(c) Pertinent information is missing.
(d) Pertinent information is illegible.
(e) Alterations appear in pertinent information.
(f) A fold, crease, tear or hole obliterates or distorts pertinent information
(g) A staple obliterates or distorts pertinent information.
(h) The document is not properly signed.

D. Social Security Number Requirements

1. Proof of Social Security Number must be presented by the applicant under the following circumstances, unless the number is already in the database:

(a) When applying for any class driver license, driver license renewal, vessel license, or non-driver identification card, whether or not the applicant wishes to have the number appear on the license.

2. An original of one of the following documents is required as proof of a Social Security number:

(a) Social Security Card
(b) A certified letter (on letterhead) from the Social Security Administration stating the person's name and Social Security number.
(c) United States Military Identification Card.
(d) United States Military form DD 214.
(e) Medicare/Medicaid Identification Card (if Social Security number is followed by the letter A).
(f) W2 Tax Form.

E. Notarization Requirements

1. Notarized documents must meet the following requirements:

(a) The notary's seal or stamp must be affixed to the document and must be legible.

(b) The notary's name must be legible.

(c) The notary's signature must be present.

(d) The complete date that the notary's commission expires must be legible and must have been current on the date the document was notarized.

(e) The state in which the notary is commissioned must be legible.

F. Acceptable documentation for proof of name, date of birth and authorized presence documents must be original or copies certified by issuing agency. Unless otherwise noted, documents must be current or be of the type that does not expire. Immigration documents must reflect at least 160 days allowable time remaining in the United States.

All applicants under the age of 19 must present a current Student Enrollment/Exclusion Form (DL-1-93). Forms may be obtained at your school or any driver license office. Forms must be completed and signed by authorized personnel.

PRIMARY DOCUMENTS

(May include date of birth)

- US Birth Certificate**

(Hospital record/certificate not acceptable)

- US Passport* (current)
- Alabama Identification Card
- Alabama Driver License
- Certificate of Naturalization
- Certificate of Citizenship
- US Certificate of Birth Abroad
- Resident Alien Card
- Social Security Card***
- Valid Foreign Passport

SECONDARY DOCUMENTS *(May not include date of birth)*

- Driver License issued in the US
- International Driver License/Permit*
- Marriage License
- US Armed Forces Driver License
- US Military DD-214
- Professional License
- Selective Service Card
- Veterans Administration
- Medical Insurance ID Card*
- School Identification (with photo)
- School Enrollment Form
- W2 Tax Form
- Documents from Court of Record, Divorce Decree, Adoption Decree, Name Change Decree, Bankruptcy Decree.
- Employment Authorization Card—with valid social security card
- †Valid visa authorizing presence in the country for a period exceeding six months—*see 5(a) on next page for listing of visa classifications acceptable for consideration.*

continued

* ***Not expired***
** ***Required for all 15-year-old applicants under Title 36-6-8(b)***
*** ***Required for all Driver License***

SECONDARY DOCUMENTS

continued

- Valid Employment Authorization Document (EAD) issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- Valid I-94 Arrival/Departure Record issued by the DHS
- Original Form I-797, Notice of Action, issued by the DHS showing approval of change of status or extension of stay
- Original Form I-797, Notice of Action, issued by the DHS evidencing timely filing of an extension petition.

†ACCEPTABLE VISA CLASSIFICATIONS

(5a) Any person lawfully present in the United States in the following nonimmigrant categories is eligible to apply for an Alabama driver's license/learner's license/non-driver identification card/vessel license: A, B, E, F, G-4, H, I, J, K, L, M, NATO, O, P, Q, R, S, T, TN, TD, TPS or U visa categories.

Note: F and M visa holders must also present Form I-20; J-1 and J-2 visa holders must also present Form DS-2019 or IAP-66.

FOREIGN EXAMINATIONS

Driver License written examinations are available in foreign languages: Chinese, Farsi, French, German, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese. Information on the administration of these tests may be obtained at the Driver License District Office.

HEARING IMPAIRED EXAMINATIONS

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services in cooperation with the Alabama Department of Public Safety has made it possible for driver license written examinations to be administered to the hearing impaired in American Sign Language. This is administered using our automated testing equipment and is available only at certain Driver License offices. Information on the administration of these tests may be obtained at the Driver License District Office.

ORAL EXAMINATIONS

Examinations are available for applicants that are unable to comprehend the knowledge tests. Oral Examinations may be administered using our automated testing equipment.

THE LEARNER'S LICENSE AND RESTRICTED LICENSE

Alabama Drivers License Graduated License law became effective October 1, 2002. Contact your local driver license office for information or log on to *www.dps.alabama.gov*. The minimum driving age in Alabama is 16. There are certain exceptions and restrictions:

LEARNER'S LICENSE - FIFTEEN YEARS OLD – Any person 15 years of age may obtain a restricted Learner's License for the purpose of learning to safely and effectively operate a motor vehicle. The examination for the license is taken from information in the Alabama Driver's Manual. Upon passing the required examination, the applicant will be issued a Class D Alabama driver license with a "Y" restriction. The "Y" restriction indicates that the holder may operate a motor vehicle while accompanied by a person who is 21 years

of age or older and, who is duly licensed in this state or a licensed or certified driving instructor occupying the seat beside the operator. After the holder's sixteenth birthday, the holder may operate a motor vehicle with any licensed driver occupying the seat beside the driver. This Learner's License is valid for four years, and can be renewed once.

LEARNER'S LICENSE - SIXTEEN YEARS OLD - Any person 16 years of age or older who, except for his lack of instruction in operating a motor vehicle, would otherwise be qualified to obtain a driver license, may obtain a Learner's License upon passing the required examination. The examination for this license is taken from information in the Alabama Driver Manual. After passing the required examination, the applicant will be issued a Class D Alabama driver license with a "Y" restriction. The "Y" restriction **indicates that the holder may operate a motor vehicle with a licensed driver occupying the seat beside the driver**. This license is valid for four years.

A Learner's License may be suspended or revoked in the same manner and for the same cause as a driver license and may also be revoked for any violations of the terms and conditions on which it was issued.

DRIVER'S LICENSE - Any person 16 years of age but under 18 years of age who has held a Learner's License for six months or until their 18th birthday and has developed the necessary skills to safely operate a motor vehicle may present himself to his local driver license examiner for the road test. He must surrender his Learners License at the time of the road test. Upon passing the road test, the applicant will be issued a new regular license with the "Y" restriction removed for the remainder of the four- year period. This will be at no cost to the applicant.

MOTOR DRIVEN CYCLE LICENSE - FOURTEEN AND 15 YEAR OLD – Any person 14 or 15 years of age may obtain a restricted license to operate a motor driven cycle weighing not more than 200 pounds, nor exceeding 150cc engine displacement. The examination for this license is taken from the Alabama Motorcycle Manual. Upon passing the required examination, the applicant will be issued a Class M Alabama driver license with a "B" restriction. The "B" restriction indicates that the holder may operate a motor driven cycle only. This license is valid for four years.

MOTORCYCLE LICENSE - SIXTEEN YEARS OLD AND OLDER – Any person 16 years of age or older may obtain a license to operate a motorcycle. A motorcycle is defined as a motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground but excluding a tractor. The examination for this license is taken from the Alabama Motorcycle Manual. Upon passing the required examination, the applicant will be issued a Class M Alabama driver license. Class M indicates that the holder may operate a motorcycle only. The license is valid for four years.

In addition to the above licenses, the Director of Public Safety has the authority to impose restrictions on your driver license when it appears that these restrictions are necessary for you to operate a motor vehicle

safely. A common restriction is the requirement of wearing corrective lenses while driving. Another is the use of mechanical devices that aid physically impaired persons. Operation of a motor vehicle in violation of restrictions may result in the loss of your license.

VESSEL LICENSE–Any person 12 years of age or older may obtain a vessel license upon passing the required vessel examination at your local driver license office. You may also present an approved Certificate of Completion of a Boating Safety Course. Applicant must meet identification requirements.

VISION SCREENING

Those restricted to corrective lenses must wear them when taking the road test.

If, as a result of the vision examination, it is found that lenses are needed to improve eyesight, you will be required to wear corrective lenses while driving. If you don't pass your vision examination, you will be required to have your eyes examined by a licensed eye specialist and return the report to the examiner. If the report shows that you can see well enough to operate a motor vehicle safely, you will be allowed to take the remainder of the test.

KNOWLEDGE TEST

The fee for each knowledge test is $5.00, no checks accepted. This test contains questions on Alabama traffic laws, road signs, and rules of safe driving. The test will be taken from material found in this booklet. This manual can also be found in digital format on the DPS web site at – http://www.dps.alabama.gov

If you are applying for a learner's license and pass the knowldege test, the examiner will issue your learner's license upon payment of the required fee.

If you are applying for a regular driver license and pass the road test, you will be issued your driver license upon payment of the required fee

If you are applying for a motor driven cycle license and a learner's license, you will be required to take both the motor driven cycle and the learner's license examination.

If you are applying for a motor driven cycle or a motorcycle license, you will need to study the material found in the motorcycle manual. You may pick this manual up at a Driver License Examining Station, State Trooper Office, Probate Judge or License Commissioner Office.

Automated testing is available to all applicants taking the driver license knowledge test.

THE ROAD TEST

The road test is the final step toward qualifying for the **privilege** of driving on public streets and highways. A Department of Public Safety driver license examiner will administer the road test. You must furnish a vehicle for the road test. Sixteen year old applicants must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. A seventeen year old applicant doesn't have to be accompanied

by a parent or guardian.

The examiner will check the vehicle before the test begins. It must be in safe operating condition and have the required equipment or the road test **will not be administered**. You must furnish a vehicle with required documents, proof of insurance and vehicle registration, for the road test.

The equipment required for the examination includes rear view mirror, horn, windshield wipers, two separate methods of applying brakes, muffler, headlights, rear tail lights, valid license plate, stop light, directional signals, seat belts, and, if applicable, window tint compliance sticker. The license examiner may refuse to give the road test in event of hazardous weather, road conditions or an inability to effectively communicate.

The driving test will determine your ability to operate a motor vehicle properly under traffic conditions. Ordinary maneuvers may include:

- Right and left turns
- Signaling (hand or approved electrical devices)
- Use of marked and unmarked lanes of traffic
- Backing of vehicle
- Observance of traffic signs and signals
- Making a quick stop
- General control of vehicle
- Observation
- Three point turn. Stop vehicle at right edge of curb. When safe, make sharp left turn; back vehicle. Move forward in right lane. Do not bump curb or use driveway.
- Parking (uphill or downhill)

During the test, you should turn your head when you observe traffic and look over your right shoulder while backing to indicate to the examiner you are aware of conditions around you. The examiner must mark items during the test indicating "acceptable" or "needs training." Do not be distracted by the scoring, as it does not indicate you are receiving all bad marks. No passengers or pets are permitted in the vehicle during the road test. Loose items like cameras or radios should not be in the car during the road test.

Causes for immediate failure and termination of the road test are:

- Violation of a traffic law.
- A dangerous action.
- Any accident which you could have prevented, regardless of legal fault.
- Lack of cooperation or a refusal to perform any maneuver.

If you fail the test, you will be allowed to try again after you have had time to improve your driving skills.

Unless you already have a legal right to drive in Alabama, you must come for the road test in a vehicle driven by a licensed driver. The licensed driver

must remain to drive the vehicle away if you fail.

When you have passed all tests, had your photo taken and paid the required fees, you will receive a temporary license with your photo that gives you the privilege of driving a motor vehicle. You will receive your permanent license by mail. We must have your current mailing address to receive your license. The license must be carried on your person at all times while driving.

LICENSE FEES

Class A Commercial License	$53.00	Motor Driven Cycle License	$23.00
Class B Commercial License	$43.00	Motorcycle License	$23.00
Class C Commercial License	$23.00	Learner's License	$23.00
CDL Permit	$23.00	Duplicate License	$18.00
School Bus Only	$23.00	Identification Cards	$23.00
Class D Operator License	$23.00		

License fees shown above are subject to change and will be slightly higher in counties where local legislation permits a higher fee.

The minimum age requirements for Alabama Driver License and Non-Driver Identification cards are as follows:

TYPE	AGE
Identification Card	No Age Requirement
Class D Learner License	15 years old
Class D	16 years old
Motor Driven Cycle	14 years old
Vessel License	12 years old
CDL Class A Unrestricted	21 years old
CDL Class B Unrestricted	21 years old
CDL Class B Restricted	18 years old
CDL Class C	21 years old

RE-EXAMINATION

When it appears that you have some physical or mental impairment which might affect your driving ability, you may be required to furnish a statement from a doctor showing your medical history and present condition as it pertains to your driving ability.

Under some circumstances, you may be required to appear before a driver license examiner at any time after you have been issued a license to prove your ability to drive a motor vehicle. If you fail to report for such a driver test or fail to submit any required statements from your doctor, your driver license can be revoked.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS (NON-DRIVER)

A citizen of Alabama may apply to the local driver license examiner for a non-driver identification card. The same degree of proof of identification required of applicants for driver licenses in the state shall be required of applicants for non-driver identification cards. Identification cards are issued to applicants who do not physically qualify for a driver license, do not have a current Alabama driver license, or who wish to discontinue driving and surrender their license. The non-driver identification card bears a number and the name, date of birth, address, description of the person, and a color photo. The Identification Cards are available wherever driver licenses are available.

RENEWING YOUR LICENSE

Your driver license expires four years after it is issued and the expiration date is shown on the license. The license may be renewed at any time within 60 days prior to expiration at your Probate Judge or License Commissioner's Office.

Military personnel, their dependents, students, or other licensed Alabama drivers who are temporarily out of state due to their job requirement ***may be eligible*** to apply if you have obtained an Alabama driver license with your picture and signature in the last four years. Application available on *www.dps.alabama.gov*.

You must submit the required fee of $23.00 for renewal license or $18.00 for duplicate license by **money order** payable to the Driver License Division. **No personal checks.** Mail to the Driver License Division, P.O. Box 1471, Montgomery, Alabama 36102-1471. The licensee's full name, date of birth, driver license number, social security number and out-of-state address should be included along with documentation providing reason for being out-of-state. A license will be issued, provided a photo and signature are on file and mailed to the licensee's out-of-state address. The license must bear an Alabama address. This does not apply to holders of a commercial driver license.

Alabama law provides a grace period of 60 days after expiration date of a driver's license for the purpose of driver license renewal and the driver license shall be valid for this time period. An Alabama driver license may be renewed without examination within a 3-year period after expiration. A license issued under these circumstances will be valid for a four-year period from the last expiration date instead of four years from date of issue. Even though license renewal is possible up to three years after expiration, a person cannot legally operate a motor vehicle with an expired license.

DUPLICATE LICENSE

If your license is lost, destroyed, or becomes illegible, but has not yet expired, you should apply for a duplicate license at your Probate Judge or License Commissioner Office. No examination is necessary but **proof of**

identity such as a certified birth certificate is required at time of application.

Any person making a false affidavit in obtaining a duplicate driver license may be charged with Forgery (Title 13A-9-3), Perjury (Title 13A-10-102) or both under the Criminal Code of Alabama and punished accordingly by fine, imprisonment or both.

CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS

If you wish to change your name, you should present proper documents (marriage certificate or court order) to your probate judge or license commissioner. A duplicate fee will be charged for a corrected license. Commercial Driver License operators must go to a Driver License Office.

After changing your address within Alabama, you have 30 days in which to notify the Driver License Division, P. 0. Box 1471, Montgomery, Alabama 36102-1471. To update your address on your driver license or non-driver identification card, apply for a dulicate license at a driver license examining office or renewal office (judge of probate or license commissioner's office). An $18 fee will be charged for the corrected, duplicate license. Before leaving the office, be sure and confirm your correct mailing address to ensure you will receive your license or non-driver identification card. **Alabama driver licenses and non-driver identification cards are not forwarded.**

ORGAN DONOR PROGRAM

All persons age 18 and older may participate in Alabama's Organ Donor Program. The Alabama Organ Center strongly recommends you discuss this decision with your family. For more information, please **contact the Alabama Organ Center toll-free at 1-800-252-3677**.

CLASS OF LICENSE

DETERMINING WHICH CLASS OF LICENSE YOU NEED

CLASS OF LICENSE

Special endorsement may be needed for Classes A, B, C		**If you want to get a license to drive this type of vehicle or a similar type vehicle**
A	**Combination vehicles GCWR over 26,000 lbs. Towed vehicle(s) over 10,000 lbs.**	
B	**Trucks or buses over 26,000 lbs. GVWR Any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 lbs. GVWR**	
C	**Vehicles weighing 26,000 lbs. GVWR or less: -Placarded for hazardous materials -Designed to seat more than 15 people including driver**	
D	**Generally, all passenger vehicles, except vehicle in Classes A, B, C, or M**	
M	**Motorcycles and motor-driven cycles**	 **SPECIAL RESTRICTIONS MAY APPLY**
V	**Motorized watercraft**	

COMMERCIAL DRIVER LICENSE

Alabama adopted the Federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 and is part of a nationally uniform system of classifying, testing, and licensing commercial vehicle drivers.

