Traffic signs

Signs giving orders

Signs with red circles are mostly prohibitive. Plates below signs qualify their message.

![Traffic signs diagram](image)

Note: Although *The Highway Code* shows many of the signs commonly in use, a comprehensive explanation of our signing system is given in the Department’s booklet *Know Your Traffic Signs*, which is on sale at booksellers. The booklet also illustrates and explains the vast majority of signs the road user is likely to encounter. The signs illustrated in *The Highway Code* are not all drawn to the same scale. In Wales, bilingual versions of some signs are used including Welsh and English versions of place names. Some older designs of signs may still be seen on the roads.
No vehicles over maximum gross weight shown (in tonnes)

Parking restricted to permit holders

No stopping at any time except buses

No stopping during period indicated except for buses

No stopping (Clearway)

No waiting

No stopping during times shown except for as long as necessary to set down or pick up passengers

Signs with blue circles but no red border mostly give positive instruction.

- Ahead only
- Turn left ahead (right if symbol reversed)
- Turn left (right if symbol reversed)
- Keep left (right if symbol reversed)
- Vehicles may pass either side to reach same destination

- Mini-roundabout (roundabout circulation - give way to vehicles from the immediate right)
- Route to be used by pedal cycles only
- Segregated pedal cycle and pedestrian route
- Minimum speed
- End of minimum speed

- Buses and cycles only
- Trams only
- Pedestrian crossing point over tramway
- One-way traffic (note: compare circular ‘Ahead only’ sign)

- With-flow bus and cycle lane
- Contra-flow bus lane
- With-flow pedal cycle lane
Warning signs

Mostly triangular

- **STOP**: Distance to ‘STOP’ line ahead
- **Give Way**: Distance to ‘Give Way’ line ahead
- **Crossroads**
- **Junction on bend ahead**
- **T-junction with priority over vehicles from the right**
- **Staggered junction**
- **Traffic merging from left ahead**

The priority through route is indicated by the broader line.

- **Double bend first to left (symbol may be reversed)**
- **Bend to right (or left if symbol reversed)**
- **Roundabout**
- **Uneven road**
- **Plate below some signs**

- **Two-way traffic crosses one-way road**
- **Two-way traffic straight ahead**
- **Opening or swing bridge ahead**
- **Low-flying aircraft or sudden aircraft noise**
- **Falling or fallen rocks**

- **Traffic signals not in use**
- **Slippery road**
- **Steep hill downwards**
- **Steep hill upwards**

- **Tunnel ahead**
- **Trams crossing ahead**
- **Level crossing with barrier or gate ahead**
- **Level crossing without barrier or gate ahead**
- **Level crossing without barrier**

Gradients may be shown as a ratio i.e. 20% = 1:5
Warning signs - continued

Sharp deviation of route to left (or right if chevrons reversed)

Frail (or blind or disabled if shown) pedestrians likely to cross road ahead

Pedestrians in road ahead

Zebra crossing

Overhead electric cable; plate indicates maximum height of vehicles which can pass safely

Available width of headroom indicated

Light signals ahead at level crossing, airfield or bridge

Miniature warning lights at level crossings

Cattle

Wild animals

Wild horses or ponies

Accompanied horses or ponies

Cycle route ahead

Risk of ice

Traffic queues likely ahead

Distance over which road humps extend

Other danger; plate indicates nature of danger

Soft verges

Side winds

Hump bridge

Wor ded warning sign

Quayside or river bank

Risk of grounding
Direction signs

Mostly rectangular

Signs on motorways - blue backgrounds

At a junction leading directly into a motorway (junction number may be shown on a black background)

On approaches to junctions (junction number on black background)

Route confirmatory sign after junction

Downward pointing arrows mean ‘Get in lane’
The left-hand lane leads to a different destination from the other lanes.

The panel with the inclined arrow indicates the destinations which can be reached by leaving the motorway at the next junction

Signs on primary routes - green backgrounds

At the junction

On approaches to junctions

Route confirmatory sign after junction

On approach to a junction in Wales (bilingual)

Blue panels indicate that the motorway starts at the junction ahead.
Motorways shown in brackets can also be reached along the route indicated.
White panels indicate local or non-primary routes leading from the junction ahead.
Brown panels show the route to tourist attractions.
The name of the junction may be shown at the top of the sign.
The aircraft symbol indicates the route to an airport.
A symbol may be included to warn of a hazard or restriction along that route.
Green background signs - continued

Primary route forming part of a ring road

Signs on non-primary and local routes - black borders

On approaches to junctions

Green panels indicate that the primary route starts at the junction ahead. Route numbers on a blue background show the direction to a motorway. Route numbers on a green background show the direction to a primary route.

Other direction signs

Picnic site

Ancient monument in the care of English Heritage

Tourist attraction

Direction to camping and caravan site

Route for pedal cycles forming part of a network

Recommended route for pedal cycles to place shown

Symbols showing emergency diversion route for motorway and other main road traffic

Diversion route
Information signs

All rectangular

Entrance to controlled parking zone

End of controlled parking zone

Entrance to congestion charging zone

End of congestion charging zone

Advance warning of restriction or prohibition ahead

Parking place for solo motorcycles

With-flow bus lane ahead which pedal cycles and taxis may also use

Lane designated for use by high occupancy vehicles (HOV) - see rule 142

Vehicles permitted to use an HOV lane ahead

End of motorway

Start of motorway and point from which motorway regulations apply

Appropriate traffic lanes at junction ahead

Traffic on the main carriageway coming from right has priority over joining traffic

Additional traffic joining from left ahead. Traffic on main carriageway has priority over joining traffic from right hand lane of slip road

Traffic in right hand lane of slip road joining the main carriageway has priority over left hand lane

‘Countdown’ markers at exit from motorway (each bar represents 100 yards to the exit). Green-backed markers may be used on primary routes and white-backed markers with black bars on other routes. At approaches to concealed level crossings white-backed markers with red bars may be used. Although these will be erected at equal distances the bars do not represent 100 yard intervals.
Traffic has priority over oncoming vehicles

Area in which cameras are used to enforce traffic regulations

No through road for vehicles

Bus lane on road at junction ahead

Recommended route for pedal cycles

Home Zone Entry

Tourist information point

Road works

Loose chippings

Temporary hazard at road works

Temporary lane closure (the number and position of arrows and red bars may be varied according to lanes open and closed)

Road works 1 mile ahead

End of road works and any temporary restrictions including speed limits

Slow-moving or stationary works vehicle blocking a traffic lane. Pass in the direction shown by the arrow.

Mandatory speed limit ahead

Roadworks

Lane restrictions at road works ahead

One lane crossover at contraflow road works

Information signs - continued

Priority over oncoming vehicles

Hospital ahead with Accident and Emergency facilities

Road works signs

Home Zone

Tourist information

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