

Learn to drive the AA Way

Safe Habits Checklist

Here's a basic list of safe driving habits for learner drivers to make part of their routine. It's not a complete list - just some useful tips to help you drive safely.

The New Zealand road code explains safe driving habits in detail. Even though you learned the road code to pass your learner licence, you should continue reviewing it while driving on your learners and restricted. Remember, the most risky time for young drivers is the first 6 to 12 months on their restricted licence when driving solo.

Before you drive

- Adjust your seat until you're comfortable and can reach all the controls easily; ensuring you have full control of the vehicle
- Adjust all your mirrors to give you the best view of your surroundings
- If you have passengers, check they're safely seated with their seat belts correctly fitted
- Put your seat belt on and adjust your headrest

Drive within the limits

- Stay within the legal speed limit
- Legal alcohol limit for under 20 years old is zero
- It is illegal to drive under the influence of any drug that could affect your driving ability. Always check with your doctor or pharmacist when getting medicines
- If you are tired, avoid driving

Be in the correct place on the road

- Keep a safe distance behind the vehicle in front and remember to use the two and four-second rule

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- Drive on the left and stay within the marked lanes. Make sure you're in the correct lane for where you want to go and follow the arrows
- Always stop at red lights
- Stop at amber (orange) traffic lights unless there isn't time to stop safely
- At 'stop' signs, come to a complete stop

Remember you share the road

- Give other drivers plenty of warning by using your indicators at least three seconds before you make a manoeuvre
- Only pass other vehicles in places where you're allowed to, taking care during the manoeuvre
- You must have a clear view of the road ahead, to make sure you can finish passing safely
- Take extra care and leave room when passing cyclists, pedestrians or horses

Be alert

- Look at least 12 seconds ahead, so you can see hazards and respond early
- Constantly check what's happening in front and behind your vehicle and use your mirrors
- Pay extra attention at intersections, schools and residential areas
- Always look over your shoulder for vehicles or cyclists that could be in the blind-spot of your mirrors