If you drive a commercial vehicle that falls into one of the following classifications, you must secure an Alabama Commercial Driver License (CDL).

CLASS A - This classification applies only to "combination" vehicles with a Gross Combination Weight Rating (GCWR) exceeding 26,000 pounds, provided the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating (GVWR) of the vehicle being towed exceeds 10,000 pounds.

The holder of a Class A license, which includes any appropriate endorsements, may operate all vehicles included in Class B, C, & D.

CLASS B - This class includes single or combination vehicles where the GVWR of the single vehicle exceeds 26,000 pounds. The vehicle in tow must not exceed 10,000 pounds. Class B licensees, with appropriate endorsements, may drive all vehicles in Class C or D.

CLASS C - Vehicles designed to transport 16 or more passengers, including the driver, and vehicles placarded for hazardous materials, that do not meet the criteria for Class A or B above fall under this classification and may drive all vehicles in Class D.

CDL Endorsements are required for double/triple trailers, tanker vehicles, passenger vehicles and vehicles placarded for hazardous materials.

ENDORSEMENTS

N – Tanks 1,000 gallons or greater
H – Hazardous materials
X – Tanks and Haz Mat
T – Double/triple trailers
P – Greater than 15 passengers including driver
S – School bus

Commercial Drivers Manuals and information are available at your local driver license office.

VESSEL LICENSE

In 1994, the Alabama Boating Safety Reform Act was passed requiring operator certification for all operators of motorized watercraft. Persons ages 12 years old and older may obtain a vessel license.

In 2001, The Boating Safety Enhancement Act was passed mandating anyone who turned 12 years old after January 1, 2002, may, after obtaining a vessel license, operate a vessel **only** if an adult 21 years old or older with a vessel license, is onboard and in a position to take immediate control of the vessel. A licensed operator, 14 years old or older, may operate alone.

Persons born before April 28, 1954 are exempt from examination but are required to go to their driver license office to have vessel class issued. Vessel manuals are available at your local driver license office. The same identification is required for first time applicants getting a vessel license if they do not already have an Alabama Driver License or Non-Driver Identification Card.

CHAPTER 2

YOU MAY LOSE YOUR LICENSE

You are responsible for obeying all traffic laws. If you are arrested for violating the law and convicted, you may, in addition to the punishment handed down by the court, lose your driver license through cancellation, revocation, suspension, or disqualification. Any person whose driver license has been canceled, suspended, revoked, or disqualified must pay a reinstatement fee of not less than $100 in addition to meeting other requirements of state law before being relicensed. Failure to surrender your driver's license within the time allowed as directed when canceled, revoked, or suspended, will result in an additional $50 fee. Reinstatement resulting from drug related convictions require an additional $25 fee. Suspensions resulting from non-payment of child support require an additional $50 fee when reinstating the license.

CANCELLATION

The Director of Public Safety is authorized to cancel any driver license upon determining that a person was not entitled to the license. Failing to give required or correct information on a driver license application or committing any fraud in making an application is also grounds for license cancellation.

REVOCATION

A driver license may be revoked if a driver is convicted of certain offenses. After the period of revocation has expired, the driver may apply for a new driver license and will be required to take and pass the complete examinations.

The Director must revoke your license upon receiving a record of your conviction for:

- Manslaughter or homicide resulting from the operation of a motor vehicle.
- Driving or being in actual physical control of a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor upon a second or subsequent conviction.
- Driving a motor vehicle while a habitual user or under the influence of a controlled substance to a degree rendering you incapable of safely driving a motor vehicle upon a second or subsequent conviction.
- Using a motor vehicle in the commission of a felony.
- Failures to stop, render aid, or identify yourself in the event of a motor vehicle accident resulting in the death or personal injury of another.
- Perjury or the making of a false affidavit or statement under oath to the Director regarding driver license laws or under any other laws relating to the ownership or operation of motor vehicles.

- Three reckless driving convictions within 12 months.
- Unauthorized use of a motor vehicle belonging to another.

SUSPENSION

A driver license may be suspended if a driver is convicted of certain offenses or is judged incompetent to operate a motor vehicle. After the period of suspension, the driver license will be reinstated unless it expired during the period of the suspension, or unless all the requirements of the suspension were not met.

Your driver license may be suspended if you:

- Have been convicted with such frequency of serious offenses against traffic regulations governing the movement of vehicles to indicate disrespect for traffic laws, and a disregard for the safety of other persons on the highways.
- Are a habitually reckless or negligent driver of a motor vehicle as established by a record of accidents or other evidence.
- Are incompetent to drive a motor vehicle.
- Have permitted an unlawful or fraudulent use of your license or mutilated such license.
- Have committed an offense in another state which, if committed in this state, would be grounds for suspension or revocation.
- Are convicted of fleeing or attempting to elude a police officer.
- Are convicted of racing on the highways.
- Fail to answer a traffic court summons on time or fail to pay.
- Are ages 15 through 18 and withdraw from school under certain conditions prior to graduation.
- Fail to maintain SR-22 insurance when required.
- Have non-payment of Child Support.
- Have medical reasons.
- Have 4 or more points accrued on driving record or 2 or more moving traffic violations on a GDL (Graduated Driver License).

THE ALABAMA POINT SYSTEM

The point system has been instituted in Alabama as a means of identifying the problem driver (one who continually disobeys the motor vehicle laws).

Points are assessed for various violations as follows:

• Any conviction which resulted from a charge that involved the drinking of alcoholic beverages and the driving of a motor vehicle but did not require mandatory revocation of the driver license	6 Points
• Reckless Driving	6 Points
• Speeding In Excess of 85 MPH (86 or above)	5 Points
• Failure to Yield Right of Way	5 Points
• Passing Stopped School Bus	5 Points
• Wrong Side of Road	4 Points
• Illegal Passing	4 Points
• Following Too Closely	3 Points
• Disregarding Traffic Control Device (stop sign, traffic light)	3 Points
• Speeding in Excess of Posted Limits	2 Points
• All Other Moving Violations	2 Points

The following schedule is used to determine the length of a suspension period:

12-14 Points in a 2-year period	60 days
15-17 Points in a 2-year period	90 days
18-20 Points in a 2-year period	120 days
21-23 Points in a 2-year period	180 days
24 and above points in a 2-year period	365 days

After a traffic conviction is 2 years old, it loses its point count for suspension purposes but remains on a driver's record.

The Department will notify you in writing at your last known address when a suspension action is taken against your license. You are entitled to an administrative hearing in your home county on a suspension action. This request should be made in writing to Driver License Division, P.O. Box 1471, Montgomery, Alabama 36102-1471. The request should include your full name, birth date, and driver license number.

CHAPTER 3

THE DRIVING TASK

Driving a motor vehicle is a serious responsibility, not only to you, but also to all others on the road. To be a good, safe driver you must know the rules and respect them, know and follow proper driving procedures, and have a good attitude. The proper attitude toward the laws and toward others on the road is extremely important. Courtesy toward others should be practiced at all times.

GOOD DRIVING HABITS

It is just as easy to develop good driving habits as it is to fall into bad habits. Safety techniques begin the moment you step into the car. Start by forming good habits immediately and use them for EVERY trip, whether it's for just a few blocks or for several hundred miles.

ENTERING THE CAR

Develop a routine for entering and leaving your car. Adjust the seat, mirrors, and check passengers to be sure they are properly seated and do not interfere with your driving. Before switching on the ignition, **buckle your safety belt** and see that all passengers do likewise.

If you are driving a hand-shift vehicle equipped with a manual transmission, push in the clutch before turning the ignition key. If you have an automatic transmission, be sure the indicator is in park or neutral and depress the brake pedal as you turn the key.

POSTURE AND STEERING

Good posture at the steering wheel is important. It will result in better vision, control, and ability to maneuver in an emergency. You should sit erect, comfortably gripping the outside rim of the steering wheel with both hands. Don't grip the wheel so tightly as to restrict reflexes but keep a firm grip to maintain control. Always keep both hands on the wheel except when it is necessary to remove one for signaling or for another purpose necessary to the operation of the vehicle.

STARTING FROM A PARKING PLACE

In preparing to leave a parallel parking spot, look over your shoulder as well as in rear view mirrors and wait until the way is clear before pulling into traffic. Indicate your intention by signaling. Enter traffic in the nearest lane and remain in that lane until it is safe to change into another lane.

ON THE ROAD

You must drive within a single traffic lane without weaving from one lane to another or straddling the lane marking. You are in a traffic lane whenever

driving on any street or highway. A traffic lane is part of a street or highway wide enough to permit safe operation of a vehicle or line of vehicles. Often lanes are not marked, but they are there whether marked or not.

RULES FOR TURNS

These are some of the rules for making safe, courteous and legal turns:

- Prepare for the turn before you get there. Don't make the decision to turn at the last moment. Observe and be alert.
- Get into the proper turn lane well ahead of the place where you will make your turn. Be sure it is safe to make the change.
- At least 100 feet before making the turn, signal your intentions. Continue the signal until you are ready to make the actual turn. Signals are given to inform both pedestrians and drivers of your intentions. Both hands should be on the steering wheel when actually turning. Pedestrians have the right of way over the motor vehicle.
- Reduce speed before making turns.
- Always finish your turn in the proper lane.
- Make sure in advance that it is safe to turn. Check to the front, rear, and sides for cars and pedestrians, and also watch for situations developing in the street you will enter upon turning.
- Be certain your signals are discontinued after completing a maneuver.
- During the daytime, hand and arm signals may be used in addition to signal lights. Reflection of bright sunlight may make it difficult for other motorists to see your flashing signal light.

TURNING FROM FOUR-LANE HIGHWAYS

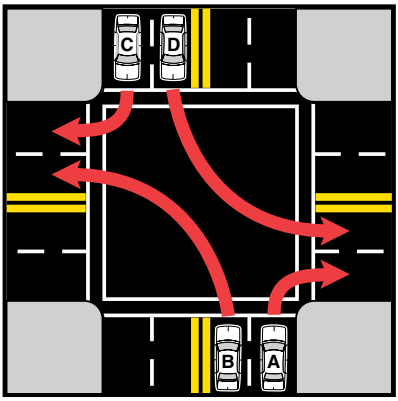
In making a right turn from a four-lane or divided highway, enter the right lane well in advance of the turn and make a tight turn into the right lane of the cross street.

For a left turn, move to the lane nearest the center line or traffic divider and turn from the inside lane. Avoid a wide swing during your turn. Enter the cross street just to the right of the centerline. Some intersections are marked to permit turns from more than one lane and you may make your turns as indicated by signs or pavement markings.

PROPER TURNING RULES

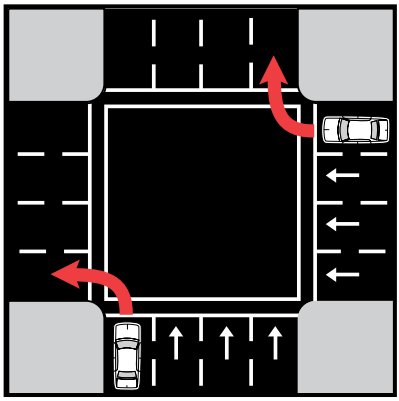
- Plan ahead.
- Be in the proper lane well before the turn (follow proper steps to change lanes).
- Signal the direction you plan to turn.
- Reduce your speed and check for persons and vehicles in your turning path.

- Turn into the proper lane (see Turning Diagrams).
- Adjust speed to the flow of traffic.

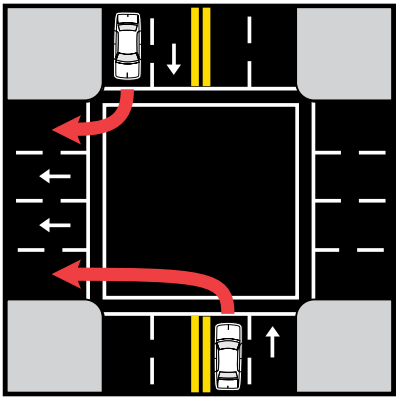


Right turns from two-way
Car "A" and Car "C"

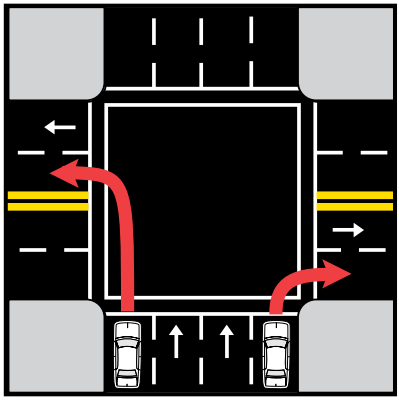
Left turns from two-way
Car "B" and Car "D"



Turns from one-way onto one-way

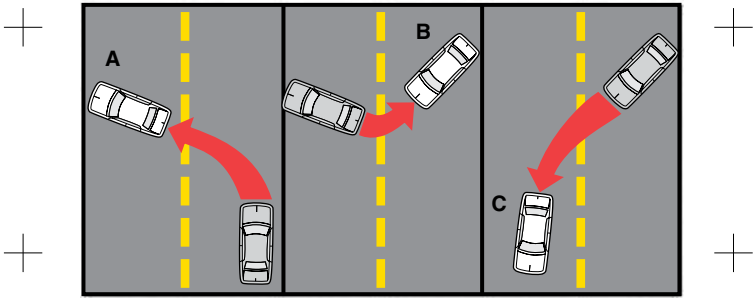


Turns from two-way to one-way



Turns from one-way to two-way

THREE-POINT TURN



When making a three-point-turn, turning your vehicle around so that you are driving in the opposite direction from the direction that you were traveling, the three-point-turn **must** be made without endangering other traffic. They are normally permitted where your vehicle can be seen for a great distance and where traffic is such that making a three-point-turn would not constitute a hazard. Three-point turns are not permitted on interstate freeways, on curves, or near the top of hills where you cannot be seen by drivers of other vehicles approaching from either direction within 500 feet. Three-point turns are governed by local ordinances and there may be no signs to warn you. Prohibitory signs are usually posted at hazardous locations.

CURVES

Slow down before entering curves because of the danger of running over the center line or leaving the roadway. A driver should enter a curve slow enough to enable him to accelerate slightly when actually rounding the curve.

SHARING THE ROAD WITH MOTORCYCLES

The increasing popularity of motorcycle riding is evident by the variety of riders and two-wheeled motor vehicles appearing on our streets and highways. Motorcycle accident statistics show that a substantial percentage of the accidents involve riders with limited experience.

Motorcyclists have the same rights and responsibilities on public roadways as other highway users. While legally everyone must abide by the same traffic laws, there are special situations and conditions drivers need to be aware of so they can share the road safely with those who choose to use two wheels instead of four.

Why is it so important to be aware of motorcycles and their operation?

Primarily because motorcycles are not easily identified in traffic. Motorcycles are only about two feet wide compared with the five-to-six-foot width of an automobile. Even when seen, it's difficult for some drivers to judge how far away motorcyclists are.

Finally, even when seen and the distance away is correctly judged, some drivers can't tell how fast motorcyclists are traveling. Being alert to this

special perceptual problem and how motorcyclists react in specific situations can help to avoid colliding with motorcyclists in traffic. The following are a few of the specific situations that call for special attention by motorcyclists and the driver.

Left turns in front of an oncoming motorcyclist account for a large percentage of car/cycle injury producing accidents. The problem of not seeing the motorcyclist is two fold: car drivers may fail to pick the cyclist out of the traffic scene, or drivers may fail to judge the speed of the oncoming motorcycle. The correct behavior is to:

LOOK AND LOOK AGAIN. MAKE SURE YOU KNOW THE SPEED OF THE MOTORCYCLE BEFORE MAKING A LEFT TURN.

Turn signals are not automatically self-canceling on most motorcycles. At times, the rider may forget to turn the signal off.

Before making a turn in front of any vehicle, BE SURE THE VEHICLE IS TURNING and not continuing straight with a forgotten turn signal still blinking.

Following distance behind the motorcyclist should be the same 2-second following distance given any other vehicle. Following too closely may make the rider nervous, causing the rider's attention to be distracted from the road and traffic ahead.

Lane usage for the motorcyclist is critical. Motorcycles are entitled to the same full lane width as all other vehicles. A skilled motorcycle operator is CONSTANTLY CHANGING positions within a lane to maximize being seen, to see the roadway better, and to compensate for objects on or near the road. Drivers should never move into the same lane alongside a motorcycle even if the lane is wide and cyclist is riding far to one side. It is not only illegal, but extremely hazardous.

