

# Driver's Guide

## A Practical Handbook for Safe and Responsible Driving in India



Because Safe Driving Saves Lives

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Special thanks to the untiring support of Vaani S. Aming for helping bring this manual to life.

See Appendix D for references used.

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**Prepared by saferoadsindia.org™ in October 2025.**

## **Disclaimer**

This manual has been prepared as an educational resource to assist learner drivers, instructors, experienced drivers, and road safety advocates across India. It is intended as a guide for safe and responsible driving, but it does not carry legal authority.

The Motor Vehicles Act (1988), the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act (2019), and official notifications of the Government of India and the respective State Governments or Union Territories remain the final authority.

**Drivers are legally responsible for complying with all applicable traffic laws and regulations. The authors and publishers of this manual accept no liability for misuse, misinterpretation, or non-compliance with official law or regulations.**



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## Preface

Road safety in India is both a challenge and an opportunity. Every year, thousands of lives are lost in preventable accidents. Many of these tragedies occur not because people lack skill, but because they lack guidance — a clear, structured reference on how to drive safely, responsibly, and legally.

In many countries, official driver's manuals have been published for decades, serving as the foundation for learning road rules and safe driving habits. In India, the Central and State governments have strengthened laws, introduced stricter penalties, run awareness campaigns, and supported road safety initiatives. But until now there has been no single, consolidated manual written in clear, learner-friendly language, applicable nationwide. This book is an attempt to fill that space — to stand alongside government efforts and make the principles of safe driving more accessible to everyone.

Although many principles of safe driving apply to all road users, this manual focuses mainly on the needs and responsibilities of car drivers, while highlighting how they must interact safely with others on the road.

The long-term vision is simple: every road user gets home safely, every day. To achieve this vision, India needs a practical guide that speaks directly to drivers.

### BACKGROUND

In India, people learn to drive in many different ways. Some are taught by parents, relatives, or friends on local roads; others join professional driving schools that provide structured lessons and prepare them for the licensing test. Both approaches give learners the basic skills to handle a vehicle and navigate traffic.

What is often missing, however, is a single reference that goes beyond passing the test — one that explains the why behind the rules, connects them with everyday road conditions, and encourages safer habits. Many new drivers rely on observation and personal experience to fill this gap, which can lead to uneven knowledge and risky shortcuts.

This manual is designed to complement existing training and learning methods. It gathers together the laws, rules, and practical guidance into one place, making them easier to understand and apply. The goal is simple: not just to help learners qualify for a licence, but to encourage courtesy, responsibility, and a culture of safety on Indian roads.

**WHY THIS MANUAL**

Unlike official legislation, which is written in legal language, this manual is written in plain, practical English. It is designed to help learners, experienced drivers, instructors, and road safety advocates alike. Since people are more likely to follow rules and guidance when they understand the reasons behind them, this manual explains not only *what* to do, but also *why* it matters. It may also serve as a reference for State agencies or NGOs who wish to adapt or expand it for local use.

**HOW THIS MANUAL IS ORGANIZED**

The manual is arranged into ten chapters and appendices. It begins with the legal and civic foundations of safe driving, then explains vehicle knowledge, road rules, safe practices, and defensive driving. Later chapters address sharing the road, accidents and first aid, and sample review questions. The appendices provide road signs, summaries of legal updates, and additional references.

**A LIVING DOCUMENT**

This is Version 1.0 of the manual. It is not the final word. We invite feedback from learners, instructors, schools, NGOs, and State agencies to make it stronger in future editions.

**DISCLAIMER**

This manual simplifies and paraphrases official law and regulations for clarity. If anything in this guide differs from the Motor Vehicles Act, the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, or State regulations, the law always prevails.

## Chapter 1: Introduction

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### 1.1 Purpose of this Manual

Driving is more than simply controlling a machine on wheels. It is an activity that requires awareness, judgment, and above all, responsibility. Every time a person drives, they share space with pedestrians, cyclists, bus passengers, truck drivers, and families traveling in cars or on two-wheelers. A good driver respects not only the rules of the road, but also the dignity, safety, and rights of others.

This manual has been created to provide learners and experienced drivers in India with clear, structured guidance on how to drive safely, responsibly, and legally. It is not merely a handbook to pass a licensing exam. It is written to help those who are genuinely interested in learning good driving habits. It is intended to support a lifetime of safe road use, better habits, and courteous driving behavior. By combining official rules with practical explanations and examples, it seeks to be a single, reliable guide that can be understood by learners, instructors, NGOs, and government programs alike.

Note: Most people in India have never seen a driver's manual or a road user's guide. At first, this document may seem long, but in reality it is more compact than many manuals used around the world. This manual is meant to guide you step by step, in a way that is easy to follow.

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### 1.2 Acknowledgment of Government Efforts

In recent years, both the Government of India and State governments have made significant strides in improving road safety. Stronger legislation, the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act of 2019, new sets of rules, national safety campaigns, stricter enforcement, and investments in infrastructure are all part of this progress. Millions of lives will be touched by these initiatives.

This manual works alongside existing efforts, presenting the same goals in a learner-friendly way. Its purpose is to explain the official rules and regulations clearly, highlight the reasons behind them, and encourage drivers to adopt them in everyday practice. States are welcome to adapt this manual if they find it useful, and a different licence is available for public-interest use upon request.

The rules and guidance in this manual are intended for application across the whole of India. While road conditions may vary from place to place, the principles of safety and courtesy remain the same everywhere.

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### 1.3 Legal Foundations

The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, as updated by the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, is the primary legal framework for road safety in India. The 2019 amendments introduced stricter penalties (e.g., ₹1,000 for not wearing a seatbelt under Section 194B), mandatory safety features like airbags, and protections for Good Samaritans. The Motor Vehicles (Driving) Regulations, 2017, complement these laws, except where superseded by the 2019 amendments. These laws are binding but often use formal legal language.

This manual paraphrases the key rules into plain, everyday English so that learners can quickly understand and apply them. At times, we illustrate the difference by showing how a legal rule is written versus how it appears in this guide. The intent is not to replace the law, but to make its meaning clear and practical for everyday driving. The authority always remains with the Motor Vehicles Act and Rules, but this guide makes their meaning easier to follow in everyday driving.

#### **Example 1:**

- Legal wording (from Motor Vehicles Act): “Every person driving a motor vehicle shall, while in a public place, drive the vehicle in a careful and cautious manner and at a speed not endangering the public.”
- Our guide’s wording: “Always drive carefully and at a safe speed so that no one is put in danger.”

#### **Example 2:**

- Legal wording (Rule 27, CMVR): “Every driver shall, on entering a road intersection, give way to the traffic approaching on the road to his right hand, unless otherwise directed by any sign board or traffic police officer.”
- Our guide’s wording: “At an intersection, let vehicles coming from your right go first, unless a sign or traffic police say otherwise.”

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### 1.4 Why Rules Exist

Traffic rules are not arbitrary. They are based on experience, accident data, and safety science, designed to protect lives and make the roads fair for everyone. When drivers understand the

reasons behind the rules, they are more likely to respect them. This manual therefore explains not only what the rules are, but also why they exist and how they protect lives.

India's laws are regularly updated to reflect new realities. The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 made road safety laws much stricter. Penalties for violations such as speeding, drunk driving, and driving without a licence became many times higher. Safety features like airbags, antilock braking systems (ABS), and seat belts for all passengers are now mandatory in new vehicles, and **Automated Enforcement** using speed cameras and automated challans is recognized. The law also formally protects Good Samaritans who help accident victims.

Technology such as speed cameras and automated challans is recognized as official enforcement. Automated challans mean that cameras, not just police officers, can catch violations. If you speed or jump a signal, the fine will arrive directly at your home or phone. Finally, greater responsibility is placed on parents of juveniles, contractors, and civic bodies for accidents caused by negligence.

These reforms underline a simple truth: rules exist because every life matters, and need for enforcement becomes stronger when people ignore their shared responsibility.

India has made steady progress in strengthening road safety, yet the number of lives lost each year on the roads remains high. Appendix B provides an overview of these official figures over time, showing why safer driving remains so important. (Also see the note of caution from the IIT-Delhi study in interpreting the statistics.)

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## 1.5 Responsibilities of Drivers

This manual is written primarily for car drivers, since cars are a common and growing part of India's traffic mix. Many principles here apply to all road users, but our focus is on the knowledge and habits that every car driver must develop. Other road users — pedestrians, cyclists, two-wheelers, buses, and trucks — are covered where they interact with car driving.

Every licenced driver in India has responsibilities that go beyond controlling their own vehicle. These responsibilities are the foundation of safe driving in India.

- Keeping their vehicle under control at all times— whether in heavy traffic, rain, or on a highway.
- Obeying traffic signs, signals, and road markings.
- Avoiding any action that endangers or inconveniences others.
- Showing patience, courtesy, and civic sense in crowded or stressful conditions.

- Paying special attention to vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, and two-wheeler riders.

Drivers must also comply with state-specific regulations, as licensing and enforcement vary across India. For example, Gujarat's RTO requires a computer-based learner's licence test, while Delhi uses a mix of written and practical assessments. Check your state's RTO guidelines to ensure compliance.

Driving is both a privilege and a social duty. Safe drivers make roads healthier, more predictable, and more humane for all.

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## 1.6 Civic Sense and Courtesy on the Road

Civic sense means recognizing that roads are shared spaces, not private territory. It is the awareness that your actions as a driver affect the safety, comfort, and rights of everyone else who uses the road — other drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, and even residents living along busy streets.

A driver with civic sense goes beyond obeying the law by acting with respect and courtesy. For example, yielding to an ambulance with flashing lights or not honking near a school ensures safer, smoother roads. Practicing civic sense may add a few minutes to your journey, but it creates safer, calmer, and more respectful experiences for all. Civic sense is about thoughtfulness, not perfection.

### Principles of Civic Sense in Driving:

- **Respect the rules.** Follow signals, signs, and speed limits even when no one is watching. Rules are not about punishment, but about creating predictable and safe conditions for all.
- **Give way when needed.** Do not block intersections, pedestrian crossings, or merging traffic. Allow buses, ambulances, and school vehicles to move safely.
- **Control noise and pollution.** Avoid unnecessary honking, especially near hospitals, schools, and residential areas. Keep your vehicle well maintained to reduce smoke and noise.
- **Practice patience.** Traffic jams and delays are part of city life. Losing temper, cutting queues, or driving aggressively does not save time — it only increases risk.
- **Think of others.** Avoid double parking or stopping in ways that obstruct traffic. Remember that every small act of consideration makes the road safer and smoother for everyone.
- **Report hazards.** Note and report road damage or non-functioning signals to the relevant civic authority (if safe and practical).

- **Lead by example.** Courtesy encourages courtesy. Drivers who practice civic sense set a standard that others begin to follow.

Rationale: Civic sense is the foundation of road safety. Enforcement by police and penalties by law are important, but they cannot replace everyday responsibility and self-discipline. Where civic sense is strong, fewer rules need to be enforced because people act responsibly on their own.

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## 1.7 Common Myths About Driving in India

Even when the responsibilities of drivers are clear, many people still carry everyday assumptions about the road that lead them away from safe practices — we call them ‘myths’ in this document. These ‘myths’ often feel normal, but they are dangerous habits in disguise. These “mental shortcuts” influence behavior every day. Recognizing them is the first step toward safer habits.

- Myth: “I’ll follow the rules only if police are around or fines are high.”

Reality: Rules exist to save lives, not to trap drivers. Safe habits protect you and others even when no one is watching.

- Myth: “Roads are for bigger vehicles. Smaller ones should adjust.”

Reality: Roads are shared spaces. Pedestrians, cyclists, two-wheelers, and buses all have equal rights. Courtesy keeps everyone safe.

- Myth: “I am a better driver than most, and if others break rules, I must get angry.”

Reality: Overconfidence and anger cloud judgment. A calm driver avoids accidents. Courtesy is a safety tool.

- Myth: “Wrong-side driving or skipping a signal saves time.”

Reality: These maneuvers may save seconds but risk lives — including your own. It often feels like a shortcut, but the real shortcut is planning extra time for the journey.

- Myth: “I must be aggressive, or I’ll never reach my destination quickly.”

Reality: Aggressive driving only increases stress and accidents. Time planning and patience make travel safer and often just as fast.

Rationale: Civic sense is not only about knowing the rules, but also about replacing harmful assumptions with safer ones. A culture of road safety begins with a change in mindset.



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## 1.8 How to Use this Manual

This manual is written to be practical and easy to follow. Each chapter explains a group of related rules or driving practices. Important rules are highlighted in callout boxes, with clear Do's and Don'ts. Real-world examples from across India illustrate how these rules apply in everyday situations. Some diagrams callouts are added later to show road layouts, traffic movements, and good practices visually, and an extensive list of traffic signs is provided in appendix A. Visuals of key road signs, such as 'Stop' and 'No U-Turn,' are included in chapters like Rules of the Road (Chapter 4) and cross-referenced with Appendix A for quick reference.

The manual can be used by:

- Learners preparing for their first licence.
- Licenced drivers refreshing their knowledge.
- Instructors and NGOs running awareness programs.
- State governments looking to adapt educational material for local conditions.

It can also serve as a companion to driving school training, reinforcing lessons and providing a deeper understanding of road safety practices.

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## 1.9 Future Adaptability

India is a vast country with varied traffic conditions. Urban driving in Delhi, Chennai, or Mumbai is not the same as rural driving in the hills of Himachal Pradesh or the highways of Gujarat, Tamil Nadu or West Bengal. This manual provides national guidance, but States and communities are free to adapt it for their own conditions. Wherever you drive, the principles remain the same: safety, respect, and responsibility. Because this guide is openly licenced, it can be reproduced, translated, or modified to suit local training needs.

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## 1.10 Licence Notice

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## 1.11 Recap

- India is making rapid progress in road safety, and this manual builds on those efforts.
- Rules exist not to restrict, but to protect life and enable safe sharing of roads.

- Every driver shares responsibility for the safety of all.
- Though it may seem long, this manual is compact compared to international guides—and designed to be practical.
- Approach the road as a shared space, with respect and responsibility.

## Chapter 2: Getting a Licence

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### 2.1 Why a Licence Matters

A driving licence is more than a plastic card with your photograph. It is official proof that you have been tested and found competent to drive on India's roads. Holding a licence means that the government has trusted you to take responsibility for your vehicle, for your passengers, and for the strangers with whom you share the road.

Licensing also protects the public. Without a system of tests and qualifications, anyone could drive at any age or skill level, and roads would be far more dangerous. The system exists not to inconvenience people, but to filter out those who are not yet ready. In this way, licensing builds confidence for everyone—drivers, passengers, and pedestrians alike. When you hold a licence, you are telling others that you are ready to share the road responsibly.

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### 2.2 Eligibility and Age Requirements

**Golden Rule: A licence is not just permission to drive; it is proof of readiness. Age limits and tests exist to protect everyone on the road.**

India has clear rules on the minimum age and eligibility for different types of vehicles:

- 16 years: With parental consent, you may obtain a learner's licence for a motorcycle without gear and with an engine capacity up to 50cc (e.g., mopeds).
- 18 years: Minimum age for a learner's or permanent licence for private cars or motorcycles (including geared motorcycles) without engine capacity restrictions.
- 20 years: Minimum age for a learner's or permanent licence for commercial transport vehicles (e.g., taxis, buses) or heavy goods vehicles, subject to additional training.

These limits are based on maturity and practice of safety, not just numbers. Younger drivers may lack the maturity and judgment that come with age. They also have less experience in managing risk, responding to sudden hazards, and controlling powerful vehicles. By setting age limits, the

law ensures that people take on greater responsibilities only when they are better able to handle them.

