



# You're the COACH

A Guide for Parents of New Drivers



## Introduction

This publication is a guide for parents and guardians of teenagers learning to drive. It should be used with the Iowa Driver's Manual to aid you in instructing your new driver about how to safely and responsibly operate a motor vehicle. Since the task of driving is affected by changing conditions, this manual does not attempt to cover all situations that may arise.

Under Iowa's graduated driver licensing system, young drivers must complete 20 hours of supervised drive time with their parents or guardians during the instruction permit stage and 10 hours during the intermediate license stage. Even though your teenager is taking or has completed driver education in school, there is a great deal of benefit to be obtained from you providing this additional practice time. Learning from your experience and under your guidance, your teenager will apply the rules of the road and more fully understand the risks involved in driving. This will require time and patience on your part, but the effort will result in you knowing that your teenager will be better able to cope with the demands of safe driving.

In the back of this manual there are several pages of diagrams. Use these diagrams to illustrate different driving situations for your teenage driver. Consider taking a notepad and pencil along during your practice sessions for additional drawings. This manual also contains a chart to log your supervised drive time. As your new driver advances through the graduated system, you will be required to certify to an Iowa driver's license examiner that you completed the minimum number of hours of supervised drive time.

By becoming involved in the learning driver's educational process, you are contributing to Iowa's overall highway safety effort and helping your teenager develop safe driving habits that will last a lifetime.



The Iowa Driver's Manual is available at all driver's license issuance sites and can be accessed online at: [iowadot.gov/mvd/driverslicense/dlmanual.htm](http://iowadot.gov/mvd/driverslicense/dlmanual.htm)

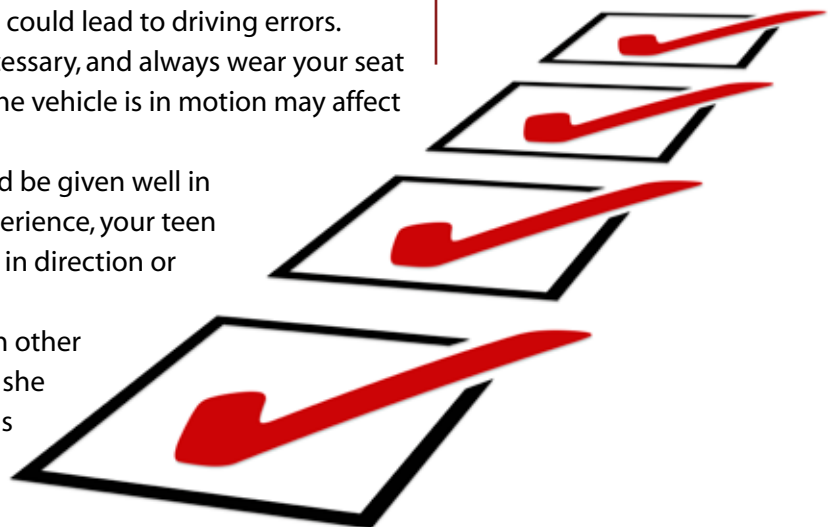
# Setting the foundation for supervised driving

Learning to drive, just as with any other skill, takes practice and time. Keep in mind that learning includes making mistakes, and it can be frustrating at times. Some people learn quickly, others need more time. Create a partnership with your teen driver where you both share in the satisfaction that comes with accomplishment and develop an atmosphere where your teen driver will feel comfortable in saying, "I don't understand" or, "I need to try it again."

## Some tips before practice driving

- Discuss with your teen driver what you want to accomplish during the driving session. Set ground rules, such as where you are going to practice, what you expect from each other, and what to do if things become difficult.
- Prohibit passengers during the practice sessions. Other family members and friends may cause distractions and make your teen driver feel overly self-conscious.
- Take this guide and the Iowa Driver's Manual with you for reference when the vehicle is parked.
- Practice only in the daytime during good weather until your teen driver is comfortable with this type of driving. Select a large, open, surfaced area for learning the basic controls. This will allow your teen driver to get a feel of the vehicle in motion without having to worry about other traffic. As he or she gains confidence, consider moving onto a street in a quiet area. An early Saturday or Sunday morning may be a good time to introduce your teen driver to a new environment since the traffic should be lighter.
- Make sure your teen driver knows where the vehicle's controls are and is familiar with the windshield wiper control, emergency flashers, headlight and dimmer switches, horn, turn signals, etc. Make sure the seat and mirrors are adjusted properly, as well as the seat belt.
- Let your teen driver drive the way he or she has been taught in driver education. If you feel things should be handled differently, consult with the driver education teacher or the school's study material. Attempting to change the instruction will confuse the new driver. Have your new driver explain why they are driving the way they are and generate a discussion about the best way to handle a particular situation.
- Remain alert, but not tense, as your teen driver drives. Your tension will be contagious and make the teen driver feel uncomfortable, and that could lead to driving errors.
- Sit so you can take control of the steering wheel, if necessary, and always wear your seat belt. Keep in mind that turning off the ignition when the vehicle is in motion may affect the power steering and brakes on many vehicles.
- Give instructions in a calm voice. Your directions should be given well in advance, and be given clearly and briefly. Due to inexperience, your teen driver will need plenty of time to prepare for a change in direction or speed.
- Consider using the "commentary" method of driving. In other words, ask your teen driver to talk out loud what he or she is seeing or plans to do. For example, "As I approach this intersection, I need to slow down, cover the brake, watch for cross traffic, and stop, if necessary;" or

## NOTES:



## NOTES:

*Exceeding the posted speed limit and driving too fast for conditions are among the most common factors contributing to traffic crashes.*

"As I approach this stop sign, I need to stop before the crosswalk." Use the commentary method yourself to demonstrate.

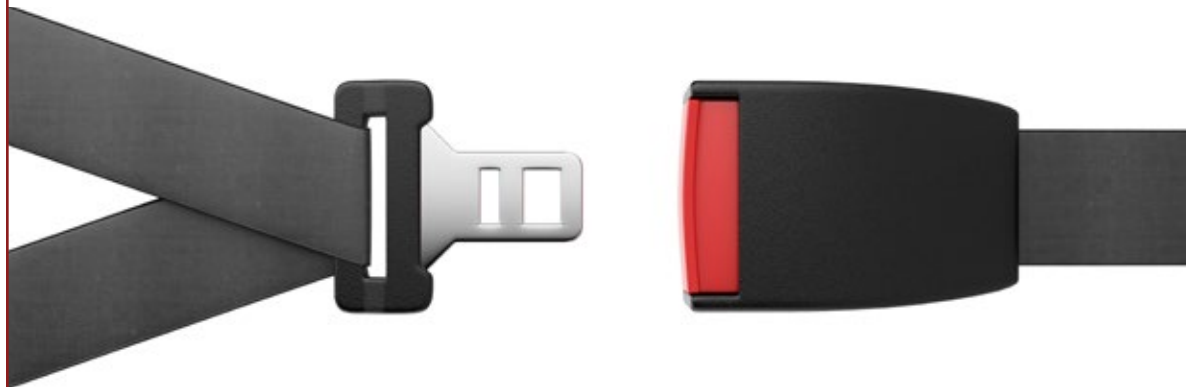
- Stop the practice session if either you or your teen driver become stressed. It could be dangerous to continue. Let everyone calm down. Later, discuss what led to the stress and what can be done to prevent it from happening again.
- Calmly coach your teen driver on what to do and how to get safely off the road if he or she gets into a traffic environment that he or she may not be able to handle.
- Evaluate what you have experienced after each session. Give praise for the things that were done correctly and offer suggestions for improvement in the other areas. Make it a dialogue. Encourage your teen driver to express his or her thoughts about the practice session.
- Be prepared for the unexpected; and try to have fun.