Inclement weather and slippery surfaces can be real problems for motorcycles. Drivers should allow even more following distance for motorcyclists when it's dark, raining, or the road surface is wet and slippery. Skilled motorcycle riders will slow down under these conditions. Remember that motorcycles only have two wheels compared to four for a car. Be alert to the problem of glare that rain and wet surfaces create, especially at night. It is easy to lose sight of a motorcycle and its rider under the best of circumstances. Rain, wind, dust, and smog affect the cyclist's vision. The cyclist's face shield, windshield, or goggles help but cannot completely overcome all the vision limitations under these conditions.

Cross winds can be hazardous to motorcyclists. Windy conditions can actually move a motorcycle out of its lane of travel. Areas to look out for are wide-open, long stretches of highways and bridges. Fast-moving, large trucks have been known to create windblasts, which can startle a motorcyclist, and under certain conditions, actually move the motorcyclist out of the path of travel. Drivers should be alert to these conditions to prepare themselves for the possible quick change in speed or direction of the motorcycle.

Road surfaces and things in the road that do not normally affect other

vehicles can create problems for the cyclist. Gravel, debris, pavement seams, small animals, and even manhole covers may cause the motorcyclist to change speed or direction.

Railroad grade crossings may be rough or cross the road at an angle. The rider may slow down or change direction so the tracks can be crossed head on. The cyclist may rise off the seat to help cushion the shock of a rough crossing.

Metal or grated bridges create a wobbling sensation in the front tire of the motorcycle greater than the feeling experienced in a car. This wobbling sensation may cause the inexperienced motorcyclist to quickly change direction or slow down.

Grooved pavement, when first encountered by a motorcyclist, may create a similar wobbling sensation. To overcompensate for this feeling, the rider may slow down or change lanes suddenly.

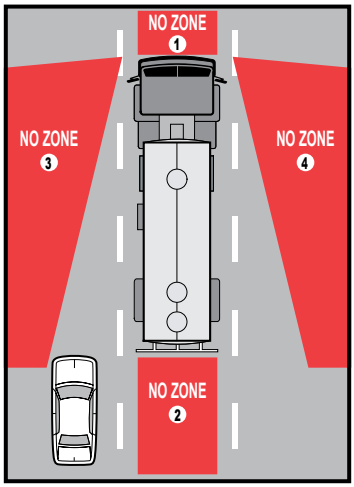
Regardless of who is legally at fault in car/cycle accidents, the motorcyclist usually is the loser. The driver's general awareness of motorcycles in traffic, combined with special attention in the situations described above, can reduce motorcycle accidents, injuries, and fatalities.

SHARING THE ROAD WITH LARGE VEHICLES

When sharing the road with trucks, buses or other large vehicles, there are some special tips that are important to remember:

No-Zones are danger areas around trucks and buses where crashes are more likely to occur. Some of the No-Zones are blind spots where your car "disappears" from the view of the truck or bus driver.

No-Zones



Side No-Zones: ***Don't hang out on either side of trucks or buses!*** They have large blind spots on both sides. If you can't see the driver's face in the side-view mirror, the driver can't see you. If that driver needs to change

lanes for any reason, you could be in big trouble. This is especially true if there is an accident situation and the driver must take evasive action. When passing a truck or bus, always try to pass on the left and do it as quickly as possible. Get your vehicle ahead of the vehicle you are passing so the driver can see you. Do not ride alongside a truck or bus.

Rear No-Zones: ***Avoid tailgating!*** Unlike cars, trucks and buses have huge no-zones directly behind them that may extend as far as 200 feet. The truck or bus driver can't see your car and you can't see what is occurring ahead of you. If the truck or bus driver brakes suddenly, you have no place to go. When following a large vehicle at night, always dim your headlights. Bright lights will blind the driver when they reflect off the side mirrors of the bus or truck.

Front No-Zones: ***Pass safely!*** Don't cut in too quickly after passing a large vehicle. Look for the entire front of the vehicle in your rear-view mirror before pulling in front and don't slow down. Truck and bus drivers need nearly two times more room to stop. A National Safety Council study of reaction time and braking distance found that at speeds of 55 miles per hour, a passenger car needs 193 feet to stop safely and a loaded truck needs 430 feet.

Backing No-Zones: ***Pay closer attention!*** Never cross behind a truck or bus that is backing up. Hundreds of accidents occur each year because motorists and pedestrians ignore a backing vehicle. Drivers of large vehicles cannot see directly behind them. They may not be able to see you.

Turning No-Zones: ***Avoid the "squeeze play"!*** Truck and bus drivers need to swing wide to the left to safely make a right turn. Watch the driver's signal. When the right turn signal is blinking, do not attempt to pass on the right. The driver will not be able to see you and you will become trapped. It is best to wait until the truck or bus has completed the maneuver before proceeding.

PARKING

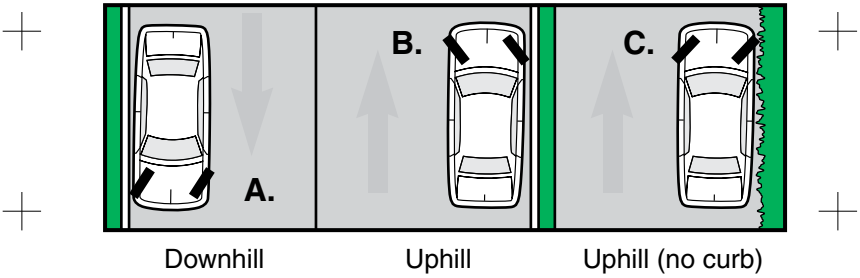
Any vehicle left standing along a rural highway for any reason must be moved off the paved or main traveled portion of the roadway. If the vehicle cannot be moved, you must take lighting and marking precautions to eliminate danger to other traffic.

PARKING ON A HILL

When parking on a hill you must make sure your car does not roll into traffic if the brakes do not hold. Always set the hand brake. Shift to the PARK position if you have one. If not, shift to reverse or low gear. If you park where there is a curb:

Facing downhill, turn your wheels toward the curb and shift into reverse gear or PARK.

Facing uphill turn your wheels away from the curb and shift into low gear or PARK. If there are no curbs, turn your wheels toward the edge of the road, whether facing uphill or downhill.



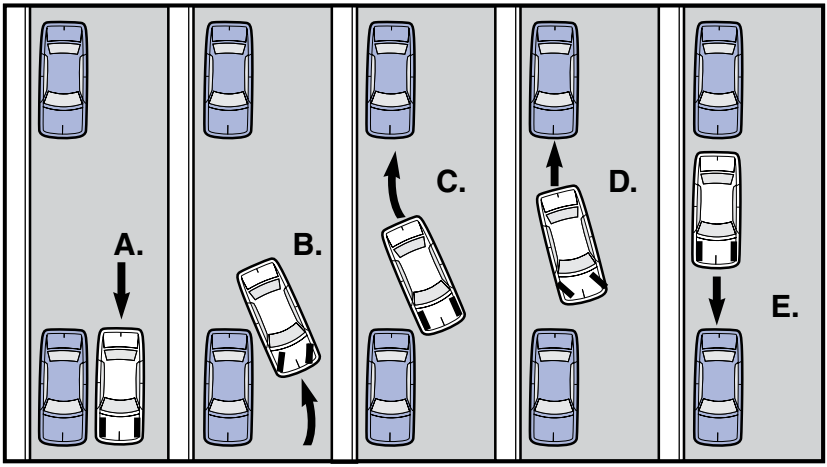
PARKING ON A HILL

A. Downhill with or without a curb, turn wheels toward curb.
B. Uphill with curb, turn wheels away from curb.
C. Uphill without curb, turn wheels to the right.

Parking is NOT allowed at the following places:

- Within intersections.
- On a crosswalk or a sidewalk.
- Within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an uncontrolled intersection.
- Within 30 feet of any flashing beacon, stop sign, or traffic control signal located at the side of a roadway.
- Within 50 feet of the nearest rail of a railroad crossing.
- Within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- In front of a driveway.
- Upon any bridge or in a tunnel.
- On the roadway side of any vehicle parked at the curb or the edge of a highway.
- Beside a curb that is painted yellow, or where official signs prohibit parking.

STEPS IN PARALLEL PARKING



A. Car 2 pulls even with car 1.

B. Car 2 maneuvers gently toward the space.

C. Car 2 turns wheels sharply.

D. Car 2 begins straightening wheels.

E. Wheels on car should be turned parallel to the curb.

BICYCLES

Traffic laws also apply to bicyclists, but sometimes both adults and children cyclists appear unaware of the seriousness of their responsibilities. Some of the younger children do not know all of the rules that apply to bicycle driving; therefore, adult cyclists should be fully aware of the state's traffic laws and set a good example by obeying them.

Motor vehicle drivers should also be aware of specific laws, which apply to bicycle drivers:

- Every bicycle driver operating upon a roadway shall ride as close as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway, except under the following situations:
  - When passing another vehicle.
  - When preparing for a left turn.
  - When reasonably necessary to avoid road or traffic conditions such as debris, opening of car doors, pedestrians, etc.
  - Bicycle drivers may ride two abreast unless they impede the normal flow of traffic.

- Bicycle drivers are required to signal for all turns, lane changes, or stops by using the same hand and arm signals as motor vehicle drivers.
- Every bicycle driver on a roadway has to wear an approved helmet.

Since cyclists travel under their own power, it is important for motor vehicle operators to be especially aware of them to prevent collisions. Following are special situations motor vehicle drivers must be aware of:

- Whenever a bicycle lane has been established on a roadway, any person operating a motor vehicle on such a roadway shall not drive in the bicycle lane except to park where parking is permitted, to enter or leave the highway, or to prepare for a turn.
- When turning across a bicycle lane, the driver shall drive the motor vehicle into the bicycle lane prior to making the turn and shall make the turn so long as such preparation for a turn shall not encroach upon the safety of the bicycle driver in the lane.
- Be especially careful when passing bicycle drivers. Make sure there is enough room between the side of your vehicle and the bicycle. When traveling at higher speeds, motor vehicles create strong wind currents which can batter a bicycle rider. Operators of such motor vehicles need to be especially cautious and courteous when passing cyclists.
- If the road is narrow and you are unable to safely pass a cyclist, do not follow too closely and do not blast the driver with your horn. Remain behind at a safe interval and warn the cyclist that you wish to pass. If possible, use an adjacent lane.
- Remember that a bicycle is sometimes difficult to see amid other traffic. Be especially watchful at intersections, when crossing sidewalks, or when entering or leaving alleys or driveways.
- During wet weather, the braking ability of a bicycle is greatly reduced. Motorists should be prepared to compensate for the cyclist's decreased ability to slow or stop.
- Since some bicycles may not be equipped with lights or reflectors, the hours of darkness or poor visibility are potentially dangerous.

ALABAMA'S SAFETY BELT AND CHILD RESTRAINT LAWS

Alabama's safety belt law requires that all front-seat occupants, regardless of age, be restrained.

Alabama's child restraint law requires that children through age 14 must be restrained when riding in motor vehicles in Alabama. The law applies to occupants of front and back seats of passenger cars, pickup trucks, vans (with seating capacity of 10 or fewer), minivans and sport utility vehicles. Violators will have points assessed against their driver record, in addition to incurring a fine of $25.

The law requires the following size appropriate restraint systems:

- Infant-only seat or convertible seat used in the rear-facing position until an infant is at least 1 year of age or 20 pounds.
- Convertible seat in the forward position or forward-facing seat until a child is at least 5 years of age or 40 pounds.
- Booster seat until a child is 6 years of age.
- Seat belt until a child is 15 years of age.

CHAPTER 4

THE DRIVER

Accident records show that over 90 percent of the highway crashes are caused by driver error, lack of knowledge, inattention, physical or mental condition, improper attitude or faulty judgment.

Any professional driver will tell you that it takes much more than basic skills to make a good driver. After learning and mastering the basics, a driver must continue to study the fine points of good driving and those physical and mental conditions that affect driving.

YOUR PERSONALITY AFFECTS YOUR DRIVING

If you are worried, distracted, or if your mind is preoccupied, you cannot count on being sufficiently alert to drive safely. Home troubles, quarrels, misunderstandings, financial worries, serious illness in the family, personal fears, or over-confidence make you far more likely to have an accident. They can make you temporarily accident-prone. Strong emotions can work the same way. Persons who have just had violent arguments or who are angry or in grief, need some time for cooling off, or for making an adjustment before they drive. Taking it out behind the wheel on streets or highways is very poor judgment and can prove an expensive way to expend emotions. Worry and safe driving do not mix. If worried, ill, nervous, frightened, angry, or depressed, let someone else drive.

As a well-adjusted person, you are more likely to make a good driver, partly because you are inclined to recognize that traffic situations require fair sharing of the road.

You act, not merely from your personal point of view, but from the point of view of all street and highway users. You have developed social responsibility.

There is something about getting behind the wheel and in control of the power, speed, and bulk of a car that reveals the type of individual you are. You can soon see whether you are inclined to be a bully, a thoughtless lawbreaker, and a self-centered lane-stealer; or whether you are reliable, courteous, and sportsmanlike. Whether a younger or an older driver, if you are psychologically and emotionally mature, your driving reflects your readiness to share the road in the interest of traffic safety. Good driving attitudes and sound actions reflect mental and emotional maturity.

CONCENTRATION

Concentration is one of the most important elements of safe driving. The driver's seat is no place for daydreaming, mental napping, window shopping, scenic viewing, or distracting conversation. Lack of concentration can dull a person's powers of observation and cause an accident that could have been avoided. Driving an automobile is a full-time job. There have been too

many crashes, after which the driver who survived said, "I don't know what happened."

Cellular Phone Usage: When using your cellular phone while driving, always remember your number one responsibility is driving. If you do use a cellular phone, take the following precautions:

- Always assess traffic conditions before calling.
- Be familiar with the telephone keypad – use speed dial, if possible.
- Place calls when stopped or have a passenger call.
- Ensure phone is within easy reach.
- Use speaker phone/hands-free device.
- Avoid intense, emotional or complicated conversations.
- Avoid talking on phone in congested traffic or bad weather.
- Pull off the road to dial or complete a conversation.

HIGHWAY HYPNOSIS AND FATIGUE

Stop driving when you feel drowsy. Don't try to fight it. Pull off the highway at the first rest stop or service area. If you are getting tired, a cup of coffee and a bit of stretching may be enough to wake you. If you are really sleepy, get off the highway and take a nap. Drowsiness is one of the greatest dangers in interstate highway driving. Don't rely on "stay-awake drugs". They are likely to make your driving even more hazardous.

It is advisable to take regular rest stops - every 100 miles or every two hours. Get out of the car and walk around - stretch your legs and relax.

On long trips, it is a good idea to exercise your eyes. Expressway drivers are subject to "highway hypnosis"- a condition of drowsiness or unawareness brought on by monotony; the sound of the wind, the tires on the pavement, and the steady hum of the engine. Keep shifting your eyes from one area of the roadway to another and focus them on various objects - near and far, left and right. Reading the highway signs will help you to stay awake and drive safely.

MEDICAL ASPECTS OF DRIVING

Physical condition has an important bearing on a person's driving ability. Alcohol, drugs, illness, or disability, are factors which may cause or contribute to traffic crashes.

DRINKING AND DRIVING

RELATIONSHIP OF ALCOHOL TO TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Driving after drinking is a wide-spread practice. The consumption of alcohol by drivers is a major contributing factor in traffic crashes. Reliable research studies show that a blood alcohol concentration of .05 percent

impairs the driving ability of most individuals to some degree. Greater impairment results as the blood alcohol concentration increases. At .08 percent all individuals are definitely impaired. Under Alabama law, it is unlawful to drive with a concentration of .08 percent or more alcohol in the blood, or while under the influence of alcohol. Special studies show that FATAL accident involvement of drinking drivers is as high as 50 percent - a fact not recognized by people who drink and drive. The amount of alcohol in one bottle of beer is about equal to that in an average "shot of whiskey or a glass of wine." The effect on the average driver is the same.

THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL

- Alcohol is a depressant, not a stimulant.
- Consuming alcohol causes drowsiness, blurred vision, and slowed reflexes.
- Consuming alcohol affects judgment and coordination.
- Impairment can occur before legal intoxication is attained.
- Alcohol related crashes have killed more people than all the U. S. soldiers killed in war.

DRIVING WHILE UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Each year, approximately 50 percent of all FATAL crashes involve drivers who have been drinking. Under state law, it is unlawful for any of the following persons to operate or be in actual physical control of a vehicle:

- A person who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- A person who is under the influence of a drug to a degree which renders him incapable of safely operating a motor vehicle.
- A person whose blood contains .08 percent or more concentration of alcohol.
- A person under the combined influence of alcohol and a drug to a degree which renders him incapable of safely driving
- Commercial vehicle operators whose blood alcohol content is .04% or more.
- Persons **under 21** years of age whose blood alcohol content is .02% or more.
- School bus and daycare drivers whose blood alcohol content is .02% or more.

