

Lesson 7: Progress

Driving at an appropriate speed



Circular signs give orders - where there is a red circle around a speed limit, this is the maximum legal speed allowed. On main roads 30mph is safe whilst clear of hazards and when you do not have poor weather conditions. Minor roads, which are usually 30mph zones are more likely to be unsafe to drive at the maximum!

Take into account conditions on each individual road. The quieter the road, the more likely you are to encounter hazards such as parked cars and pedestrians. Take extra care when passing schools, shops etc. Speed bumps are designed to slow the traffic down in areas where traffic may otherwise drive too fast.



You will find if you are in a higher speed limit then the road is more of a main route and clear of houses, shops, schools etc. With having far

fewer hazards it is safer and appropriate to make progress faster as long as the road is clear and you are not driving in poor weather. The speed determined on a road is a guide, you must not exceed the limit but remember it is not a target. If it is unsafe to travel at the speed limit to must reduce your speed. Consider the road conditions the severity of bends and the amount of traffic. Look further ahead for hazards on faster roads so you can be ready to reduce your speed accordingly and keep a safe distance. (2 second rule)

Look out for speed limits - check mirrors well before change of speed or direction

You will see a new limit sign on both sides of the road you are on or you are entering. If you see a speed limit sign on just one side of the road - this is normally smaller and a reminder of the existing speed limit of the road you are on.

You must reduce your speed to the correct limit or below so you are travelling at the required speed as you pass the signs. You must also make sure where speed limit increases that you wait until you pass the sign before speeding up.

Note: After travelling on a fast road you would need to keep an eye on your speed, as it is easier to be travelling faster than you think.



National Speed Limit Roads



National speed limit applies as follows: -

Single lane = 60mph - maximum speed (but not a target!)

Dual carriageway = 70mph - maximum speed (but not a target!)

Note: To be classed as a dual carriageway there would need to be a central reservation/barrier otherwise the 60mph maximum would apply. Where you have two lanes but no central reservation/barrier - this is normally to give priority to traffic going uphill and will turn back into a single lane road so make sure, if you are overtaking, you have enough time to do so before the road turns back into single lane.

Even when national speed limit roads are clear it is not always safe or appropriate to drive at the maximum speed - a very high percentage of all road fatalities occur on country roads. It will only be safe to travel at the maximum speed when you have a clear stretch of road.

The roads are often not lit and have no pavements and it is likely you may come across pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders etc. National speed limits are normally in rural areas therefore farm vehicles and animals are more likely to be present. Take extra care overtaking and watch your speed and position around the bends.

Sharp change of direction chevrons

Used where the road changes direction sharply enough to create a hazard or to reinforce a bend warning sign where stronger emphasis is needed.



Approaching a bend

Check your mirrors well before slowing down - the sharper the bend the slower the speed. You should get to a slower speed before entering the bend to maintain full control as you steer. Keeping on the gas to maintain speed around the bend will help maintain control and position as the wheels will grip the road as you do so.

Left hand bend

On a left hand bend position to the centre of your lane, beware not to get too close to the centre line, you don't want to find yourself on a collision course.



Right hand bend

Position to the left of your lane to improve your view but do not let a clearer view tempt you to take the bend too fast.

On approaching a bend ask yourself...

- Can I see the full picture?
- How sharp is the bend?
- Am I in the correct road position?
- Am I at a safe speed/gear?
- What might I meet?
- Could I stop if necessary?

Recap Quiz (Read Highway Code Rules 124-126, 160, 166 and pages 157-166)

1. What are circular signs?

2. How will you know if you are travelling on a dual carriageway?



3. What speed limit are most minor roads?

4. Why should you be extra cautious when travelling in a 30mph speed limit?

5. Where should you position the car on approaching a left hand bend?

6. What does this sign mean?


