

# Chapter 2: Rules of the Road



Automobile collisions can be traumatic events. Responsible drivers greatly reduce the risk of a collision by obeying traffic regulations. They realize it is their responsibility to drive carefully so as not to cause any harm to themselves, other persons or damage to property.

Collisions do happen even to the most careful driver. The force of a collision is so great that unrestrained persons may strike each other, the interior of the vehicle, or may be ejected from the vehicle. Severe injuries or death often result. Using a seat belt or child restraint system correctly helps hold all persons in place in the vehicle. This provides them with a far better chance of avoiding serious injury.

Seat belts and child restraints also help prevent injuries during "regular" driving. A driver may have to swerve and stop, or stop suddenly to avoid a collision.

Unrestrained persons may strike each other or the vehicle interior.

Fewer than one percent of all injury-producing collisions involve fire or submersion. In these situations, wearing a seat belt greatly increases the chances of remaining conscious in order to escape from the vehicle.

Everyone 16 years of age and older, whether a driver or passenger riding in a motor vehicle in Prince Edward Island, is required by law to wear a seat belt if a seating position with a seat belt is available to them.

A driver is responsible for ensuring that all passengers under 16 years of age are wearing a seat belt in a seating position with a seat belt available to them. Young children must be placed in an approved child restraint system that is appropriate for them.

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### INFANTS

Infants from birth weight to 9 kg (20 lb) must travel rear-facing in a child restraint seat that conforms to the requirements of Standard 213.1 under the Motor Vehicle Safety Act (Canada) and the PEI Seat Belt Regulations. This may be a portable infant carrier or a convertible seat that will serve infants and toddlers.

The child must be able to pull to a stand prior to moving into a forward facing Child Safety Seat.

**NOTE:** Never place a rear-facing infant carrier in the front passenger seat equipped with an air bag.



### TODDLERS

Toddlers from 9-18 kg (20-40 lb) must travel in a child restraint seat conforming to the requirements of the Children's Car Seats and Harnesses Regulations under the Hazardous Products Act (Canada), the PEI Seat Belt Regulations, or to the requirements of Standard Products Act (Canada). This can be the convertible type of seat used by infants too, or a child seat made just for toddlers. When a toddler travels in a vehicle, other than a parent's or legal guardian's, a lap belt may be used.

**NOTE:** Restraint seats must have a properly installed anchor. You can contact Highway Safety for installation instructions.



### **PRESCHOOLERS**

Preschoolers from 18-23 kg (40-50 lb) who have outgrown the child restraint seat must use the lap belt portion of the seat belt assembly, worn securely fitted, low on the hips. If a child of this size must ride in the front seat and there is a shoulder strap, make sure it fits correctly. If it passes across the child's face or neck the child needs to be in a booster seat.

A booster seat should be used with the lap belt for children who have outgrown their forward-facing child restraint seat. Make sure it is in the back seat and the lap belt is worn snugly over the child's hips (not over the stomach). Children under the age of 12 should be seated in the back seat of the vehicle, if possible.

### **OLDER CHILDREN**

Older children from 23kg (60 lb) or over must use the full seat belt assembly provided in the seating position being occupied. You may elect for a higher rated booster seat up to 35 kg (80 lb).

### **PROPER FIT OF SEATBELTS**

Lap belts should be worn snugly and as low around the hips as possible. Shoulder belts must never be worn without a lap belt. Shoulder belts should not be too tight. Leave a fist's width between your chest and the belt. The use of a shoulder belt is not recommended for a child or an adult less than 140 cm (47 in) in height.



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### AIR BAGS

Air bags are safety devices that protect the head and upper body from injury in a collision. They prevent the driver's head from hitting the steering wheel and the front passenger's head from striking the dashboard.

While air bags save many lives each year, they do not protect in all kinds of crashes. They deploy in frontal impacts only, and not in rear-end collisions, side impacts or rollovers. They may also deploy in low-speed collisions sometimes as low as 15 kilometers per hour. Seat belts, on the other hand, protect the entire body and are effective in all types of collisions. In low and moderate-speed impacts, seat belts alone provide all the protection necessary.

Air bags are most effective in high-speed crashes, where they are often necessary to prevent serious injury. Together, seat belts and air bags offer good protection in most collisions

**CAUTION:** People who sit close to the air bag module, usually because they are short, are at risk of injury when the air bag is deployed. Children are also vulnerable because they are small. They should be properly belted, and those under the age of 12 should be seated in the back seat.