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### 2.3 Learner's Licence

Every journey begins with learning. The learner's licence is the first step toward becoming a responsible driver. It allows you to practice driving under supervision before taking the permanent licence test. Mistakes at this stage are expected and are part of the process. A learner's licence is valid for six months, and during that time you are expected to practice safely and seriously. To obtain a Learner's Licence, the applicant must first pass a **knowledge test** (often called the theory or computer-based test). This test covers traffic signs, signals, road rules, and general driving duties, ensuring the learner understands the legal principles of safe driving *before* they are allowed to practice on public roads. Passing the test is the formal confirmation that the applicant possesses the necessary foundational knowledge to begin learning practical driving.

In many states, you can apply for a learner's licence online through portals like Sarathi Parivahan. The process involves submitting documents (e.g., age proof, address proof) and scheduling a test slot. Check your state's RTO website for specific requirements and digital services.

There are important restrictions:

- An "L" plate must be displayed clearly on the front and back of the vehicle.
- A licenced driver must accompany the learner at all times.
- Carrying passengers (other than the supervisor) is not permitted.

These restrictions may feel strict, but they exist for good reason. Supervised practice reduces accidents and helps learners develop safe habits without endangering themselves or others.

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### 2.4 Permanent Licence

Once a learner has practiced sufficiently and feels confident, they can apply for a permanent licence. This involves both a theory test (covering traffic signs, road rules, and safe practices) and a practical test (driving under the observation of an examiner). The tests are designed to make sure you are ready for full responsibility.

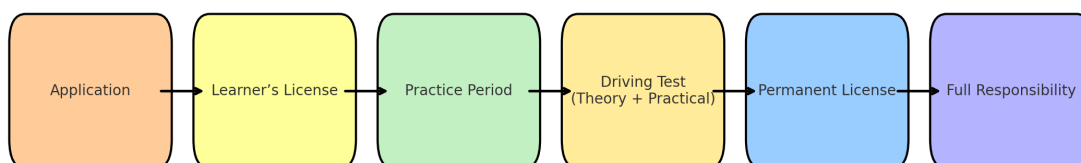
What the driving test Examiner generally looks for:

- Smooth starting, stopping, and gear changes.
- Proper mirror–signal–maneuver routine.

- Observing and obeying traffic signs.
- Maintaining lane discipline and safe distance.
- Confident parking and reversing.
- Calm control at intersections and turns.

Passing isn't just about skill — it shows you understand safety and courtesy.

A permanent licence is valid for 20 years or until the holder turns 40, whichever comes first, as per the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. For drivers aged 40–50, renewals may require a medical fitness certificate, and after age 50, renewals are required every five years. This ensures drivers remain medically fit and updated on current rules.



**Figure 1: Flowchart of the licensing process, illustrating steps from learner's licence application to permanent licence issuance.**

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## 2.5 Renewal, Duplicate, and Endorsements

Life is full of changes. Licences can be renewed, replaced, or expanded:

- **Renewal:** A licence must be renewed after its validity period. This keeps drivers up-to-date and ensures safer roads for everyone. Renewing on time prevents interruptions in driving rights.
- **Duplicate:** If a licence is lost, damaged, or stolen, a duplicate can be obtained from the Regional Transport Office (RTO).
- **Endorsements:** Special authorizations, such as those for commercial driving or transporting hazardous goods, require additional checks and are noted as endorsements on the licence.

These processes are designed to keep records accurate and to ensure that special responsibilities are given only to those who are properly trained and certified. Keeping licences current ensures that only medically fit and legally responsible drivers remain on the road.

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## 2.6 Suspension and Disqualification

A licence is a privilege, not a permanent right. It can be suspended or cancelled if the holder misuses it. Serious offences that can lead to suspension include:

- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Reckless or dangerous driving.
- Repeated traffic violations.
- Failing to yield to emergency vehicles.

The rationale is simple: if a driver consistently endangers others, society has the right to remove them from the road until they change their behavior. Driving without a valid licence is a serious offence under Section 181 of the Motor Vehicles Act, carrying a large fine and/or imprisonment up to three months. This underscores the importance of maintaining a valid licence at all times. This protects both the driver and the public. A licence comes with trust — keeping that trust keeps you and others safe.

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## 2.7 International Driving Permit (IDP)

If you plan to drive abroad, you can apply for an International Driving Permit (IDP). It is valid for one year and must always be carried together with your valid driving licence issued in India. The IDP is recognized in many countries under international conventions. As of 2025, Indians can apply for or renew an IDP through the Sarathi Parivahan portal or authorized RTOs, with options for overseas residents to process renewals via Indian embassies. Always check the host country's requirements, as some may mandate additional certifications.

The IDP exists to harmonize driving standards across borders, allowing Indians to drive legally overseas while ensuring that international visitors respect Indian licences in return.

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## 2.8 Respecting the System

It is easy to think of licensing as just a formality, but it represents a system built to protect lives. Think of the licensing system as a safety net that protects you and others on the road. Drivers show civic responsibility when they apply honestly, respect the process, and cooperate with officials. The system works best when people see it not as an obstacle, but as a safeguard for themselves and their communities.

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## 2.9 Do's and Don'ts for Licensing

These practical tips are easy to follow but make a big difference.

### **Do**

- Apply for the correct category of licence based on your age and vehicle type.
- Practice seriously during the learner's licence period.
- Carry your licence with you whenever you drive.
- Renew your licence on time.
- Follow the restrictions and responsibilities honestly.
- Use official RTO portals like Sarathi Parivahan for applications and renewals to avoid fraudulent agents.

### **Don't**

- Use shortcuts or false documents — honesty ensures the system works fairly.
- Carry passengers when holding only a learner's licence.
- Ignore the renewal date of your licence.
- Treat licensing as a mere formality—it is a responsibility to society.

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## 2.10 Recap

- A driver's licence represents readiness and legal responsibility.
- Different categories of vehicles have different age and training requirements.
- The learner's licence is the first step in becoming a safe driver.
- Driving tests measure both knowledge and practical ability.
- The licensing process is designed to protect all road users by ensuring only prepared drivers take the wheel.
- International Driving Permit is valid only with your Indian licence.

## Chapter 3: Know Your Vehicle

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### 3.1 Why Know Your Vehicle?

A driver who does not understand their vehicle is like a doctor who does not know how to use medical instruments—mistakes can directly endanger lives. Controls are not just parts of a machine — they are tools for communication, stability, and safety. Safe and responsible driving begins with familiarity. You must know what each control does, how your vehicle responds, and how to keep it in a roadworthy condition. When you know your vehicle well, you feel more confident and less stressed on the road. This knowledge builds confidence and reduces hesitation in critical moments.

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### 3.2 Vehicle Controls

Every driver must understand the basic controls of their vehicle. Knowing how and when to use them is the foundation of safe driving. A driver who does not know their own vehicle is like a doctor unfamiliar with their tools — mistakes can harm others.

#### Primary Controls

- **Steering wheel (or handlebar for two-wheelers):** Guides the vehicle's direction. Hold firmly but not tightly, allowing smooth and controlled movement.
- **Accelerator (throttle):** Increases speed. Use gently — sudden acceleration reduces stability and surprises other road users.
- **Brake:** Reduces speed or stops the vehicle. Apply progressively, not suddenly, unless in an emergency.
- **Clutch (manual vehicles):** Disconnects the engine from the wheels, allowing gear changes or controlled stopping.
- **Gear lever:** Selects the right gear for speed and power. Lower gears provide control at low speeds and on slopes; higher gears are for cruising.
- **Parking brake (handbrake):** Secures the vehicle when stopped, especially on slopes. Engage it after stopping and release it smoothly before moving off.

#### Secondary Controls

- **Mirrors:** Check traffic behind and to the sides. Always use before changing speed or direction.
- **Indicators (turn signals):** Communicate your intentions to others. Signal early and cancel once the action is complete.



- **Lights:** Improve visibility and help others see you. Use dipped (low beam) headlights in normal traffic; high beams only on empty, dark roads.
- **Horn:** A tool for warning, not for aggression. Use briefly to alert, never to scold.
- **Wipers and washers:** Essential in rain or dust. Clear vision is non-negotiable for safety.

### **Control Routines (Step-by-Step Sequences)**

Using these controls in the right order keeps driving smooth and predictable. Practice these routines in a safe, empty area until they become automatic habits.

- **Moving off from standstill:** Mirror → Signal → Gear → Observation → Move (MS-GO).
- **Changing lanes:** Mirror → Signal → Observation → Smooth steering.
- **Turning:** Signal early → Slow down → Check mirrors → Select gear → Complete turn smoothly.
- **Stopping:** Mirror → Signal → Brake → Clutch → Neutral.

### **Common Mistakes to Avoid**

- Resting your foot on the clutch (riding the clutch) on manual gear vehicles, which wears it out and reduces control.
- Forgetting blind spot checks before lane changes.
- Braking too late or too harshly.
- Overusing the high beam and blinding other drivers.

**Rationale:** Vehicle controls are not complicated, but they must become second nature. By practicing routines and avoiding bad habits, drivers stay predictable and safe — for themselves and for everyone around them.

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## 3.3 Pre-Drive Checks

Before starting any journey, a responsible driver takes a minute to check the vehicle. These checks take only a minute, but they may save hours of trouble. A simple routine can prevent accidents and breakdowns:

- Check tyre pressure and condition (e.g., tread depth, no visible damage).
- Test the brakes for responsiveness.
- Ensure mirrors, lights, and windows are clean.

- Ensure mirrors are adjusted for clear visibility.
- Adjust seat and steering for comfort and control.
- Fasten your seat belt; confirm passengers do the same.
- Confirm fuel level or battery charge (for electric vehicles) and no warning lights are on.
- Verify seatbelts and head restraints are functional for all passengers.
- Test lights, indicators, wipers, and horn for proper operation.

### **Warning Lights and Indicators:**

Modern vehicles have dashboard warning lights to alert drivers to potential problems. These are applicable pre-drive and as well as while driving.

- **Oil Pressure Light:** Stop safely and switch off the engine immediately; continuing to drive may cause serious damage.
- **Engine Temperature Light:** Pull over safely and let the engine cool before checking coolant levels.
- **Battery or Charging Light:** Indicates a fault in the electrical system—drive cautiously to a safe place and have it checked.
- **Brake Warning Light:** If it appears while driving, stop safely and seek assistance; brake failure may be imminent.

Ignoring warning lights can turn a small issue into a dangerous or costly one.

**Rationale:** A 30-second check and a regular scan while driving can prevent a roadside breakdown or accident later. For motorcycles and scooters, helmets should be fastened properly before moving. For cars, ensure that all passengers wear seatbelts.

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## **3.4 Roadworthiness and Legal Duties**

Indian law places a duty on drivers to ensure their vehicle is roadworthy. These rules exist not to burden drivers, but to protect everyone sharing the road. Driving an unsafe vehicle is not only risky but also punishable. Roadworthiness means that brakes, tyres, lights, and emissions systems are in proper working order. Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates are mandatory, and vehicles without them may face fines or be barred from use.

Commercial vehicles must also carry valid fitness certificates, proving they meet safety standards. These checks exist to protect the public. A poorly maintained vehicle is not just a private risk—it is a danger to everyone who shares the public roads.

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### 3.5 Documents to Carry

Whenever you drive, you are legally required to carry certain documents. These include:

- A valid driving licence.
- The vehicle's Registration Certificate (RC).
- A valid insurance certificate.
- A Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificate.

These documents may be carried in digital form via official apps like DigiLocker or mParivahan, as permitted under the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. Ensure digital copies are accessible offline, as network issues may arise during checks. Carrying proper documents minimizes delays at checkpoints and demonstrates compliance with the law.

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### 3.6 Maintenance Basics

Regular maintenance keeps a vehicle safe, efficient, and long-lasting. Think of maintenance as regular health check-ups for your vehicle. This includes:

- Periodic servicing as per the manufacturer's schedule.
- Checking and topping up engine oil, coolant, and brake fluid and windshield washer fluid.
- Keeping tyres properly inflated and replacing them when worn.
- Replacing faulty lights or wipers promptly.
- For electric vehicles, ensure the battery is charged adequately and check for software updates or alerts from the manufacturer. Regular maintenance of electric components, such as charging ports, is as critical as traditional vehicle upkeep.

Ignoring maintenance can lead to sudden failures on the road, which may cause accidents. A well-maintained vehicle consumes less fuel, pollutes less, and provides peace of mind to the driver and others.

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### 3.7 Why It Matters

**Golden Rule: A well-maintained vehicle is a safe vehicle. If you take care of your vehicle, your vehicle will take care of you—and everyone else on the road.**

Knowing your vehicle is not about mechanical expertise—it is about responsibility, and making sure the vehicle is operationally suitable. Drivers who know their vehicles well are less likely to

panic in emergencies, more likely to anticipate problems, and better prepared to prevent accidents. The law recognizes this by holding drivers accountable for the condition of their vehicles. Knowing your vehicle is one of the easiest ways to make driving safer for you and kinder to others.

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### 3.8 Do's and Don'ts for Vehicle Knowledge

Think of this as a quick checklist to keep yourself and others safe.

#### **Do**

- Learn and practice all the basic controls before driving on public roads.
- Perform a quick safety check before each trip.
- Keep your vehicle serviced and roadworthy.
- Carry all required documents, physical or digital.
- Act promptly on dashboard warning lights (e.g., check engine, low oil) by consulting a mechanic to prevent breakdowns or accidents.

#### **Don't**

- Drive a vehicle you are unfamiliar with without first learning the controls.
- Ignore warning lights or unusual sounds.
- Neglect maintenance—small issues can become major failures.
- Drive without required documents; it may lead to penalties.

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### 3.9 Recap

- Master your vehicle's basic controls (e.g., steering, brakes, indicators) and instruments.
- Check tires, brakes, lights, and mirrors before driving.
- Regular maintenance prevents accidents and breakdowns.
- Keep documents and safety equipment in your vehicle at all times.
- A responsible driver treats vehicle care as part of road safety.

## Chapter 4: Rules of the Road

### 4.1 Road Signs

Road signs are the language of the road. They convey instructions, warnings, and guidance to drivers in a clear and standardized form. Obeying road signs is essential for safety and the signs carry the same force as law. Ignoring a road sign is both illegal and dangerous.

There are three broad categories. Many have their own color and shape, making them easy to recognize at a glance:

- **Mandatory signs** (circular with red border): STOP, NO ENTRY, SPEED LIMIT, ONE WAY, NO U-TURN. These must always be obeyed without exception and carry legal penalties for violation under the Motor Vehicles Act.
- **Cautionary signs** (triangular with red border): SHARP CURVE, SCHOOL AHEAD, SLIPPERY ROAD, CATTLE CROSSING. These warn of potential hazards requiring reduced speed or extra vigilance.
- **Informatory signs** (rectangular or square, often blue): PETROL PUMP, PARKING, HOSPITAL, REST AREA. These provide guidance on facilities or directions.

**IMPORTANT: Refer to Appendix A for a comprehensive list of Indian road signs, including detailed illustrations of mandatory, cautionary, and informatory signs. Familiarize yourself with these visuals to recognize signs quickly while driving, as they are critical for safe navigation and compliance with the Motor Vehicles Act.**

**Rationale:** Road signs make traffic predictable. They allow drivers from different states, or even different countries, to understand the same instructions instantly. By obeying them, drivers reduce confusion, avoid hesitation, and prevent accidents. A disciplined response to signs also improves traffic flow and reduces unnecessary conflicts.

