

# Signs, Pavement Markings, and Work Zones



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## Signs, Pavement Markings, and Work Zones



This chapter includes information on highway signs that are intended to guide and inform you while you are driving. It includes information on the following:

- regulatory signs
- warning signs
- guidance signs
- work zone signs
- pavement markings

Traffic signs and pavement markings are pictures with specific meanings. Like flash cards, they must be read and understood in an instant. Signs and pavement markings help regulate the flow of traffic and warn you of conditions on the road ahead. They also inform you about routes, distances, and available services. Take the time to learn and remember the numerous traffic signs and pavement markings.

Be aware that signs and pavement markings change over time. The Department of Transportation and Public Works continually reviews existing highway conditions. The department also reviews new practices and technologies, creates new signs, modifies existing signs, and introduces new devices whenever appropriate. Always be alert and prepared for these changes.

Traffic signs have distinctive shapes and use different symbols and colours so that you can recognize them from a distance. Early recognition will allow you to regulate your driving in accordance with these signs. Traffic signs are classified according to their function: regulatory (rules of the road), warning, and guidance (information and direction). Become familiar with the various signs so that you can understand them.



Signs with a green circle give permission, as indicated



Signs with a red circle with a slash deny permission, as indicated



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### Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs indicate the laws and regulations affecting the use of the highway. You must observe the instructions on regulatory signs unless directed otherwise by a Peace Officer.

#### *Stop sign*

The stop sign is eight-sided with a red background and the word "STOP" printed in white. The octagonal shape is used only for stop signs. A stop sign means that you must bring your vehicle to a complete stop and be sure the way is clear before proceeding. The stop must be completed at the clearly marked stop line, or at the nearest crosswalk line. If there is no painted crosswalk or stop line, you must stop far enough back to allow sufficient room to allow a pedestrian to cross safely. This is called an unmarked crosswalk.



Stop Sign



Yield Sign

#### *Yield sign*

The yield sign is triangular and is red and white. The yield sign means that you must reduce speed as your vehicle approaches the intersection. You must give the right of way, stopping if necessary, to any other traffic in, or closely approaching, the intersection.

#### *School zone*

The school zone sign is five-sided with a fluorescent yellow-green background and two school children pedestrian symbols in black. This is the standard design across Nova Scotia since June 1, 2001. When children are present in the school zone, the maximum speed limit is 50 km/h. You must slow down, watch for children, and exercise extreme caution, as with all driving situations. Your speed must be reasonable and prudent for existing conditions.



School Zone Sign

## Railway crossings

Railway crossings are marked with a crossbuck sign which has a white background with a red reflective border. This has replaced the older sign which had "Railway Crossing" in black lettering printed on the crossbuck.

A yellow and black warning sign indicates that you are approaching a railway crossing. The direction or angle of the tracks across the road is reflected on the sign (in this case perpendicular).

As you approach the tracks, look both ways and listen, because you may have to stop. Trains can approach a crossing at any time. If there is a stop sign, you must come to a full stop before crossing. A railway crossbuck sign is used at the crossing itself. A smaller sign below the crossbuck indicates if there is more than one set of tracks.

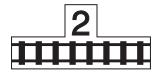
Many crossings have flashing red lights or flashing red lights with gates. If the warning signal activates, you must stop before the gates lower across your side of the road. Do not move through a railway crossing when the gates are lowered.

Remember these railway crossing rules:

- When flashing red lights are used with crossbuck signs at the railway crossing, you must stop, just as you would stop for any flashing red traffic signal, and only proceed when it is safe to do so.
- If you are waiting for a train to pass, be patient.
- Do not move immediately after the train has passed. First check to make sure that there isn't another train approaching.
- Be prepared to stop for vehicles that must stop at crossings, such as school buses, motor vehicles carrying passengers for hire, or vehicles transporting explosives or hazardous materials (these vehicles are marked with placard signs).



Crossbuck Sign



Indicates number of tracks to cross



This warning sign is usually posted in advance of the Railway Crossbuck sign



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- If you happen to be crossing the tracks and the warning lights begin flashing or gates start to come down, do not stop. Keep moving! The warning signals will allow enough time for you to finish driving through the crossing before the train arrives. The gate on the far side of the tracks will not block you in. If you stop and try to back up, your vehicle may stall.
- Crossing gates will not trap you, but stopped traffic might. Be sure the traffic ahead of you will not stop you on the tracks before you move forward.
- As you approach a railway crossing, slow down, keep alert, and watch for the railway crossing signal.