**The following topics are a few you will want to emphasize as you work with your teenage driver.**

### Seat belts

Tell your teen driver the truth: seat belts save lives. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports, "Seat belts are your best protection in a crash. They are designed so that the forces in a crash are absorbed by the strongest areas of the body; the bones of the hips, shoulders, and chest. They keep you in place so that your head, face, and chest are less likely to strike the windshield, dashboard, other vehicle interiors, or passengers. They also keep you from being thrown out of a vehicle."

Iowa law requires that all persons under the age of 18 be restrained by a seat belt, safety harness, or a child restraint system in all positions in the vehicle, including the back seat.



Insist that your teen driver uses and understands the importance of seat belts. Seat belt use significantly reduces serious injury and death.

### Following too closely

Explain that following other vehicles too closely is a common cause of rear-end collisions. If the driver in front makes a quick stop or slows for traffic, your young driver could be in a position where he or she cannot get stopped in time or make an effective evasive maneuver.

Although a two-second following distance may be sufficient in normal conditions for an experienced driver, instruct your teen driver to leave at least three seconds distance between your vehicle and the one ahead as a beginner. An even safer recommendation is:

- At speeds of 40 mph and higher leave four to five seconds distance between your vehicle and the one ahead.
- When surface conditions are wet or slippery or the vehicle ahead blocks your view, leave six seconds or more distance between your vehicle and the one ahead.

How to determine a following distance of four seconds:

- Have your teen driver pick out a fixed object along the roadside such as a sign, telephone pole, shadow, or line on the pavement.
- Then tell your teen driver that when the back bumper of the vehicle in front of him or her passes that object, count "one thousand one, one thousand two, one thousand three, one thousand four."
- Explain that if the front of the vehicle reaches the object before he or she reaches "one thousand four," that means he or she is following too closely.

Emphasize that following too closely increases the chance of being involved in a rear-end collision. It is important to be able to stop in a safe distance.

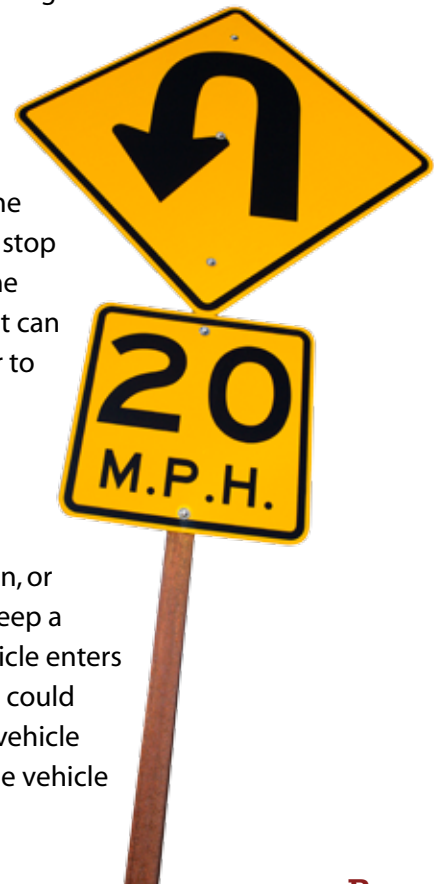
Help your teen driver learn to watch for clues on what vehicles in a line of traffic ahead are going to do. Your teen driver needs to know not to rely only on the vehicle immediately in front, but to watch for brake lights in the stream of traffic. If the brake lights come on, your teen driver should understand he or she might have to slow down or stop. Sometimes, drivers can even see advance indication of braking by looking through the back and front windows of the car in front of them.

## Beware of the false start

Remind your teen driver that even experienced drivers can be caught off guard at stop signs or traffic signals when stopped behind another vehicle. The vehicle in front may start to go or begin to make a right turn on red, but then stop suddenly due to changing conditions. The second vehicle then bumps into the first. Advise your teen driver to stop so that the rear tires of the vehicle in front can be seen where they touch the street. Most importantly, teach your teen driver to always be alert and remain aware of a false start or sudden stop.

## Control of speed entering a curve

Explain the power of inertia to your teen driver. Many injury and fatal crashes happen when vehicles run off the road on curves. A vehicle's tires need friction, or traction, on the road surface to remain stable. Inertia is a force that tends to keep a vehicle moving in a straight path. If the vehicle's speed is too great as the vehicle enters a curve, the inertia will be too strong. As the steering wheel is turned, traction could be lost. The vehicle may cross into the wrong lane or go off the roadway. The vehicle may roll over or strike a solid or fixed object. Reducing speed is vital before the vehicle enters a curve.



## NOTES:

Rural roads account for a high percentage of speed-related fatal crashes.



### Control of speed on a gravel road

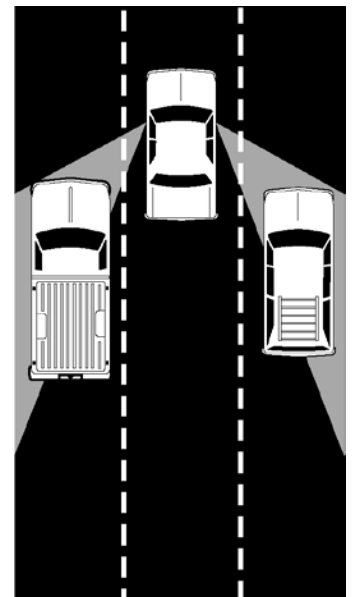
Tell your teen driver about how loose gravel will build up on the sides of rural roads. If the front tire enters the loose gravel, steering control may be at risk. If the vehicle's speed is too great, the gravel may pull the vehicle into the ditch. The vehicle may roll, strike an object or embankment, or become submerged in water. **Novice drivers should be introduced to gravel roads after becoming comfortable driving on hard surfaces, if at all possible.**

### Lane changes

Remind your teen driver that a driver should plan to change lanes rather than doing so on the spur of the moment, and then change lanes only when space and time permit. When considering a lane change, a driver should be aware of what is going on in both the current lane of travel and lane of travel to be entered.

#### Things to consider

- Is there a large enough gap in traffic to enter into the other lane?
- Is it possible a vehicle from behind will hit the driver's car if he or she suddenly has to brake in the new lane?
- Does the teen driver have to increase or decrease speed?
- Are other vehicles signaling to enter into the same lane your teen driver wants to move into?



Blind spots

#### Executing the lane change

Tell your teen driver how to safely change lanes by doing the following.

- Check the mirrors.
- Use the appropriate turn signs to indicate intent to change lanes.
- Check the blind spot by glancing over his or her shoulder in the direction he or she intends to change lanes. Be careful not to let the vehicle drift in the direction being checked.
- Adjust speed.
- Steer smoothly into the lane if space and time permit.
- Cancel the turn signal.

Remaining constantly aware of traffic will help your teen driver make a quick and correct decision about changing lanes, if an obstacle appears in their lane of travel.

## NOTES:

## Communication

Explain that your teen driver will communicate with other drivers in various ways.

- Brake lights alert traffic following the vehicle that the vehicle is slowing or stopping.
- Turn signals warn others of the intent to turn or change lanes. Other drivers may make decisions based on turn signals or lack of signals. Warn your teen driver it's dangerous to change lanes while driving through an intersection because other drivers may think your turn signal indicates a turn and they may pull out in front of you. Perhaps, if you've been in this situation and had a "near-miss," you can give your teen driver an example.
- Emergency or four-way flashers communicate that the driver or vehicle is having trouble.
- The horn is a warning device and should be used only to demand attention to the vehicle. Drivers should not use the horn to greet friends. Sounding the horn unnecessarily may startle other drivers, especially in an intersection.
- Eye contact will help the teen driver and another driver make decisions about what to do next. It helps to avoid conflicts; and helps drivers to know they have seen each other.

*Speeding reduces a driver's ability to steer safely around curves or objects in the roadway.*

## Intersections

Remind your teen driver that an intersection is one of the most likely places where a crash may occur. There are two types of intersections: an uncontrolled intersection and a controlled intersection.

