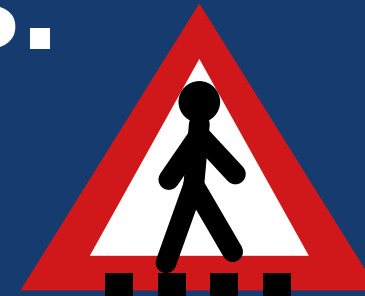


Indian Road Signs, explained with visuals.

Mandatory, cautionary and informatory signs, road markings, traffic signals and police hand signals - as per IRC:67 and the Motor Vehicles Rules used by MoRTH.

A volunteer training deck



ORIENTATION

Shape tells you what a sign does.



Circle

An order. Obeying it is the law.



Triangle

A warning. Something ahead needs your attention.



Rectangle

Information. Services, directions and facilities.

COLOUR CODE

Red means prohibition or danger. Blue means a positive instruction or information. Green boards are highway destinations. Yellow and black mark temporary hazards.



SIGN FAMILY

Mandatory / regulatory signs

Shape: Circular with a red border. Blue circles carry positive commands.

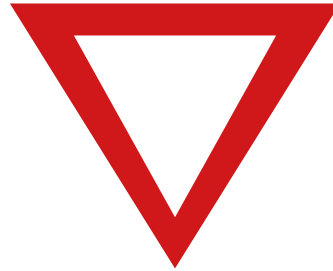
These carry the force of law. Ignoring one is a traffic offence under the Motor Vehicles Act and is now mostly captured by automated e-challan cameras. Learn this family first - it is the one that decides who has right of way.

Stop, give way and no entry



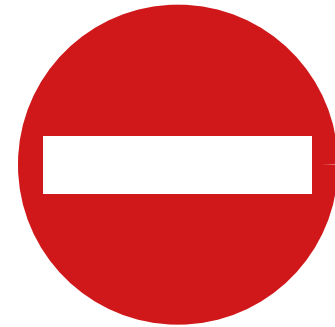
Stop

Come to a complete halt behind the stop line, look both ways, then go.



Give Way

Slow down and let traffic on the main road pass before you join.



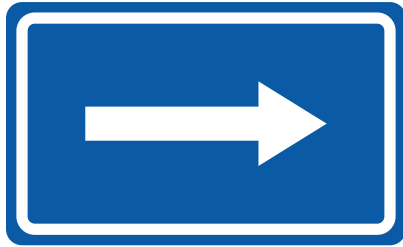
No Entry

You may not enter this road from here. Common on one-way streets.

REMEMBER

A stop sign means wheels stopped, not merely slowed. Most junction crashes in our cities start with a rolling stop.

Direction and speed



One Way

Traffic moves in the arrow's direction only. Never ride against it.



Speed Limit

Maximum legal speed in km/h. Cameras enforce it automatically by e-challan.



Ahead Only

Carry straight on. No turns permitted at this point.

REMEMBER

Speed limits are the upper limit in ideal conditions - in rain, fog or heavy traffic the safe speed is lower than the number on the sign.

Parking, stopping and overtaking



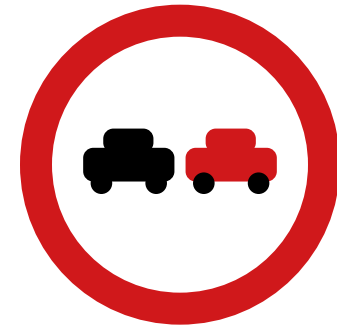
No Parking

Do not leave a vehicle here. Brief stops to set down are also risky.



No Stopping

No halting at all, even for a moment. Usually near junctions and bus bays.



No Overtaking

Overtaking is prohibited on this stretch - poor sight lines ahead.

REMEMBER

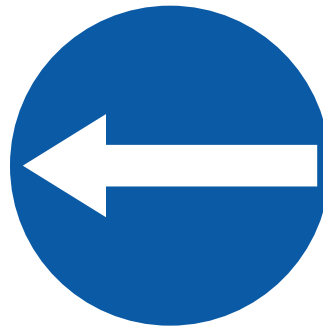
Vehicles parked in a no-stopping zone force two-wheelers into the fast lane. That is how a parking offence becomes a fatality.

Silence zones and closed roads



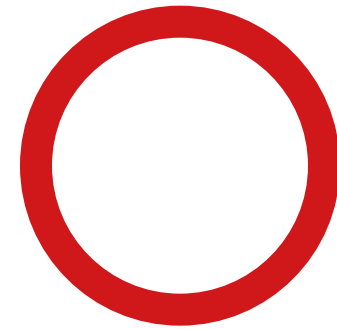
Horn Prohibited

Silence zones near hospitals and schools. Honking here is an offence.



Compulsory Turn Left

You must turn in the arrow's direction. Blue circles are positive commands.