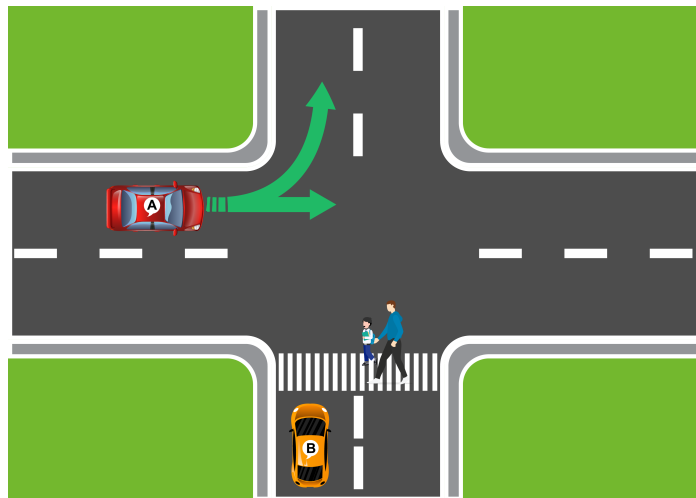
**Reminder:** Road signs and markings are not suggestions — they are legal requirements. Obeying them keeps traffic predictable and safe, while disobeying them is a punishable offence.

### 4.2 Road Markings

Road markings are painted on the road surface to regulate and guide traffic. They are an extension of road signs and work together to create order on busy streets. They are like the road's handwriting, telling drivers where to go and when to stop.

Examples include:

- Lane lines: keep vehicles in order within their lanes and discourage dangerous weaving.
- Stop lines: indicate where to halt at signals or stop signs, keeping junctions clear.
- Zebra crossings: reserved for pedestrians to cross safely, highlighting their right of way.
- Solid lines: indicate where changing lanes or overtaking is prohibited, such as near a curve or junction.
- Dashed lines: Allow lane changes or overtaking when safe, but always check mirrors and blind spots before crossing.
- Arrows and symbols: guide turning, merging, or lane-specific restrictions.



**Figure 2: Example of a pedestrian crossing: Pedestrians have right of way. Car-B is stopped to let pedestrians cross.**

Rationale: Road markings organize the available space, separate streams of traffic, and protect vulnerable road users. They reduce the need for constant enforcement by making the expected behavior obvious to all.

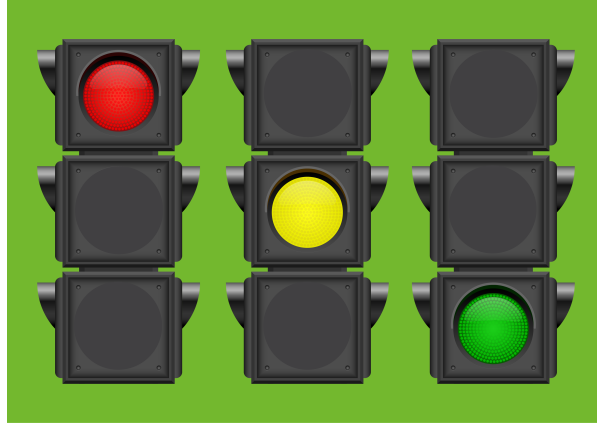
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### 4.3 Traffic Signals

Traffic signals control movement at intersections, the points of highest conflict in road networks. Standard meanings are:

- Red: stop completely and wait.

- Yellow/Amber: prepare to stop; do not accelerate to beat the light.
- Green: proceed with caution when the way is clear.



**Figure 3: Example of Traffic Lights: Standard meanings show above.**

Flashing signals often mean caution or a temporary condition, and at some intersections, police officers may override signals with hand instructions.

**All-Red Phase:** At some junctions, a brief 'all-red' period ensures that the intersection clears before traffic in the next direction begins to move. Never enter a junction during this phase.

**Rationale:** Signals create order in busy intersections, allowing vehicles and pedestrians from different directions to move safely in turn. They prevent the chaos of multiple vehicles trying to cross at once, and reduce the likelihood of collisions.

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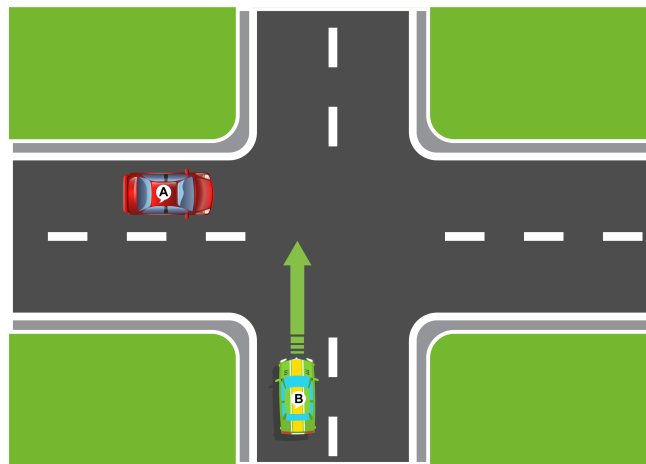
#### 4.4 Right of Way

**Golden Rule: Right of Way is not about power—it is about predictability. Always yield when required so that everyone knows what to expect. Yielding when required is also a sign of respect for others.**

Right of Way is an important concept in driving. Right of Way rules clarify who should proceed first in different situations. They are not about power or privilege, but about predictability and fairness. When drivers know the order of precedence, hesitation and aggression are reduced.

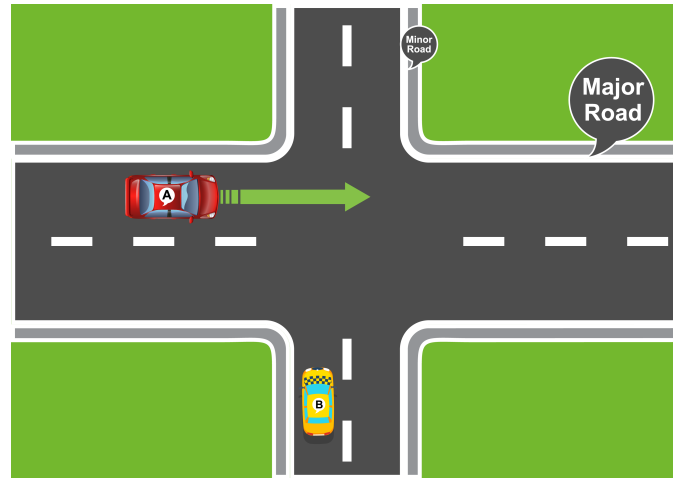
Examples:

- At uncontrolled intersections: Vehicles approaching from the right have priority, as per Rule 27 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules (CMVR).
- At roundabouts: Vehicles already in the circle have priority; entering vehicles must yield.
- Pedestrian crossings: Pedestrians have absolute right of way; stop fully to allow safe crossing.
- Emergency vehicles: Always yield immediately to ambulances, fire engines, or police vehicles with active sirens and lights, pulling over to the left if needed.
- Major vs. minor roads: Traffic on the major road has priority over vehicles entering from minor roads.

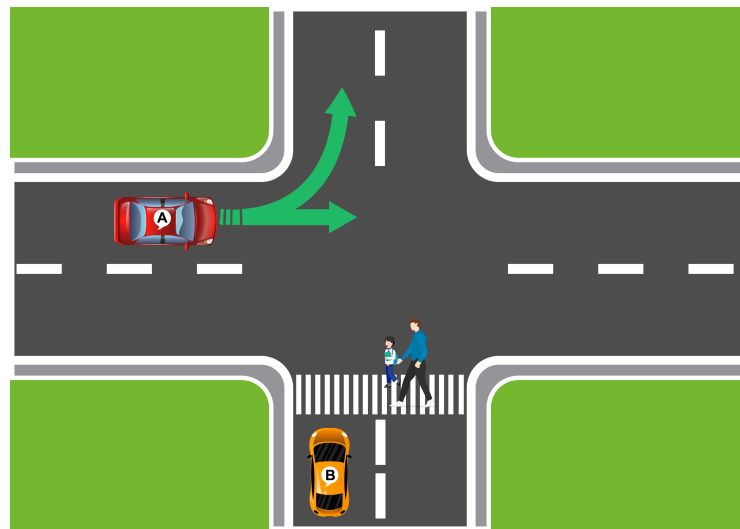


**Figure 4: Uncontrolled intersection of two equal sized roads. The vehicles to your right has the right of way.**

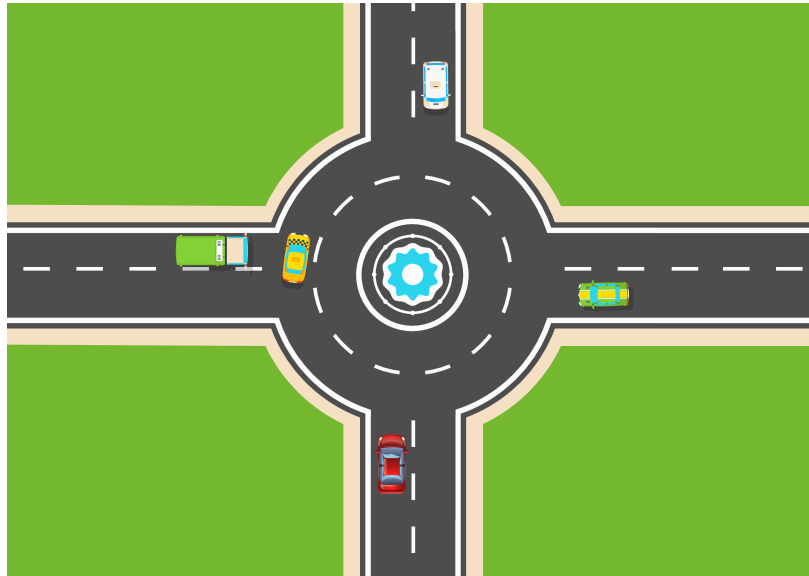




**Figure 5: Uncontrolled intersection with a major and minor road. The traffic on the major road has right of way and the car-B on the minor road must stop and yield to all vehicles (traveling in either direction) traveling on the major road before entering the road.**



**Figure 6: Pedestrian Crossing: Pedestrians have right of way - car B stops and yields to pedestrians.**



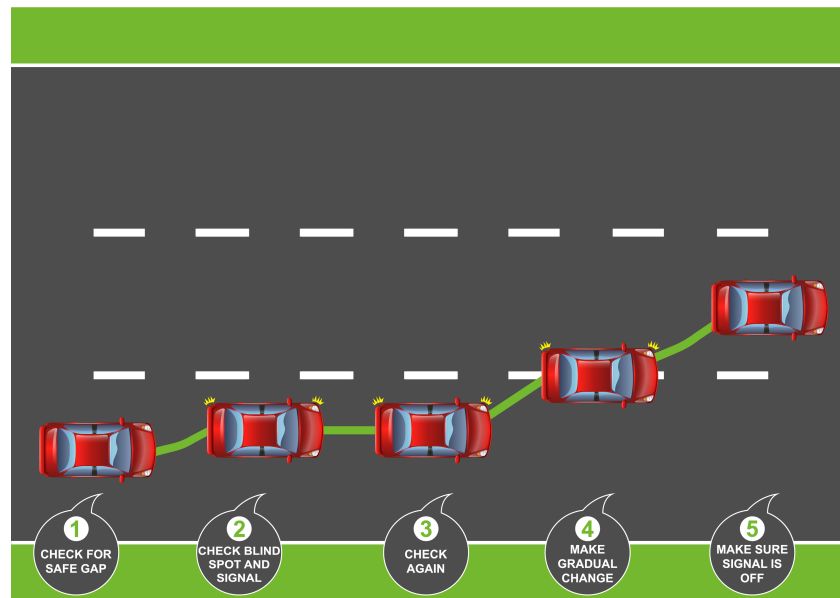
**Figure 7: Roundabout - Traffic already in the roundabout has right of way. Green lorry (left) stops to yield to the yellow car (in the roundabout).**

Rationale: Predictability is essential for safety. When every driver expects the same behavior, conflicts reduce and flow improves.

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#### 4.5 Lane Discipline

India follows the 'keep left' system. Drivers must keep to the left side of the road, leaving the right lane free for overtaking or for right turns. When the lanes are marked, the vehicle should stay in between the markings. Lane changes must always be signaled well in advance and carried out smoothly, without cutting across other vehicles. Good lane discipline makes driving less stressful for everyone.



**Figure 8: Safe method to change lanes. Follow the steps provided.**

Rationale: Lane discipline ensures that traffic flows smoothly and predictably. Without it, weaving vehicles create constant surprises, which lead to sudden braking, near misses, and crashes. Staying in lane is both courteous and safe.

Reminder: Keep to the left except when overtaking. Avoid weaving between lanes. Always signal early when you intend to change lanes or turn. Overtaking must be done on the right. Do not overtake on the left *unless* the vehicle ahead is signaling a right turn and has moved to the center of the road.

#### 4.6 Speed and Control

Speed must always be adapted to road conditions. Posted speed limits are the maximum allowable, not a target in all situations. Drivers must reduce speed near schools, hospitals, markets, construction zones, or during rain and fog. A child running onto the road gives you only seconds to react—lower speeds give you those extra seconds. Modern enforcement tools like speed cameras and automated challans make speed control both a personal duty and a monitored legal requirement. Note that driving much slower than the flow of traffic on highways can also be dangerous by causing other drivers to change speeds and switch lanes to pass you.

Rationale: Stopping distance increases with speed, but reaction time does not. A car at 80 km/h needs nearly double the distance to stop as one at 50 km/h. Controlling speed gives drivers more time to react and avoids accidents.

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## 4.7 Overtaking

Overtaking should only be done when it is safe, legal, and clearly communicated to others. On two lane roads, think of overtaking as borrowing the opposite lane—you must return it quickly and safely. Always overtake on the right after signaling. Check mirrors and blind spots before overtaking, and ensure a clear gap in oncoming traffic.

Never overtake:

- At bends or curves.
- Near hill crests.
- At intersections or pedestrian crossings.
- At railway crossings.

Rationale: You should not overtake where you cannot see ahead far enough to be able to safely complete the overtake and return to your lane. Overtaking requires moving into the opposite lane, often against oncoming traffic. If visibility is limited, the risk of collision is extremely high. The rules exist to prevent head-on crashes.

---

## 4.8 Stopping and Parking

### (a) Stopping

Stopping must never create obstruction or danger. Drivers should avoid stopping:

- On pedestrian crossings.
- At intersections.
- On bends, bridges, or narrow roads.
- At bus stops or in designated no-parking areas.

Rationale: Vehicles stopped carelessly reduce visibility, force others into dangerous maneuvers, and may block emergency access. Responsible stopping keeps roads safer and more orderly.

## (b) Parking

Parking must never cause obstruction, danger, or inconvenience. Safe parking practices include:

- Park as close to the left edge of the road as possible, without blocking traffic.
- Always use the handbrake and switch off the engine when parked.
- At night, use parking lights or reflective warning if the vehicle is not easily visible.
- Do not double-park or leave your vehicle where it narrows the usable road.
- When leaving a parked position, check mirrors, signal, and re-enter traffic safely.
- Do not park in No-Parking zones.
- Do not park blocking entrances or exits when parking.

Rationale: Good parking not only avoids fines but also prevents accidents, ensures smoother flow, and shows consideration for other road users.

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## 4.9 Use of Horns and Lights

Horns and lights are safety tools, not weapons or toys. Horns should only be used to warn others of potential danger, not to express frustration or impatience. Using horns in silence zones such as hospitals, schools, and courts is prohibited.

Lights serve two purposes: to see and to be seen. Proper use of headlights improves your visibility at night, but it also ensures that other drivers can see you clearly. High beams should only be used on empty roads with poor lighting, and must be dipped when vehicles approach. Hazard warning lights are only for situations when your vehicle itself is a danger to others — such as breakdowns, accidents, or when stopped unexpectedly in a dangerous spot. They must not be used while driving in moving traffic, except in very limited circumstances such as being part of an officially escorted convoy.