An uncontrolled intersection, usually found in residential areas of a city or town, or on rural gravel roads, has no signs or signal lights to control the traffic. Direct your teen driver to reduce speed and be prepared to stop, if necessary, when approaching the intersection. Have the teen driver look left first as traffic coming from that direction will be in his or her path first. Then check to the right. Recheck left. If a vehicle is coming, the driver on the left should yield to the driver on the right. However, do not automatically assume that another car will yield, even if the driver is on the right.

A controlled intersection is one where signs and signal lights control the movement of traffic. If there is a stop sign, have your teen driver make a complete stop and tell the teen driver not to proceed until it is safe to do so. Make sure he or she looks and makes a valid assessment of approaching traffic and its rate of speed. Too many drivers stop, but then pull out in front of another vehicle. The result can be disastrous, especially when pulling onto a highway or a street with a high speed zone.



*Many crashes involving teens occur at intersections because of their inexperience judging distance and speed.*

## NOTES:

*A high percentage of speed-related crashes involve a single vehicle.*



Reinforce that the vehicle to the right has the right of way if two vehicles arrive at a four-way stop intersection at the same time. If there is a yield sign, let both left and right approaching traffic go by first.

When your teen driver is stopped at a red traffic light, tell him or her not to do a “jack rabbit” start and hastily accelerate into the intersection when the light changes to green. Have him or her quickly check left and right for vehicles entering the intersection at the last second or running the red light. It is important for a driver to avoid watching and concentrating only on the light change. This may cause drivers to react only to the “green” and enter the intersection before checking the cross traffic.

When approaching an intersection and the signal turns yellow, tell your teen driver to stop. The intersection must be cleared. If the stop cannot be made safely, have your teen driver drive cautiously through the intersection.

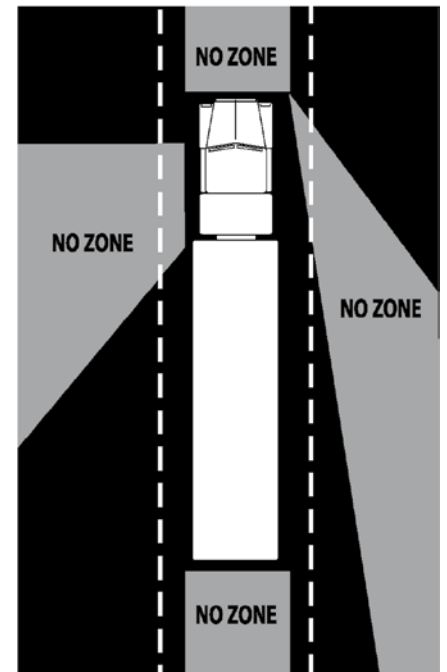
When approaching a flashing yellow left-turn arrow signal, have your teen driver yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians, and then turn with caution.

## Sharing the road with trucks

Tell your teen driver that trucks have large blind spots behind them and on both sides. These blind spots are referred to as “No Zones.” Emphasize that drivers must stay out of these “No Zones.” If the driver can’t see the truck driver’s side mirror, that driver is at risk since the truck driver may not know the vehicle is there.

Talk about the operating characteristics of trucks, **the bigger the truck:**

- The larger the blind spots.
- The more room required to maneuver.
- The longer it takes to stop.
- The more likely the driver and passengers in the smaller vehicle will be the losers in a crash.



*The presence of teen passengers strongly increases crash risk. For teen drivers, the more passengers, the greater the risk.*





## Teach your teen driver to watch for deer on the roadway and explain the following facts

- Deer crossing warning signs are placed where deer are frequently seen. Your teen driver needs to drive defensively and remain alert.
- Deer often travel in groups. There may be others following the leader and are just out of sight. They could suddenly jump out onto the road.
- Deer are typically on the move at dawn and dusk, and drivers need to be especially alert.
- A serious crash can result if a driver swerves to miss a deer, loses control and drives off the road or crosses into the opposite lane. Drivers should be prepared to brake and your teen driver should know that sometimes hitting the animal at a reduced speed is safer than swerving, losing control and hitting a utility pole, embankment, tree, or other fixed object.



## NOTES:

*Look for the positive in your teen's driving and tell him or her about it.*

## Yielding to emergency vehicles

Instruct your teen driver to always be prepared to yield to emergency vehicles. When an emergency vehicle such as a police car, ambulance, or fire truck approaches from either direction on an undivided road or from behind on a divided road and has activated its red and blue lights or is sounding a siren, a driver must yield the right of way. Have your teen driver immediately pull to the right and stop as close to the curb as possible, clear of any intersection, unless a police officer directs otherwise. If the driver cannot

get to the right, make sure he or she positions the vehicle so that a clear path is made for the emergency vehicle. Make sure your teen driver remains stopped until the emergency vehicle has passed by and tell the teen driver to watch for multiple emergency vehicles.



## Approaching stopped emergency or maintenance vehicles

Tell your teen driver to change lanes if it's safe to do when approaching a stationary vehicle such as a police car, tow truck, utility, or maintenance vehicle parked along side the road and displaying flashing lights.

If a lane change is not possible, prohibited by law, or unsafe, explain that drivers must slow down to a reasonable and proper speed for the existing conditions and be prepared to stop.

## NOTES:

*Young drivers are more likely to speed than other drivers.*

*Of all drivers involved in fatal crashes, young males are more likely to have been speeding.*

*Driver inattention and distraction are common contributing factors in multiple vehicle crashes.*

## School buses

Emphasize that drivers must be very careful when driving around school buses. Riders will be rushing to catch the bus and passengers exiting the bus may be hurrying across the street. Does your teen driver know how to react when he or she sees the following signals on the bus?

### Flashing yellow lights

Your teen driver needs to know this means the bus is going to stop. It is illegal to pass from behind when the yellow lights are flashing. When approaching a bus (coming toward it) that has its yellow lights flashing, drivers must slow to 20 mph or less, and be prepared to stop.

### Flashing red lights and stop arm out

Your teen driver needs to know this means the bus is stopped and passengers are getting on or off. It is illegal to pass from behind or from the opposite direction. Drivers must stop at least 15 feet from the bus and remain stopped until the flashing red lights deactivate and the stop sign is retracted. Drivers must be alert for pedestrians.

### Four-lane (or more) roads

Your teen driver needs to know it is illegal to pass from behind when yellow or red lights are flashing. When drivers approach a school bus (coming toward it), proceed with caution when yellow or red lights are flashing. The school bus driver is not permitted to allow passengers to get off the bus when they must cross four or more lanes. However, drivers must still be very cautious.

## Distractions

Remind your teen driver that a driver's concentration must be focused on driving. Any activities or thoughts that absorb attention to the point where reflex time is compromised should be avoided because the driving environment is constantly changing. A mere half-second of time lost due to distraction can mean the difference between life and death. Tell your teen driver about distractions that should be avoided while driving. Be sure to include the following.

- Texting
- Eating/Drinking
- Removing product packaging
- Grooming (combing hair, fixing makeup, looking at yourself in the mirror)
- Using a cell phone
- Using a headphone
- Listening to loud music
- Looking for and changing CDs
- Searching for an item in a purse, glove compartment, backpack, etc.
- Reaching for objects that have fallen to the floor
- Reading
- Unfolding a road map
- Having passengers in the car creating disturbances
- Carrying pets that are not suitably restrained
- Driving while angry, depressed, emotionally upset

## Watch for slow-moving vehicles

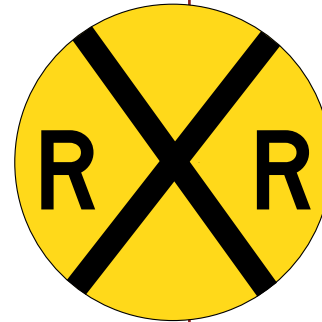
Watch for tractors, combines, and other farm equipment moving across the road and traveling on highways in rural areas. Farm machinery can be very large and wide enough to take up more than one traffic lane. Farm machinery usually does not have turn signals and to make a right turn operators of farm machinery may pull wide to the left and then turn to the right. Pass with caution and keep in mind that an operator of farm machinery will have difficulty hearing approaching vehicles.