Penalty for a ***first*** conviction is a fine of $600 to $2,100, up to one year in jail or by both fine and imprisonment. In addition, the driver license will be suspended for 90 days. For a ***second*** conviction in five years the fine ranges from $1,100 to $5,100, a jail sentence of up to one year, or both fine and imprisonment. A mandatory 48 hours jail or 20 days community service and one-year revocation of driver license is required after a second conviction.

For a ***third*** conviction, the fine ranges from $2,100 to $10,100, and the driver license will be revoked for three years. In addition to the fine, the offender may be sentenced up to one year with a mandatory minimum sentence of 60 days in jail, which may not be probated or suspended.

A ***fourth*** conviction or subsequent conviction is a Class C felony. Fines range from $4,100 to $10,100, with a five-year revocation of driver license. Additionally, the offender may be imprisoned for not less than one year and one day or more than 10 years.

IMPLIED CONSENT LAW

Any person who operates a motor vehicle upon the public highways of this state shall be deemed to have given his consent to a chemical test or tests of his blood, breath, or urine to determine blood alcohol content.

A driver under arrest for Driving Under the Influence, who refuses to submit to chemical breath tests when directed by an officer, shall have his driver's license suspended.

There are several things you should remember about alcohol:

- Alcohol is a depressant, not a stimulant. It slows normal reflexes, interferes with judgment, reduces alertness, and impairs observation. If some people feel stimulated after drinking, it is simply that their inhibitions are lowered, causing loss of caution and self-control.
- It doesn't matter whether you are drinking beer, wine, or whiskey - it's the amount of alcohol which enters the blood that counts.
- Alcohol can affect you differently at different times. A small amount will affect you more on an empty stomach than it usually would if you have food in your stomach.
- While alcohol is absorbed rapidly into the system, it takes its time about leaving the body and the brain. Black coffee, food, or a cold shower might wake you, but they will not sober you. Once alcohol is in the blood stream, it must be broken down by the liver and oxidized; that is, turned into water and carbon dioxide and eliminated from the body through the kidneys and lungs. This process takes time.

WHY NOT DRINK AND DRIVE ?

- Alcohol retards judgment.
- Alcohol slows down reflexes.
- Alcohol impairs vision.
- Alcohol causes loss in coordination.
- Alcohol destroys inhibitions.
- Alcohol promotes over-confidence.
- Alcohol prevents concentration.

DRUGS

There are many drugs, which interfere with a person's ability to drive safely. These may be contained in prescriptions written by your doctor, or may be found in some of the remedies which you can buy without prescription. Here are a few things you should remember.

- When taking prescription medicine, it is important to ask your doctor about any possible side effects that relate to driving.
- Drugs, including some allergy remedies and cold pills that you can buy without prescription, may contain codeine, alcohol, antihistamines, or bromides. Each of these ingredients can affect your driving.
- Antihistamines are drugs used for relief of nasal congestion due to colds, to combat allergies, and for other purposes. They may cause side effects such as inattention, confusion, and drowsiness. Some are used as an aid to sleep.
- Barbiturates are sedatives used primarily for sleep. They include Phenobarbital, Sleep-Eze, and other preparations: Excessive use of these can produce symptoms similar to alcoholic intoxication - drowsiness, confusion, and lack of coordination. A user may experience tremor of hands, lips, and tongue, and have difficulty in thinking or talking clearly. A person so affected is unfit to drive.
- The most dangerous types of drugs can be obtained only illegally. LSD and heroin are examples. They have the power to make users completely unaware of or indifferent to their surroundings. Anyone under the influence of such drugs must not try to operate a motor vehicle.
- Marijuana: Studies show that users of marijuana have more arrests for traffic violations than other drivers. Many ignore traffic citations and continue to drive despite suspension or revocation of their driver licenses. Because little is actually known about the drug, many people feel that it is harmless, but experts agree that, for safety's sake, it should not be used when driving.
- The drug-alcohol mix: Many times worse than alcohol or drugs used alone is the use of alcohol and drugs together. The use of these two drugs together produces serious effects on the mind and body and often death. According to some beliefs, if, for example, a "pop" pill gets you high, a drink with it will get you twice as high. WRONG! It doesn't just double the effect; it multiplies and, when overdone, has caused death. If you are using drugs for medicinal purposes, don't use alcohol at the same time.

CHRONIC ILLNESS OR IMPAIRMENT

In cases of chronic illness or physical impairment, the physician has the responsibility to inform his patient of any driving limitation that may be appropriate.

HOW TO AVOID REAR END COLLISIONS

Most rear-end collisions are caused by following too closely. The space easiest to control is the space ahead of your vehicle. This space cushion is called "following distance." You must consider the speed of the traffic, the condition of the highway and allow yourself enough following distance to stop if necessary.

For years, the rule-of-thumb formula for following distance was one car length for every ten miles per hour. Recently, a new formula was introduced which is even more positive and easier to apply, the "two-second rule."

The following chart illustrates why the two-second rule is more readily adaptable for today's drivers and allows for a safer following distance.

CAR SPEED	FEET CAR WILL TRAVEL IN 1 SECOND	AT 1 CAR LENGTH FOR EACH 10 MPH YOU WILL BE: (Bases on a 20 ft. vehicle)	USING THE 2 SECOND RULE YOU WILL BE:
30 mph =	44.4	60 ft. back	88.8 ft. back
40 mph =	58.6	80 ft. back	117.2 ft. back
50 mph =	73.3	100 ft. back	146.6 ft. back

To use the two-second rule, choose a fixed object on the road ahead (such as a sign post, tree, overpass, bridge abutment, etc.). When the vehicle ahead passes that object, begin to count "One thousand one, one thousand two." If you reach the same object before you finish saying "one thousand two," you are following too closely and should gradually slow down until you've reached the safe following distance.

The two-second rule applies to good and bad weather conditions. If the road and weather conditions are not good, increase your following distance to a four or five second count. The increased following limit also applies if you are driving vehicles with longer lengths than cars.

You must also watch for brake lights on the vehicle ahead and be alert for diminishing distances between your car and the one ahead. If you see brake lights or notice the following distance getting less, shift your foot to the brake pedal promptly so you are ready to stop if necessary.

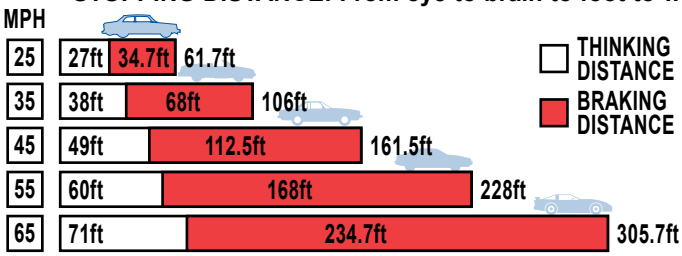
STOPPING DISTANCE

The distance required to stop your car is important in determining a safe driving speed. The chart below may be used as a guide, but actual stopping distances depend upon many factors.

- Mental and physical reaction time of the driver.
- Type and condition of the pavement. There is a great difference between rough, dry concrete and slippery brick or smooth asphalt.

- The type and condition of tires - radial, bias ply, regular tread, snow tires, the amount of tread - all determine the traction you will have for stopping. The proper size tire for your vehicle is important; large, wide tires may help stop quicker on smooth, dry surfaces, but will skid or hydroplane easier on slippery or wet surfaces. Conversely, small narrow tires may "cut through" standing water but lose stopping power overall because of less rubber on the road and poorer traction. Consult your owner's manual or with a car dealer for proper tire size for the vehicle you drive.
- Chassis design, weight distribution, suspension, and shock absorbers.
- Type of brakes, condition of brakes, and brake balance. In an emergency situation you can be in serious trouble if one or more of the brakes lock the wheels before the others fully take hold.
- Wind direction and velocity. Drivers may not realize the difference a strong tail wind can make when trying to stop suddenly at high speed.

STOPPING DISTANCE: From eye to brain to foot to wheel to road



WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A CRASH

If you are involved in a traffic crash, you must stop at once and aid any injured persons. Call for medical assistance if necessary. Before the police arrive, use whatever means available to warn other traffic (flags, flares, etc).

It is dangerous to move injured persons. You should avoid moving the injured unless it is absolutely necessary to remove them from areas threatened by fire or other dangers common to a crash scene. Keep the injured lying or sitting down until competent medical aid arrives.

Apply first aid to the injured, making the persons as comfortable as possible. Treat for shock. Remember that a layman can give "too much first aid." It is wise for every motorist to become familiar with first aid treatment by enrolling in Red Cross sponsored courses or other training courses offered by groups and organizations. You may not only save another person's life with your knowledge, but it will also make you a more safety-conscious individual.

Remember - you must STOP whenever you are involved in a crash. Give your name, address, and registration number and show your driver license to other persons involved. This applies to any type of accident.

REPORT ALL TRAFFIC MISHAPS

Any injury or fatal crash must, by the quickest means of communication, be reported to the local police if it occurs within a municipality or to the State Troopers if it happens on a state highway.

In case of injury, a fatality, or if damage to any vehicle or property in the crash amounts to $250 or more, a written report (Form SR-13) must be sent within 30 days, by the drivers involved, to the Department of Public Safety, Safety Responsibility Unit, P.O. Box 1471, Montgomery, Alabama 36102-1471. SR-13 forms are available at local law enforcement agencies, at any State Trooper post or from the Department of Public Safety in Montgomery.

WHEN INVOLVED IN A CRASH

Secure the names and addresses of persons involved and any witnesses.

Note other important relative factors. At the scene of the accident, drivers involved should, if requested by any person who is also involved in the accident, give the name and address of the insurance company providing the automobile liability insurance coverage and the name of the local insurance agent. If unable to furnish such information at the scene of the accident, the driver should do so later.

If your vehicle hits an unattended vehicle, either notify the police, make an attempt to locate the owner of the parked vehicle, or leave a written notice in a conspicuous place on the unattended vehicle, giving your name and address. If a mishap damages any other type of property, notify the property owner.

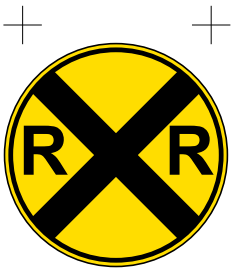
CRASH REPORTS HELP THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND HIGHWAY TRAFFIC OFFICIALS EVALUATE TRAFFIC CRASHES SO THEY CAN IMPROVE HIGHWAY AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS.

IF YOU WITNESS A TRAFFIC MISHAP OR CRASH

When reporting a crash and requesting aid, be sure to give the exact location, if the road is blocked and the probable damage as well as injuries. Accuracy helps police respond quickly to the scene. In the best interest of traffic safety and enforcement, all crashes should be reported to the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction.

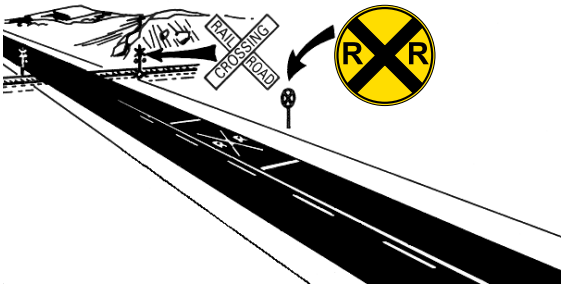
RAILROAD CROSSINGS –ADVANCED WARNINGS

Railroad crossings are marked with one or more of the following devices:



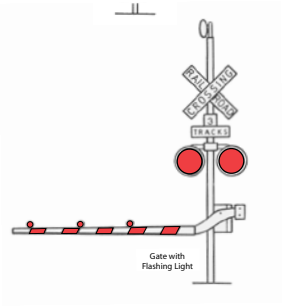
- **The round railroad warning sign:** It is yellow with a black X and the letters RR. It means a highway railroad crossing is ahead and is placed 750 feet before the track.
- **Pavement markings:** In front of a railroad crossing, the pavement may be marked with a large X and two RR's. A yellow line in advance

of the crossing means no passing. White lines on each side of the track show motorists where to stop when a train is approaching.



Flashing Light

- **Flashing light signal:** When lights begin to flash, you must always stop until it is safe to proceed.



Gate with Flashing Light

- **Gates**: When gates are being lowered the red flashing lights will warn you to stop. Remain stopped until the gates are raised and lights are no longer flashing. If a railroad crossing has no warning device, **slow down, look and listen** for trains before proceeding.

- **Railroad Crossbuck:** These signs are found at most crossings. The driver should slow down and be prepared to stop upon sighting a train. If there is more than one track, a sign below the crossbuck indicates the number of tracks.

STOPPING FOR RAILROAD CROSSINGS

The vehicles listed below are required to stop before crossing any railroad crossing:

- School bus, church bus, or any passenger bus.
- Trucks transporting flammables, explosives or other hazardous material.

When approaching a railroad crossing. You must stop within 15 to 50 ft. The driver needs to slow down to allow himself enough time to be certain that he/she can stop when a train can first be seen. Railroad crossings protected by electric or mechanical signal devices require the operator to bring

his/her vehicle to a complete stop. If there is more than one track, make certain all tracks are clear before crossing. You must also stop if the crossing gate is lowered or when a train is approaching.

To avoid stalling, a driver should not change gears while crossing the track.

SAFETY TIPS FOR MOTORISTS

- Expect a train on any track at anytime. Be cautious both day and night.
- Never get trapped on a crossing. When traffic is heavy, wait until you are sure you can clear the crossing before proceeding.
- Watch out for the second train. When the last car of the train passes, do not proceed until you are sure no train is coming on another track, especially from the other direction.
- Never drive around gates. If the gates are down, stay in place and do not cross the tracks until they are raised. It is against the law to go around gates.
- Never race a train to the crossing. **Even if you tie-you lose.**
- Never shift gears on the crossing. If your vehicle has a manual transmission, shift down and do not change gears while crossing the tracks.
- Watch for vehicles that must stop at crossings. Be prepared to stop when you are following buses or trucks that are required to stop.
- Alabama ranks #13 in the nation for highway-railroad crossing fatalities.
- A motorist is 40 times more likely to die in a crash involving a train.
- More people in the United States die each year in highway-railroad crossing crashes than in all aviation crashes combined.
- Nearly 50% of vehicle/train collisions occur at crossings with active warning devices.
- Walking or playing on railroad tracks, trestles, yards and equipment is illegal. The penalty may be death.
- Cross tracks only at designated crossings.
- If your vehicle stalls on a crossing, get everyone out of the vehicle immediately and away from the tracks. Call your local law enforcement agency for assistance.
- Be aware that trains cannot stop quickly. A freight train travelling at 55 mph takes a mile or more to stop. That's the length of 18 football fields.
- **ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN.**

CHAPTER 5

SIGNS, SIGNALS AND ROAD MARKINGS

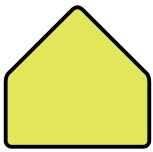
A thorough knowledge of traffic signs, signals and road markings is a must for all drivers. You must know them well enough to recognize them immediately and, in the case of regulatory signs, obey them without hesitation.

Road signing has taken on a new look with greater use of symbols and pictures. These have the advantage of quicker recognition at higher speeds and at greater distances.

In addition to becoming familiar with individual signs, it is important for the driver to recognize the shapes and colors of signs, because both are coded to the sign's type of message.

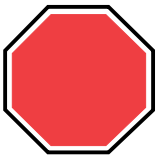
TRAFFIC SIGNS

The three types of traffic signs are classified according to function. They are regulatory, warning, and information or guide signs. KNOW THESE SIGNS BY THEIR SHAPES AND COLORS.

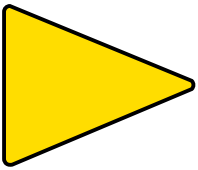


SCHOOL WARNING

YIELD RIGHT OF WAY

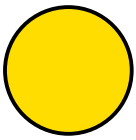


STOP



NO PASSING ZONE

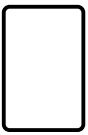
WARNING



RAILROAD WARNING

CONSTRUCTION

SLOW MOVING VEHICLE



REGULATORY

INFORMATIONAL OR GUIDANCE

REGULATORY SIGNS

Regulatory signs regulate the movement of traffic. They are black and white with the exception of those shown in actual color, and MUST be obeyed.

The STOP is the only 8-sided traffic sign. It means that you must come to a complete stop before entering the intersection ahead and yield to traffic close enough to be an immediate hazard. If there is a crosswalk, stop before entering the crosswalk.

The YIELD sign means slow down so you can yield the right of way to pedestrians crossing the roadway and to vehicles on the intersecting street or highway.

White on red background. Motorist is approaching one-way highway or ramp from wrong direction.