Rationale: Misusing horns increases noise pollution and stress, while improper lighting blinds others and creates danger. Used properly, these tools reduce accidents and signal courtesy to fellow road users.

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#### 4.10 Duties of a Driver

Every driver has a general duty not to endanger or inconvenience others. Beyond strict rules that must be followed, this means showing civic sense, patience, and kindness:

- Yield when necessary to maintain flow.
- Stop for pedestrians even when it requires extra patience.
- Allow others to merge safely instead of blocking them.
- Avoid aggressive behavior or retaliating against mistakes.

Rationale: Roads are shared spaces. Courtesy and patience transform driving from a stressful contest into a cooperative activity. Courtesy is not weakness—it is strength that makes the road safer for all.

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#### 4.11 Do's and Don'ts for Rules of the Road

These do's and don'ts turn safe driving principles into daily habits.

##### **Do**

- Obey all signs, signals, and road markings.
- Keep left and use lanes properly.
- Yield to pedestrians and emergency vehicles.
- Adjust speed according to conditions.
- Use lights correctly to see and to be seen.
- Use horns sparingly, only to warn of danger, and never in silence zones near hospitals or schools.

##### **Don't**

- Overtake at bends, junctions, or crossings.
- Park in prohibited areas or obstruct traffic.
- Jump signals or ignore right-of-way rules.
- Use high beams carelessly at night.
- Misuse hazard lights when the vehicle is not in an emergency.
- Show aggression or impatience on the road.

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#### 4.12 Recap

- Rules of the road bring order and safety to shared spaces.
- Always obey traffic signs, signals, and markings.
- Yield the right of way when required—predictability prevents crashes.
- Follow safe overtaking, lane discipline, and speed limits.
- Parking, use of lights, and signaling are part of safe road sharing.
- Courtesy and patience turn rules into everyday safety practices.

## Chapter 5: Safe Driving Practices

### 5.1 Introduction to Safe Driving

Safe driving is about creating peace of mind — for you and for everyone around you. Safe driving is not only about obeying laws and passing a test. It is a philosophy of how one approaches the road. A safe driver is someone who understands that every decision behind the wheel has consequences, not only for themselves, but for passengers, pedestrians, and other road users. Safe driving creates an atmosphere of trust—trust that others will follow the rules, that vehicles will act predictably, and that danger will be minimized.

India's roads are among the busiest and most varied in the world, with vehicles ranging from trucks and buses to two-wheelers, bicycles, animal-drawn carts, and pedestrians. In such an environment, safe driving practices are not just desirable—they are essential. The more drivers commit to safe practices, the fewer accidents occur, the smoother traffic becomes, and the more pleasant the road experience is for everyone.

### 5.2 Defensive Driving

Defensive driving is the practice of anticipating hazards and preparing yourself to respond safely so that one mistake—either yours or someone else's—does not lead to disaster.

**Golden Rule of Sharing the Road: Drive as though every other road user's safety depends on you. If every driver shows patience and courtesy, accidents can be prevented. A defensive driver is always alert, always patient, and never surprised.**

Defensive driving is an important concept in driving. Defensive driving is about expecting the unexpected and staying prepared so that a single mistake — either yours or someone else's — does not result in an accident. A true defensive driver creates a buffer of safety around themselves and others, ensuring that at least two mistakes would have to happen before a collision occurs.

The South African K53 system offers a clear way to understand defensive driving, built on the cycle of:

SEARCH → IDENTIFY → PREDICT → DECIDE → EXECUTE



- **Search:** Continuously scan the road ahead, behind, and to the sides. Look for hazards such as pedestrians about to cross, cyclists weaving, or a car braking suddenly.
- **Identify:** Recognize which of those hazards are most likely to affect you. For example, a parked truck blocking visibility at an intersection.
- **Predict:** Think ahead — what might happen next? Could the child on the footpath run into the road? Might the car in the right lane cut across suddenly?
- **Decide:** Choose the safest response in advance — slow down, hold your lane, prepare to brake, or signal to change lanes.
- **Execute:** Carry out your decision smoothly and confidently, avoiding sudden or panicked moves.

Practical reminders include:

- Maintain a safe following distance, using the two-second rule in normal conditions and doubling it in rain, fog, or poor visibility.
- Anticipate that other road users may make mistakes — pedestrians may cross carelessly, cyclists may swerve, or drivers may jump signals.
- Do not assume you have been seen; judiciously use your horn, lights, and indicators to make your presence clear.
- Always leave yourself an “escape path” — a clear option to move safely if traffic ahead comes to a sudden stop.

Example: In a busy Indian market street, a defensive driver scans for pedestrians stepping off the curb, anticipates two-wheelers weaving through traffic, and slows down near unmarked speed breakers, ensuring they can stop if a child darts into the road.

Rationale: Defensive driving is not about fear but about foresight. By searching, identifying, predicting, deciding, and executing calmly, you give yourself and others the best chance to avoid accidents.

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### 5.3 Personal Attitudes and Decision-Making

Every driver carries personal attitudes onto the road — confidence, impatience, competitiveness, or fatigue — and these influence decisions made in the moment. In driving, as in aviation, most errors arise not from lack of skill but from poor judgment under stress or haste. Recognizing one’s own tendencies is the first defense against them.

- **Impulsiveness** — acting too quickly without thinking, such as overtaking on a curve.

- Resignation — giving up responsibility (“nothing I do matters”), which reduces alertness.
- Invulnerability — assuming “it won’t happen to me,” which erodes caution.
- Macho attitude — trying to prove skill or dominance instead of focusing on safety.

Good drivers pause before reacting, stay mindful of their emotional state, and make deliberate, calm choices. Awareness of attitude is the foundation of safe decision-making.

Rationale: Recognizing how emotions influence judgment helps prevent overconfidence, anger, and risk-taking on the road.

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## 5.4 Sharing the Road

India’s roads are public spaces used by many different kinds of vehicles and people. Cars, scooters, auto-rickshaws, bicycles, bullock carts, buses, trucks, and pedestrians all share the same limited space. Every road user, from pedestrians to trucks, has the same right to safety. Safe driving practices demand respect for all road users, regardless of size, speed, or power.

Key points to remember:

- Pedestrians: They are the most vulnerable. Always stop for them at crossings and be extra careful near schools, markets, or bus stops.
- Two-wheelers and bicycles are smaller and less visible than cars, especially at night. Always give them extra space, especially when turning or changing lanes, as they often fall completely into a car’s blind spot, and because even a slight touch or close pass can cause them to lose balance and fall.
- Heavy vehicles: Trucks and buses require longer distances to stop and have wide blind spots. Do not cut abruptly in front of them or linger alongside them.
- Animal-drawn or slow-moving vehicles: They may seem inconvenient, but they have as much right to the road as you do. Show patience and overtake safely.
- Stray animals: Cattle, dogs, or other animals may cross roads unexpectedly, especially in rural areas or near markets. Slow down and use the horn lightly to alert them without startling.

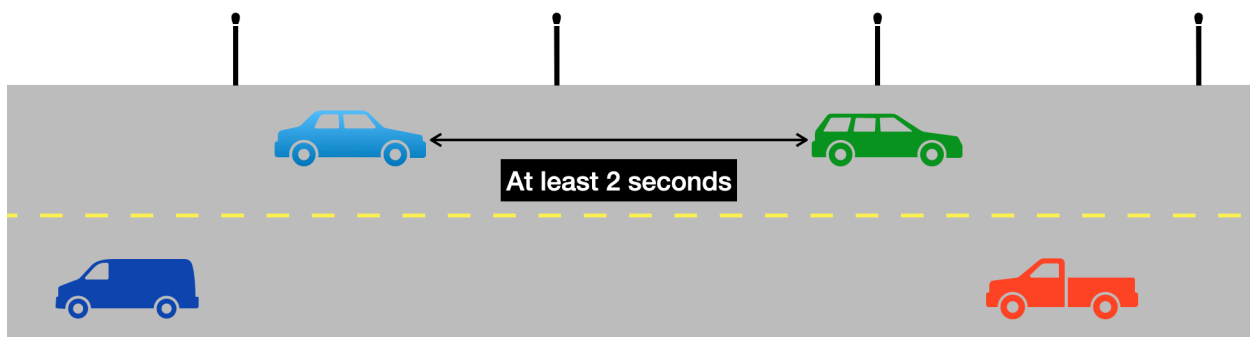
Rationale: Roads are shared resources. Treating weaker users with courtesy and care prevents tragedies and builds a culture of mutual respect.

## 5.5 Maintaining Safe Distance

Keeping distance from the vehicle ahead is one of the simplest and most effective safety habits. Distance gives you time, and time gives you choices. Remember, the space needed is more than just braking distance; it is the Total Stopping Distance (Reaction Time + Braking Distance). The two-second rule accounts for both. Without enough space, even the best driver cannot avoid a crash if the vehicle in front stops suddenly.

A good rule is the two-second rule:

- Pick a marker on the road, such as a tree, sign, or lamp post.
- When the vehicle ahead passes it, start counting: “one thousand and one, one thousand and two.”
- If you reach the marker before you finish counting, you are too close — ease off and create more space.



**Figure 9: Two second rule: Follow two or more seconds behind.**

In poor conditions (e.g., rain, fog, or rough roads), increase the two-second rule to three or four seconds. For heavy vehicles like trucks or buses, use a four-second rule or more, as their stopping distances are significantly longer due to weight and momentum.

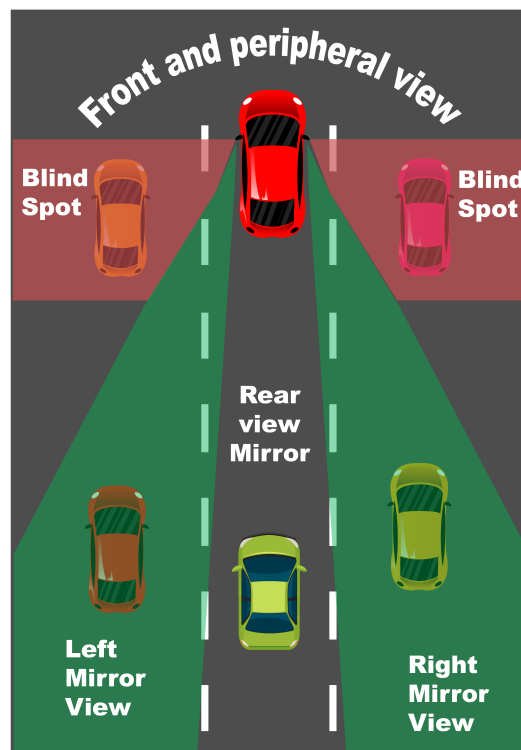
Remember: Tailgating (closely following another vehicle) is dangerous, and no one gains time from it. A safe distance feels generous, but it is actually just enough to protect you, your passengers, and those ahead. If someone is following too closely behind you, increase the

distance *in front* of you and the vehicle ahead of you to allow for safe stopping distance for both you and the tailgater. You can also gently slow down and allow the tailgater to overtake you.

Rationale: Think of distance as buying yourself time — the most valuable safety tool you have.

## 5.6 Using Mirrors and Signals

Mirrors and indicators are the driver's language of communication. Driving safely requires not just controlling your own vehicle but also signaling your intentions clearly to others. Using mirrors properly means checking them regularly, not only when changing lanes. Indicators should always be used when turning, merging, or overtaking, and they must be turned on early enough for others to react. The **blind spot** (Figure 10) is the area that cannot be seen in the driver's mirrors. Before changing lanes, a quick head check (shoulder check) is mandatory to clear this area. This sequence should become routine practice: Check mirrors → Check blind spot → Signal → Move → Cancel Signal.



**Figure 10: Vehicle blind spots: The driver can not see in this area - Caution is advised.**

Rationale: Predictability is the foundation of safe driving. If others know what you intend to do, they can adjust their own actions. Without communication, every maneuver becomes a surprise, which is a recipe for accidents.

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## 5.7 Driving in Different Conditions

India's roads change with weather, time, and place — safe drivers adjust their habits to match. What works on a sunny, dry highway may be risky in heavy rain, at night, or on a steep hill.

- **Rain:** Roads become slippery, especially just after the first rainfall when oil and dust mix with water. Slow down, keep a longer distance, and use headlights so you can be seen. Avoid sudden braking or sharp turns.
- **Fog:** Visibility can drop suddenly. Use fog lights or low-beam headlights (never high beam, which reflects back). Drive slowly, and keep extra distance. Use hazard lights only if you are stopped.
- **Night:** Darkness reduces visibility and depth perception. Lower speeds, clean windshields, and properly aimed headlights make a big difference. Watch for pedestrians, animals, or unlit vehicles.
- **Hills and Curves:** Climb and descend in a low gear to maintain control. Always give way to vehicles coming uphill. Sound your horn on blind curves to alert oncoming traffic.
- **Rural Roads:** Expect pedestrians, animals, tractors, and cyclists sharing the road. Be patient and avoid sudden maneuvers.
- **Unmarked or poorly lit roads:** Common in rural and semi-urban areas, these require slower speeds and heightened vigilance for pedestrians, animals, or sudden obstacles. Use low-beam headlights and sound the horn lightly at blind corners.
- **Urban Congestion:** Anticipate sudden stops, parked vehicles, and pedestrians crossing. Courtesy and patience prevent gridlock.

Rationale: Road conditions are never under your control — but how you adapt to them is. Safe drivers treat every condition as a reason to be more alert, not more aggressive.

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## 5.8 Managing Distractions

Modern vehicles are filled with potential distractions: phones, music systems, GPS screens. Drivers must discipline themselves to focus on the road. Key practices include:

- Never use a mobile phone without hands-free, and even then only for brief, necessary calls.

- Set music, climate controls, and navigation before you start moving.
- Avoid eating or smoking while driving.
- Rest if tired—fatigue slows reaction time as much as alcohol.

A driver's attention is their greatest safety tool — but it is also the easiest to lose. Distractions, even for a second, can turn a safe journey into a tragedy. Looking away at the wrong moment means you are not fully in control of your vehicle.

Common distractions include:

- Mobile phones: Talking, texting, or checking apps takes eyes off the road and mind off driving. Even hands-free use reduces concentration.
- Passengers: Conversations, children, or arguments can pull your focus away from the road.
- Entertainment systems: Adjusting music or screens while driving divides attention.
- Eating or drinking: Simple actions can take both hands and eyes away from the task.

The solution is simple: keep driving your only task. If something urgent arises, pull over safely before attending to it. Using a mobile phone while driving is illegal under Section 184 of the Motor Vehicles Act, with large fines even for the first offence. Prioritize safety over connectivity to avoid penalties and accidents.

Modern life makes phones and constant connection tempting, but nothing on your screen is more important than the road ahead.

Rationale: Your phone can wait — life cannot. A distracted driver travels blind, even if their eyes are open. Attention is your greatest safety tool.

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## 5.9 Speed Management

Safe speed is not the same as maximum posted speed. Good drivers adjust their pace based on the law, conditions, and their own comfort. Going too fast reduces control; going too slow in fast-moving traffic can also cause accidents.

Rationale: You must always be able to stop within the distance you can see. This principle applies equally to highways, city roads, and rural tracks. Speed should never be treated as a contest.

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### 5.10 Courtesy and Civic Sense

Courtesy on the road is not weakness; it is strength. Civic sense transforms chaotic traffic into cooperative movement. Examples include:

- Allowing others to merge smoothly.
- Using the horn as a gentle signal, not as a weapon.
- Avoiding unnecessary use of high-beam at night.
- Giving way immediately to ambulances or fire engines.
- Avoiding aggressive gestures or retaliation.

Rationale: When drivers show patience and kindness, stress levels drop for everyone.

Cooperation builds safety more effectively than enforcement alone. Courtesy costs nothing, but it saves lives.