**WARNING:** It is very important to prevent children from sitting or standing close to the dashboard. Never install a rearward-facing infant restraint system in a seat equipped with an air bag. If the air bag deploys, the infant restraint system will be propelled into the back of the seat.

### SOME SEAT BELT AND AIR BAG FACTS

- **You are many times more likely to be killed or seriously injured if thrown from the vehicle in a collision.**

- Fire or submersion in water is rare in collisions. Safety belts keep you conscious and uninjured, enabling you to get free of the car.
  - Safety belts can help prevent serious collisions by keeping the driver behind the wheel and in control of the vehicle.
  - Many injuries and deaths result from collisions at 40 mph (60 km/h) or less.
  - Most accidents occur close to home.
  - Unbelted vehicle occupants can seriously injure fellow passengers by striking or crushing them against the car in a collision.
  - Children should never be held on an adult lap, because the force of a collision may tear the child from the adult's arms. In addition, the child may be crushed between the adult and the car if the adult is not buckled in.
- Injuries from safety belts are very rare, usually occurring only in very severe collisions and resulting from improper use or adjustment of the belts.
  - Never have more than one person in a seat belt.



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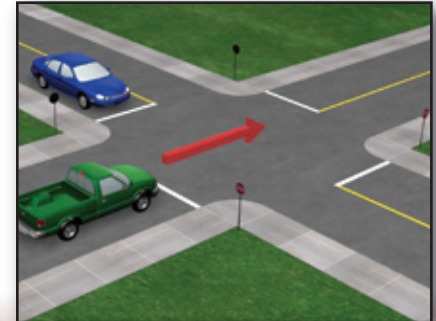
The Rules of the Road are laws and safe practices that have developed out of custom and experience. They are for the safe and efficient movement of vehicles, pedestrians and other road users. They cover such things as starting, signaling, turning, overtaking and passing, stopping and other actions of drivers and other road users. You will be required to demonstrate your knowledge of these rules and your ability to apply them properly before you can get a license.

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY AT THREE-WAY OR FOUR-WAY INTERSECTIONS CONTROLLED BY STOP SIGNS**

When two or more vehicles enter such an intersection from different directions at approximately the same time, the vehicle on the left will yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right when arriving at about the same time. It is a good practice to slow down to a speed that will permit you to stop if you see a vehicle coming from your right which is travelling at such a

speed, or is so close, that a collision will occur if each continues on its respective way. Since most of these intersections are in residential areas, your view of approaching cars, cyclists, pedestrians and children will often be obscured. Under such conditions you should slow down to a speed that will permit you to have complete control of your vehicle. Remember that you do not automatically acquire the right-of-way by entering the intersection first.

The law says that before entering a highway you must come to a complete stop and not proceed unless you can do so safely. The stop must be made before any marked or unmarked crosswalk, or where none exists, then before the travelled

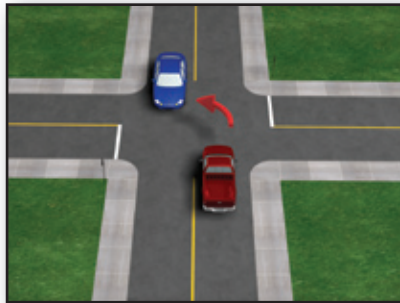


portion of the highway you are about to enter.

### RIGHT-OF-WAY OF A CAR TURNING LEFT

There are many duties and responsibilities of a driver making a left turn. When you turn left you must:

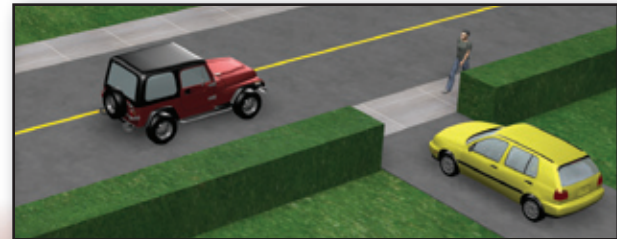
- be in the proper lane;
- give a visible signal of your intention to turn; and
- yield the right-of-way to any vehicle or pedestrian within, or so close to the intersection that a collision could result.



### RIGHT-OF-WAY AT LANES, DRIVEWAYS AND ALLEYS

If you are driving in a rural area and you wish to enter or cross a highway from a private road, lane, driveway, or building you must:

- stop and yield the right-of-way to traffic on the highway;
- not enter the highway if there is any danger of collision;
- not enter the highway if the other driver would be forced to swerve or brake to avoid a collision; and
- stop and yield the right-of-way to all traffic on the street or highway.





