

TRAFFIC RULES AND SIGNALS

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Abstract

Road safety is the prevention and protection of road accidents by using all the road safety measures. It is to secure people while traveling on the roads. It is to make all the road users such as pedestrians, two-wheelers, four-wheelers, multi-wheelers, and other transport vehicle users. Practicing road safety measures is very good and safe to all people throughout their life. Everyone should respect others while driving or walking on the road and take care of their safety. There are plenty of traffic rules that one should follow before getting his or her vehicle on the road. And something to be noted here is that traffic rules are not just for the drivers, it applies to pedestrians and passersby as well. The responsibility equally lies on the shoulders of the citizens as well. As long as we follow the rules and be obedient law-abiding citizens, we can save others' lives as well as save our own lives

Road safety is one of the most serious public health issues in our country. The present transport system has reduced the distances but it has on the other hand increased the life risk of road accidents. Every year road accidents lead to loss of lakhs of lives and serious injuries to crores of people. Since 2009, road safety initiatives have been promoted by WHO in nine countries that account for over 60% of global road traffic deaths: Brazil, Cambodia, China, India, Kenya, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Turkey and Viet Nam. WHO has been working in these countries with the financial support of the Bloomberg Philanthropies Global Road Safety Programme (BP-GRSP), a US\$ 125 million initiative to reduce preventable road traffic deaths and injuries? In India itself about eighty thousand people are killed in road

crashes every year which is 13% of the total fatality all over the world. The person behind the wheel plays an important role in most of the road accidents. In most cases, road accidents occur either due to carelessness or due to lack of road safety awareness of the road user. Therefore, road safety education is as essential as any other basic skills of survival. In this paper, we will briefly focus on the various aspects of road safety important for reducing road accidents. It has an impact on everyone, whether one drives a vehicle, walks or rides a cycle. Road safety refers to the measures which must be adopted by everyone while using roads. These safety methods are meant for reducing the risk of accidents and injuries or casualties on the road. These rules must be followed by all users of roads including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, and bus and truck drivers. Safety methods also relate to the construction, layout of roads as well as traffic regulation systems.

So, we can summarize that road safety involves:

- (i) The design of roads and highways;
- (ii) Laws pertaining to traffic and vehicles;
- (iii) Systems of traffic safety and control;
- (iv) Driver education;
- (v) School students' education;
- (vi) Mass education;
- (vii) Traffic regulation and road safety signs;
- (viii) Vehicle design; and
- (ix) Motor vehicle safety inspection and maintenance.

Keeping our roads safe is not that difficult a task. Imagine if everyone follows simple safety measures and traffic rules, there will be no accident! All should know the importance of safety rules, road signs, traffic signals and driving rules. In 1914, the first legislation 'Indian Motor Vehicle Act 1914' was passed in our country to regulate motor vehicles as well as other road users. Since then the traffic pressure on Indian roads has multiplied several times and the first Motor Vehicle Act 1914 was amended and revised several times by the Government of India to form the 'The Motor Vehicle Act 1988'. Traffic rules and regulations are devised to assure the smooth flowing of

motor vehicles in the road, not meant only for drivers but also for pedestrians, cyclists, hand carters and other road users. The thorough knowledge of traffic rules/regulations, traffic signs and markings are very essential for the drivers and road users. The proper knowledge of these rules can greatly reduce the number of accidents and establish a healthy and organized traffic system in our country. The Motor Vehicle Act 2019 or the Motor Vehicle (Amendment) Act 2019 was implemented in September 2019.

The amendments were targeted towards bringing changes in the transport sector to encourage safer driving practices among Indian motor vehicle drivers. The draft for the amendment was put forward in the lower house of the Parliament, with a proposal to impose strict fines on the violators of traffic rules. It proposes stricter provisions for offences such as drunken driving, juvenile driving, driving without license, over-speeding, dangerous driving and overloading. It also proposes stricter provisions for driving without helmets.