What to do if your vehicle is blocked in, or stalls on the railway tracks:

- Immediately move everyone out of the vehicle and well away from the tracks and the vehicle.
- Post a lookout in each direction of the tracks to see if a train is approaching.
- If there is no train in sight, try to push the vehicle clear of the tracks or, if stalled, try to restart it.

Some trains require more than a kilometre for stopping distance. Remember, trains cannot stop quickly, but your vehicle can.

## Other regulatory signs

The most common regulatory signs are rectangular or square with a white background and either black or red lettering.

Many of these signs use a combination of graphics and symbols. For example, two cars in a green circle means that passing is permitted, whereas two cars in a red circle with a line through it means do not pass.

The accessible parking sign means that the space is reserved for persons with mobility disability who have a special licence plate or permit. The permit must be hung from the rearview mirror.

## Warning Signs

Most warning signs are diamond-shaped with black lettering or symbols on a yellow background.

Warning signs caution you of changing road conditions ahead. The merge sign, for example, indicates an upcoming intersection where two separate traffic lanes are about to join and merge into one. Drivers approaching from both lanes are equally responsible for seeing that traffic merges smoothly and safely. You should be ready to yield the right of way when necessary.

## Guidance Signs

Guidance signs are rectangular, usually with a green background and white letters. They provide information and directions, including route numbers and distances. Other signs with different colours guide you to facilities, services, and attractions.

Example of  
Warning Signs



Slippery When Wet



Traffic Signal  
Lights Ahead



Stop Sign Ahead



Truck Entering

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### Pavement Markings

Pavement markings work with road signs and traffic signal lights to give you important information about the direction of traffic and where you may and may not travel. Pavement markings divide traffic lanes, show turning lanes, mark pedestrian crossings, indicate obstacles, and tell you when it is not safe to pass.

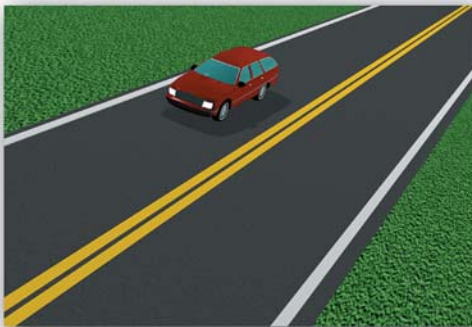
#### *Rules about solid and broken lines*

Yellow lines separate travel lanes moving in opposite

directions. White lines separate travel lanes moving in the same direction. A yellow dotted or broken line is used as the centre line on a two-lane, two-way road where passing with care is permitted in both directions. When the centre line consists of continuous double solid yellow lines, you cannot cross them to pass in either direction. On a two-lane road, passing with care is permitted if the broken yellow line is on your side of the centreline markings.



Broken Centre Line



Double Solid Lines



Single solid white lines are used as right-edge lines along the roadway and for guiding traffic travelling in the same direction. Single solid yellow lines are used as left-edge lines on divided highways. If you see the reverse, you are travelling in the wrong direction.

A single solid yellow line marking the centre of a highway permits passing in either direction when traffic, sight distance, and other conditions are ideal.

The rules respecting solid and broken lines do not apply when

- a vehicle is entering or leaving the highway at a place other than an intersection
- a vehicle is completing a passing manoeuvre begun in accordance with rules noted above
- the lines are not clearly visible
- it is reasonable or prudent to drive to the left of the lines due to weather or other conditions



Broken Centre Line  
with Solid Line



Left Edge Solid  
Yellow Line on a  
Divided Highway

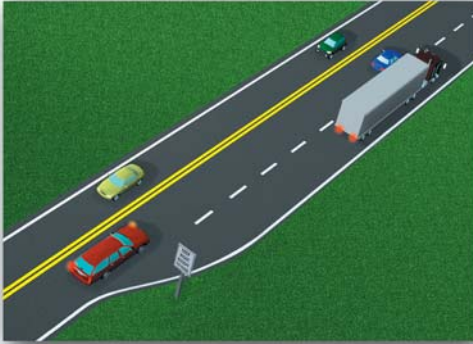
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### *Two-laned highway with climbing lane*

Climbing lanes are designed to allow faster-moving traffic to pass slower-moving traffic. All traffic must keep to the right unless passing. Vehicles travelling at less than 70 km/h must use four-way flashers when indicated by a posted sign on the right hand side of the road. Traffic wishing to pass

must pass using the left lane, returning to the right lane when the pass is completed. Do not attempt to pass when you reach the solid line at the end of the climbing lane. The vehicle on the right has the right of way.