## Railroad crossings

Explain that railroad crossings are dangerous and tell your teen driver to obey the following rules.

- Never drive around gates or flashing red lights. If the gates are down, stop. Drivers should not cross the tracks until the gates are raised and lights have stopped flashing. Some highway-rail crossings have multiple tracks. Drivers need to make sure there isn't a second train hidden behind the first train.
- Expect a train on any track at any time. Most trains do not travel on a regular schedule. Drivers must be cautious at a railroad crossing at any time of the day or night.
- Never drive onto a crossing until the driver is sure he or she can completely cross the tracks. Once drivers have started across the tracks, they should keep going and not get "trapped" on the tracks and between the gates.
- Get out of the vehicle if it stalls and immediately get away from the tracks. This applies to the driver and any passengers. If a train is coming, everyone should quickly move away from the tracks, preferably in the direction from which the train is approaching.



## Passing on a two-lane road

Help your teen driver understand that passing other vehicles can be dangerous. Before deciding to pass, a driver must determine if it is legal to pass and if traffic, weather, and road surface conditions permit the passing maneuver to be done safely. A solid yellow line in the vehicle's lane means it is not legal to pass. A pennant-shaped sign on the left side of the roadway means it is not legal to pass. Weather conditions such as rain, snow, sleet, fog, and bright sunlight may create an environment in which it is not wise to pass.

If the conditions are right, a driver must keep in mind that he or she will typically need to accelerate 10 to 15 mph faster than the other vehicle to complete the passing maneuver. It is illegal to exceed the speed limit when passing.

Make sure your teen driver checks both approaching traffic and traffic to the rear before starting to pass, and then your teen driver should use the turn signal. Explain to your teen driver that she or he should be able to see the front of the passed vehicle (headlights) in the rearview mirror before returning to the right lane. Reinforce that if there's any question as to whether it is safe to pass, DON'T DO IT!



## NOTES:

*Alcohol involvement and speeding often go hand-in-hand.*

## Recovery if wheels drop off the edge of the roadway

Explain to your teen driver that new drivers may over-compensate or over-steer if the tires on one side of the vehicle drop off the edge of the roadway. As the driver steers sharply back toward the road, they may lose control and cross over the centerline into oncoming traffic or drive off the roadway risking a roll-over or collision with a fixed object or embankment.

Help the teen driver learn the correct recovery method: Hold the steering wheel firmly; reduce speed; and do not brake sharply. Let up on the accelerator and lightly brake. Watch closely for traffic behind and conditions of the shoulder ahead. If conditions ahead allow, look for an area where the level of the shoulder is close to the level of the roadway. Steer toward the roadway if traffic is clear from behind. If the drop-off level is deep, the driver may need to steer sharply to return to the pavement. Countersteer or steer back in the opposite direction to avoid crossing the centerline.

## Impaired driving

Make sure your teen driver understands that alcohol is a depressant that reduces the brain's control over the body. Blurred vision, impaired judgment, and lack of coordination create an unsafe driver at any age. Young drivers need to hear that drinking and driving is not a socially acceptable behavior. Those who abuse alcohol would like other young people to believe it is OK. However, smart people make smart decisions. They remain in control of their actions and don't surrender to activities that create embarrassment and endanger lives.

### **Drinking and driving can be a deadly combination.**

Explain the consequences of drinking and driving to your teen driver. Tell him or her the process that will happen if a law enforcement officer believes he or she is operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated.

He or she will be required to perform field sobriety tests, including walking a straight line, balancing on one foot, following the movement of a pen with the eyes, etc. He or she will be asked to take a preliminary breath test. If he or she fails these, he or she can be arrested, handcuffed, and taken to jail.

At the jail, a secondary or evidentiary breath test will be administered. If the test indicates a blood alcohol level of 0.08 percent or greater, the teen driver will be given a notice of license revocation effective in 10 days, the teen driver's license will be taken and the driver issued a temporary license. Then, he or she will either be jailed or released to a parent or guardian.



He or she will be required to appear in court; and if convicted of operating while intoxicated, will be fined up to \$1,000 in addition to a 30 percent surcharge and court costs. Attorney fees may be added to this total. Explain to your teen driver that Iowa has a “two-track” system related to driving under the influence. Even if the driver “wins” in the criminal court, there are administrative penalties that are imposed on the driving privilege.

The operator’s driver’s license will be revoked for six months or until their 18th birthday, whichever is longer. If the teen driver refuses to submit to testing, the revocation period will be for one year or until their 18th birthday, whichever is longer.

The teen driver’s name will be entered into the National Driver Register as a problem driver until the revocation has ended. The teen driver will not be eligible for a work permit, if he or she is under the age of 18. The teen driver will not be eligible for a school license.

The teen driver will be required, at his or her own expense, to attend and satisfactorily complete a course for drinking drivers. The teen driver, again at his or her own expense, will be required to undergo a substance abuse evaluation and complete any recommended treatment.

When the revocation period is over, Iowa law requires the teen driver to maintain SR-22 (high-risk) insurance for two years from the start date of the revocation. The teen driver must also pay a civil penalty of \$200, which is used to help pay expenses for crime victims. Before a new license can be issued, the teen driver must pass all required tests and pay the fees for a new license. You need to help your teen driver understand that while these penalties may seem harsh, they exist to help deter the devastation caused by drinking drivers.

Explain that illicit drugs are also involved in a large proportion of driving crashes, injuries, and deaths. Marijuana and other drugs reduce coordination, reaction time, and other abilities required to drive safely. Your teen driver needs to know that the consequences for driving under the influence of illicit drugs are the same as operating while intoxicated.

Point out to the teen driver that driving while deeply fatigued can pose dangers that are similar to those when intoxicated. Fatigued drivers have slowed reaction times and impaired judgment.

**IMPORTANT:**

**Iowa has a “zero tolerance law” for those under age 21. A blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of 0.02 percent will trigger a license revocation.**

## NOTES:

*Speed increases the likelihood of a crash and increases the severity of a crash once it occurs.*

## Driving in work zones

Help your teen driver understand that work zones are not there to inconvenience drivers. They are necessary to improve the roads for everyone. Review the items listed below with your teen driver.

- In a work zone along any road, major or minor, expect the unexpected. Normal speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed, and people and vehicles may be working on or near the road.
- Diamond-shaped orange warning signs are posted in advance of work zones. Be extra alert as soon as you see the sign and be ready to slow down or stop.
- In addition to other warning signs, a “flagger ahead” sign may be posted in the work zone. Stay alert and be prepared to obey the flagger’s directions.
- There may be flashing arrow panels or “lane closed ahead” signs. Merge into the correct lane as soon as possible. Don’t continue driving in the lane that will be closed right up to point of the lane closure and then try to merge at the last second. Move to the appropriate lane at first notice of an approaching work zone. If everyone cooperates, traffic will move much more efficiently.
- The most common crash in a highway work zone is the rear-end collision. Maintain a safe following distance between your vehicle and the one in front of you.
- Motorists and their passengers sustain a high number of fatalities and injuries in work zone crashes.
- Some work zones, such as painting, road patching, and mowing, are mobile and move down the road as the work is finished. Just because the driver doesn’t immediately see the workers, doesn’t mean they’re not there. Teach your teen driver to observe the posted signs until he or she sees one that indicates they have left the work zone.
- Highway workers, just like everyone else, want to return home safely after the day’s work.



## Bad weather or adverse driving conditions

Teaching teenagers to drive shouldn’t be limited only to good weather. Once they obtain a license that allows unaccompanied driving, they will be exposed to a variety of conditions. Previous exposure to adverse driving conditions under the supervision of an experienced driver could pay off in a big way in the future. Crashes resulting in property damage, injury, and death may be prevented. Review “section 5” in the Iowa Driver’s Manual for additional information about the following topics.