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If you are driving in a restricted speed area, such as a 50 km/h (30 mph) zone in any city or town, you must:

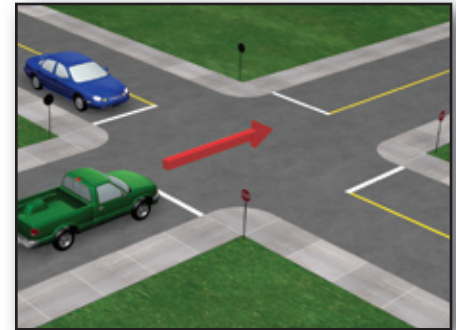
- stop your car before driving onto the crosswalk;
- check for pedestrians and other vehicles that may be approaching and yield the right-of-way to them; and
- do not proceed until you are sure it is safe to do so. Always remember that the responsibility to avoid a collision rests with you.

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY AT STOP SIGNS**

Stop signs are placed at those intersections where extra hazards exist, such as heavy traffic or limited visibility. When you approach a stop sign always follow these rules:

- start slowing down soon enough so that you can stop smoothly;
- in a city or town, stop your vehicle:
  - A) before entering a crosswalk; or

- B) at a clearly marked stop line; or
  - C) at a point nearest the intersecting roadways where pedestrians would normally cross.
- in rural areas:
    - A) stop your vehicle before the edge of the roadway you are about to enter;
    - B) look carefully in both directions to observe the speed and distance of approaching traffic before starting;
    - C) if the road is slippery you will need a larger gap in traffic before you can start up;
    - D) look twice in both directions starting with the left (or closest lanes of traffic); and



- E) yield the right-of-way to any traffic that is close, or is traveling at such a speed, that there would be danger of a collision if you proceeded.

Rolling a stop sign is illegal. Remember that stop signs are placed at those intersections where extra hazards exist, such as heavy traffic or limited visibility. Slowing rather than stopping for stop signs is a dangerous practice and one that will eventually lead to accidents. If you are a beginner, develop the habit of always making a full stop. If you have driven for some years, you may have developed the habit of “rolling” through stop signs; this habit should be corrected.

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY OF EMERGENCY VEHICLES**

Whenever an emergency vehicle, ambulance, fire department vehicle, or police car, sounding a siren, horn or warning signals, approaches from any direction, you must yield the right-of-way by:

- immediately moving clear of an intersection;
- driving as closely as possible to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway; and
- stopping and remaining stopped until the emergency vehicle or vehicles have passed.



**NOTE:** On one-way streets, pull to the right or left.

### **RIGHT-OF-WAY OF FUNERAL PROCESSION**

Drivers of vehicles in a funeral procession with lighted headlights are required to exercise care when coming to a red traffic light or stop sign. Only if a

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police officer is present and directs, then may you proceed through the red light or stop sign with caution. All approaching vehicles must reduce their speed to half the posted speed limit. At no time will a driver of a vehicle attempt to pass through a funeral procession from behind. Funeral vehicles on PEI will be equipped with purple flashing lights.

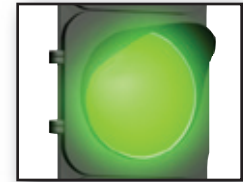
### RIGHT-OF-WAY AT YIELD SIGNS

Yield signs provide a realistic and flexible means of controlling traffic at certain locations. When approaching a yield sign, you must slow down to a speed that will make it possible for you to stop and yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and vehicles. If necessary, stop and yield the right-of-way to anyone on the roadway, then proceed with caution.



### PEDESTRIANS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES AT INTERSECTIONS CONTROLLED BY TRAFFIC SIGNALS

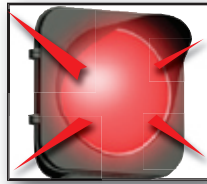
Both drivers and pedestrians must obey the traffic signal that controls an intersection. Whenever a pedestrian enters the crosswalk with a "walk" or green signal light, the pedestrian has the right-of-way over all vehicles. A pedestrian must not leave the curb and walk or run into the path of a vehicle that is so close that a driver cannot safely yield the right-of-way.