Climbing Lanes



Continuity Lines

### *Continuity lines*

Continuity lines are painted on the highway at entry and exit ramps. They indicate the separation between the through-lane and the entry or exit ramps. They are wider than the regular lane-separation lines.

## *Two-way-left-turn lanes*

On certain multi-lane highways, the centre lane is reserved exclusively as a two-way-left-turn lane. This means that traffic travelling in both directions share the lane when making left turns. Never use this lane to pass or overtake another vehicle.

When a highway is divided into three or more lanes and a sign is posted or the pavement is marked designating the centre or middle lane as a two-way-left-turn lane, all drivers must drive to the right of the double lines except to prepare for a left turn.

Be careful when using this lane. Remember, other vehicles may also be using the lane from the opposite direction.



Complete a left turn in a two-way-left-turn lane in the following way:

- Turn on your left-turn signal, check traffic to the front and rear, and do a shoulder check to the left.
- When it is safe, slow down and gradually move into the two-way-left-turn lane as close to your exit point as possible. Do not drive in the two-way-left-turn lane for an extended distance.
- Reduce your speed and stop as near as possible to the point at which the left turn will be made.
- Yield to approaching vehicles. When the way is clear, complete the turn. Vehicles approaching in the turning lane from the opposite direction are also required to yield. Each driver must yield sufficiently to the other so that traffic moves smoothly without causing an immediate hazard to other drivers or pedestrians.

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### Examples of Signs and Their Meanings

#### Crosswalk signs



Pedestrian Crosswalk.  
Indicates the location of a pedestrian crosswalk



School Crosswalk.  
Indicates the location of a school crosswalk



Playground.  
You are approaching a playground: Reduce speed, watch for children

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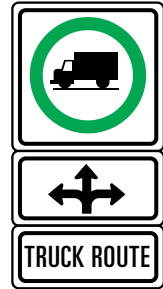
#### Regulatory signs



No Turns



No Parking in either direction of this sign



Truck Route.  
Truck traffic may proceed only in the direction indicated by the arrow(s)



No right turn on red signal. Wait for green light before making a right turn



No left turn permitted



Do Not Litter



No U-turn permitted. Do not turn to go in the opposite direction



No Stopping



Passing Permitted



One-Way Sign. Indicates to drivers that traffic is allowed to travel only in the direction of the arrow



Do Not Pass



Do Not Enter

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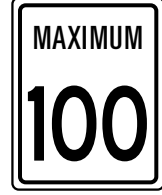
## Signs, Pavement Markings, and Work Zones



Through or right turn only



Change in maximum speed limit ahead. Be prepared to adjust your speed accordingly



Maximum speed limit. Speed signs indicate the maximum speed allowable under ideal conditions: Reduce your speed when poor conditions exist or visibility is restricted



Keep to the right of the traffic island or obstruction



Hazard warning. If the black lines are sloped to the right, drive to the right of the sign



Hazard warning. If the black lines are sloped to the left, drive to the left of the sign

*Warning signs*



Road narrows ahead. Quite often, when the road narrows, hazard warning signs will be posted to alert drivers to keep to the left or right, or between the signs if both are posted. Example: at an approach to a bridge



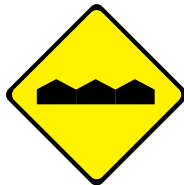
Fire truck entrance ahead. Indicates to drivers that they are approaching a location at which fire trucks are entering or leaving



Hidden intersection ahead. Drivers on the side of road at the intersection ahead don't have a clear view of approaching traffic: Use caution and be prepared to slow down



Steep decline ahead. You may need to use a lower gear



Bump or rough road ahead. Slow down



Divided highway ends. Two-way traffic beyond this section of the highway; often followed by two-way traffic sign to reinforce the message

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Divided highway ahead. Transition from an undivided to a divided highway



Bridge opening. Indicates to drivers that they are approaching a bridge that can be opened to permit the passage of boats



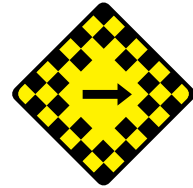
Right curve ahead. Posted speed sign indicates safe speed for this turn



Narrow structure ahead. Indicates a structure such as a road, bridge, culvert, underpass, overpass, or similar structure having a clear road width less than the width of the approach road



Right lane ends



Sharp turn or bend in the roadway ahead. Checkerboard design is a warning to slow down; the arrow indicates the direction of the roadway





Chevron (arrow) signs are posted in groups to guide drivers around sharp curves in the road