This marks a one-way roadway with traffic coming against you. You must not enter the one-way at this point.

Approach with caution and be sure that all tracks are clear before your cross.

You must not make a left turn at this intersection.

You may not park your car in this area even though you stay in the car.

You must not park in a parking space designated for the physically handicapped on either private or public property unless: (a) the vehicle being parked is operated by a

physically handicapped person or under the direction of a physically handicapped person and (b) the vehicle visibly displays the handicapped sticker.

Stopping permitted only for real emergencies.

Traffic in left lane must turn left at the intersection ahead.

You must not turn either to the right or to the left at this intersection.

Speed limit as posted under normal conditions.

These are the "maximum" and "minimum" speeds permitted on this section of the highway. "Minimum" limits are usually posted on freeways and other controlled access highways.

30 miles an hour is the top speed permitted in this area.

Speed limit in school zone during hours indicated. School zone speed limit may also be displayed on lighted sign with flashing amber lights.

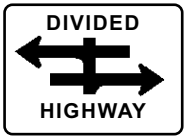
Marks the beginning of a no passing zone.

At intersections controlled by traffic signals, you MAY NOT make a right or left turn on red if this sign is posted.

You must not drive to the left of this sign.

At the intersection ahead, traffic in right lane must turn right and traffic in adjoining lane may turn right or continue straight ahead. Double right turns are only permitted at intersections that are properly signed. At intersections that aren't signed, follow the rules for right turns.

You may travel only in the direction indicated by arrow.



DIVIDED HIGHWAY

WARNING SIGNS

Warning signs are black and yellow, except those used in construction areas which are black and orange. These signs are used to warn you of hazardous conditions ahead requiring you to drive with extra caution. Fluorescent yellow indicates pedstrian crossings and school zones. Warning signs are usually diamond shaped, but there are some exceptions.

Sharp turn to the left.

Curve to the right.

Gradual curve to the right then curve to the left.

Winding road ahead.

Side road enters highway ahead from the right.

Side road enters highway ahead at an angle.

There is a bump ahead. Slow down!

You cannot go straight ahead. You must turn either to the right or left.

The side of the road is soft. Do not drive off the pavement.

The road ahead is not as wide as the road you are on.

Island ahead. You may drive on either side.

There is a dip in the roadway. Slow Down!

Sharp turn to the left then sharp turn to the right.

You cannot go straight ahead. Road turns to both right and left.

There is not room on the bridge ahead to meet or pass another car or truck.

There is a STOP sign ahead.

There is a YIELD sign ahead.

The pavement ahead is not as wide as the pavement on which you are driving.

This advises you of the top safe speed at which you can make the turn.

Warns of sharp turn or curve in direction of arrow. Signs normally placed in series.

Railroad crossing ahead. You must slow down, look carefully in both directions and be prepared to stop. Remember, a train cannot stop quickly!

Road shoulder much lower than road surface.

Truck Crossing. Watch for trucks entering highway.

Fire Station. Watch for fire trucks entering street or highway.

The road surface ahead will change to gravel or dirt. Be prepared for this change.

The street has no outlet.

Number of highway lanes change ahead. The three signs appear in a series as a repeating reminder to merge into the adjacent lane.

This sign is placed on the left side of a two-lane road to warn of the beginning of a NO PASSING ZONE.

There is a traffic signal ahead.

Vehicles or loads higher than the clearance shown cannot go under the structure ahead.

You are leaving a separated one-way roadway and entering a two-way roadway. Also used to remind drivers they are on a two-way road.

You will be merging with other traffic traveling in the same direction. Drivers entering from the right must yield to traffic on the main route, and must make use of speed-change lanes to merge smoothly and safely with the main traffic flow.

Another road crosses the highway ahead.

Divided highway ahead.

Divided highway ends.

The road ahead goes downhill.

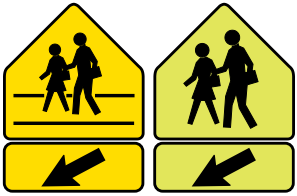
Slippery when wet.

Narrow bridge ahead.

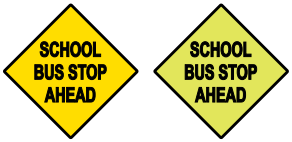
Cattle crossing.

Watch for deer crossing the road.

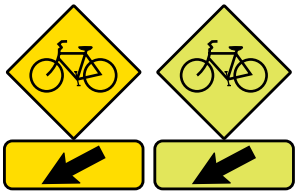
*You must yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. Just ahead is a location where people on foot often cross. The crosswalk may not necessarily be at an intersection. Use caution as you approach and drive more slowly and carefully, watching both sides of the street for pedestrians.



*School crossing. Slow down and watch for children crossing.



*School bus stop ahead.



*Bike crossing.

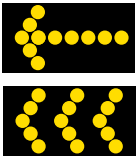
You are about to enter a road construction area. Be on the look-out for flagman, one-way traffic, other signs or obstructions. Proceed with caution and obey signs and instructions.

Flagman ahead.

Workers in or near roadway.

**You may see the previous and current colors of these Bicycle, Pedestrian and School Crossing signs.*

Mowing equipment ahead.



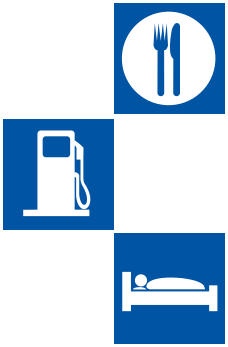
Flashing arrow panels:

Large flashing or sequencing arrow panels may be used in work zones both day and night to guide drivers into certain traffic lanes and to inform them that part of the road or street ahead is closed.

INFORMATIONAL OR GUIDE SIGNS

Guide or informational signs inform and direct motorists, and are green and white for motorist directions; blue and white for services; and brown and white for points of public recreational or cultural interest. The highway route markers shown here are actual color.

Hospital



Gas - Food - Lodging

County Route

Recreational – Cultural Marker

Informational or Guidance

Interstate Routes

U. S. Routes

State Routes

MILEPOSTS
To assist drivers in pinpointing locations and to provide a means for identifying the location of emergency incidents, and to aid in highway maintenance and servicing, mileposts are erected along most sections of the state's main highways. Zero mileage should begin at the south and west state lines or at junctions where routes begin.

PAVEMENT MARKINGS

Generally, there are four types of pavement markings: centerline striping, edge striping, crosswalks, and pavement messages.

Centerlines: The centerline is the painted stripe in the center of the road, which separates traffic proceeding in opposite directions. Under the new Uniform Code, centerlines are to be painted yellow on two lane highways and white on multi-lane highways and one way streets. Broken lines are used in areas where there are no restrictions on passing when safe to do so. In those areas where passing is not allowed, a **solid** yellow line is painted alongside the broken line. If the **solid** yellow line is on your side of the

centerline, you may not pass. If passing is not allowed for traffic in both directions, the broken line will be replaced by **two** solid yellow lines.

Lane dividers: When a roadway consists of two or more traffic lanes for vehicles moving in one direction, the lanes are divided by broken **white** lines. These broken lines may be crossed when passing.

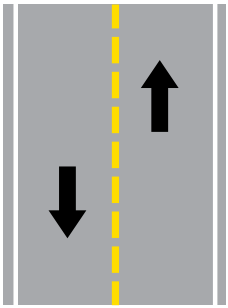
Edge striping: In many areas, the right and/or left edges of the highway are marked with a solid white line. This line indicates the outside edge of the traffic lane, and may be crossed only by traffic moving to or from the shoulder. Occasionally yellow lines are used for left edgelines on divided roadways where traffic cannot pull entirely off the roadway, for marking of obstructions and islands, which must be passed on the right.

White solid line: A normal solid white line is used to delineate the edge of a travel lane where travel in the same direction is permitted on both sides of the line but crossing the line is discouraged. A wide solid line is used for emphasis where crossing requires unusual care.

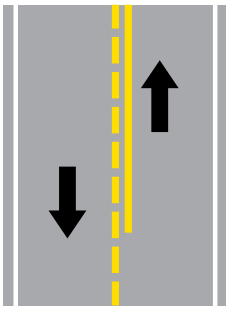
Double solid white lines: A double solid white line is used to delineate a travel lane where travel is the same direction and is permitted on both sides of the line, but **crossing** the double lines is **prohibited**.

Crosswalks: White solid lines are used to denote pedestrian crosswalks at intersections and, in some situations, between intersections. A driver must stop at all crosswalks which are occupied by pedestrians if there are no controlling signals.

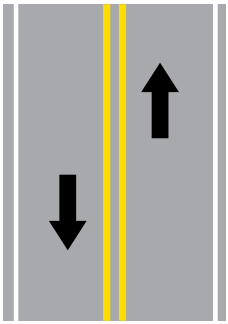
Pavement messages: In some areas, pavement messages are used to warn of conditions ahead, such as SCHOOL ZONE, RR CROSSING, etc. Such messages are lettered on the road surface in white paint.



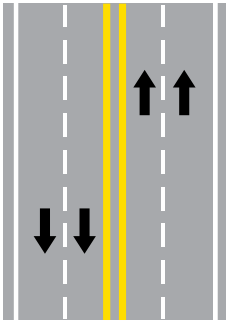
Two-lane, two-way roadway, passing permitted.



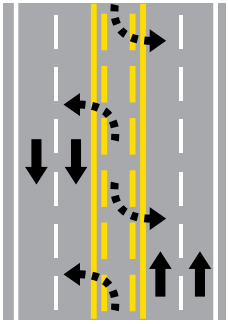
Two-lane, two-way roadway, passing prohibited one direction



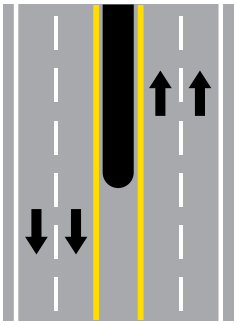
Two-lane, two-way roadway, passing prohibited both directions, crossing center-line permitted only as part of left turn maneuver.



Multi-lane, two-way roadway, crossing center-line permitted only as part of left turn maneuver.

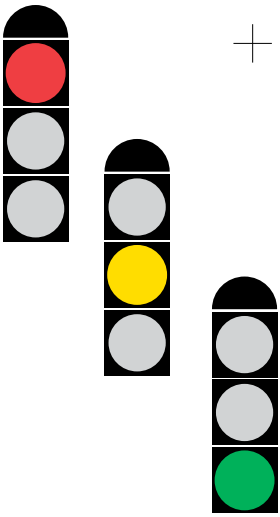


Multi-lane, two-way roadway, with two way left turn lane reserved exclusively for left turning vehicles in either direction.



Divided roadways, multi-lane with divider (non-traversable) and with no clearance for vehicle inner edge of the through lane.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS



RED…Stop when signal is steady circular red. Remain stopped until signal turns to green. Right turn, and in certain instances, left turn movements after stopping are permitted.

YELLOW…A circular steady yellow means clear the intersection. It follows a green signal. You must not enter the intersection when the red signal comes on.

GREEN…Go when signal is steady circular green. You may go straight or turn right or left, yielding to other vehicles and pedestrians lawfully within the intersection. A sign may prohibit a turn or turns.

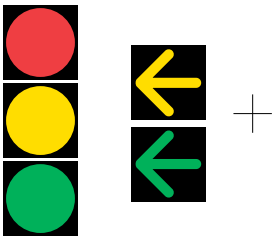
Flashing Light

Red Flashing light signals are used with cross-buck signs at many railroad crossings. Always stop when the lights begin to flash because a train is near. Do not proceed until you can do so safely. If there is more than one track, make sure all tracks are clear before crossing.

Gates are used with flashing light signals at certain crossings. Stop when the lights begin to flash before the gates lower across your side of the road. Remain stopped until the gates are raised and the lights stop flashing.

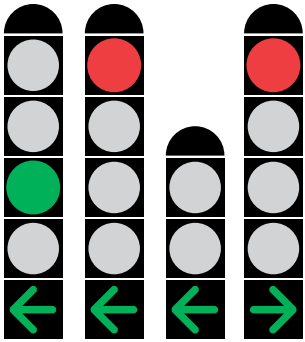
ARROWS ARE USED TO CONTROL SPECIFIC TURNING MOVEMENTS.

VEHICLE TURNS

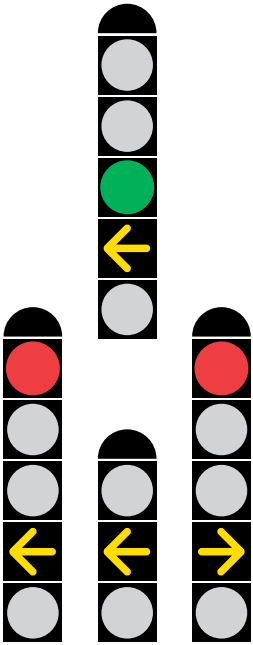


The yellow and green arrow indications give the same control to the left turns as the standard traffic light gives to the through movement.

GREEN ARROWS permit you to proceed in the direction of the arrow while opposing traffic must stop.



GREEN ARROW…A steady green arrow shown alone or with any other indication means you may enter the intersection to make the movement indicated by the arrow or any other movement permitted by the other indications, yielding to pedestrians and vehicles lawfully using the intersection.



YELLOW ARROWS come after green arrows to indicate that the protected movement indicated by the green arrow is being terminated.

A steady YELLOW ARROW displayed with a circular green means that the previous protected green arrow movement is ending.

A steady YELLOW ARROW displayed alone or with a steady circular red is used to clear the previous protected green arrow movement. You may not enter the intersection after the yellow arrow goes out.

LANE USE CONTROL SIGNALS

Lane use control signals may be placed over individual lanes of a street, highway or freeway to indicate to drivers which lane(s) they may or may not drive in.

"STEADY RED X"… A driver facing this indication shall not drive in the lane over which the signal is located, and this indication shall modify accordingly all other traffic controls present. The driver shall obey all other traffic controls and follow normal safe driving practices. May also be indicated by red light.

"STEADY GREEN ARROW"…A driver facing this indication is permitted to drive in the lane over which the arrow signal is located. The driver shall obey all other traffic controls and follow normal safe driving practices. May also be indicated by green light.

"STEADY YELLOW X" – A driver facing this indication is permitted to drive in the lane over which the "X" signal is located using caution. Potentially hazardous conditions exist when the steady yellow "X" is displayed. May also be indicated by a yellow light.

These images are from the Manual of Traffic Signs, by Richard C. Moeur (http://members.aol.com/rcmoeur/)

CHAPTER 6

TRAFFIC LAWS

Laws regulating the movement of traffic are an absolute necessity. Without traffic laws, all movements of vehicles on public roads would come to a complete stop in a very short time. Traffic laws apply to all who use the streets and roads - drivers of vehicles, operators of motorcycles and bicycles, and pedestrians. Traffic laws exist for your own protection. If you disobey them, you run the risk of killing or injuring yourself or someone else.

From time to time, traffic laws are changed or modified by our State Legislature. Any important changes will be brought to the attention of drivers through the news media, driver education courses, law enforcement officers, and all other resources. Every driver should study the manual every few years to know the laws of the state.

Listed here are the principle traffic laws as they apply to users of public streets and highways. Topics covered in other sections of this manual may be regulated by law, in addition to their value as safe operating suggestions for highway users.

SPEED REGULATIONS

Speed may not always, in itself, be the primary cause of traffic crashes, but it all too often is the factor that turns a minor mishap into a fatal accident. The greatest danger of excessive speed lies in the increased severity rather than the frequency of collisions.

Alabama's basic speed law provides that you must never drive a vehicle at a speed that is faster than reasonable under existing conditions.

Consider road, weather, and your vehicle condition, as well as your own physical condition. What might be a reasonable speed at one time may not be reasonable at another time because of conditions.

SPEED LIMITS

In addition to the basic speed law, the traffic laws set up speed limits for normal driving conditions. Speeds in excess of such limits are prima facie evidence that they are unlawful, and you may be arrested. All speed limits in municipalities are maximum speeds.

Statutory limits apply unless there have been other speed zones established and the limits are posted on official regulatory signs.

STATUTORY SPEED LIMITS INCLUDE:

30	**miles per hour in an urban district**
35	**miles per hour unpaved road**

45	miles per hour county paved road (unless posted)
55	miles per hour in other locations
65	miles per hour where posted
70	miles per hour where posted on interstate

Minimum speed limits may also be set on some roadways. Where they are posted, any speed below that minimum is considered to be unlawful under normal weather, road, and traffic conditions. You must never drive so slowly that you will interfere with other cars or vehicles moving at normal safe speeds. Many accidents are caused by drivers who block or hinder other traffic by driving at speeds that are too low.

SLOW SPEEDS OFTEN REQUIRED

Slower speeds are necessary when you approach or cross a street, highway, or railroad crossing and also when approaching flags, flares, or fuses on roads. Slow down when approaching crests of hills and curves.

