

Changes to Victoria's Road Safety Rules



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S/C 98236
VPPIN02173/2:10:09

Pedestrians

When walking on a road, pedestrians must walk facing the approaching traffic, usually on the right side of the road.

Drivers

- ▶ A driver must stop at the first stop line of the area reserved for cyclists, and must not enter this area when the traffic light is red.
- ▶ If you are blocking a driveway, a driver is only allowed two minutes to pick up or drop off passengers and must not leave the vehicle unattended.
- ▶ When driving a car, the driver must not have another person or animal on their lap.
- ▶ If two vehicles, for example a bicycle and a car or two motorcycles, are travelling in the same single marked lane and one vehicle diverges to the left or right within the marked lane, the diverging vehicle must give way.

Parking

- ▶ A driver is not permitted to stop to park in a slip lane, or on a painted island.
- ▶ Providing there is at least three metres of clear road between the car and the following, a driver can parallel park opposite (unless otherwise signed):
 - ▶ double continuous dividing lines
 - ▶ a single continuous dividing line
 - ▶ a single continuous line to the left or right of a broken dividing line
 - ▶ a dividing strip.
- ▶ Heavy or long vehicles cannot be parked on a road in a built-up area for longer than one hour, unless parking signs show otherwise or the driver is picking up or setting down goods.
- ▶ When moving a parked vehicle to another parking spot, the driver must move the vehicle off the length of road, or out of the area, to which the parking sign applies.

Driving with trams

- ▶ When sharing the road with trams, a driver must stop before passing the rear of a stopped tram at a tram stop.
Once the tram doors are closed and pedestrians have crossed between the tram and kerb, a driver may then proceed at no more than 10km per hour past the tram.
- ▶ A driver may drive in a tram lane for up to 50 metres in order to enter or leave the road or to avoid an obstruction.
- ▶ Unless there is a sign which permits parking, a driver must not stop or park within 20 metres before a tram stop.
- ▶ A driver is not allowed to drive in a tramway. A tramway is a part of a road that is identified by signage that shows an image of a tram and the word 'ONLY' and is marked along the left side of the road by two continuous yellow lines or raised dividing strips.

Wheeled recreational devices

Scooters, skateboards and roller blades are described as wheeled recreational vehicles and are subject to the following additional rules:

- ▶ They cannot be towed or allowed to slipstream.
- ▶ They must not be used on the road at night (except crossing by the shortest route for example at an intersection).
- ▶ They must not be used in places where there is a 'no wheeled recreational devices' sign.

Notes

The term 'driver' includes motorcyclists.

The information in this fact sheet was current at the time of printing and is intended as a guide only. For full details about the Road Safety Road Rules 2009 see vicroads.vic.gov.au

For further information:
Please visit vicroads.vic.gov.au/roadrules Telephone: 1300 360 745

Victoria's road safety regulations are being updated

Victoria's road safety strategy, *arrive alive 2008-2017*, sets out how the Victorian Government will continue its leadership in road safety to deliver a safer system for all road users and make a significant reduction to road trauma.

Road safety is a shared responsibility and all Victorians can contribute to safer roads and safer road user behaviour. By working together, we can substantially reduce serious casualties from road crashes.

One of the ongoing priorities for *arrive alive 2008-2017* is to examine existing legislation and, where appropriate, amend or introduce new legislation to respond to emerging road safety trends.

VicRoads is introducing national amendments to the road rules. All of these changes will help maintain and improve Victoria's high standard of road safety.

What the important road rule changes are

The changes to the rules reflect common practices, and are consistent with the need to constantly update road rules to reflect community views. Other changes are new and aimed at improving safety on our roads.

The main changes are:

Child restraints

The new rules will require children to be correctly restrained in a motor vehicle in an approved child restraint from birth up to their seventh birthday.

Specifically, the new rules will require children:

- ▶ less than the age of six months to be restrained in a properly fastened and adjusted approved rearward facing child restraint (e.g. infant capsule)
- ▶ from six months to less than the age of four to be restrained in either a properly fastened and adjusted approved *rearward* or properly fastened and adjusted approved *forward* facing child restraint with inbuilt harness (e.g. child safety seat)
- ▶ from four years to less than the age of seven to be restrained in either a forward facing child restraint with an inbuilt harness or booster seat restrained by a correctly adjusted and fastened seatbelt or child safety harness.

There are also new laws for where children can sit in vehicles.

- ▶ If a car has two or more rows of seats, then children under four years must not travel in the front seat.
- ▶ If all seats, other than the front seats, are being used by children under seven years, children aged between four and six years (inclusive) may travel in the front seat, provided they use an approved child restraint or booster seat.

This rule does not apply to buses which have more than 12 seats and children in taxis must be restrained in a seatbelt if there is no suitable approved child restraint available for use in the taxi.

Seatbelts

Each passenger within a vehicle must wear a seatbelt or an approved child restraint which is suitable to the passenger's age.

A driver is now responsible for ensuring that each passenger is wearing a seatbelt or an approved child restraint. The driver can be booked for failing to do so. (This rule does not apply to the driver of a bus, or a taxi driver with passengers 16 years or older).

If all the seatbelts are taken by individual passengers, no additional people can travel within that vehicle.

Linemarkings

Dividing lines

- ▶ A driver must not overtake or U-turn over a single continuous dividing line, or a single continuous dividing line to the left of a broken line. They may only cross this line to enter or leave the road or to avoid an obstruction.

Lane lines

- ▶ A driver must not change lanes over a single continuous lane line.

Painted Islands

- ▶ A driver must not drive on a painted island that is surrounded by a single continuous line unless entering or leaving the road, or entering a turning lane that begins immediately after the painted island.
- ▶ A driver must not drive on a painted island that is surrounded by a double line.
- ▶ A driver cannot drive over a painted island at a freeway on-ramp.

Mobile phones and visual display units

Using a mobile phone while driving is prohibited, except to make or receive a phone call or to use its audio/music functions provided the phone:

- ▶ is secured in a commercially designed holder fixed to the vehicle, or
- ▶ can be operated by the driver without touching any part of the phone.

Using a phone as a GPS while driving is prohibited unless it is secured in a commercially designed holder fixed to the vehicle.

All other functions (including video calls, texting and emailing) are prohibited.

Learner and P1 drivers, are prohibited from using a mobile phone at all while driving.

Holding the phone (whether or not engaged in a phone call) is also prohibited. Holding includes resting the mobile on the driver's lap.

Additionally, a driver must not drive a motor vehicle with a visual display unit operating if any part of the screen is visible to the driver or is likely to distract another driver, unless it is a driver's aid.

A driver's aid (such as a GPS) must be an integrated part of the vehicle design, or be secured in a commercially designed holder fixed to the vehicle (excluding motorcycles).

Motorcyclists

- ▶ A child under the age of eight must not travel as a passenger on a motorcycle. However they are still permitted to travel in a sidecar.
- ▶ A sidecar must not carry more than the number of passengers for which it was designed.
- ▶ Animals must not be carried between the handle bars and the rider of a motorcycle.

Cyclists

- ▶ A passenger on a bicycle must sit in a proper seat (designed for the bicycle) and wear an approved bicycle helmet.
- ▶ At a red light a driver must stop at the first stop line of the area reserved for cyclists at intersections. If you are using the area reserved for cyclists, a bicyclist must stop at the second line.
- ▶ At some intersections, an area reserved for bicycles will be made available to assist cyclists to do a hook turn.