### Rain

Help your teen driver understand why it’s important that the first thing he or she should do when the road becomes wet is to reduce the vehicle’s speed. During the first half-hour of rain the water mixes with dirt and oil on the road, making the roadway a slippery surface. Traction will be significantly reduced until this film is washed away.

Explain that hydroplaning is when a vehicle’s tires actually ride the surface of the water, rather than gripping the road’s surface. Hydroplaning can also occur in slush when snow melts on the road. Braking and steering will be affected. Worn, bald, or

under-inflated tires will make matters worse. The best way to avoid loss of control under wet conditions is to slow down.

Caution your teen driver against driving through deep running water. This may occur during periods of flash flooding. A car can be swept away in a few inches of running water. When running water is encountered, the best thing to do is to turn around and find another route.

### **Ice and snow**

Although your teen driver may have grown up in Iowa, remind him or her that when the temperature drops, rain may turn to ice on the road's surface. Often this ice is hardly visible. Because air circulates both below and above bridges and overpasses, moisture on the surface of them is likely to freeze quickly. Trees and buildings may shelter parts of the road and prevent the sun from drying the surface. Icy conditions may be present. A driver can be caught off guard and spin out of control, if speed is too high in these areas.

Teach your teen driver that snow and ice require a driver to use gentle acceleration, braking, and slight steering techniques. A driver must ease the vehicle into curves and turns. Allow your teen driver to experience the negative effect packed snow and ice will have on vehicle control in a large open area where no traffic is present. Keep strict control over this practice and don't let your teen driver get carried away. However, it's best to learn under safe, controlled conditions, rather than the hard way in traffic where someone is likely to be hurt or killed.

### **Driving around snowplows**

- Snowplows plow far and wide, sometimes very wide. The front plow extends several feet in front of the truck and may cross the centerline during snow removal operations.
- Don't follow too closely behind a snowplow since they are often spreading deicing materials from the back of the truck. They may also create a snow cloud that can reduce your visibility very quickly. Never drive into a snow cloud, it could conceal a snowplow.
- Snowplows also travel much slower than the posted speeds so when you spot a plow, allow plenty of time to slow down.

When there is ice or snow on the road, take it slow!

### **Fog**

Explain that fog reduces visibility and makes it very difficult to judge distances. Driving should be avoided. When it is necessary to drive, instruct your teen driver to use low-beam headlights because less light will be reflected back. Slow down and increase following distances. The driver should make certain that he or she can stop safely within the distance he or she can see.

## **NOTES:**

*Let your teen practice under different conditions, including driving at night.*

*"Ice and Snow ... Take It Slow"*



## NOTES:

*Speeding extends the distance required to stop a vehicle in emergency situations.*

*The act of scanning. This involves observing the surroundings far ahead of the vehicle and side-to-side, not just immediately in front of the hood.*

### **Glare**

Remind your teen driver that sun glare will be worse early in the morning, late in the afternoon, and early in the evening. Point out that low sun angles are a short-time problem and adjusting their travel schedules can make a big difference. Go early or stay late. Sunglasses are cool, but they are also valuable safety devices. Make sure your teen driver has a pair available and knows how and when to use the vehicle's sun visors. New drivers should be aware that in both foggy and sun-glare conditions, other drivers will have difficulty seeing them, just as they will have trouble seeing other vehicles. Use of headlights on low beam is recommended.

### **Use of cruise control**

Caution your teen driver that using the cruise control is not wise when the road surface is wet or when weather conditions are not good. The vehicle could easily skid. Cruise control is continually adjusting the speed of the car to maintain a constant speed and may be accelerating or decelerating when it's not desired. *Example:* In hilly parts of Iowa on the interstate system, the cruise control may start accelerating during a hill climb when the car hits a slippery spot. It may be too late to take corrective action and the car could easily slide into the ditch. Your teen driver should reserve the use of cruise control for when conditions are ideal.

### **Wind**

Tell your teen driver that strong crosswinds can affect the control of a vehicle. On a windy day, a driver should be prepared for the impact of wind after driving out from under a bridge or out of an underpass. Provide your teen driver these tips.

- Maintain a firm grip on the steering wheel and be prepared to countersteer, if necessary.
- When meeting a large truck on the highway, be prepared for a wind blast from the truck and don't panic. Explain that your teen driver should anticipate this effect and then be prepared to counter steer a little, if necessary.

### **Night driving**

Let your teen driver know that Iowa's graduated driver's license law requires you to provide him or her with nighttime driving practice. Darkness limits visibility, so it is wise to drive slower at night than during the day. Teach your teen driver that he or she must be able to stop within the range of the vehicle's headlights. If the headlight glare of an oncoming vehicle creates a problem, instruct your teen driver to look beyond the glare and direct his or her attention to the side, but keep the approaching vehicle within the range of his or her peripheral vision.

### **Closed cars on a hot day**

Make sure you explain that leaving children or even pets in an enclosed car on a hot day can be deadly. In as little as 10 minutes the temperature inside a car can reach well above 120 degrees, depending on the temperature outside, humidity, and how far the windows are rolled down. Heat exhaustion can occur at temperatures above 90 degrees and heat stroke can occur when temperatures rise above 105 degrees. When a child is enclosed in a hot car, body fluids and salts are lost through sweating, causing heat exhaustion. If not treated immediately, heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke. In heat stroke, a child can no longer sweat. The body temperature rises to deadly levels leading to severe damage to the brain, liver, and kidneys, or even death. Heat stroke is a medical emergency. Your teen driver should know to call 911 immediately. Steps should be taken to cool the patient down, as soon as possible. Instruct your teen driver never to leave children, elderly persons, dependent persons, or pets in an enclosed car alone.



Use this driving log to keep track of your hours of behind the wheel practice.

Date	Practice route (residential, highway, etc.)	Time of day	Weather	Length of practice session	Adult's initials

Use this driving log to keep track of your hours of behind the wheel practice.

Date	Practice route (residential, highway, etc.)	Time of day	Weather	Length of practice session	Adult's initials

**Use this driving log to keep track of your hours of behind the wheel practice.**

Date	Practice route (residential, highway, etc.)	Time of day	Weather	Length of practice session	Adult's initials

# Evaluation

Review the Iowa Driver's Manual and/or your teenager's driver education study material for additional information and categories.

Your teen driver should be capable of safely performing and/or demonstrating all of the following. Check them when you feel he or she is ready to drive alone.

## Basic maneuvers

- Starting (adjusts seat and mirrors, fastens safety belt, and knows location of gauges) \_\_\_\_\_
- Shifting \_\_\_\_\_
- Steering (correct hand position on wheel) \_\_\_\_\_
- Stopping \_\_\_\_\_
- Signaling \_\_\_\_\_
- Backing \_\_\_\_\_
- Parking \_\_\_\_\_
- Turning \_\_\_\_\_
- High- and low-beam headlight usage \_\_\_\_\_
- Proper use of horn and windshield wipers \_\_\_\_\_