STOPPING

A complete stop is required for the following:

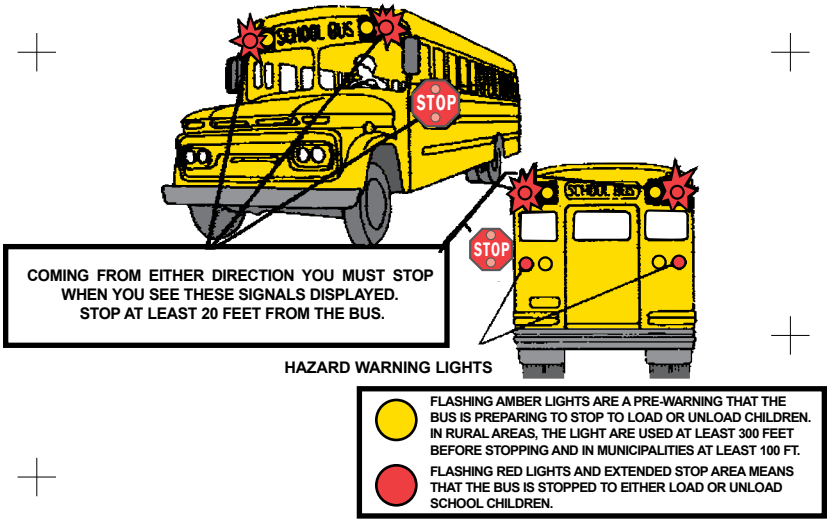
- At a STOP sign. When a stop sign is placed at the entrance to any street or highway, you must bring your vehicle to a complete stop. A vehicle approaching a STOP sign must stop at the marked stop line. If no stop line is marked, the vehicle must stop before entering the crosswalk on the near side of the intersection. If there is no crosswalk, the vehicle must stop before entering the crossing street at the point nearest the intersection where the driver has a clear view of approaching traffic. Proceed cautiously. You may have to stop a second time if your view was blocked at the first stop and there is conflicting traffic.
- When coming from an alley, private driveway, or building within a business or residence district. Always stop before crossing the sidewalk or crosswalk area.
- When a school patrol member is displaying an official flag in a STOP position.
- At an intersection or crosswalk when traffic signal shows a red light or stop signal. Wait until the signal changes to green and the way is clear before proceeding. You may make a right turn after stopping for a red light if you are in the proper lane for such turn. You may make a left turn after stopping if you are driving on a one-way street and the street you turn left onto is a one-way street with traffic moving from right to left. In the case of both right and left turns after stopping for a red light, you must yield to other traffic and pedestrians lawfully proceeding through the intersection. Such turns cannot be made against a red light if a sign has been posted prohibiting such turn. If the traffic light is

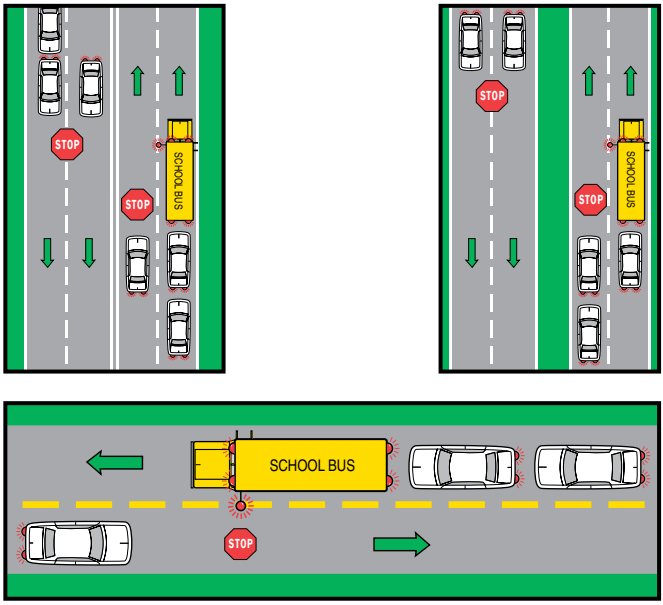
inoperative, treat the intersection as you would a four-way stop.

- At railroad crossing where STOP signs are posted.
- At a flashing red signal. This means the same as a STOP sign.
- When directed by a flagman or any traffic control device at railroad crossings.
- At bridges opening for water navigation.
- When ordered to stop by a flagman at a construction site, or at any time when directed by a police officer.
- After being involved in an accident, proceed only after complying with procedure defined by law.
- When an emergency vehicle is coming toward you or approaches from behind, displaying flashing red or blue lights and activating a siren, you must pull over to the curb or side of the road and come to a complete stop.
- At a yield sign if there are pedestrians or vehicles crossing the intersecting street or highway.
- When you meet or are following a school bus or church bus stopped on the road while the stop signal arm is extended and displaying flashing red lights. Remain stopped until the stop signal is retracted and red lights are turned off. You should also stop when meeting or following a school or church bus which is stopped on a four to six lane highway even if the opposing traffic lanes are separated by a median or safety zone.

SCHOOL BUSES

MANY SCHOOL BUSES ACTIVATE AMBER FLASHING LIGHTS WELL IN ADVANCE OF THE STOP TO WARN OTHER DRIVERS.





RIGHT OF WAY AND YIELDING

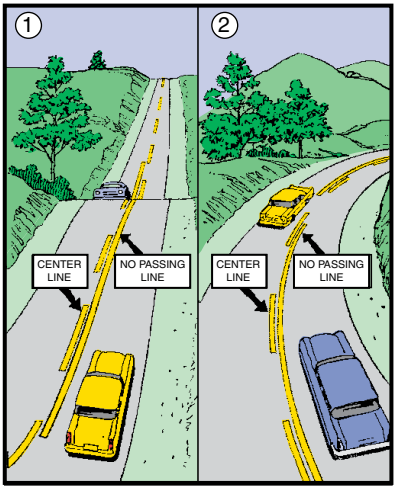
Right of way rules are an aid to safe and smooth traffic flow. They emphasize courtesy and common sense. The violation of these rules is one of the main causes of traffic crashes. It's smart driving to obey right-of-way rules.

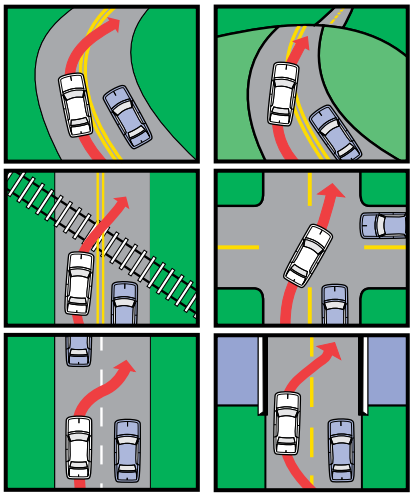
The right-of-way rules include:

- If two vehicles enter an intersection not controlled by signs or signals, and from different roadways at about the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left shall yield to the vehicle on the right. If you enter an uncontrolled intersection at an unlawful speed, you lose any right of way which you might otherwise have.
- Yield to emergency vehicles (such as ambulances, fire fighting apparatus, and police vehicles) when they are displaying a flashing red or blue light and sounding a siren or bell. Whether the emergency vehicle is overtaking or meeting you, pull to the side of the roadway and stop. In an intersection, clear it before stopping. Don't proceed until the emergency vehicle has passed.
- The law requires you to stop and give right of way at any intersection to a blind person carrying a white cane tipped with red and holding the cane with arm extended, or using a guide dog.
- Cars entering from a private road or driveway must stop and yield to cars on a public street or highway.

- When entering an intersection where there is a yield sign facing you, slow down and, if necessary, stop to yield the right of way to vehicles and pedestrians legally crossing the roadway on which you are driving.
- When making a left turn within an intersection or into an alley, driveway, or private road, you must yield the right of way to any vehicle approaching from the opposite direction when it is within the intersection or so close as to constitute an immediate hazard.
- Vehicles entering an intersection on "green arrows" must yield to other traffic lawfully using the intersection.

NO PASSING ZONES





No Passing Zones

Many highway deaths and serious injuries occur on two-lane highways when vehicles collide head-on or sideswipe each other. Most of these are caused by improper or careless passing, and is almost always a violation of state law. Most two-lane highways in the state are adequately marked with solid yellow center stripes and prohibiting signs in areas where passing would be hazardous. In addition to those areas so marked, drivers must exercise extreme caution in all areas during the hours of darkness, poor visibility, and when road surfaces are slippery from rain, snow, or ice.

On two-lane roads with traffic moving in both directions, you may pass traffic on the left if the pass can be completed safely without exceeding the speed limit. In preparing to pass, check the road ahead for sufficient distance and the road behind for other traffic that maybe preparing to pass you. Signal your intention to the driver ahead - a tap of the horn or a flick of headlights at night is helpful. Activate left turn signals before passing, and right turn signals after passing and before returning to the right lane. Do not return to the right lane too soon - not until you can see the entire front of the vehicle you have just passed in your interior rear view mirror. When another car is trying to pass you, stay in your own lane and don't increase speed.

Passing on the right is permissible on one-way roadways and streets and highways marked for two or more lanes of traffic moving in the same direction. It is unlawful to drive on the shoulder to pass except during an emergency or when so directed by traffic authorities. When passing on the right, be sure to check traffic ahead and behind and use signals to show your intention. Use of the signal alone does not give you the right to pass. Be extremely cautious in passing on the right and watch the car you are passing carefully. In some states, this is a forbidden maneuver and out-of-state drivers may not expect it.

You may not cross the center line to pass:

- On a curve or hill where you cannot see a clear passing distance of at least 500 feet.
- At a highway intersection.
- When meeting an oncoming vehicle.
- Where signs prohibit passing, or where there is a solid yellow line on your side of the center line. Double solid yellow prohibits traffic from both directions from crossing the center line to pass.

PEDESTRIANS

When automobiles became popular as a means of traveling from one place to another, a problem arose as pedestrians and motor vehicles had to share the same roadways. There have been numbers of pedestrians killed or injured in collisions with vehicles. These numbers could be greatly reduced if motorists were more observant of pedestrian rights.

Be especially alert for pedestrians:

- On streets on which cars are parked.
- During the hours of darkness or poor visibility.
- At places where people cross - near mailboxes, institutions, churches, play areas, bus stops, etc.
- During morning and afternoon when children are going to and from school or at play.
- Be especially alert for older people who move slowly and cannot see or hear well.

At sometime or another, every driver is a pedestrian and the traffic laws are written for both driver and pedestrian.

DRIVERS MUST:

- Yield the right of way to pedestrians.
- Not pass (overtake) another vehicle stopped for pedestrians in a crosswalk.
- Stop for school children and school safety patrols directing the movement of children.
- Yield to blind pedestrians carrying a white or metallic cane, with or without a red tip, or using a guide dog when such blind person enters an intersection of any street, alley or other public highway.
- Not block crosswalks when at a stop sign or waiting on a red light.
- Stop for a school bus displaying an extended stop arm.
- Exercise extreme care to avoid hitting a pedestrian.

PEDESTRIANS MUST:

- Obey traffic control signals at intersections.
- Use sidewalks where provided and usable.
- Walk on the left side of the roadway giving way to oncoming traffic.
- Yield to all vehicles when crossing at points other than within a marked crosswalk or in a crosswalk (extension of the sidewalk) at an intersection.
- Not stand in the roadway while hitchhiking.

SAFETY RULES FOR PEDESTRIANS

- When walking on a roadway, stay as near to the left side as possible and in single file.
- During the hours of darkness or poor visibility, carry a light or wear clothing trimmed with reflective materials. Since all clothing is not trimmed with reflective materials, it is a good rule always to wear light-colored clothing.
- Through vehicles are required to yield to you in intersections and cross safely.
- Be aware of a driver's difficulty in stopping quickly when streets are slippery and when visibility is poor.
- Be sure that the driver sees you. Be sure you've made eye contact before you proceed.

FOLLOWING EMERGENCY VEHICLES

Only vehicles on necessary official business are permitted to follow within 500 feet of emergency vehicles on an emergency run. Don't drive over an unprotected fire hose unless authorized to do so by a police officer or fire department official.

OTHER TRAFFIC LAWS

Backing is a dangerous maneuver and accounts for many crashes among all classes of drivers.

If you are going to back the vehicle, it is a good practice to walk completely around the vehicle to be sure no person or obstacle is behind it.

Before backing, you should look to the front, sides, and rear and continue to look over your right shoulder to the rear while backing. Do not depend on your mirror. Back slowly into the proper traffic lane with a minimum of movement. Follow the same rules when backing into traffic lanes after being parked at an angle.

Backing is prohibited on controlled access highways (freeways and expressways) except for emergency vehicles in performance of their duties. Except for backing into a parking place, it is never advisable to back on a public street or road. If you back out of a driveway, always back into the nearest lane and proceed from there. Never back across other traffic lanes.

Driving on shoulders is unlawful unless required by emergency conditions. It is never lawful, except under emergency conditions, to drive on the shoulder to pass another vehicle.

Obstructions on windows are prohibited by state law. No sign, poster, or other materials may be placed on any window of a vehicle if it obstructs a driver's clear view of the highway.

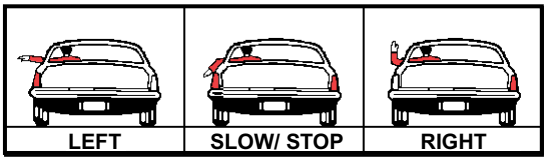
CHANGING LANES

Never move from one lane to another until you make certain that you can do so safely. This means watching for safe clearance to the side, ahead and behind your vehicle. Do not rely solely on your mirror when checking for clearance. Glance over your shoulder to check the "blind spot" your mirror does not cover. You should show your intentions to other drivers by using turn signals or hand signals, but remember that a signal does not grant the right to change lanes. Whether you are changing to the next lane or, as may be necessary on multiple lane roadways, to some other lane, you must wait until it is safe to do so.

Be sure your intentions are known. Signals should be continued until you are ready to make the actual turn.

The correct hand signals are:

- **STOP OR DECREASE SPEED…..hand and arm extended downward.**
- **LEFT TURN .....hand and arm extended out.**
- **RIGHT TURN.....hand and arm extended upward.**



Improper turns are the cause of many traffic accidents. The pedestrian is often the victim of an improper turn at an intersection. A wrong turn on the highway where the pace is faster may result in tragedy. Make an extreme effort to learn and abide by correct procedures of turning.

THROWING DEBRIS ON STREETS, HIGHWAYS

It is unlawful to throw or leave any bottles, nails, tacks, wires, cans, or any injurious items on any highway or to throw or drop objects at or upon a motor vehicle on the road.

LOADS MUST CONFORM TO LAW

It is unlawful to drive any vehicle so loaded or when there are such numbers of persons in excess of three in the front seat as to obstruct the driver's view to the front and sides or hinder the driver's control over his vehicle.

A load must not extend more than 5 feet beyond both the front and rear, inclusive, of the vehicle. If a load projects 4 feet or more from the rear of a vehicle, a red flag at least 12 inches square must be attached at its end in daytime and a red light, visible for at least 200 feet, must be attached to the end at night. On passenger vehicles, a load may not extend beyond the line of the tandem.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED AT TRAFFIC STOPS

When stopped for a traffic violation or at an equipment check, the following three documents must be produced by the driver.

- Driver License
- Proof of Insurance
- Vehicle Registration

MANDATORY LIABILITY INSURANCE ACT

As of June 1, 2000, certification of insurance became mandatory. The Department of Public Safety may verify whether or not at the time of an accident a motor vehicle is covered by a liability insurance policy. A document issued by an insurer or authorized representative showing that a specific vehicle is insured for liability will be required.

Random requests concerning motor vehicle liability insurance coverage may be made. Drivers must show proof of insurance when stopped for a traffic offense or at checkpoints.

Minimum coverage of $20,000 for personal injury for one person, $40,000 for two or more people and $10,000 property damage will be required.

A first conviction for not having mandatory liability insurance carries a fine of up to $500 plus court costs.

If you have any questions, you may call **334-353-2000**.

WINDOW TINTING

- As of August 15, 1996, all vehicles must comply with Alabama's window tinting law.
- Any motor vehicle which has reduced light transmission through any window or windshield or increased light reflectance of the window or windshield, shall display a label visible from the outside of the vehicle indicating that the windows and windshield are in compliance with the light transmission and light reflectance requirements as provided in Section 32-5C-2.
- Only the upper six inches of the front windshield may be tinted and may not be red or amber in color.
- All other windows may have tinting of 32% or higher.

GAS DRIVE-OFFS

Under Alabama law if you don't pay for gas you can lose your driver's license.

Alabama Senate Bill 459 prohibits a person from driving his or her vehicle off the premises of a gasoline establishment without payment. A person who does so shall be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor. On a second conviction the driver's license of the person shall be suspended for a period of six months. On a third conviction the driver's license of the person shall be suspended for a period of one year.

