



HOW TO OVERTAKE

OVERTAKING

Overtaking other vehicles is one of the most dangerous driving manoeuvres.

Many road crashes, some of them causing deaths, are the result of insufficient care when overtaking.

There will be times when you toss up in your mind whether to overtake or not. If in any doubt, don't!

WHEN CAN YOU OVERTAKE?

You can overtake a vehicle on its **left** when:

- You are on a multi-lane road and it is safe to do so.
- A vehicle is signalling that it is turning right. You can also overtake any vehicles that are stationary behind it.
- You are directed to do so by a police officer or other authorised person.

You can overtake on the **right** when:

- Both vehicles are travelling in the same direction and it is safe to do so.

Whether overtaking or not, on roads with marked lanes, you must drive entirely within the marked lane.

There are three main elements to overtaking - before, during and after.

1. BEFORE OVERTAKING

Stay back

As you approach the vehicle you intend to overtake, adjust your speed as necessary in order to maintain a safe following distance. Don't drive close up to the vehicle, as this will reduce how much you can see of the road ahead. It is also dangerous if the vehicle stops suddenly.

Check ahead

You must be able to see any oncoming traffic, estimate how far away it is and whether or not it will be a danger to you if you overtake. If there is a vehicle coming towards you, you need to be able to estimate the time and distance it will take for you to overtake safely.

For example, if you are going to overtake a vehicle travelling at 80 km/h in an 110 km/h zone it will take approximately 10 seconds to

complete the manoeuvre safely. At 110 km/h you travel at 30 metres per second, so overtaking will take approximately 300 metres. If a vehicle is coming towards you at 110 km/h, it will also be travelling at 30 metres per second.

THEREFORE:

110 km/h = 30 metres per second

10 seconds to overtake

10 seconds x 30 metres per second = 300 metres

Oncoming vehicle @ 110 km/h = 300 metres

Allowing a 5 second safety margin = 150 metres

So, a safe overtaking distance at 110 km/h is 750 metres

That's three-quarters of a kilometre.

Check behind

Before you pull out to overtake, check in all rear vision mirrors to make sure it is safe. Clear blind spots by looking over your right shoulder to ensure there are no vehicles alongside your vehicle.

Signal your intentions

This is a legal requirement and it will also warn drivers that you are about to move to the right (or to the left if you are overtaking a vehicle on its left).

2. DURING OVERTAKING (ON THE RIGHT)

As you approach the vehicle you intend to overtake, make sure that the other driver has seen you.

Move right

Before pulling out to overtake, ensure that you haven't reduced your following distance and that you still have a clear uninterrupted view of the road ahead.

Accelerate

You are now on the wrong side of the road and you don't want to stay there any longer than necessary. Accelerate and overtake as quickly and safely as possible without exceeding the speed limit.

 See overleaf

3. AFTER OVERTAKING (ON THE RIGHT)

Signal left

After you've overtaken the other vehicle you must indicate to let other drivers know that you are returning to the left. This is a legal requirement.

Move left

Before you move back to the left side of the road make sure that you can see the front centre of the vehicle you have overtaken in your internal rear vision mirror. This indicates that there is now sufficient distance between you and the vehicle you have overtaken for you to return to the left side of the road.

Cancel your signal

Make sure you have cancelled your left indicator.

LONG VEHICLES

When you are overtaking a 'LONG VEHICLE' or a 'ROAD TRAIN' you should take the utmost care. The extra length of these vehicles means it takes a lot longer to overtake safely.

OVERTAKING AT NIGHT OR IN ADVERSE CONDITIONS

When driving at night, look ahead using the headlight range of the traffic you're following. This extends your own visual field and reduces the dangers caused by oncoming vehicles with only one light, or pedestrians approaching from the side. If the lighted distance ahead is clear, overtake. If in any doubt, wait!

Take extra care

When visibility is reduced such as in poor weather conditions, it is particularly difficult to judge both speed and distance. In such conditions it is safer to continue following another vehicle rather than risk overtaking. Remember to adjust your speed accordingly in order to be able to stop safely in the event of an emergency.

Give slow moving vehicles, especially bicycles or mopeds, the widest possible berth when you overtake them.

WHEN YOU MUST NOT OVERTAKE

You must not overtake another vehicle when:

- It is stopping or has stopped at a pedestrian or children's crossing.
- It has stopped at an intersection (unless the driver signals that they are turning left or right and it is safe to do so).
- There is a 'NO OVERTAKING' or 'NO PASSING' sign.
- You are nearing a blind bend or the crest of a hill or you do not have a good view of the road ahead.
- The road is marked with a dividing line comprising two continuous lines; a continuous line on the left of a broken or dotted line; or a single continuous line.

- The vehicle in front is displaying a "DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE" sign if that vehicle is turning, unless it is safe to do so.

BEING OVERTAKEN

The way you drive when you are being overtaken can add to safety on our roads so, please:

- Keep well to the left to allow plenty of clearance for any overtaking vehicle and be prepared to brake if the other vehicle suddenly cuts back in front of you.
- Never drive in a manner that prevents another vehicle from overtaking yours.
- Dip your lights at night time as the overtaking vehicle approaches the front of your vehicle.

OVERTAKING CHECK LIST

Remember, to overtake safely you must:

- Have a clear uninterrupted view of the road ahead.
- Check rear-view mirrors and clear blind spots.
- Signal your intentions before and after overtaking.
- Not exceed the posted speed limit.

This brochure has been published as an easy-to-read guide to the WA Road Traffic Act (1974) and Road Traffic Code 2000. It is not intended to be a 'legal' document and for exact statements of the law you should refer to the Act and Code.

A complete version of the Road Traffic Act 1974 and Road Traffic Code 2000 may be obtained by visiting the State Law Publishers web site at: www.slp.wa.gov.au

For more road safety information telephone 138 138 or visit www.ors.wa.gov.au

TOWARDS ZERO



getting there together

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