## Advanced maneuvers

- Passing \_\_\_\_\_
- Merging \_\_\_\_\_

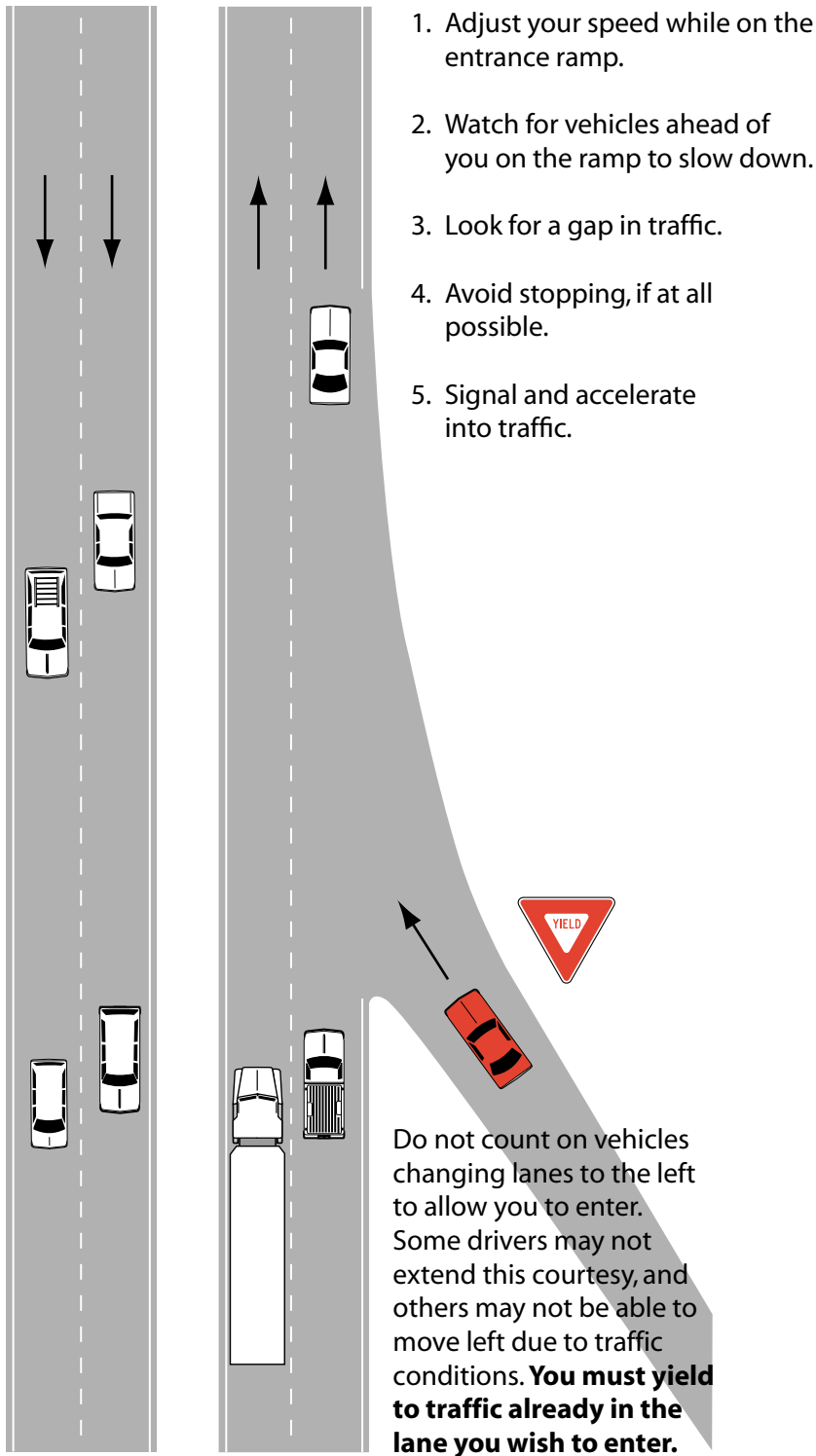
## Demonstrate the ability to interpret and react to the following situations

- Stop signs (comes to a complete stop) \_\_\_\_\_
- Traffic lights (anticipates light changes) \_\_\_\_\_
- Railroad crossings \_\_\_\_\_
- Right of way situations (can make safe decisions independently) \_\_\_\_\_
- Lane use and position \_\_\_\_\_
- Intersections \_\_\_\_\_
- Change of speed (adjusts to road, traffic, and weather conditions) \_\_\_\_\_
- Following (correct following distance) \_\_\_\_\_

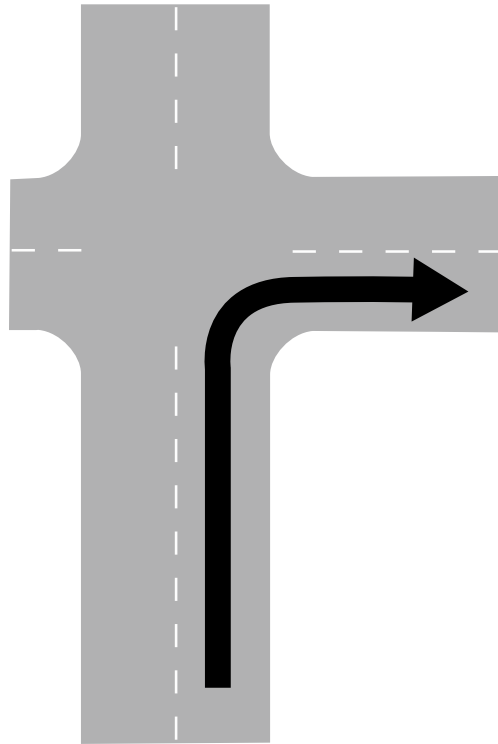
## Demonstrate the ability to observe the changing environment

- Use of mirrors \_\_\_\_\_
- Check blind spots (aware of other vehicles' blind spots) \_\_\_\_\_
- Anticipate what other motorists might do \_\_\_\_\_
- Awareness of the possibility of deer on the roadway \_\_\_\_\_

# Entrance ramp

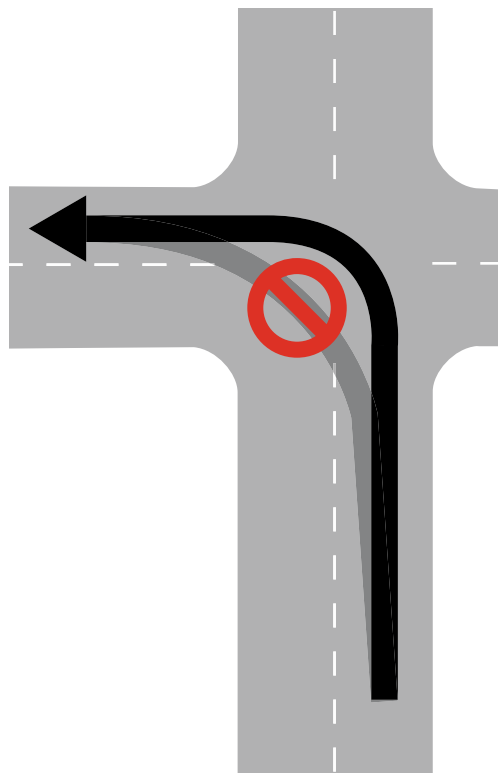


## Turning diagrams



### Right turn

1. Check to the rear and signal.
2. Check for pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Check for traffic to the left.
4. Turn to the right as your front wheels are even with the bend of the curb.
5. Look through the turn and into the path of travel.
6. Straighten out the wheels as you get around the corner.

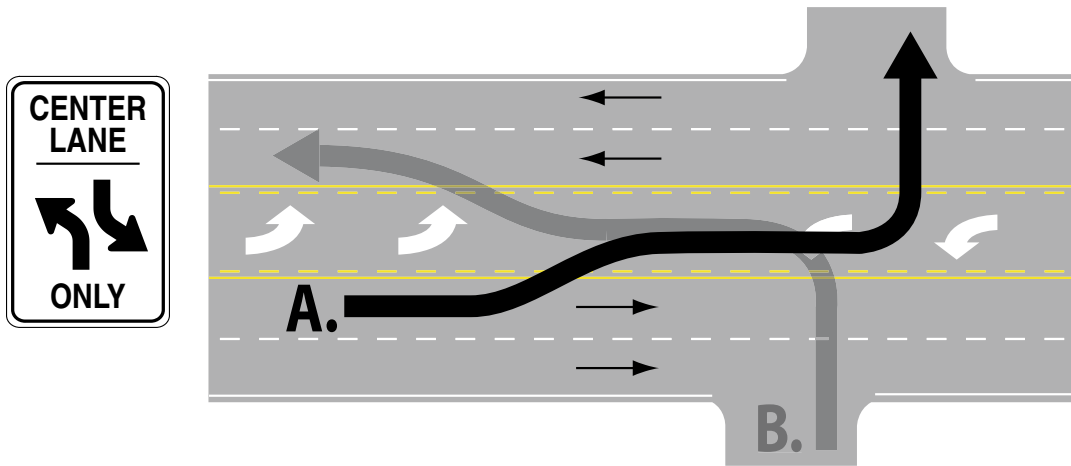


### Left turn

1. Check to the rear and signal.
2. Check for pedestrians and bicyclists.
3. Check for traffic left and right.
4. Yield to oncoming traffic in the opposite lane. When yielding, keep your wheels pointed straight. This way if you are rear ended, you will not be forced into the oncoming traffic.
5. Start your turn just before the front of the vehicle reaches the center of the intersection.
6. Do not cut the turn short.
7. Look through the turn and into the path of travel.
8. Straighten out the wheels as you get around the corner.