The person shall submit the driver's license to the court upon conviction and the court shall forward the driver's license to the Department of Public Safety.

MOVE-OVER LAW

When approaching emergency vehicles stopped with flashing emergency lights, motorists on roadways with four or more lanes must move into the lane not adjacent to the authorized emergency vehicle. When changing lanes is unsafe or not possible, the law allows motorists instead to slow down, maintaining a safe speed for the road conditions. Changing lanes when possible or slowing down and proceeding with caution provides an extra measure of safety to law enforcement officers and other emergency responders.

CHAPTER 7

ADJUST TO DRIVING CONDITIONS

Since nearly all motorists learn to drive under normal conditions, many are not practiced in handling a car safely under conditions that change with the weather, light, emergencies, or with the changes that occur in the human body.

Good, safe driving under all conditions does not come to a person naturally, but must be learned through study and experience. Since many of the conditions described in this chapter do not occur daily, you should study this chapter well so that you can react quickly and properly when they do occur.

NIGHT DRIVING

Approximately half the fatal motor vehicle crashes in Alabama occur during the hours of darkness. Several factors contribute to this despite the fact that traffic volume is light during this period.

Vision: Most of the contributing factors in night-time crashes are directly or indirectly involved with vision. Over driving headlights is a common and dangerous practice. You should never drive so fast that you cannot stop within the distance you can see ahead with your lights. Headlights on high beam normally illuminate the roadway about 350 feet UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS.

Dimming headlights when meeting or following is required by law, as well as being a sensible driving practice. You must dim your headlights when within 500 feet of an oncoming vehicle and within 200 feet when following another vehicle. If you do not depress your headlights, you could cause the other driver to crash; and if it's an oncoming vehicle, the driver could crash into YOU. In most instances, if you depress your headlights, the oncoming driver will do likewise. If, after you depress yours, and the other driver fails to do so, keep yours depressed anyway. You prove nothing if you blind the approaching driver with your high beam because you are endangering yourself.

Keep your lighting equipment clean and in good operating condition. In addition to insuring that all lights are operating properly, keep the lenses clean. Keep all glass on your vehicle free of defects and clean, including free of frost and steam.

According to state law, headlights (not parking lights only) must be turned on from a half-hour after sunset to a half-hour before sunrise and during other periods of limited visibility when you cannot see clearly for at least 500 feet. As a general rule, if you are in doubt as to when lights are needed, turn them on low beam. In addition to improving your own vision, it helps others to see you.

It is difficult to see at night. Watch carefully for highway signs, pedestrians, bicycles, slow-moving vehicles and animals on the road.

For night driving, maps should be studied carefully in advance. If you have a companion, he or she can serve as a second pair of eyes for you. Have your "assistant driver" watch for signs and unexpected hazards. Eye fatigue is common in night driving. This can be relieved by keeping your eyes moving from the road to the sides— from near to far ahead, etc.

Glare: Glare can seriously impair vision, many times to the point of causing temporary blindness. The most common glare encountered at night is that of oncoming headlights or the reflection of following lights in your rear view mirror. Glare from oncoming lights can be reduced by directing your vision AWAY from them. This is done by looking to the right-hand edge of the pavement and concentrating on the white striped line. For glare from the rear, use a day-night mirror or adjust your mirror to cut out most of the strong light from the rear.

Emergencies: Emergencies are always worse at night than during the day. Traffic is lighter, your choices of action are limited, and danger is greater. Here are some "do's and don'ts" for night road emergencies: Pull well off the highway or on the shoulder. Activate four-way flashers and raise hood. Stay with the car, if possible, until help comes. If you MUST become a pedestrian, carry a light and walk on the left edge of the road or shoulder FACING the traffic. If you have flares or reflectors, place them from 100 to 500 feet to the rear of your vehicle on the right hand edge of the highway to warn other traffic.

Speed: Excessive speed is more dangerous at night because of limited visibility. You can see only as far as your headlights carry, and at high speeds this does not give you sufficient stopping distance. Highways are posted for speed limits. Obey these limits, even if you know the road and feel that you can drive faster. These limits are imposed for many reasons, but principally to protect you from the unexpected. A deer leaps out in front of you or you come upon an accident before authorities arrive. Weather conditions may have damaged the road or a bridge. If you should doze or suffer some type of sudden attack, your chances of surviving are many times improved at lower speeds.

WINTER DRIVING

Winter driving brings its own particular dangers. Increased hours of darkness along with fog, rain, snow, sleet, and ice increase driving hazards. The smart driver prepares for these adverse conditions. In most instances, bad weather cannot be blamed for accidents. A thoughtful driver offsets the hazards of winter by following these additional safe-driving practices.

Before driving, start the engine and let it warm up while you remove snow and ice from the car (especially the hood) and windows. Continue to warm at a fast idle until the heater and defroster are warm. Be sure that windshield-washing fluid contains an anti-freeze solution. On extremely cold days, be cautious about using windshield washer and wipers at high speeds. Even if the fluid contains antifreeze, high speed combined with extreme cold can

freeze the solution on the windshield and totally obscure your vision.

Get the feel of the road. Try your brakes while driving slowly to find out just how slippery the road is and then adjust your speed to the situation.

Snow treads on the drive wheels are recommended for general driving during snow. They greatly improve general traction, including starting and stopping. Don't be over-confident because you have them on. You still must drive at less than normal speed on snow and allow more room for stopping.

Although snow treads are a great help under normal winter driving conditions, they do not give proper traction on ice. For extremely icy conditions, hard packed snow, and very deep snow, reinforced tire chains are the best.

WINDSHIELD WIPERS/HEADLIGHTS

Alabama law requires that headlights be turned on when the windshield wipers of the vehicle are in use because of rain, sleet, or snow. Intermittent use of windshield wipers does not require headlight usage.

SLIPPERY ROADS ARE HAZARDOUS

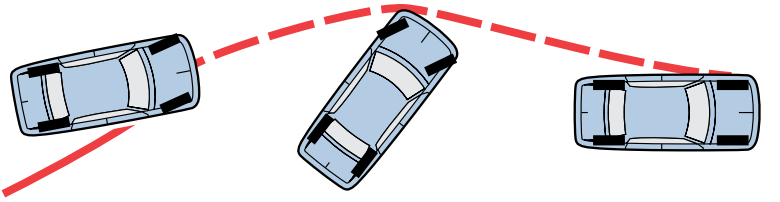
Follow other cars at a safe distance. Remember that on snow or ice it takes three to twelve times as much distance to stop your car as on dry pavement. Keep well back of the vehicle ahead of you to give yourself plenty of room to stop.

To start on snow and ice, lower your engine speed to its very minimum. If you have a car with a clutch, let the clutch out very slowly in starting. If your wheels spin, start in second or high gear. This permits a smoother acceleration and should aid you in avoiding spinning or sliding the wheels. If you have an automatic transmission, accelerate slowly and smoothly.

When stopping on packed snow or ice, apply the brakes gently. If you should have to stop suddenly on a slippery surface, pump your brakes. If your wheels lock, release the brake to get them rolling again, then squeeze down again and keep repeating the pumping action until the vehicle stops. Stopping this way will slow your vehicle gradually instead of causing it to skid. While making your stop, be sure to release the pressure on the brakes at the first hint the wheels are starting to slip; and do not depress the clutch to take the vehicle out of gear.

SKIDDING

A vehicle skids when its tires lose their grip on the roadway. When your car begins to skid, the engine loses its pulling effect and the brakes lose their effectiveness. The steering wheel also seems to be ineffective.



Since braking will only increase the velocity of the skid and cause the loss of steering control when the front wheels lock, do not apply pressure on the brake until you regain control of your forward direction. Then carefully apply the brakes if necessary.

With any vehicle skid, the main idea is to keep the rear end from outrunning the front. So to overcome a skid, you must either slow the rear wheels somewhat or speed the front wheels.

With a conventional rear-wheel drive vehicle, when you ease off the gas, the engine acts as a brake to slow the rear wheels slightly. This slows the rear-end slide and gives time for the front end to catch up and, combined with steering, will get the vehicle going straight again.

To achieve the same effect WITH FRONT-WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLES, you have to make the engine pull harder on the front wheels. STEPPING LIGHTLY ON THE GAS WILL INCREASE FRONT WHEEL SPEED, so the front end can catch up with the sliding rear end and straighten out the skid.

In some situations there may not be enough room to step on the gas. The next best action is to disengage the transmission, either by jamming in the clutch with standard transmission vehicles or shifting into neutral with automatic transmission, and steer in the direction the rear of the vehicle is skidding. CAUTION: Many safety experts hesitate to recommend shifting into neutral because, in a panic of skidding, drivers may take their attention off the road or accidentally shift past neutral into reverse, and either reaction is potentially disastrous.

HYDROPLANING -"WATER SKIING ON THE HIGHWAY"

Hydroplaning, as a cause of skids, has only recently been investigated. It takes place when you're driving on wet roads. At speeds up to 35 mph, most tires will "wipe" the road surface, the same way a windshield wiper cleans the windshield. As the speed increases, the tires cannot wipe the road as well and start to ride on a film of water, just like a set of water skis. In a standard passenger car, partial hydroplaning starts at about 35 mph and increases with speed to about 55 mph, at which point the tires may be totally on the water. In a severe rainstorm the tires lose all contact with the road at 55 mph. If this is the case, there is no friction available to brake, accelerate, or corner. A gust of wind, a change of road pitch or a slight turn can create an unpredictable and uncontrollable skid.

Although our knowledge of hydroplaning is limited, we do know how you can handle it. The best thing to do is to take your foot off the accelerator and let the car slow down. If you skid while your car is only partially hydroplaning, you should be able to regain control by correcting the particular type of skid that occurs. If you're totally hydroplaning, about all you can do is release the accelerator and ride out the skid.

To prevent hydroplaning, it is most helpful to have good tires with deep treads. The treads allow the water to escape from under the tires and tend to prevent complete hydroplaning at normal highway speeds. When the depth

of the water exceeds the depth of the treads, complete hydroplaning can be expected at speeds above 50 mph.

DRIVING IN FOG, SNOW

Avoid driving in fog or a snowstorm unless it's absolutely necessary. When visibility is limited, speed must be reduced and you must be ready to stop within the limits of your vision.

Keep headlights on low beam to reduce the glaring reflection of your lights on the thick fog blanket or blinding snow. If it is impossible to see or you become weary of straining your eyes to see with such poor visibility, pull completely off the road, leave lights on and park. Wait until visibility improves.

DRIVING IN HILLY COUNTRY

Use extra caution when driving on narrow, hilly roads or where thick brush and wooded areas frequently block your view. There are many blind pockets within hilly areas and you may not realize another car is on the same road until it's within a few feet of you.

Don't hesitate to use your horn, as you round hazardous curves to let the other drivers know they aren't alone on the narrow road.

The law also forbids you to coast downhill with the transmission in neutral.

CARBON MONOXIDE

Carbon monoxide poisoning is much more likely to occur during wintertime driving when you are more apt to drive with all the windows closed and to warm the engine before using the car. Carbon monoxide fumes are odorless and deadly. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are sudden weariness, yawning, dizziness and nausea. The only cure is to go to an adequate supply of fresh air. Simple precautions to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning are:

- Have the exhaust system checked regularly to be sure it does not leak.
- Do not idle the motor or drive with all the windows closed tightly.
- Do not warm up the motor while the vehicle is in a closed garage.

DRIVING EMERGENCIES

There is one basic rule that applies in all driving situations, and especially in emergency situations - THINK BEFORE YOU ACT. Often, an instinctive reaction such as slamming on your brakes while skidding, may be the wrong reaction.

The suggestions below are designed to help you if you are faced with a sudden driving emergency. Remember that these are only suggestions. In some emergency situations, there is little that the driver can do but hang on and hope. In other cases, a driver who understands the basic principles described below can minimize the consequences of a sudden emergency.

- **Blowouts:** A blowout is a sudden collapse of a tire. This throws the vehicle out of control. To regain control, hold tightly to the steering wheel,

steer straight and ease up on the accelerator. Do not brake until the vehicle is under control. You may receive warning of an impending blowout by a thumping sound caused by a bulge in the tire. If the tire is losing air rapidly, it will pull the car to the side. Under-inflation is one of the most common reasons for blowouts.

- **Loss of a wheel:** This is a situation that is similar to a blowout. Often the warning signs are the same - a thumping noise and/or a pulling to one side. The same basic rules apply for recovery of control: hold tightly to the steering wheel, steer straight ahead, ease up on the accelerator, and do not brake until the vehicle has slowed down and is completely under control.
- **Steering failure:** If you suddenly lose control of your steering and the wheel no longer responds to your turning movements, ease up on the accelerator, but do not brake. Your car may have enough natural balance to keep it moving forward as you slow it down. If you brake or try to shift gears, this sudden change in speed may throw the vehicle off balance and out of control. As the car slows down, you may be able to brake very gently to help bring it to a stop.
- **Brake failure:** If your brake pedal suddenly sinks all the way to the floor, try pumping the pedal to build up the pressure. You will generally receive advance warning that your brakes are starting to fail when the pedal feels spongy and slowly continues to sink while being depressed. If pumping the pedal does not build up the pressure, use your emergency or parking brake, but apply gently so that you do not lock the brakes and throw your car into a skid. If you can shift to a lower gear, the engine will slow you down. You can turn off the engine - leaving the car in gear - and the engine will slow you down. If you have power steering or power brakes, you will lose this assistance when you turn off the engine.
- **Running off the pavement:** If your wheels drift onto the shoulder of the road, don't try to swerve back onto the pavement because you might throw your car off balance. Instead, stay on the shoulder and reduce speed. After you've slowed down, turn gently back onto the pavement.
- **Car approaching in your lane.** If you see a car coming toward you in your lane, pull to the right and slow down. Sound your horn. At night, flash your lights. You may wake up the drowsy or inattentive driver approaching you. Do not turn into the left lane because the driver of the oncoming vehicle might wake up and swing back into the path of your car.
- **Car attempting to pass you:** If a car is attempting to pass you and cannot complete the movement because of oncoming traffic, you must act to prevent a crash, which could also involve you. If the passing car is at a point where the pass can be completed with your help, slow your speed to allow the driver to move ahead of you quickly. If it becomes definite that the driver cannot complete the pass and must drop back, increase

your speed leaving room for the vehicle to again move in behind you. If the right shoulder is adequate and a crash is almost certain, move quickly onto the shoulder to allow the passing car to move into your lane.

- **Stalling on railroad tracks:** If your car stalls on railroad tracks and it has a manual transmission, you may be able to move it off the tracks by running the starter while the car is in low or second gear. If you have an automatic transmission, you will have to push the car off the tracks. If you cannot get the car off the tracks, and a train is approaching, abandon the vehicle, and quickly walk alongside the tracks in the direction of the approaching train so that you will not be struck by debris when the vehicle is hit.
- **Immersion:** If your car plunges into deep water **BUT DOES NOT SINK,** immediately escape through a window. Opening a door, even if possible, will permit the water to enter the car more rapidly. If the car SINKS beneath the surface before you can escape, the weight of the engine will force the front end down first. This usually creates an air pocket in the back of the car. Get into the air area and breath deeply. When the car has settled you should be able to escape through a window.
- **Fire:** If smoke comes from under the hood, get off the road and turn off the ignition. If no fire extinguisher is available, use dirt or sand to smother the fire. Do not use water, for burning gasoline will float on it and spread the blaze.
- **Overheating:** You can help prevent overheating in slow-moving traffic by shifting into neutral and racing the engine briefly during stops. This will speed up the fan and the water pump. If steam begins to come from under the hood, your cooling system is boiling. Pull to the side of the road and turn off your engine. **DO NOT OPEN THE RADIATOR CAP.**
- **Headlight failure:** If your headlights suddenly fail, try your parking lights and directional signals—one of the two may work and give you enough light to guide you as you leave the road. If your lights fail on a busy or lighted highway, you will probably have enough light from other sources to guide you off the road. If all the lights fail on a dark, deserted highway, slow down and try to keep your car on the pavement until you have reduced speed enough so that you can move onto the shoulder without striking an obstruction.
- **Windshield wiper failure:** If your wipers suddenly fail in blinding rain or snow, slow down, roll down your side window, and put your head out so that you can see ahead. Then move your car off the highway. Use the same procedure if your hood should suddenly open and blind you.
- **Stuck accelerator pedal:** If your accelerator pedal sticks, you may be able to free it by hooking your toe under the pedal and attempting to raise it. If not, you can turn the engine off and thus slow the vehicle down. If you have power steering or power brakes, you will lose this assistance when you cut the engine.