Low Clearance. Underpass ahead; overhead clearance as shown



Merge. Prepare to merge with other vehicles

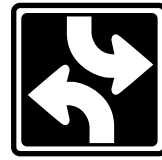
### Lane arrows



Right turn only lane. Indicates to drivers approaching an intersection in the designated lane that they must only turn right from the designated lane at the intersection— if this arrow was reversed the above would apply for left turns only



Straight through or left turn only lane. Indicates to drivers approaching an intersection in the designated lane that they must only proceed straight through or turn left

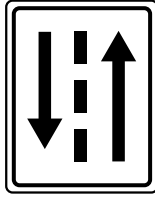


Two-way left turn lane. Indicates to drivers that the designated lane is reserved for left-turning vehicles only

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### Guide signs



Two-way traffic. Indicates to drivers that the section of road which they are travelling on is a two-way road, and that the normal rules of the road for two-way operation apply



Highway 102. Provincial highway with controlled access; also referred to as 100-series highway

## Construction or Work Zones

In a work zone, construction or maintenance activities take place on or near the roadway. Work zones may interfere with the normal traffic flow. They also tend to distract driver attention. Stay alert and be prepared to react safely to unexpected conditions.

Work zones are usually marked with orange warning signs. The orange signs with messages in black letters identify work zones and direct drivers as they travel through the work zone. When you see these signs, go on high alert and follow their directions.

Traffic-control devices such as barricades, cones, and drums guide and direct drivers safely through the work zone. Traffic control persons may also be present, using “stop/slow” paddles to direct traffic safely through the work zone.

Respect road workers and follow their directions. You are travelling through their workplace. They have families waiting for their safe return.

You are at greater risk of having an accident when travelling through a work zone. The biggest hazard is speed variations between vehicles. Drive at the correct speed for the conditions present. Be aware of the speed of vehicles ahead of you and behind you as you adjust your speed.

### *Travelling safely through a work zone*

- Go on high alert. You are entering an area where an accident is more likely—Hands on wheel. Eyes on road. Mind on task. Cell phone off.
- Follow instructions on work zone signs and from traffic control persons.
- Travel no more than the speed limit. Travelling at a speed different from other vehicles causes the most accidents in work zones.
- Slow down safely when directed to do so. Take note of the speed of vehicles ahead of you and behind you, and adjust your speed to avoid collisions.
- Act promptly when signs direct your movement. For example, if you are directed to shift your vehicle to another lane, make the move as soon as it is safe to do so without impeding traffic.
- Leave extra space between your vehicle and the vehicle in front of you. If you are hit from behind by a faster moving vehicle, this space could prevent your hitting the vehicle in front of you.



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### *Lane closures*

Take extra care on multi-lane roads when a lane is closed. The risk of accidents is high at merge points. Take the following precautions to avoid collisions:

- Adjust your speed when you see a merge sign or lane closure sign.
- Obey the “Do Not Pass” sign. It prepares traffic for an orderly merge.
- Merge as soon as safely possible. A common mistake is to approach the merge point at too high a speed in the lane to be closed, then to push into the other lane at the last moment. This causes collisions.
- Be courteous to road workers and other drivers.

### *Biggest cause of collisions at work zones*

#### **1 Vehicles travelling at different speeds**

As you enter a work zone, pay attention and adjust your speed gradually so that all vehicles move at the same reduced speed through a work zone. Be aware that the vehicles ahead of you may have slowed down more than you. You may collide with them if you approach too quickly. As you slow your speed, be aware of the vehicles behind you. If you slow too quickly, you may be hit from behind.

#### **2 Driver inattention**

Driving through work zones demands all of your attention. Follow instructions on work zone signs, especially the “Do Not Pass” sign. Drivers who ignore signs place themselves and others at risk.

### *Work zone signs*

Some work zone signs give a general warning. They indicate that unusual conditions will occur, without telling you exactly what the condition is.

Human activity signs are those with a symbol of a person. They are only used when the workplace is active—people are working and at risk of being struck.

Some signs give specific information about conditions. They warn you that a hazard exists or a driving manoeuvre will be needed. When you see these signs, act promptly. Don't wait until the last moment.

If you see someone driving irresponsibly through a work zone, report it to the police.

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### *General Signs*

- warn of unusual conditions
- remain in place until the road is returned to normal

Watch for slow moving equipment and road surface hazards



Prepare for unusual road conditions or construction traffic that may be moving at a difference in speed.



The road has returned to normal. Expect no more impact from road work. When the end point of a project is obvious, this sign is not often used.

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### Signs with Arrows

- called advance temporary condition signs
- used when drivers need time to prepare for conditions ahead



Construction activities will begin 1.5 km ahead. Choose a different route or be prepared for delays.