Vehicles Prohibited Both Ways

No vehicle may pass in either direction - pedestrian zone or closed road.

REMEMBER

Honking does not clear traffic. It raises stress, masks warning sounds and is banned outright near hospitals and schools.



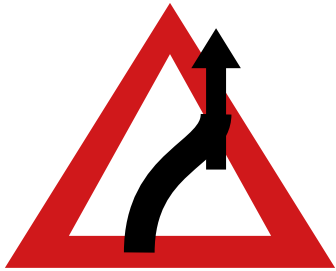
SIGN FAMILY

Cautionary / warning signs

Shape: Triangular, red border on a white background, black symbol.

A warning of what is ahead. Slow down, cover the brake and increase your following distance the moment you see one. These signs are placed far enough in advance that you can act calmly - if you are already braking hard, you saw it too late.

Curves and bends



Right Hand Curve

The road bends ahead. Slow before the bend, not in it.



Hairpin Bend

A very tight turn, usually on ghat roads. Stay in your lane, use low gear.



Narrow Road / Bridge

The carriageway shrinks. Give way to oncoming traffic and do not overtake.

REMEMBER

Brake before the bend, steer through it. Braking mid-corner is what puts two-wheelers down on ghat roads.

People and animals ahead



Pedestrian Crossing

People will be crossing. Stop before the zebra, never on it.



School Ahead

Children may step out suddenly. Drop to 25 km/h and cover the brake.



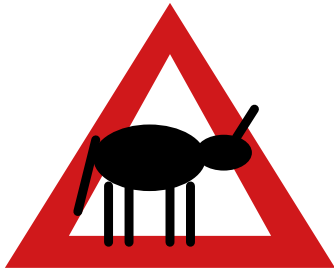
Cycle Crossing

Cyclists cross here. Check your left mirror before turning.

REMEMBER

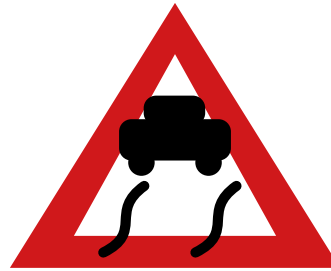
Pedestrians, cyclists and children are the most vulnerable road users. Around them, speed is the single factor that decides whether a crash is survivable.

Surface and gradient



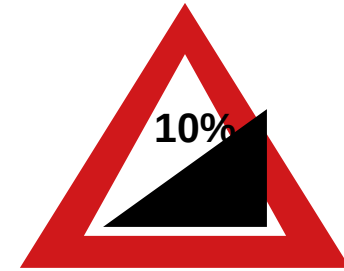
Cattle Crossing

Animals on the road ahead. Do not honk them into panic - wait.



Slippery Road

Loose gravel or wet surface. Brake early, gently and in a straight line.



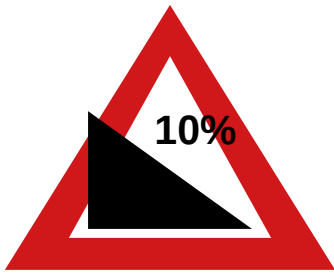
Steep Ascent

A sharp climb. Downshift early and keep heavy vehicles a safe distance ahead.

REMEMBER

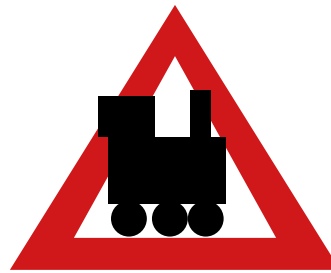
Stopping distance roughly doubles on a wet road. Leave a four-second gap in the monsoon.

Descents, railways and road works



Steep Descent

Engine-brake in a low gear. Riding the brakes downhill will fade them.



Unguarded Level Crossing

No gate and no gateman. Stop, look along both rails, then cross.



Men at Work

Road works ahead. Merge early, expect loose material and people on foot.

REMEMBER

At an unguarded level crossing, stop every time. A train needs over a kilometre to halt; you need five seconds to look.



SIGN FAMILY

Informatory signs

Shape: Rectangular, blue or green background, white symbol or text.

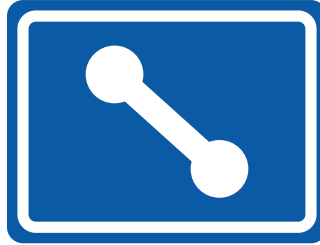
Guidance rather than instruction: services, directions and facilities. Green boards are used on national highways for destinations and route numbers. Read them early so you are not deciding your exit at the last second.

Parking and help



Parking

Authorised parking. Park inside the marked bay, wheels off the footpath.



Public Telephone

A phone you can use in an emergency. Emergency number across India: 112.