CHAPTER 8

DRIVING THE FREEWAYS

Freeways are multi-lane, controlled access, divided highways that permit you to drive long distances without interruption, with minimum fatigue and maximum safety. There are no stops and cross traffic on the freeways. If you know how to use them properly you can get where you're going sooner and have a better chance to arrive safely. It is therefore important that you know and understand the distinctive features of freeways.

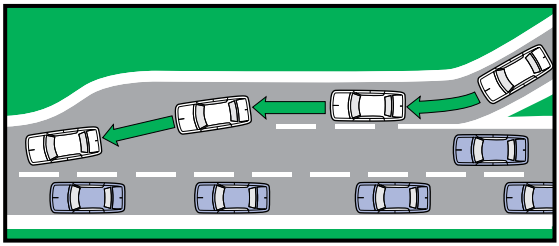
Safe use of freeways demands knowledge of special types of hazards. Among other things, it requires that you keep pace with traffic and stay alert. Slower moving vehicles, those traveling at less than the normal speed of traffic at that time, MUST KEEP TO THE RIGHT.

Cutting from one lane to another is a dangerous practice. Choose the lane in which traffic is moving at the pace you prefer and stay in it. If you must change lanes to pass or leave the freeway, check traffic carefully and signal well in advance of your move.

In case of emergencies, such as mechanical breakdowns, park entirely off the traveled portion and stay with your vehicle if at all possible. Open the trunk, raise the hood if weather permits and tie a white cloth to a door handle or antenna, where it can best be seen. These are distress signals, and any law enforcement officer seeing them will give you assistance. Other than in a case of emergency, parking is not permitted on the freeway.

For highway emergencies, to report accidents and drunk drivers, dial *HP or (*47) toll-free on your cell-phone to contact Alabama State Troopers.

ENTERING THE FREEWAY

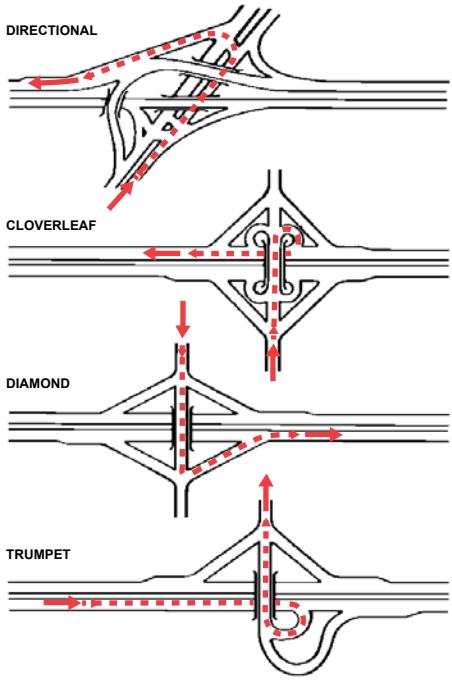


Entrance ramps are provided for entering freeways. These are short, one-way ramps that permit safe and easy entry. The entrance ramp will take you to a special acceleration lane. As you approach and enter the acceleration lane, increase speed to match that of vehicles in the through lanes, if possible. Watch for an opening, activate your turn signal, and merge smoothly with the other traffic. Drivers on the freeway should allow room for those entering, but you must yield to them if they do not. DO NOT come to a full stop in the acceleration lane unless absolutely necessary.

When a YIELD sign is in place at an entrance ramp with no acceleration lane, entering traffic must obey the YIELD sign and stop if necessary rather than force their way into the traffic stream.

INTERCHANGES

The intersection of two highways at different levels (over and under) with separate connecting roads for the transfer of traffic from one highway to the other is called an interchange. This design feature enables vehicles to cross, enter, or leave either highway without interfering with other vehicles. Four of the most common types of interchanges are called **"directional," "cloverleaf," "diamond," and "trumpet".**



DIRECTIONAL INTERCHANGE:

This type is used where a high volume of traffic desires to transfer between only two legs of the interchange. The directional ramp shown in the above illustration is designed to accommodate high volumes of traffic from west to north. Other movements are accomplished on the conventional diamond type ramps.

CLOVERLEAF INTERCHANGE:

Designed to allow turning movements off or onto the freeway from four directions, using loop type connections. It eliminates left turn and cross traffic conflicts for all movements.

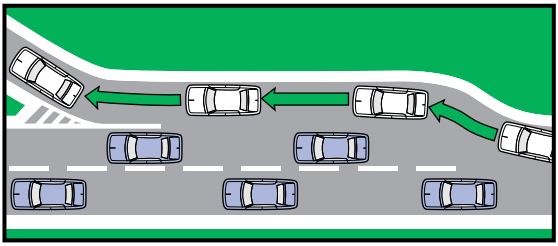
DIAMOND INTERCHANGE:

Characterized by four ramps, allowing vehicles to enter or leave the main highway while flowing with the traffic. Left turns are made AFTER leaving the freeway.

TRUMPET INTERCHANGE:

Provides access to a freeway when another roadway connects, forming a "T" intersection. It is a variation of directional or diamond type interchanges to permit turning movements on and off the highway.

LEAVING THE FREEWAY



Getting off the freeway at the right place requires advance planning and close observance of all signs. Prepare for your exit by moving into the proper lane well in advance. Signal your turn, move into the deceleration lane and reduce your speed as you prepare to enter the exit ramp. Never reduce speed suddenly on the freeway. As you move into the exit ramp, be prepared to yield or stop when you come to the intersecting roadway.

If you miss your exit you must not stop, back up, or attempt to turn-around; proceed to the next exit and come back to the one you missed.

CHAPTER 9

YOUR VEHICLE

Motorists cannot be safe drivers unless their vehicles are properly equipped and in good mechanical condition.

Alabama law specifies the safety equipment you must have on your vehicle. There are different regulations regarding different types of vehicles.

BRAKES:

All automobiles must have two separate methods of applying brakes. They must have a regular foot brake and a parking brake.

MUFFLERS:

Every vehicle must be equipped with a muffler in good working order. It must eliminate excessive or unusual noise such as a sharp popping or cracking sound. Muffler cutouts, bypasses or similar devices are forbidden. The exhaust system must not leak carbon monoxide fumes into the interior of the vehicle. The system should be checked periodically to be sure it is not leaking.

WINDSHIELD WIPERS:

Every motor vehicle having a windshield must be equipped with windshield wipers in good working order.

REAR VIEW MIRRORS:

To enable the driver to see 200 feet to the rear are required on all vehicles.

LIGHTS:

Motor vehicles must be equipped with at least two headlights (white lights), a rear license plate light, a brake light, and at least one red taillight. All lights must be visible from a distance of at least 500 feet. The high beam of the headlight must illuminate objects at a minimum of 350 feet and be in adjustment and alignment. Other vehicles must be equipped as required by law.

OTHER LIGHTS:

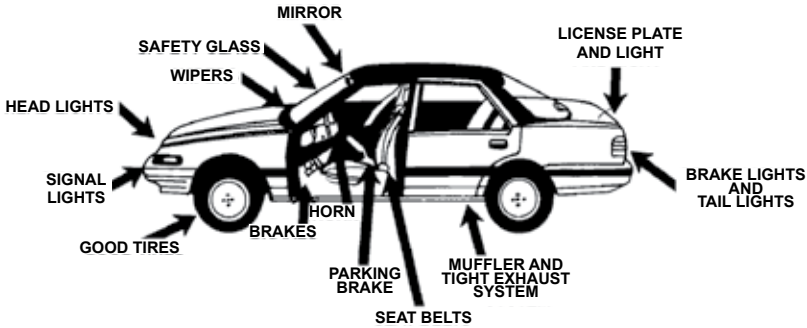
The use of both left and right turn signal lights or other pairs of lights flashing simultaneously to indicate a vehicular hazard is permitted.

SAFETY BELTS:

Statistics show that in a crash, steering assemblies cause 30 percent of fatal injuries, and another 40 percent of deaths are caused by striking the windshield, windshield frame or instrument panel. Safety belts can prevent these "second collisions." For children under six years old, special child and

infant restraints are needed to protect them from serious injury or death. Traffic accidents are the number one killer of children and these restraints for small children can prevent them from becoming "flying missiles" in a traffic crash.

YOUR CAR MUST HAVE THIS EQUIPMENT



HORNS

A horn (in good working order) is required on all motor vehicles. Use it to warn children, bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists you are passing. Bells, sirens or exhaust whistles may not be used except for emergency vehicles.

Needless use of your horn may result in an arrest. It is unlawful to use a motor vehicle horn for any purpose except in giving warning when reasonably necessary to insure safe operation. Never use the horn to announce arrival or call your passengers.

TIRES

With the increasing number of miles being driven on high-speed highways, safe tires are important. It is important that you buy the proper tires for your particular car to be sure that they will carry the weight. Check tire pressure often and never drive with them under-inflated. When your car is being serviced, check your tires for cuts, bruises, foreign objects or other faults. If wear is uneven, have wheels and/or alignment inspected. Be sure that you have enough rubber; a tire is illegal if your tread is less than 1/16 inch deep. Treat your tires kindly, do not make "jack-rabbit" starts or screeching halts unless absolutely necessary. Take it easy on corners and over extremely rough surfaces. Take a break and let them cool during long trips during warm weather. Never use different types of tires. Check with your dealer about mixing types on front and back. Your spare tire should be checked periodically, you may need it.

MAINTENANCE

The only efficient, safe vehicle is one that is properly maintained. Brakes, exhaust systems, cooling systems, lights, windshield wipers, tires become worn and defective and need maintenance from time to time. If not properly maintained, any one of these items could be the cause of a serious accident.

As a safety measure, it is advisable to have your car checked. In this way, defective equipment will be repaired.

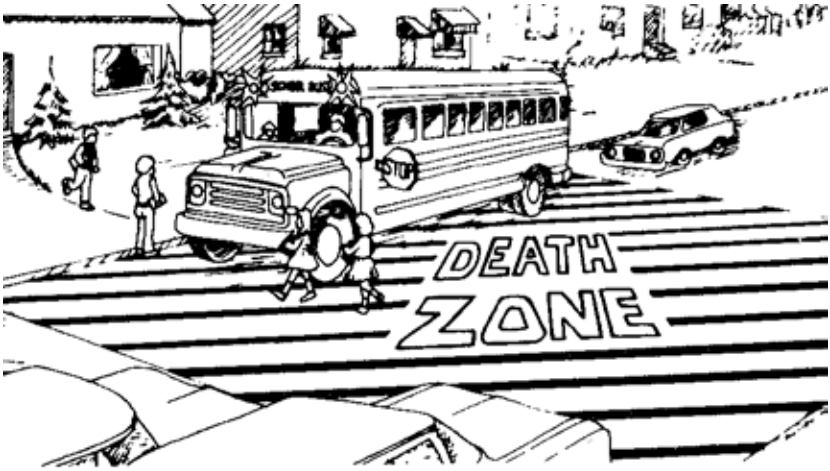
PLAN YOUR TRIP

Plan your trip in advance. Use a map and decide exactly where to get on and off the freeway.

CHECK YOUR CAR'S GASOLINE GAUGE and get fuel if you do not have enough for your trip. Check for water and oil needs. There are no service stations located directly on freeways.

Make sure your car is in good mechanical condition. Check your tires, including spares, to make certain they are properly inflated, have good tread and are free of cuts.

THE DEATH ZONE



CAUTION: The majority of children injured or killed in pupil transportation are not injured or killed on the bus, but outside the bus. Most are struck by motorists who fail to stop for the flashing red lights and extended stop signs. This area around the stopped school bus is referred to as the "DEATH ZONE."

MOVING? LET US KNOW!

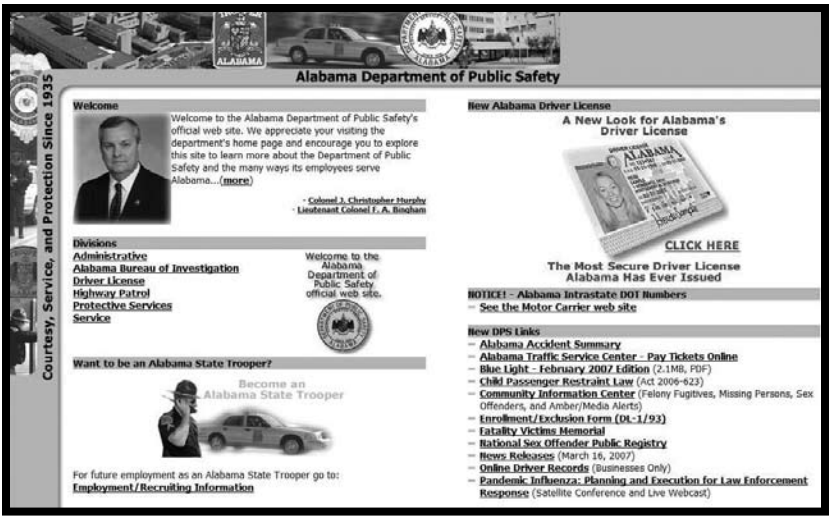
Alabama driver license holders have 30 days in which to inform the Driver License Division of a change of address.

Write or Call:

Alabama Department of Public Safety
Driver License Division
PO Box 1471
Montgomery AL 36102-1471

334-242-4400 *(Phone menu selection options.)*

Visit Our Web Site At http://www.dps.alabama.gov



The Driver License Division Web page contains a variety of information that we hope will help you. From online manuals to information on testing procedures and schedules, our Web site was designed to be your one-stop for all your Driver License needs.

ATTENTION 15, 16 & 17 YEAR OLD DRIVERS!!

GDL (Graduated Drivers License)—Act #02-408

GDL SUMMARY:

1. Does not apply to individuals 18 years of age or older.
2. Does not apply to individuals 17 years of age or older who have had a valid drivers license for 6 months or longer.
3. Does not apply to individuals who are 16 years of age or older who are married or the head of household.
4. Does not apply to individual that have been legally relieved of minority status (the state or period of being below the legal age).
5. A person under the age of 18 may not apply for an unrestricted driver's license until that person has held a learner's license for at least a six-month period with no violations of the restrictions. (Must be 17.)

15 year olds with a valid learner's license are authorized to drive while accompanied by a parent, legal guardian or a person who is 21 years of age or older who is a licensed driver and occupies the front seat next to the driver or when accompanied by a licensed or certified driving instructor occupying the front seat by the driver.

16 year olds must have parental or legal guardian's permission to receive a license and to drive without supervision.

AND

The student must have a verification form provided by the Department of Public Safety (DPS), signed by a parent or legal guardian verifying that the applicant has COMPLETED a minimum of 30 hours of behind-the wheel (BTW) practice. ***Graduated Driver License Form w/ Permission, Verification & Certificate of Completion are available at: www.dps.state.al.us***

OR

The student must submit a completion form supplied by the State Department of Education (SDE) verifying that the applicant has COMPLETED an SDE approved Driver Education course.

RESTRICTIONS:

Restrictions on the license of a person who is 16 years of age or age 17 with a license less than 6 months:

1. The student may not operate a vehicle between midnight and 6:00 am unless:
   a. Accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
   b. Accompanied by a person 21 years of age or older who is duly licensed and has the consent of the licensee's parent or legal guardian.
   c. Going to or from their regular workplace.
   d. Going to or from a school sponsored event.
   e. Going to or from a religious sponsored event.
   f. Driving for the purpose of a medical, fire, or law enforcement related emergency.

2. May not have more than 4 occupants in the vehicle excluding a parent or legal guardian of licensee. (3 friends, driver and parent maximum).

ENFORCEMENT:

Violation of the above conditions will cause the licensee to be guilty of a traffic violation, but shall not be subject to any criminal penalties or court costs. No citation will be issued for a traffic violation unless the licensee is stopped for a separate violation of the law and issued a citation or warrant for the separate violation. No points will be assessed for violation of the above restrictions.

Violation of any of the above restrictions will result in the restrictive period being extended by 6 months or until the driver reaches 18 years of age.

If a licensee is convicted of a second moving traffic violation or is convicted of failure to give information, render aid, racing, fleeing, or attempting to elude a law enforcement officer, reckless driving, illegal passing, driving on the wrong side of the road, or any other offense where four or more points are assessed, their license will automatically be suspended for 60 days or until age 18, whichever comes first. This rule will also apply to other violations as designated by rules or regulations that may be imposed pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act.

NOTES:

NOTES:

Alabama Driver License Offices Telephone Numbers

Birmingham	205 252-7445	Mobile	251 660-2330
Decatur	256 351-4667	Montgomery	334 272-8868
Dothan	334 983-5616	Opelika	334 742-9986
Evergreen	251 578-5726	Quad Cities	256 383-2923
Huntsville	256 539-0681	Selma	334 875-1341
Jacksonville	256 435-7006	Tuscaloosa	205 553-0729

The Alabama Department of Public Safety and You can make our communities Safer!

Don't Become Another Statistic, Make Every Mile A Safe One!

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
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