Traffic Rules in India:

- Always Overtake from the right side.
- Parking – Make sure you don't park your vehicle in a way it causes any hurdle or disturbance to any other road users.
- Keep To Your Left – Always drive or ride on the left side of the road and let other vehicles overtake you from the right side.
- Stay Left When You Turn Left – When turning towards left, start with approaching the curb from the left-most lane and ensure there's enough distance for oncoming vehicles to pass.
- Turn Right – Come to the center of the road before you start turning right but when going around the curb, try to stay towards the left-most part of your lane to avoid contact with oncoming traffic.
- When being overtaken by another vehicle, never increase your speed to prevent the other driver from overtaking you.
- Be extra careful on intersections. Also, when passing through them, ensure your vehicle doesn't cause inconvenience to other road users.
- Right of Way- Always give a right of way to vehicles on intersections by letting them continue without stopping in that particular direction in which you are about to proceed.

- **Emergency Vehicles** – It is your responsibility to give way to emergency services vehicles such as fire engines and ambulances.
- **Indicators** – Always use indicators to let other road users know about the planned change in the direction of travel. If your vehicle indicators get damaged without any warning, use hand signals
- **Pedestrians** have the right of way at pedestrian crossings or zebra crossings.
- **“U” Turns**- U-turns can only be taken when there is no warning sign nearby you give a proper indication to other vehicle drivers that you are going to take a U turn.
- **Registration** – Your vehicle's registration plate should be visible at all times. In case it is broken or damaged, you need to get it replaced at the earliest. Driving a vehicle with its registration number not being visible is a serious offence.
- **One way Roads** – Always drive only in the permissible direction on a one-way road. Also, never park your vehicle in reverse on a one way street.
- **Stop Lines** – Always stop your vehicle behind the stop lines. On roads with no stop lines, make sure your vehicle comes to a halt before the Zebra-crossing.
- **Towing** – No vehicles should be towed closer to other vehicles on the road. However, vehicles that are mechanically disabled and those confiscated by the police are exceptions to this rule.
- **Noise** – Drivers should not horn needlessly or excessively or use them in no-honking zones like hospital zones and school zones, etc. Also, one should not drive with non-OEM-spec silencers
- **Traffic Lights and Signs** should be always obeyed. One should respect instructions given by a traffic cop when there are no traffic lights available.
- **Following Distance** – Always keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front of you as this will give you enough time to come to a stop in case the vehicle in front brakes suddenly.

- Right of way on Steep Roads – When going up on an incline, you have the right of way as it might be difficult for you to stop and regain momentum. The vice versa holds true when you're driving downhill.
- Obstruction of View – You should always have a clear view of the road ahead. Therefore, your car's windshield shouldn't have stickers that might obstruct your view.
- Passing Pedestrians Do not drive at more than 25 km/hr, when you passing a procession, meeting, strike, or a march.
- Tractor and Goods Carriages – It is prohibited to carry passengers on a tractor or a goods carrier
- Loading – Overloading a vehicle is not only dangerous but even illegal. Therefore, one should not carry more than a permissible number of passengers or excessive luggage that the vehicle isn't designed to carry.
- Dangerous Materials – One should not carry explosives, inflammable or harmful substances as they are a fire hazard.
- Driving in Reverse – When driving in reverse, you should make sure you do not cause annoyance to any other people on the road.
- Essential Documents – Always carry the following documents – Driving license, Registration certificate of the vehicle, Insurance certificate, fitness certificate (in case of commercial vehicle), tourist permit (in case of commercial vehicle) and PUC certificate.
- Additional Regulations – In addition to the above, the drivers should be aware of all the road safety rules, such as those of speed limit, one-way streets, etc.

The above stated traffic rules would always be beneficial for people. It will reduce the rate of accidents occurring on the road. Therefore, it is everyone's duty to strictly follow the rules.

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