## Left turns from center lanes

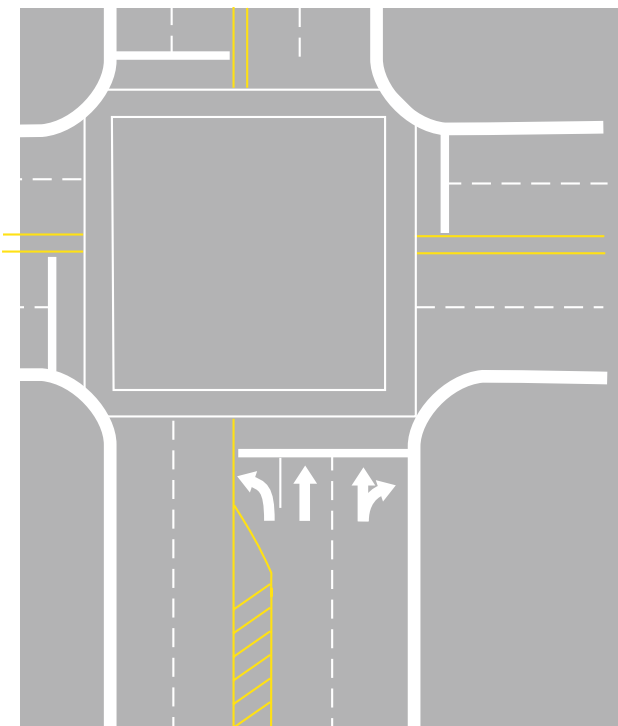
On some two-way roads, a center lane may be marked as a common left-turn lane to be used by vehicles in both directions. You may **not** travel in a center turning lane. Do not enter the lane too early. Never use the center left-turn lane to pass another vehicle. Never pass through an intersection in the center left-turn lane.



**A. To turn left from the street:** Look for opposing vehicles already in the center left-turn lane. Signal a left turn and drive completely into the center lane. Don't stop at an angle with the rear of your vehicle blocking through traffic. Turn only when it is safe. Look for vehicles approaching you in the same lane preparing to make their left turns.

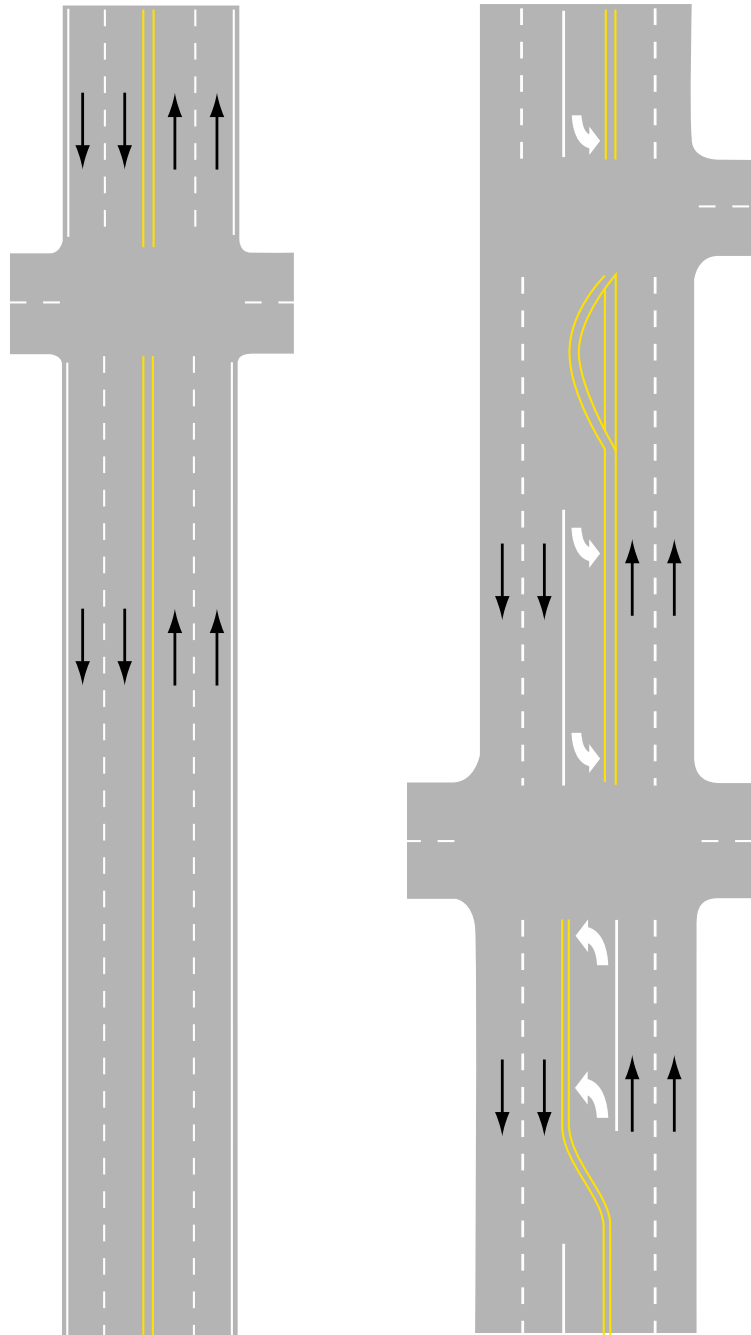
**B. To turn left onto the street:** Wait for an opening in traffic on the near side of the street. Look for vehicles entering the center left-turn lane. When safe, turn left driving completely into the center lane. How long you pause in the center lane is dependent on traffic flow. However, do not stop with part of your vehicle blocking through traffic. When safe, move to the right into the regular traffic lane and proceed.

## Turning lanes



Use this diagram to illustrate different driving situations.

## Intersecting with a four-lane road



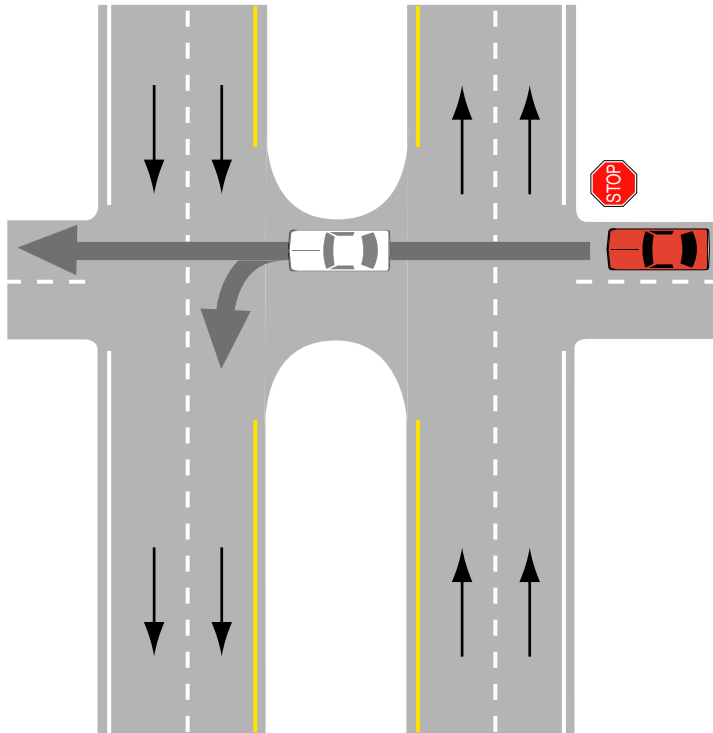
Examples of urban four-lane roadways.