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### 5.11 Do's and Don'ts for Safe Driving

Think of this as a quick checklist to keep yourself and other road users safe.

#### **Do**

- Keep safe distance at all times, adapting to weather and traffic.
- Use mirrors and indicators regularly to communicate intentions.
- Before changing speed or direction: Check mirrors → Check blind spot → Signal → Move and cancel the signal.
- Adjust speed according to road and weather conditions.
- Be courteous to vulnerable users like pedestrians and cyclists.
- Pull over to the left immediately for emergency vehicles with active sirens or lights.
- Take breaks to avoid fatigue on long trips.

#### **Don't**

- Use mobile phones or screens while driving.
- Tailgate or pressure slower vehicles.
- Drive aggressively or competitively.
- Misuse horns, headlights, or hazard lights.
- Ignore signs of fatigue or illness.

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## 5.12 Recap

- Safe driving is a philosophy as well as a skill.
- Defensive driving means expecting mistakes and preparing for them.
- Roads are shared—pedestrians, cyclists, and heavy vehicles all need respect.
- Adjust your driving to distance, mirrors, signals, conditions, and distractions.
- Courtesy and civic sense transform roads from chaos to cooperation.



## Chapter 6: Two-Wheelers and Vulnerable Road Users

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### 6.1 Introduction

Two-wheelers—motorcycles, scooters, and mopeds—are among the most common vehicles on India’s roads. They are affordable, convenient, and able to navigate traffic more easily than larger vehicles. But their popularity also comes with risks. Two-wheeler riders are far more vulnerable in collisions than drivers of cars or trucks, because they lack the physical protection of an enclosed vehicle. This chapter focuses on two-wheelers as well as other vulnerable users—pedestrians, cyclists, and persons with disabilities—who must all be given special care by drivers. Every driver is sometimes a pedestrian, cyclist, or scooter rider — so protecting them means protecting ourselves.

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### 6.2 Risks for Two-Wheelers

Two-wheelers are quick, flexible, and fuel-efficient, but they are also the most exposed vehicles on the road. Without the protection of a car body, even a minor mistake or collision can cause serious injury.

The main risks two-wheeler riders face include:

- **Instability:** Two wheels provide less balance than four. Sudden braking, uneven roads, or slippery surfaces can easily cause a fall.
- **Visibility:** Motorcycles and scooters are smaller and harder for others to see, especially at night or in blind spots. Many accidents happen simply because another driver “didn’t notice” the two-wheeler.
- **Vulnerability in collisions:** In a crash, riders are directly exposed to impact. Helmets and protective gear reduce injury, but cannot eliminate it.
- **Mixed traffic:** In India, two-wheelers share the road with trucks, buses, cars, pedestrians, and animals. Larger vehicles create air turbulence, blind spots, and sudden obstacles that riders must anticipate.

**Rationale:** Recognizing these risks is the first step toward reducing them. A careful rider accepts these realities and compensates with extra caution, visibility, and patience.

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## 6.3 Helmets and Protective Gear

**Golden Rule: A helmet is not an accessory—it is survival gear. Wearing it properly can mean the difference between life and death. A helmet is like a seat belt for your head — never ride without it.**

A helmet is the single most important piece of safety equipment for a two-wheeler rider. In India, head injuries are the leading cause of death in motorcycle and scooter crashes. A strong, well-fitted helmet can mean the difference between a minor accident and a fatal one.

When choosing and using a helmet:

- Make sure it is ISI-certified and fits snugly.
- Always fasten the chin strap — an unstrapped helmet offers almost no protection.
- Replace a helmet after any major impact, even if no damage is visible.
- Encourage pillion riders (passengers) to wear helmets too — safety is for everyone. Note: Under Section 129 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, as amended in 2019, both the rider and pillion passenger must wear ISI-certified helmets. Violators face a monetary fine and/or three-month licence suspension.

Protective gear such as jackets, gloves, boots, and reflective clothing provide additional layers of protection. They reduce cuts, burns, and fractures in falls, and reflective strips make riders visible at night.

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## 6.4 Safe Riding Practices

Safe riding is about being predictable, visible, and alert. When other road users can trust what you are going to do, accidents become less likely. Car drivers should give wide berth when overtaking a two-wheeler, leave a clear, large gap (at least 1.5 meters if road width permits) to account for wind turbulence or sudden braking.

Key practices include:

- Ride within your limits: Know your skill level and do not take risks beyond it. Speeding or weaving may feel thrilling, but it reduces control.

- Use indicators and mirrors: Clearly show your intentions before turning or changing lanes, and always check mirrors to know what is behind you.
- Stay visible: Avoid blind spots of larger vehicles. Use headlights in low light and wear reflective clothing at night.
- Obey signals and signs: Stopping at red lights, yielding at intersections, and respecting lane markings keeps traffic flowing smoothly.
- Anticipate hazards: Watch out for potholes, sand, stray animals, or pedestrians — all common on Indian roads.
- Maintain your two-wheeler: Regularly check brakes, tyres, lights, and chain to ensure roadworthiness, as required under the Motor Vehicles Act.
- Keep both hands on the handlebars: Balance and control depend on it. Do not carry items in your hands while riding.

Rationale: Riding safely is not just self-protection — it is also a way of showing respect for everyone else sharing the road.

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## 6.5 Alcohol, Drugs, and Fatigue

Two-wheeler riders under the influence of alcohol or drugs face even greater risk than car drivers. Their balance, reaction time, and judgment are impaired, making them more likely to lose control. Riding when tired or drowsy is equally dangerous, as fatigue reduces alertness. On two wheels, there is no margin for error — staying sober and rested is your strongest protection.

Driving under the influence is illegal under Section 185 of the Motor Vehicles Act, with penalties including very large fines and/or imprisonment for up to six months for the first offence. Fatigue-related accidents carry similar consequences if deemed negligent.

Rationale: On a two-wheeler, even a small mistake can be fatal. Staying sober and rested is a life-saving practice.

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## 6.6 Vulnerable Road Users: Pedestrians

Pedestrians are the weakest and most exposed of all road users. Many have no protective gear, and some may be children or elderly persons who move slowly. Drivers must:

- Always stop at pedestrian crossings.
- When stopping at an intersection, stop behind the white stop line to leave the zebra crossing clear for pedestrians.

- Slow down in residential areas, markets, and near schools.
- Be patient with elderly or disabled pedestrians who need more time.
- Avoid parking on footpaths, which forces pedestrians onto the road.
- Assist injured pedestrians if safe, as the Good Samaritan Law protects those who help accident victims from legal or financial liability.

Rationale: Every driver is sometimes a vulnerable and unprotected pedestrian. Protecting walkers is both a legal and moral responsibility.

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## 6.7 Cyclists

Cyclists are common on both rural and urban roads. Like other two-wheelers, they are hard to see and highly vulnerable. They often lack helmets or reflective gear. Drivers must:

- Leave extra space when overtaking cyclists.
- Avoid honking aggressively near them.
- Check mirrors for cyclists before opening car doors.
- Be aware that children on bicycles may be unpredictable.
- Check mirrors and do a shoulder check before opening car doors. Always open the door with the hand furthest from the door handle (the “Dutch Reach”) to ensure you look back for approaching cyclists or vehicles. The Dutch reach is a simple, evidence-backed method for opening a car door that greatly reduces the chance of the door hitting a passing cyclist or pedestrian. Instead of opening the door with the hand nearest the handle, you use the far hand (the hand furthest from the door). That forces you to twist your body and naturally look over your shoulder into the lane before the door opens.

Rationale: Cycling is eco-friendly and healthy. Respecting cyclists encourages safe and sustainable transport options.

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## 6.8 Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities may use wheelchairs, tricycles, or adapted vehicles. They may move more slowly and require extra consideration. Drivers should:

- Yield the right of way when they are crossing.
- Avoid blocking ramps or special paths.
- Show patience and courtesy, recognizing their challenges.

Rationale: A truly safe road system protects its most vulnerable members. Inclusion is a mark of civilized driving. Respect for the most vulnerable is the true test of safe driving.

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## 6.9 Do's and Don'ts for Two-Wheelers and Vulnerable Users

Safe riding comes down to everyday habits. These simple choices make the difference between risk and safety:

### **Do**

- Wear a helmet and ensure your passenger does too.
- Ride within speed limits and avoid weaving in traffic.
- Give pedestrians and cyclists extra space and priority.
- Slow down in crowded or residential areas.
- Use lights and reflective gear at night to make yourself more visible.

### **Don't**

- Carry more passengers than your vehicle is designed for.
- Carry children under 4 years as pillion riders, as prohibited by the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. Ensure older children wear helmets and can securely reach footrests.
- Ride under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Ignore pedestrian crossings or block footpaths.
- Treat cyclists, pedestrians, or persons with disabilities as obstacles.
- Assume others will notice you — take steps to make yourself visible.

Rationale: These do's and don'ts cost nothing, but they save lives. Practiced daily, they turn courtesy and caution into second nature.

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## 6.10 Recap

- Two-wheelers are especially vulnerable in mixed traffic.
- Helmets and protective gear save lives when worn properly.
- Keep safe distance, avoid blind spots, and never weave dangerously.
- Pedestrians, children, and differently-abled persons need extra care.
- Defensive driving is the best protection for all vulnerable road users.

## Chapter 7: Driving in Special Conditions

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### 7.1 Introduction

Not every journey happens on a clear day with dry roads. Drivers in India encounter many different conditions—from monsoon rains and dense fog to hilly terrain, unpaved rural roads, and heavy city traffic. Each condition creates unique challenges that require skill, patience, and adaptability. Safe drivers recognize these challenges and change their behavior accordingly. This chapter provides guidance for handling special conditions so that journeys remain safe and predictable.

---

### 7.2 Night Driving

Driving at night demands more care, because visibility is reduced and hazards are harder to see. Good night driving is not only about using your lights — it is about being alert, patient, and predictable.

Safe practices include:

- Use low-beam headlights in most situations. High beams can dazzle oncoming drivers and cause accidents.
- Keep windshields, mirrors, and lights clean to avoid glare and improve visibility.
- Reduce speed, because darkness hides hazards such as potholes, animals, or pedestrians.
- Be extra careful with pedestrians and cyclists, who may not always wear reflective clothing or have lights.
- Use reflective tape on vehicles, especially two-wheelers or cycles, to enhance visibility for other drivers.
- Do not overtake unless absolutely safe. Judging distance and speed is harder in the dark.
- Remember: Lights are not only to help you see — they are also to help others see you.

Rationale: At night, even small mistakes can have larger consequences. Driving calmly and with full attention makes the darkness safer for everyone.

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### 7.3 Driving in Rain

Rain transforms roads into slippery surfaces. Water mixes with oil and dust, creating a film that reduces tyre grip. Potholes may fill with water, hiding their depth. Rain rewards patience — rushing only increases the chance of losing control. Be aware of aquaplaning (hydroplaning), which occurs when a layer of water lifts the tires off the road surface, causing a total loss of steering and braking control. If aquaplaning occurs, ease off the accelerator, avoid braking, and hold the steering wheel steady until the tyres regain traction.

Safe practices include:

- Reduce speed and avoid sudden braking.
- Increase following distance to allow for longer stopping distances.
- Use wipers and headlights to maintain visibility.
- Avoid flooded areas, as water may stall engines or conceal hazards.

Rationale: Rain-related crashes are common, but preventable. By slowing down and staying alert, drivers maintain control even in wet conditions.

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### 7.4 Fog and Low Visibility

Fog and smog reduce visibility drastically. High beams reflect back, making conditions worse.

Safe practices include:

- Use fog lamps or low beams instead of high beams.
- Keep windows clear of condensation.
- Drive at a speed where you can stop safely within the distance you can see ahead.
- Increase following distance at least threefold.
- Avoid sudden braking or overtaking.
- If visibility is near zero and you must drive slowly or stop on the road, use hazard lights sparingly and carefully to indicate a hazard. Crucially, turn them off when moving to ensure your turn signals are visible. (Hazard warning lights are only for situations when your vehicle itself is a danger to others — such as breakdowns, accidents, or when stopped unexpectedly in a dangerous spot. They must not be used while driving in moving traffic, except in very limited circumstances such as being part of an officially escorted convoy.)

- If stopping due to near-zero visibility, pull over to the left edge of the road, use parking lights, and place a reflective warning triangle at least 50 meters behind the vehicle, as required by Rule 138(4) of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules.

Rationale: Collisions in fog often involve multiple vehicles. Reducing speed and making your vehicle visible are essential.

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## 7.5 Hilly and Mountain Roads

Hilly and mountain roads bring unique challenges: steep gradients, sharp curves, narrow lanes, and changing weather. Extra care is needed because mistakes here are harder to correct.

Safe practices include:

- Use lower gears while climbing and descending. This gives better control and reduces strain on brakes.
- Sound your horn on blind curves to warn oncoming traffic of your presence.
- Keep to your lane, especially on curves and narrow stretches. Cutting corners is extremely dangerous.
- Always give way to vehicles going uphill. This is generally a rule of courtesy and safe physics, as stopping and restarting on a steep incline is easier for the vehicle coming down than for the vehicle coming up.
- Avoid overtaking unless the road is fully clear and wide enough.
- Stay alert for falling rocks, animals, or pedestrians, which are common in hilly areas.

Rationale: Mountain roads reward patience. A cautious driver not only protects themselves but also helps everyone else share the road safely in these difficult conditions.

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## 7.6 Rural Roads

Rural roads often lack markings, lighting, and proper surfacing. Default speed limits on unmarked rural roads are typically 40 km/h unless signed otherwise, as per the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. Pedestrians, livestock, and slow-moving vehicles are common. Patience here is not just courtesy — it keeps entire communities safe.



Safe practices include:

- Drive slowly and be prepared for sudden obstacles.
- Use headlights even in daytime if visibility is poor.
- Give wide berth to animals and respect local traffic customs.

Rationale: Rural roads connect much of India. Patience and respect for local conditions prevent accidents and protect communities.

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## 7.7 Heavy Traffic and Urban Conditions

Urban roads are often crowded with vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and roadside activity. Patience and courtesy make the difference between chaos and flow.

Safe practices include:

- Stay calm in congestion. Aggressive driving only adds stress and risk, without saving real time.
- Anticipate sudden stops. Pedestrians may step off the curb, or vehicles may pull out from side streets.
- Avoid blocking intersections and pedestrian crossings. Keeping them clear allows smoother movement for everyone.
- Respect traffic signals and lane markings. Even when others disobey, your discipline helps reduce confusion.
- Use your horn sparingly. A polite honk can warn, but constant honking creates noise and frustration.

Rationale: Courtesy in traffic is contagious. Your calmness reduces stress for others, and together this makes city driving safer and more bearable.

---

## 7.8 Emergency Situations

**Golden Rule: Emergencies test calmness and presence of mind. Stay calm, protect lives first, and let help come quickly if there an accident.**

Emergencies can occur anywhere — a sudden brake failure, an obstacle on the road, or another driver’s mistake. How you react in those first few seconds often decides the outcome.

Safe practices include:

- Stay calm. Panic reduces your ability to think clearly.
- If Brakes Fail: Downshift, pump the pedal, use the handbrake gradually.
- If a tyre blows out, hold the steering wheel firmly, ease off the accelerator, and let the vehicle slow down gradually. Do not slam the brakes. a firm grip on the steering wheel and focus on bringing the vehicle under control.
- If Accelerator Sticks: Shift to neutral and brake gently.
- Use hazard lights if you need to stop suddenly, to warn drivers behind you.
- Do not slam the brakes suddenly unless absolutely necessary — controlled braking helps keep stability.
- Steer smoothly to avoid skidding or rolling over, especially at higher speeds.
- If possible, move to the side of the road to reduce risk of further collisions.
- If you witness an accident, assist victims if safe to do so, as the Good Samaritan Law protects helpers from legal or financial liability, encouraging timely aid.