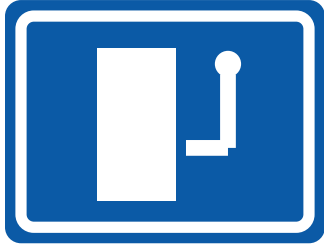
Hospital

Hospital ahead. A silence zone - no horn, and keep the lane clear for ambulances.

REMEMBER

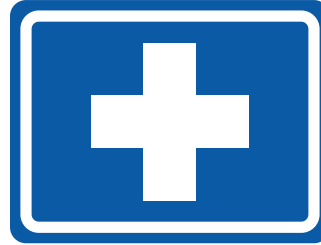
Emergency number across India: 112. It works from any phone, with or without a network SIM.

Fuel, first aid and rest



Petrol Pump

Fuel station ahead. Switch off the engine and your phone while refuelling.



First Aid Post

Trained help within reach. In the golden hour, this can save a life.



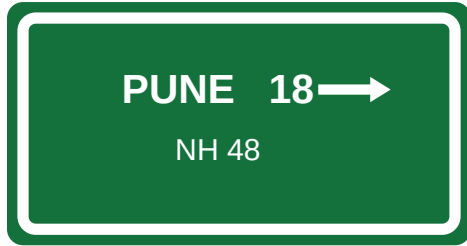
Eating Place / Rest Area

Stop and rest. Take a 15-minute break every two hours on long drives.

REMEMBER

Fatigue behaves like alcohol. If you have driven two hours, stop for fifteen minutes.

Direction and safe crossings



Destination and Distance

Green boards on national highways give the destination and distance in km.



Route Number Marker

Confirms you are still on the right highway after a junction.



Subway / Foot Over Bridge

The safe way across a busy road. Use it instead of hopping the median.

REMEMBER

A foot over bridge adds ninety seconds to your walk. Crossing a highway on foot can end it.

Lines that decide whether you may cross



Solid white centre line

Do not cross and do not overtake. Common on curves, bridges and ghat sections.



Broken white line

Lane divider. You may change lanes or overtake when it is genuinely safe.



Solid yellow line

Separates opposing traffic. Crossing it to overtake is prohibited.



Double line, one solid one broken

The broken-line side may overtake. The solid side may not.

Markings at junctions and hazards



Zebra crossing

Pedestrians have right of way. Stop behind the stop line, never on the stripes.



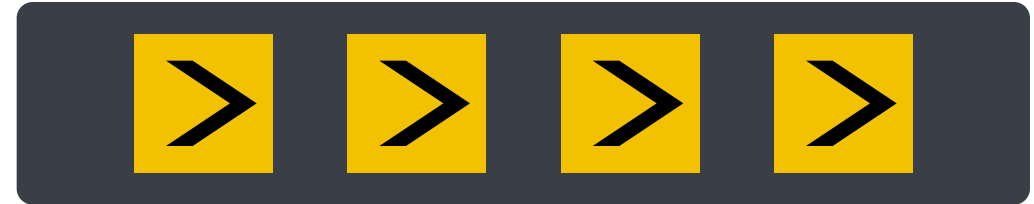
Yellow box junction

Do not enter unless your exit is clear, even when the signal is green.



Rumble strips

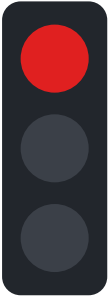
Raised transverse strips warning of a junction, village or hazard - reduce speed.



Chevron and hazard markers

Black and yellow boards on sharp curves show the direction the road bends.

Six states, and what each one asks of you.



Red

Stop behind the stop line. Turning left on red is allowed only where a 'Free Left' board is displayed.



Amber

Prepare to stop. Cross only if stopping safely is no longer possible.



Green

Go, after checking that pedestrians and the junction ahead are clear.



Flashing amber

Proceed with caution - the signal is not in normal operation.



Flashing red

Treat exactly as a Stop sign, then proceed when safe.



Green arrow

You may move only in the direction of the arrow.

POLICE HAND SIGNALS

An officer's hand overrides every sign and signal.



Palm raised towards you

Stop where you are, behind the stop line.



Arm extended to the side

Traffic from that direction may proceed.



Arm swung across the body

Your line is being waved forward - move on promptly.



Raised hand with a whistle

Stop immediately, wherever you are on the road.

If a traffic police officer's signal contradicts the light or a sign, follow the officer. This matters most when signals fail, at diversions and during processions.

Five habits that use all of this.

- 1 Read the sign, then adjust speed before you reach the hazard.
- 2 Stop means stopped - wheels still, behind the line, every time.
- 3 Around people, cyclists and school gates, drop to 25 km/h.
- 4 Never cross a solid line, and never enter a full yellow box.
- 5 The officer's hand beats the light. The light beats the sign.

surakshaindia.org/start-here

SURAKSHA - Traffic Safety Awareness Campaign
An initiative of Nation Change Makers