Tar has been sprayed on the road ahead. The tar may make the road surface slippery. Spray from tires may stick tar to your vehicle's paint. Choose a different route or drive to avoid the hazards.



Right lane will be ending ahead. It gives advance notice so that traffic can form a single lane in plenty of time. This sign is often used with the Do Not Pass sign.



This combination sign gives advance notice that traffic may be stopped by traffic control persons. Adjust your speed gradually to avoid rear-end collisions.

If you are in the right lane, merge left as soon as you can do it safely. It is best to form the single lane as soon as practical, to avoid vehicle conflict at the last possible moment.

There is an equivalent sign for use when the left lane will end.

## Specific Signs

### Specific Signs

- prepare for the hazard shown on the sign
- act before you reach the hazard, to reduce the need for urgent and rapid manoeuvres at the last minute

Specific signs remain in place as long as the condition exists.



Road surface conditions may be rutted, grooved, or pose another danger. Bicycles or motorcycles may become unstable.



Difference in elevation between the lanes.

A tire catching the edge could cause a vehicle to lose control.



Road will narrow, but the number of lanes will not change. You may need to slow down, because there will be less lane width available.

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Construction traffic could be entering or leaving the road on the right and may be moving slower than through traffic. Be careful whenever there are differences in speeds.

A similar sign shows the entranceway on the left of the road.



Blasting activities are taking place on or near the road. The sign is usually used with the Shut Off Your Radio Transmitter sign and the End Blasting Zone sign.

Traffic may be required to stop. A loud noise could startle a driver. Debris may be thrown from the blast.



Do Not Pass is used to create an orderly flow of traffic before a merge point or to prevent passing at other locations where it is unsafe.

Obeying this sign at merge points makes work zones safer. Disobeying this regulatory sign is an offence that warrants a ticket.



Drive to the right of the sign. It is sometimes used to move traffic around an obstruction on the road.

This is a regulatory sign. You must obey its message.



## Human Activity Signs

- used only when workers are present on the site
- take extra care



Workers are active at the site.

Driving mistakes have the potential to cause fatal injuries to road workers.

Red/orange flags are used on human activity signs when they are displayed close to the ground.



Traffic Control  
Persons are actively managing traffic past the workplace using Stop/Slow paddles.

Driving mistakes have the potential to cause fatal injuries to road workers.

Red/orange flags are used on human activity signs when they are displayed close to the ground.



Survey work is being done on or near the road.

Driving mistakes have the potential to cause fatal injuries to road workers.

Red/orange flags are used on human activity signs when they are displayed close to the ground.

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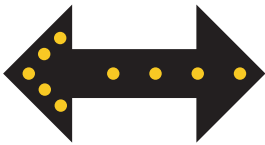
Work is going on overhead with electrical or data cables.

Driving mistakes have the potential to cause fatal injuries to road workers.

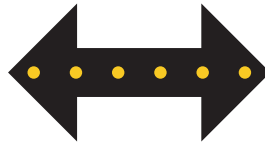
Red/orange flags are used on human activity signs when they are displayed close to the ground.



A Flashing Light Unit displaying two arrow heads means that the lane ahead is closed and you will have to move over, or there is an obstruction which you will have to drive around. When two arrow heads are displayed at the same time it is safe to pass on either side of the Flashing Light Unit.



A Flashing Light Unit displaying a left or right arrow means that the lane ahead is closed and you will have to move over, or there is an obstruction which you will have to drive around. When a single arrow head is displayed, it is safe to pass the Flashing Light Unit, but only on the side indicated by the arrow.



Lamps in a straight line or bar is called "caution" mode.

The Flashing Light unit in caution mode is used to alert drivers to a hazard, such as a vehicle occupying a lane or workers laying out signs.

The Flashing Light Unit in caution mode does not indicate that it is safe to pass. Drivers must evaluate the situation and make a decision to pass based on conditions present in the work zone.

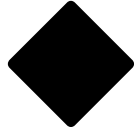
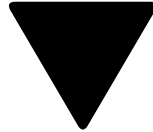
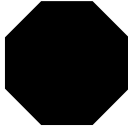
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**Remember:** it is an offence to deface, destroy, or remove traffic signs or signals.

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## The Shape of a Sign Says What It Means

What do the shapes below mean to you? The correct answer for each of the six sign shapes shown here is in the list. Match the sign shape with the correct answer.



Correct answers are in this list:

- Guide Sign
- Stop
- Yield
- School Zone
- Warning Sign
- Regulatory Sign