Rationale: Emergencies test your composure more than your skill. Staying calm and acting steadily can prevent a bad situation from becoming worse. Knowing what to do before an emergency happens allows calm, structured action instead of panic.

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## 7.9 Do’s and Don’ts for Special Conditions

Driving in special conditions calls for extra care. These simple reminders help you adjust safely to whatever the road presents:

### **Do**

- Slow down in poor visibility, rain, fog, or crowded conditions.
- Keep headlights, mirrors, and windshields clean for maximum visibility.
- Use lower gears on hilly roads for better control.
- Maintain extra distance from vehicles ahead when conditions are difficult. In urban congestion, avoid weaving through traffic and maintain lane discipline to reduce gridlock.
- Stay patient — reaching safely is more important than reaching quickly.

**Don't**

- Overtake in blind curves, fog, or when visibility is limited.
- Use high beams when other vehicles are approaching.
- Block intersections, pedestrian crossings, or narrow lanes.
- Honk unnecessarily — use the horn only as a warning.
- Ignore signs, signals, or instructions just because others do.

Rationale: Special conditions demand special care. A few adjustments in speed, distance, and patience protect not just you, but everyone around you.

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**7.10 Recap**

- Different conditions—rain, fog, night, hills—require different skills and patience.
- Reduce speed and increase following distance in poor visibility or slippery conditions.
- Always use lights to see and be seen.
- In emergencies, stay calm and protect life first.
- Special conditions test maturity; good drivers prepare in advance.

## Chapter 8: Traffic Offences and Penalties

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### 8.1 Introduction

Traffic laws are not just suggestions—they are binding rules designed to protect lives and ensure order on the roads. Traffic offences and their penalties are an essential part of road safety. They are not created to punish for the sake of punishment, but to guide drivers toward safer behavior. Every fine or penalty is a signal that certain actions — such as speeding, drunk driving, or ignoring signals — put lives at risk.

Penalties serve three key purposes:

- **Deterrence:** To discourage dangerous behavior before it causes accidents or injuries.
- **Education:** To reinforce the importance of road safety rules and standards.
- **Accountability:** To ensure drivers face consequences for actions that endanger others, fostering shared responsibility.

**Rationale:** The goal of penalties is not fear, but prevention. They are designed to make drivers think twice, choose safety, and protect both themselves and others.

---

### 8.2 Why Penalties Exist

Penalties are reminders that driving is not just personal freedom — it is shared responsibility. Penalties serve as consequences for unsafe behavior. They remind drivers that roads are shared spaces and that recklessness carries costs. For example, heavy fines for drunk driving underline the seriousness of impaired driving, while penalties for failing to wear helmets or seatbelts highlight their importance in preventing fatalities.

**Rationale:** Laws backed by meaningful penalties shape behavior. Without consequences, some drivers might ignore rules altogether, making roads more dangerous for everyone.

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### 8.3 Common Traffic Offences

Most drivers are familiar with the rules they are expected to follow, yet many violations continue to occur. These offences may seem routine, but each one creates real danger on the road.

Common offences include:

- **Speeding:** Driving faster than the limit reduces reaction time and increases crash severity.
- **Drunk or drug-impaired driving:** Even small amounts of alcohol or drugs slow reflexes and cloud judgment.

- Not wearing seat belts or helmets: These simple habits save lives, yet many ignore them.
- Using mobile phones while driving: A moment of distraction can cause a lifetime of regret.
- Jumping red lights or ignoring stop signs: Small shortcuts that create big risks for everyone.
- Overloading vehicles: Extra passengers or goods reduce stability and braking ability.
- Driving without a valid licence: Operating a vehicle without a current, appropriate licence undermines the legal framework for safe driving.
- Driving without a valid PUC (Pollution Under Control) certificate: This is an environmental as well as legal violation and is frequently penalized.
- Dangerous overtaking or lane-cutting: Sudden movements force others into risky maneuvers.

Rationale: Breaking rules may save a few seconds, but it risks entire lives. No convenience is worth that cost.

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#### 8.4 Penalties under the Law

**Golden Rule: Penalties are not punishment for their own sake—they are society’s way of saying that lives matter more than convenience. Exact fine amounts change over time and vary by state, but the principle is always the same: safety comes first.**

The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 made penalties much stricter across India. The intent was not to burden drivers, but to ensure that risky behavior carries real consequences. Higher fines, suspension of licences, and even imprisonment for serious offences are meant to send a clear message: safety comes first. This legislative strengthening signals that the administration and lawmakers consider road safety a top national priority.

Penalties vary by state, but the principle remains the same everywhere — violations that endanger lives attract stronger punishment. For example, drunk driving, speeding, and dangerous driving now carry heavy fines and possible licence suspension. Conversely, the Good Samaritan Law encourages drivers to assist accident victims without fear of legal or financial liability, promoting a culture of care alongside strict penalties.

Note: Exact fine amounts may change over time and differ from state to state. Always check the latest rules where you live or drive.

Rationale: When penalties are serious, drivers are more likely to take the law seriously. The goal is to create lasting behavior change.

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## 8.5 Enforcement and Responsibility

Penalties alone are not enough—enforcement matters. Traffic police, cameras, and automated systems all play a role in catching violators. But true road safety depends on self-discipline. A driver who avoids offences only out of fear of fines misses the point. The real reason to obey rules is to protect lives, including one's own. For instance, technologies like speed cameras and Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems can detect violations such as red-light jumping or speeding instantly, but only a driver's commitment to safety prevents these offences.

Rationale: Laws work best when citizens respect them voluntarily. Enforcement supports the system, but responsible attitudes make it sustainable.

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## 8.6 Long-Term Consequences of Violations

Traffic violations do more than bring immediate fines. They can create long-term effects that follow a driver well beyond the moment of the offence.

- Licence suspension or disqualification: Repeated violations can lead to losing your driving privilege altogether.
- Insurance impact: Insurers may raise premiums for drivers with poor records, or even refuse coverage.
- Employment consequences: Professional drivers with violations may lose jobs or find it harder to get new ones.
- Reputation: A record of careless driving marks a person as irresponsible in the eyes of the family, friends, and community.
- Legal record: Traffic violations are recorded and may impact future legal proceedings or background checks, affecting personal or professional opportunities.

Even without a crash, repeated offences carry a cost — to your freedom, your finances, and your future opportunities.

Rationale: Obeying the law is more than avoiding fines. It is protecting your driving privileges, your career, and your good name.

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## 8.7 Do's and Don'ts for Obeying the Law

These reminders turn respect for the law into everyday practice.

### **Do**

- Learn and follow the rules of the road.
- Wear helmets and seatbelts every time.
- Obey signals, signs, and speed limits.
- Cooperate with enforcement officers.
- Carry valid documents (e.g., licence, RC, PUC) in physical or digital form via apps like DigiLocker, as required by law.
- Encourage others in your family to respect traffic laws.

### **Don't**

- Drink and drive under any circumstances.
- Use a mobile phone while driving.
- Park carelessly in no-parking zones.
- Treat penalties as minor inconveniences.
- Repeat offences that risk lives.

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## 8.8 Recap

- Traffic offences endanger lives; penalties exist to prevent harm, not to raise revenue.
- Common violations include speeding, red-light running, drunk driving, helmet/seat-belt non-use, and mobile phone use while driving.
- The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 increased fines and introduced stronger deterrents.
- Enforcement may use technology, including speed cameras and Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) systems (leading to automated challans), and carries legal consequences.
- See Appendix A for visuals of common traffic signs and signals, which help drivers recognize and avoid violations.
- Repeat offences and dangerous driving can lead to disqualification or imprisonment.
- Reminder: Under India's Good Samaritan Law, helping an accident victim is protected—do not hesitate to assist safely.

## Chapter 9: Accidents and First Aid

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### 9.1 Introduction

Accidents are sudden and often frightening events, but being prepared can make a huge difference. Thousands of lives are lost each year in India due to road crashes, many of which could be prevented or made less severe with quick and calm action.

Preparedness is not only about carrying a first aid kit or knowing emergency numbers — it is about developing the confidence to act when it matters most. No one expects to be in an accident, yet every driver should know the basics of how to respond. Even simple actions can save lives, reduce the seriousness of injuries, and provide comfort until professional help arrives.

Rationale: Road safety is not only about preventing accidents, but also about responding wisely when they do happen. Knowledge and calmness in those first moments can turn fear into effective action. Preventive habits, such as defensive driving (Chapter 5) and obeying traffic rules (Chapter 4), significantly reduce the likelihood of accidents, but preparedness ensures you can respond effectively if one occurs.

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### 9.2 Immediate Priorities After an Accident

The moments immediately after an accident are critical. A driver or bystander must act quickly but calmly, focusing on safety first.

- Ensure personal safety. Do not rush into moving traffic or dangerous situations. Protect yourself before helping others.
- Switch off the engine and secure the vehicle(s) involved in the accident. This reduces the risk of fire or further damage.
- Activate hazard lights on vehicles involved or your own if stopping to assist, and place a reflective warning triangle at least 50 meters behind the vehicle. This alerts approaching traffic and prevents secondary collisions. (Hazard warning lights are only for situations when your vehicle itself is a danger to others — such as breakdowns, accidents, or when stopped unexpectedly in a dangerous spot. They must not be used while driving in moving traffic, except in very limited circumstances such as being part of an officially escorted convoy.)
- If possible, move the vehicle to the side of the road but only if the scene is stable and moving the vehicle will not endanger the injured or erase crucial evidence. Keeping the roadway clear reduces the chance of more accidents.
- Give space and air to the injured. Do not crowd around — it can block breathing and delay assistance.



- Check the condition of passengers and others involved. Identify who needs urgent attention first.
- Call emergency services immediately. Give clear information about the location, number of injured, and severity of the situation.
- Provide basic first aid if you are trained. Simple actions like stopping bleeding or keeping an airway open can save lives until professionals arrive.

Rationale: Panic is the enemy of effective response. A calm, step-by-step approach prevents further harm and ensures that help arrives as quickly as possible.

Legal Note: Under India's Good Samaritan Law, any person who helps an accident victim is legally protected. You cannot be held liable for providing assistance, and hospitals are required to offer immediate care without waiting for police formalities.

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### 9.3 First Aid Basics

In an accident, even small steps can make a big difference. You do not need to be a doctor to save a life — simple first aid given quickly can stabilize an injured person until professional help arrives.

Key basics include:

- **Airway:** Make sure the injured person can breathe. If they are unconscious but breathing, place them in the recovery position (on their side, with head tilted slightly back).
- **Breathing:** Check for steady breathing. If it has stopped and you are trained, begin CPR immediately.
- **Circulation:** Control bleeding by applying firm, direct pressure with a clean cloth or bandage.
- **Shock:** Keep the injured person warm and calm. Do not give food or drink.
- **Fractures:** If a broken bone is suspected, keep the limb still using a splint or cloth to prevent further injury.
- If an injured person is unresponsive or has suspected neck/spinal injury, do not attempt to move them unless they are in immediate danger (e.g., risk of fire, drowning, or oncoming traffic).
- Offer reassurance—calm words reduce fear and shock.

Rationale: Quick first aid can prevent injuries from becoming fatal. The goal is not to provide complete treatment, but to keep the injured safe and stable until medical professionals take over.

---

## 9.4 Golden Hour

**Golden Rule: The first hour after a crash is critical. Quick action and timely medical care can make the difference between recovery and tragedy. Stay calm and act fast. Provide first aid if you are trained.**

Doctors often speak of the “golden hour” — the first sixty minutes after a serious injury. What happens in this short window can decide whether a victim survives and how well they recover.

Prompt medical attention during this period can:

- Stop bleeding before it becomes fatal.
- Prevent shock by keeping the patient stable.
- Provide life-saving interventions such as oxygen or surgery at the right time.

Rationale: The golden hour is not about fear, but about opportunity. Acting quickly gives doctors and hospitals the best chance to save lives. Calling 112, India’s unified emergency number, ensures rapid connection to ambulance services, maximizing the golden hour’s effectiveness.

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## 9.5 Role of Bystanders and Good Samaritan Law

Many people hesitate to help accident victims out of fear of police or legal trouble. To address this, India has enacted the Good Samaritan Law (2016), backed by Supreme Court guidelines, which protects anyone who helps accident victims in good faith.

Key protections under the Good Samaritan Law include:

- No liability: Helpers acting in good faith (with reasonable care and intent) are not liable for unintended complications.
- No detention: You are not obligated to remain at the scene or hospital unless you volunteer as a witness.
- Anonymity: You may assist anonymously, without providing personal details.
- Protection from harassment: Police are prohibited from intimidating or pressuring helpers, ensuring a supportive environment.

- Hospital duty: Hospitals must provide immediate treatment without delaying for police formalities or payment, as mandated by law.

Note: The central government has consolidated emergency response efforts under the national number 112 (Emergency Response Support System). Calling 112 connects you to Police, Fire, and Ambulance services, simplifying access to help.

Rationale: A culture of helping grows only when people feel safe in stepping forward. If you stop to help, the law is on your side. By knowing your rights, you can act with confidence and compassion.

---

## 9.6 Carrying First Aid Kits and Emergency Supplies

Every vehicle should carry a basic first aid kit and simple emergency supplies; it is legally mandatory for all motor vehicles to carry a basic First Aid Kit. Just as a spare tire prepares you for a puncture, a first aid kit prepares you for the unexpected. You hope never to use it, but when the need arises, it can make all the difference.

A standard kit should include:

- Sterile gauze, bandages, and adhesive tape.
- Antiseptic wipes or solution.
- Scissors and tweezers.
- Disposable gloves.
- A CPR face shield (if available).
- Emergency contact numbers written clearly.

Additional supplies, such as a torch (flashlight), reflective triangle, and a bottle of drinking water, are also valuable in roadside emergencies.

Rationale: Being prepared is a mark of responsibility. A small kit in your vehicle may one day protect your family, friends, or a stranger on the road.

---

## 9.7 After the Accident: Legal and Ethical Duties

What you do after an accident matters for both justice and humanity. As a driver, you have responsibilities under the law, but you also carry moral duties toward those affected.

Legal duties include:

- Informing the nearest police station about the accident.
- Remaining at the scene if required, unless it is unsafe.

- Cooperating with authorities and providing accurate information.
- If the accident involves injury or death, the driver of the motor vehicle is legally required to take reasonable steps to secure medical attention for the injured person(s).

Ethical duties include:

- Showing compassion and offering reassurance to the injured.
- Helping arrange transport to the hospital if emergency services are delayed.
- Respecting the dignity and privacy of victims — do not take photos/videos to share them.

Rationale: Legal duties ensure fairness, while ethical duties ensure compassion. Together, they reflect the responsibility of every driver to act as a responsible citizen and a caring human being.

---

## 9.8 Do's and Don'ts in Accident Situations

In the stress of an accident, it is easy to forget what to do. These reminders can help you act quickly and responsibly:

### **Do**

- Stay calm and ensure your own safety before helping others.
- Switch on hazard lights and place a reflective triangle if available.
- Call emergency services immediately with clear details.
- Report the accident to the nearest police station if required, providing accurate details without admitting fault.
- Provide basic first aid if you are trained.
- Comfort the injured and wait with them until help arrives.

### **Don't**

- Panic or run into unsafe situations.
- Move the injured unnecessarily, unless they are in immediate danger.
- Crowd around victims or block their breathing space.
- Offer food, drink, or medication.
- Take photos or share accident images — respect the dignity of those involved.

Rationale: Accidents create chaos, but your calm and responsible actions can restore order. Doing the right things — and avoiding the wrong ones — can save lives.