Turning lanes allow through traffic to keep moving, avoiding some potential for rear-end collisions.

1. Maintain lane position until safe to change lanes.
2. Use your visual skills and look ahead.
3. Use your mirrors to monitor traffic behind you.
4. Predict what might change in the environment.
5. Be ready to reduce speed.



## Rural four-lane road with intersecting road

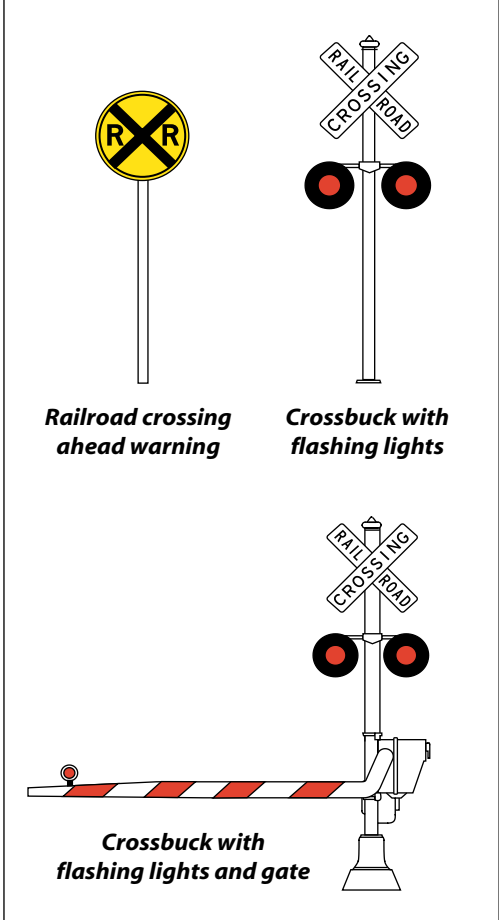
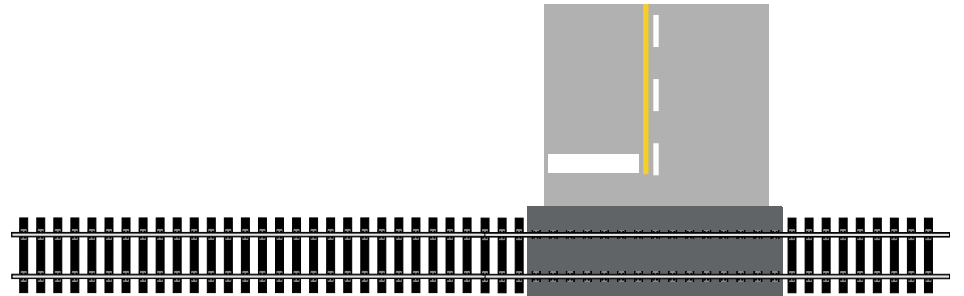


### **Left turn or straight through crossing**

Treat this as two separate roadways. Stop at the stop sign, look left and into the median, then proceed to the median. Stop again and look right. **Also look straight across the road for approaching or stopped traffic.** Cross or turn left **when safe.**

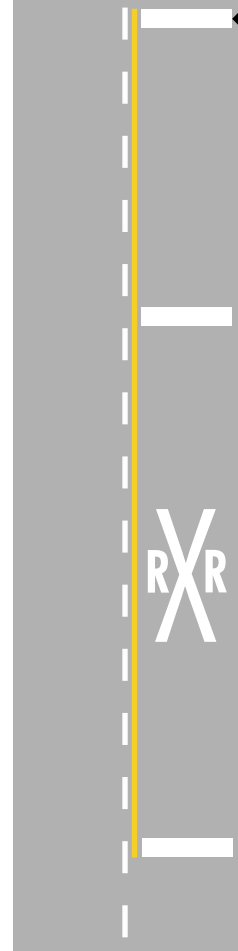
**Drivers must be aware that traffic is moving very fast in this environment. Caution and concentration are very important.**

# Railroad crossing

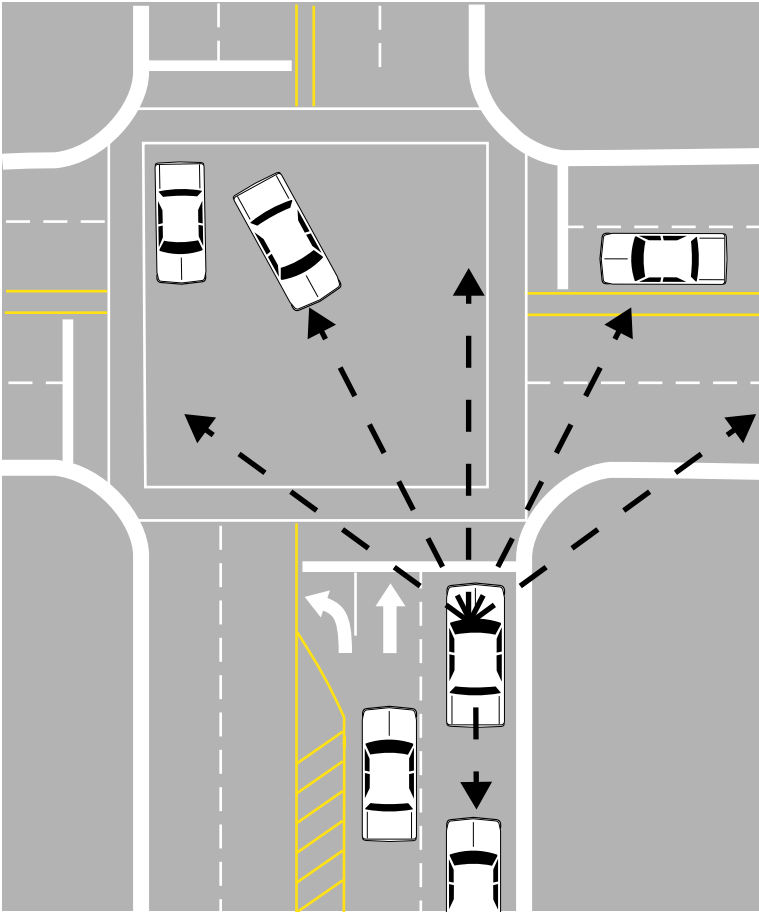


**STOP HERE**

To create an added cushion of safety, a driver may want to stop back an additional two car lengths from the stop bar pavement marking.



# Visually scan at intersections



Visually scan left, right, and forward at intersections.  
Always be aware of traffic behind you

# DWT

## Driving while texting

**DWT is dangerous and unlawful for all drivers. The division of attention away from the driving task increases the likelihood of a crash.**

**Instruct your teen driver to park his or her vehicle in a safe place before text messaging or using a mobile device.**

**It is unlawful for teen drivers operating a motor vehicle with a minor restricted license, instruction permit, intermediate license, or minor school license to use an electronic communication device (including cell phones) or an electronic entertainment device unless the motor vehicle is at a complete stop off the traveled portion of the roadway.**



For more information contact:

Office of Driver Services  
Iowa Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 9204  
Des Moines, IA 50313  
515-244-8725  
Toll free 515-244-8725

To learn more about transportation in Iowa,  
visit our website at:  
[www.iowadot.gov](http://www.iowadot.gov).