---

## 9.9 Recap

- Safety first: protect yourself before assisting others.
- Switch off engines, use hazard lights, and move vehicles if safe.
- Call emergency services quickly and give clear information.
- Provide first aid only if trained, and never delay professional help.
- The Golden Hour can save lives—every minute counts.
- Good Samaritan Law protects those who assist accident victims.

## Chapter 10: Sample Questions and Review

---

### 10.1 Introduction

Learning to drive safely requires not only practice on the road but also a clear understanding of the rules, signs, and responsibilities described in this manual. One way to test that understanding is through review questions. The Regional Transport Offices (RTOs) across India include written or computer-based tests as part of the licensing process. These questions are designed to check whether drivers know the laws and safe practices before they are trusted on the road.

This chapter provides only a very small sample of the kinds of questions that appear in driving tests. They are not guaranteed to appear on actual tests, but they reflect the type of knowledge that every driver should have. Learners are encouraged to explore additional practice questions available on official State Transport Department websites or recognised RTO learning platforms. Many states also offer free mock tests online. Practising regularly helps build familiarity with signs, rules, and safe-driving habits—not just for passing the test, but for becoming a confident and responsible driver.

---

### 10.2 Multiple Choice Questions

Here are some examples of the kinds of questions you may face. Each of the following questions has four possible answers. Choose the one that best matches the correct rule or practice.

What does a red traffic light mean?

Stop and wait until green

Go if the road is clear

Slow down and proceed

Stop only if other vehicles are present

*Correct answer: Stop and wait until green.*

When approaching a pedestrian crossing (zebra crossing) and pedestrians are waiting to cross, you should:

Honk and continue driving

Stop and allow them to cross

Slow down but continue if you are in a hurry

Flash headlights to warn them

*Correct answer: Stop and allow them to cross.*

Which of the following is mandatory for two-wheeler riders?

- Wearing a helmet
- Carrying a passenger
- Driving only during the day
- Using high beam lights at all times

*Correct answer: Wearing a helmet.*

If an ambulance with siren and flashing lights approaches, you should:

- Continue at the same speed
- Block its way so others cannot overtake
- Give way immediately
- Stop in the middle of the road

*Correct answer: Give way immediately.*

The 'two-second rule' refers to:

- Minimum time to wait at a red light
- Safe following distance behind the vehicle in front
- Time allowed to cross an intersection
- Delay before using high beam headlights

*Correct answer: Safe following distance behind the vehicle in front.*

---

### 10.3 True or False Questions

You may drive without carrying your licence if you know the number

Answer: False.

Helmets are required for both the rider and pillion passenger on two-wheelers.

Answer: True.

Using a mobile phone while driving is safe if you are experienced.

Answer: False.

Drivers must always slow down near schools and hospitals.

Answer: True.

It is acceptable to overtake at a blind curve if you are in a hurry.

Answer: False.

---

#### 10.4 Scenario-Based Questions

You are driving at night on a rural road and see an oncoming vehicle with high beams. What should you do?

*Answer: Slow down, keep your lane position, and use the edge of the road as a guide. Do not retaliate with your own high beam.*

At a busy roundabout, you see vehicles entering without yielding. How should you proceed?

*Answer: Follow the rule—vehicles already in the circle have right of way. Enter only when safe, without forcing your way.*

You are the first to arrive at the scene of an accident. What steps should you take?

*Answer: Ensure safety, switch on hazard lights, call emergency services, give first aid if possible, and reassure the injured until help arrives.*

---

#### 10.5 Rationale for Practice Questions

**Golden Rule: Questions are not just for passing tests—they prepare you to make safe choices in real traffic.**

These sample questions are not about memorizing answers, but about reinforcing safe habits. For example:

- Questions about traffic lights remind drivers of predictable behavior at intersections.
- Questions on helmets and seatbelts highlight the importance of basic protective measures.
- Scenario questions encourage drivers to think about real-world decisions, not just rules.

Rationale: Learning through questions prepares drivers to apply knowledge in unpredictable



situations. A driver who can answer these questions thoughtfully is more likely to make safe choices on the road.

---

## 10.6 Summary

This chapter has provided a small set of review questions to test your knowledge of road rules and safe driving practices. They reflect the kind of understanding that licensing tests require, but more importantly, they represent the everyday decisions that make roads safer. For a larger set of practice questions, learners should refer to the official resources provided by their State Transport Department or the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), as many states host online RTO exam practice tests and study guides. Use these questions as checkpoints for your knowledge, not as shortcuts. Review them often, practice honestly, and approach the road as a lifelong learner. Safe driving is not just about passing a test—it is about protecting lives.

---

## 10.7 Recap

- Practice questions help reinforce the rules and safe driving practices.
  - The purpose of tests is not memorization, but preparation for real-world decisions.
  - Review questions regularly to keep knowledge fresh.
  - Safe driving is a lifelong learning process, beyond exams.
  - Protecting lives is the ultimate goal of all road rules and driving tests.



## Appendix A: Road signs of India

Road signs are the silent language of the road. They give instructions, warnings, and guidance that every driver must understand and obey. Unlike spoken language, road signs use shapes, symbols, and colors so that they can be recognized quickly by anyone, regardless of literacy or local language.

In India, road signs are based on international standards, with some unique local adaptations. They fall into broad categories such as mandatory signs (rules you must follow), cautionary or warning signs (hazards ahead), and informatory signs (directions and services).

Knowing these signs is not just about passing a driving test — it is about safe and respectful use of the road. Ignoring them can put lives at risk. A responsible driver studies them, practices recognizing them at a glance, and treats them as part of everyday road sense.

(The following collection of road signs is adapted from public domain sources. Signs shown here are for learning purposes and match the official standards used across India.)

## Mandatory Road Signs (1 of 2)

**Mandatory Signs:** These signs indicate rules that must be followed without exception — disobeying them is a traffic offence.



Give Way



Give Way to Buses  
(Exiting the Bus Bay)



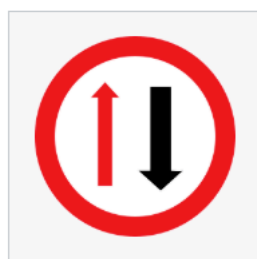
Stop



Stop (in major Indian  
languages)



No entry



Priority for oncoming  
vehicles



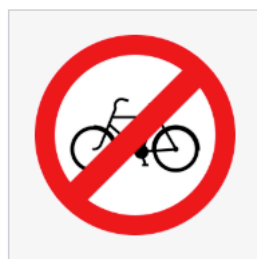
One-way traffic



One-way traffic



No vehicles in both  
directions



Cycles prohibited



Trucks prohibited



Pedestrians  
prohibited



Tongas prohibited



Bullock carts  
prohibited



Hand carts prohibited



Bullock cart and hand  
carts prohibited

## Mandatory Road Signs (2 of 2)



All motor vehicles  
prohibited



Buses Prohibited



Height limit



Width limit



Load limit



Axle load limit



Length limit



Left turn prohibited



Right turn prohibited



Overtaking prohibited



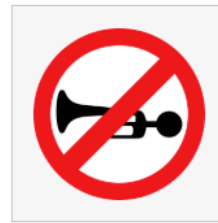
U-Turn Prohibited



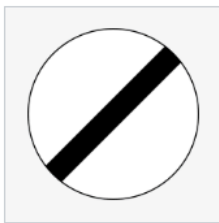
Maximum Speed  
Limit



Stop For Police  
Check



Horns prohibited



Restriction Ends



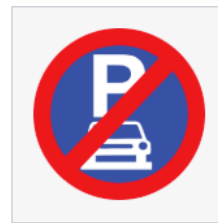
No Parking



No Standing



No Stopping



Parking Not Allowed  
On Footpath



Parking Not Allowed

## Compulsory Signs (1 of 1)

These are a type of mandatory sign that direct drivers to take a specific action — such as turning in a certain direction or keeping to one side. They are just as binding as prohibitory mandatory signs.



## Cautionary/Warning signs (1 of 4)

These signs warn of hazards or changes ahead, giving drivers time to slow down and react safely.



## Cautionary/Warning signs (2 of 4)



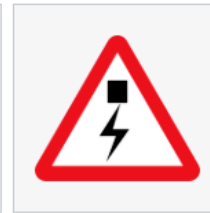
### Cautionary/Warning signs (3 of 4)



Loose gravel



Slippery road

Slippery road  
because of IceOpening or Swing  
Bridge

Overhead cables

Quayside or  
riverbank

Barrier



Sudden Side Winds



Tunnel ahead



Ferry



Trams crossing



Falling rocks



Cattle crossing



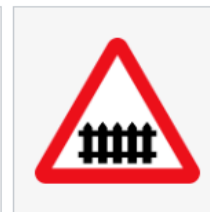
Wild Animals



Queues likely ahead

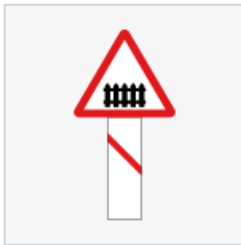


Low-flying aircraft

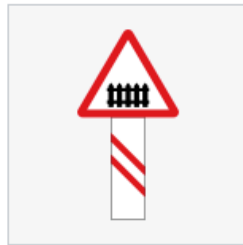
Unguarded railway  
crossingUnguarded railway  
crossing (50 - 100  
Metres Ahead)Unguarded railway  
crossing (200 metres  
ahead)Guarded railway  
crossing



## Cautionary/Warning signs (4 of 4)



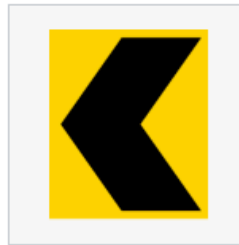
Guarded railway crossing (50-100 metres ahead)



Guarded railway crossing (200 metres ahead)



U-Turn Ahead



Single Chevron



Double chevron



Triple chevron



Object Hazard (Left)













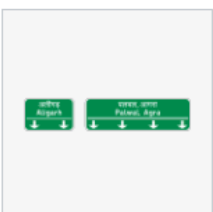



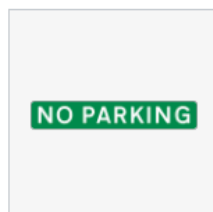
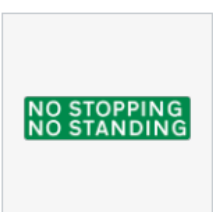
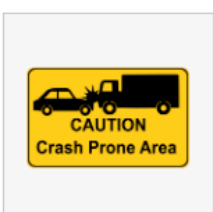
Object Hazard (Right)




























Two Way Object Hazard Marker

## Informatory signs (1 of 2)

These signs provide helpful information such as directions, locations, or available services to guide road users.

				
Stack-type advance direction sign	Map-type advance direction sign	Roundabout	Flag-type direction sign	Confirmatory sign
				
Place identification sign	Truck lay by	Weigh bridge ahead	Gantry-mounted advance direction sign ahead of a grade-separated junction	Gantry-mounted advance direction sign ahead of an at-grade junction
				
Lane dedicated gantry sign	Shoulder-mounted sign in advance of grade-separated junction	Expressway Ahead	Gantry-mounted advance direction sign ahead of a flyover in urban/city roads	Supplementary road sign "No parking"
				
Supplementary road sign "No stopping No standing"	Crash Prone Area			

## Informatory signs (2 of 3)











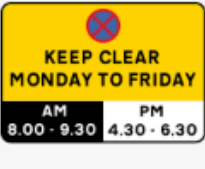

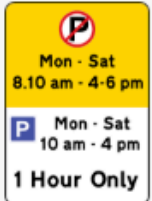

				
Eating Place	Light Refreshment	Resting Place	First Aid Post	Toilet
				
Filling Station (Fuel Pump)	Hospital	Emergency SOS Facility	U-Turn Ahead	Pedestrian Subway
				
Foot Over Bridge	Chair Lift	Police Station	Repair Facility	Railway Station/Metro Station/Monorail Station
				
Cycle Rickshaw Stand	Taxi Stand	Auto-rickshaw Stand	Shared Taxi/Share Auto Stand	Home Zone
				
Camp Site	Airport	Golf Course	National Heritage	No Through Road

## Informatory signs (3 of 3)

No Through Side Road	Toll Road Ahead	ETC Lane Guide	Country Border	Entry Ramp for Expressway
Exit Ramp for Expressway	Expressway Symbol	End of Expressway	Bus Stop	Bus Lane
Contra Flow Bus Lane	Cycle Lane	Contra Flow Cycle Lane	Holiday Chalets	Emergency Exit (a)
Emergency Exit (b)	Emergency Helpline Number (a)	Emergency Helpline Number (b)	Emergency Lay-by	Fire Extinguisher
Rest and Service Area (a)	Rest and Service Area (b)	Pedestrian Crossing	Speed Breaker	Electric Vehicle Charging Station

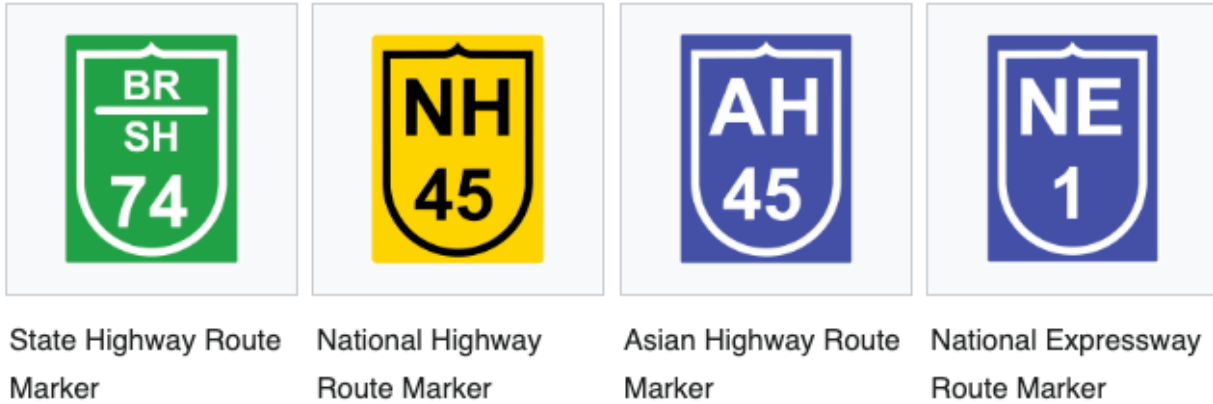
## Parking signs (1 of 1)

These signs indicate where parking is allowed, restricted, or prohibited, helping to keep traffic flow smooth and orderly.

				
Parking	Auto Rickshaw Parking	Cycle Parking	Cycle Rickshaw Parking	Scooter and Motorcycle Parking
				
Taxi Parking	Car Parking	Park and Ride (By Metro)	Park and Ride (By Bus)	Pick Up & Drop Point
				
Parking Restriction Sign for Traffic Management (a)	Parking Restriction Sign for Traffic Management (b)	Parking Restriction Sign for Traffic Management (c)	Flood Gauge	

**Route Marker signs (1 of 1)**

These signs identify highways, routes, or specific corridors, guiding drivers along the correct path. (Of course, these vary by the highways and routes they mark.)



## Retired signs (1 of 1)

These signs were once in use but are no longer part of the official standards; they are shown here for historical awareness and to avoid confusion if still seen on older roads.



School



Roadworks



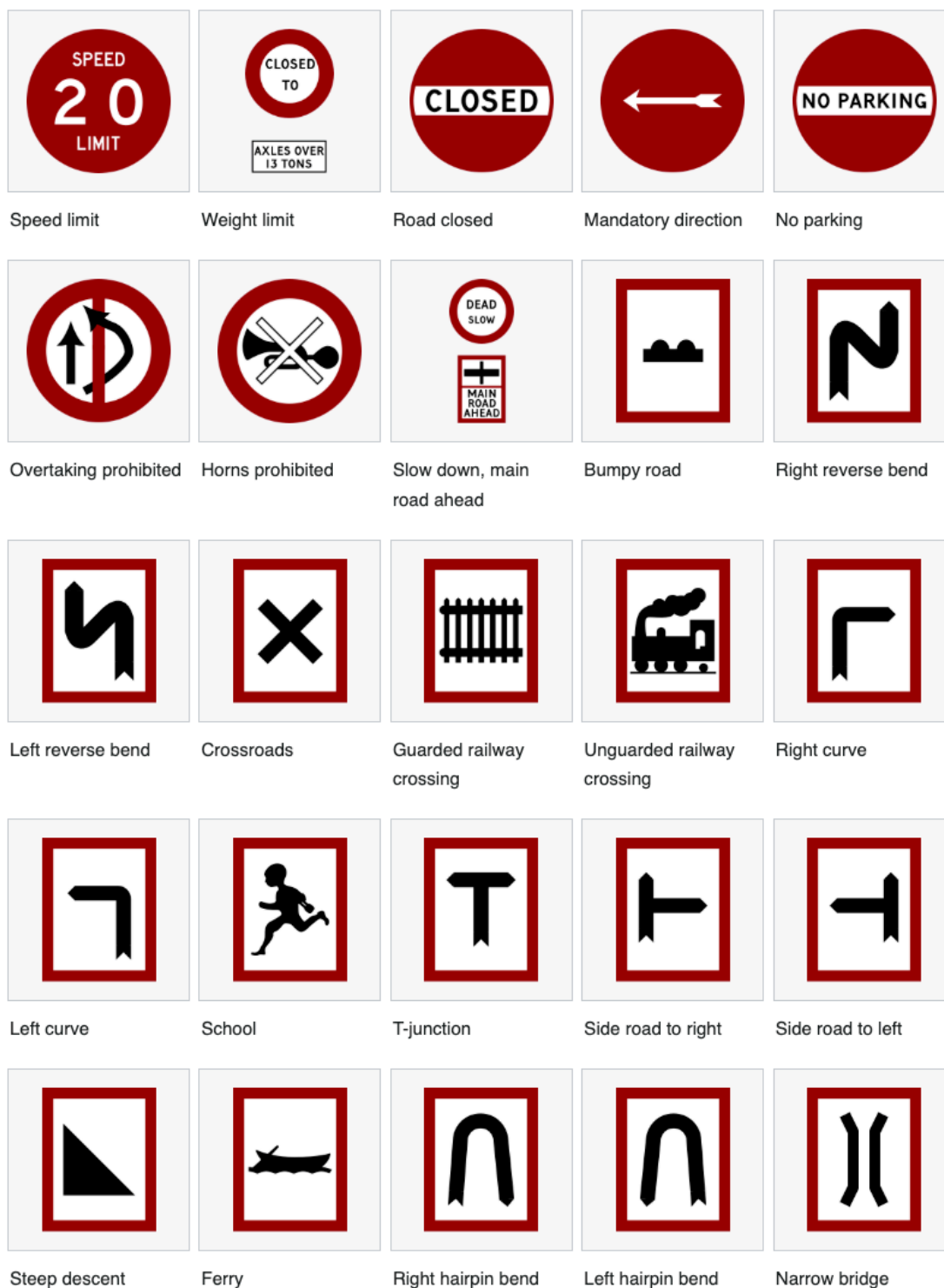
Deaf persons likely  
on road ahead



Blind persons likely  
on road ahead

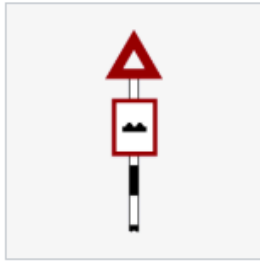
## 1950s road signs (1 of 2)

These older designs date back to the early decades of road use in India; while most have been replaced, some may still be seen on older signboards, especially in rural or less updated areas.

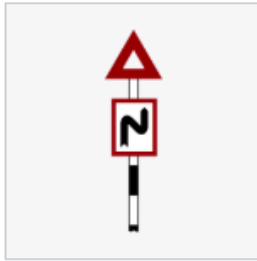




## 1950s road signs (2 of 2)



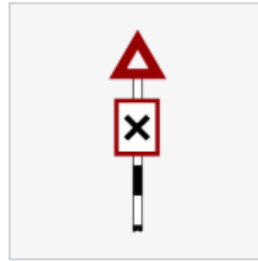
Bumpy road



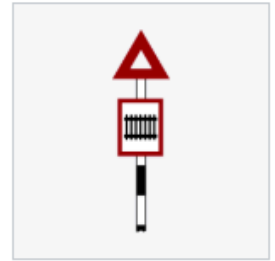
Right reverse bend



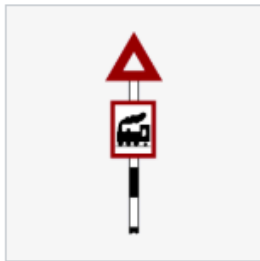
Left reverse bend



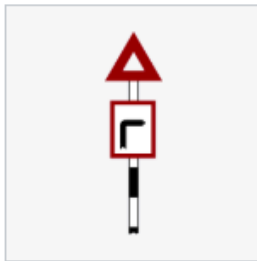
Crossroads



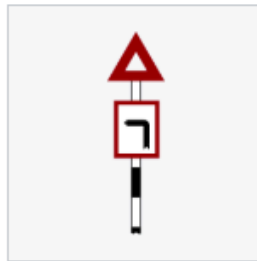
Guarded railway crossing



Unguarded railway crossing



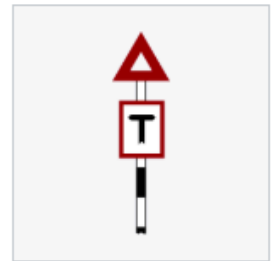
Right curve



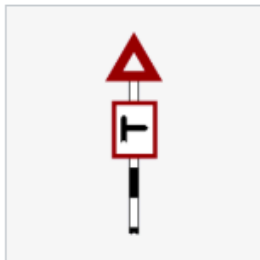
Left curve



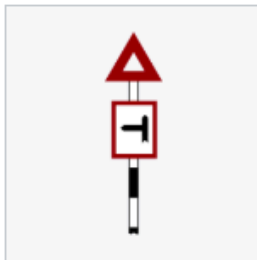
School



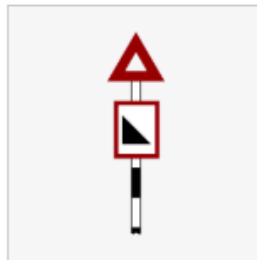
T-junction



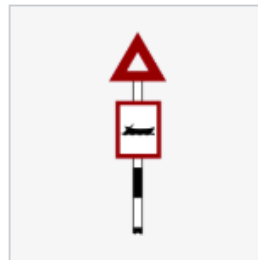
Side road to right



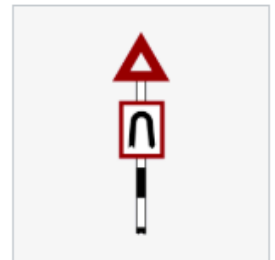
Side road to left



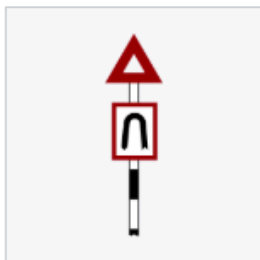
Steep descent



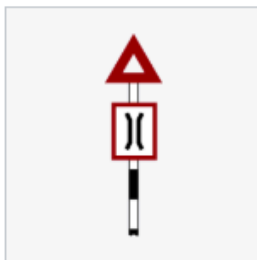
Ferry



Right hairpin bend



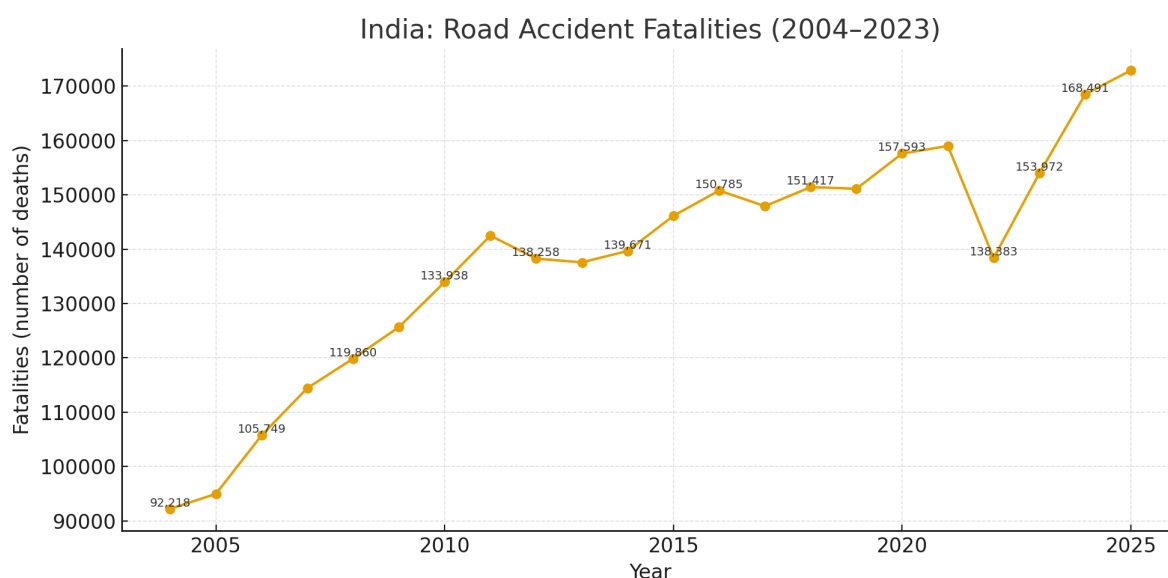
Left hairpin bend



Narrow bridge

## Appendix B: Traffic Fatalities in India

This appendix provides the official, police-reported number of traffic fatalities in India by year, along with research-based estimates that highlight possible under-reporting.



**Figure B-1: Road accident fatalities, India (Source: MoRTH, Government of India.)**

Caution with interpretation: While official police-reported numbers are widely cited, researchers caution that they likely underestimate the true toll. Many deaths are missed due to late reporting, rural under-registration, or victims dying after hospital admission.

According to the Road Safety in India – Status Report 2023 by IIT Delhi (Transportation Research and Injury Prevention Centre):

- Officially, 1.55 lakh fatalities were reported in 2021.
- However, estimates using Sample Registration System (SRS) and verbal autopsy methods suggest the true figure could be closer to 2.7 lakh deaths annually.
- This implies that official data may capture only about 60–65% of actual road traffic deaths.

- The gap is larger in rural areas, where crashes are more likely to be under-reported or misclassified.

Understanding real fatality trends helps policy-makers, drivers, and educators measure progress and focus on behaviors that save lives.

## **Appendix C: Key Legal Updates (2017 vs 2019)**

This appendix provides a comparison between the Motor Vehicles (Driving) Regulations, 2017 and the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. It highlights the key changes that affect drivers, instructors, and policymakers. The 2017 Regulations were designed to standardize driver behavior, testing, and responsibilities across India. However, by 2019 it became clear that stronger enforcement, modern safety measures, and higher penalties were needed to address India's high rate of road accidents. The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 therefore updated the legal framework to reflect these priorities.

The purpose of this appendix is to help learners and instructors understand how the legal environment has evolved. State-level manuals written before 2019 may not reflect these updates. For this reason, drivers should be aware that penalties are higher, Good Samaritan protections are stronger, and safety standards have been expanded under the 2019 law. Wherever there is a difference between this manual and the law, the provisions of the law prevail.

Note: The fine amounts listed are as per the Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019. States may revise fines from time to time, so actual penalties can differ depending on local rules and updates.

## Part A: Driver-Facing Updates

Area	2017 (Motor Vehicles (Driving) Regulations, 2017)	2019 (Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019)
Licensing	Standardized learner's licence, driving test, renewal rules.	Introduced electronic applications, computer-based testing, stricter driver training school norms.
Road Conduct	Defined duties of drivers: lane discipline, signals, giving way, speed limits.	Retained but added higher penalties for violations (speeding, drunk driving, no licence, etc.).
Penalties	Fines modest (e.g., ₹500 for no helmet, ₹500 for speeding).	Huge increases: drunk driving ₹10,000, no licence ₹5,000, speeding ₹5,000, etc.
Good Samaritan	Mentioned in policy and guidelines, not law.	Formally recognized in the Act: helpers cannot be harassed or held liable.
Vehicle Safety	Required basic safety features and maintenance.	Mandated modern safety features (airbags, ABS, seat belts for all occupants). Introduced recall provisions for defective vehicles.
Technology	Encouraged lane markings, speed limits, and signs.	Legalized electronic enforcement: speed cameras, CCTV, automated challans.
Accountability	Focused mainly on drivers.	Extended accountability to road contractors, civic agencies, and vehicle manufacturers if defects cause accidents.
Vulnerable Users	Rules for helmets, seat belts, pedestrian right of way.	Stricter penalties for juvenile driving (parents/owners liable), child safety provisions strengthened.
Compensation	Hit-and-run: ₹25,000 (death), ₹12,500 (injury).	Hit-and-run: ₹2,00,000 (death), ₹50,000 (injury). Accident fund expanded.

## Part B: Institutional and Administrative Updates

The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019 also introduced broader reforms that go beyond individual drivers:

- National Road Safety Board – to advise on standards, traffic management, and safety policies.
- National Transportation Policy – framework for efficient, sustainable transport planning.
- Vehicle Aggregators (e.g., Ola, Uber) – brought under regulation for safety, pricing, and licensing.
- Registration and Permits – streamlined and digitized processes for vehicle registration and national permits.
- Accountability of Authorities – contractors, consultants, and civic agencies can now be penalized for poor road design or maintenance.

Note: These updates are important for policymakers, companies, and administrators. For everyday drivers, the key impact remains the higher penalties, stronger safety requirements, and clearer protections introduced in 2019.

## Appendix D: Reference Materials

This manual draws on a wide range of official documents, open-source references, and international driver education materials. They have been consulted to ensure accuracy, clarity, and completeness. Where language has been simplified or paraphrased, the official law or regulation remains the final authority.

### Indian Legal and Regulatory Sources

- The Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 (as amended).
- Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, Gazette of India.
- Motor Vehicles (Driving) Regulations, 2017, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
- Rules and notifications issued by State Governments.
- Good Samaritan Law (2016) and related Supreme Court guidelines.

### Indian Driver Training and Awareness Materials

- Government of Gujarat Driving Licence Portal (<http://www.gujaratdrivinglicence.com>).
- Delhi RTO Exam Practice Materials (<https://www.rtoexam.com/delhi/en>).
- Haryana Road Safety Manual (English Edition), Haryana Police in collaboration with the Transport Department, Government of Haryana.
- West Bengal Driver Training Manual (English), 2017.
- Road safety awareness booklets published by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways.

### International Reference Manuals

- The Official Highway Code, UK (2025 edition).
- Road Users Handbook, New South Wales, Australia.
- Road Users Handbook, Western Australia.
- VicRoads Learner Driver Resources, Victoria, Australia.

- Singapore Basic Theory of Driving (9th edition).
- The New Official K53 Manual, South Africa.
- Selected US State Driver Handbooks (for comparison of style and pedagogy).

#### Open Source and Public Domain Resources

- Road signs of India (SVGs and images) from Wikipedia (public domain / CC BY-SA).
- IIT-Delhi road safety and accident under-reporting studies.
- Central and State Government press releases and awareness campaigns.

#### Community Observations and Public Insights

- Informal observations of road use and discussions in public forums and communities, used to identify common attitudes and myths about driving in India. They are used here in a generalized form to highlight patterns of behavior, not as quotations from individuals or specific forums.





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