When the amber light or "wait" sign appears a pedestrian must not start to cross. If a pedestrian is in the intersection when the amber light or "wait" sign appears, he or she must proceed to the nearest sidewalk. A driver must yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian and must not proceed until the pedestrian is safely across the street.

### PEDESTRIANS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES AT FLASHING LIGHTS FLASHING RED

When approaching an intersection controlled by a flashing red light, a driver must come to a full stop and remain stopped until it is safe to proceed. Pedestrians may enter the roadway with caution, and have the right-of-way over vehicles.



### FLASHING AMBER

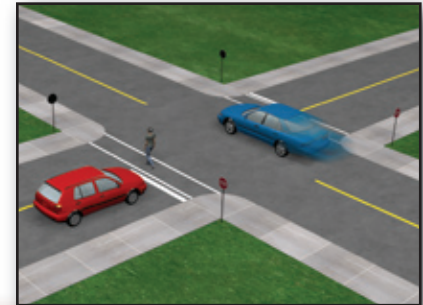
When approaching an intersection controlled by a flashing amber light, a driver must enter with caution and yield the right-of-way to any pedestrians within the crosswalks. Pedestrians should remember that drivers are not required to come to a full stop for a



flashing amber light, and before entering the roadway against an amber light a pedestrian should exercise extra care and be on guard against drivers who may not be prepared to stop.

### PEDESTRIANS' RIGHTS AND DUTIES AT INTERSECTIONS WITH NO TRAFFIC SIGNALS

Pedestrians have the right-of-way within a marked or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection with a stop sign or yield sign, and at an open intersection. Drivers must yield to a pedestrian. Pedestrians should always exercise caution when entering an intersection where drivers are not required to stop.

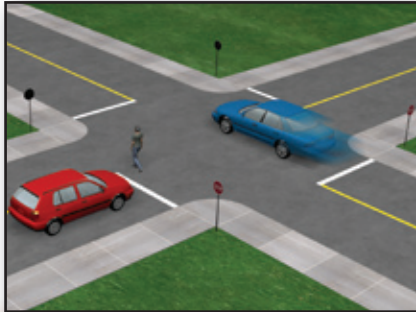


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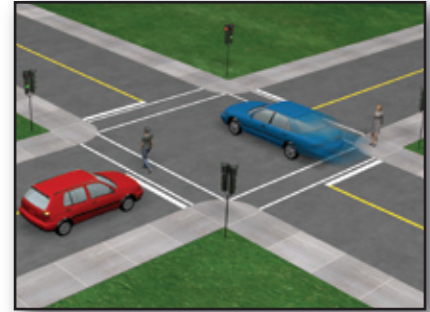
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### VEHICLES STOPPED FOR PEDESTRIANS

One of the frequent causes of pedestrian collisions is one vehicle passing another that is stopped for pedestrians. The law requires that where a vehicle has stopped for a pedestrian, a driver approaching from behind must not pass the stopped vehicle. The driver of the first vehicle approaching the crosswalk should attempt to stop a sufficient distance away to give other drivers a clear view of the crosswalk and the driver of the oncoming vehicle must also stop. Always use extreme caution before you attempt to pass a vehicle which is stopped or slowing down at an intersection. Remember that he or she has a clearer view of the road ahead.



If you are about to pass a larger vehicle always be aware of the pedestrian who may walk or run into your path. This is particularly true if you are driving in the lane next to the stopped vehicle. Slow down as you are about to pass. Never pass a vehicle stopped for a pedestrian.



### ADVICE TO PEDESTRIANS

- Always cross at intersections and keep within the crosswalk. Crossing between intersections is a hazardous practice. If you must cross between intersections, first yield the right-of-way to all vehicles.

- Never walk into the roadway from behind parked vehicles or from the rear of a stopped bus. If the driver cannot see you, he or she cannot avoid you.
- Always look for turning vehicles before trying to cross.
- Teach your children never to play on or near the roadway, and always to use the crosswalks.
- At night wear white, light coloured or retro reflective material clothing. The driver will be able to see you at a greater distance.
- On the highways, always walk on the left, facing traffic, so that you can see approaching vehicles; whenever possible stay off the pavement.
- New crosswalks have sounds in addition to the light signalling pedestrians that it is safe to cross the road. This is for the visually impaired pedestrians.

### ADVICE TO DRIVERS

- The law requires that you exercise care for the safety of pedestrians **WHEREVER** they may be crossing.
- In residential areas, slow down and be on alert for youngsters who may suddenly run into your path.
- If you see any children, or a confused or incapacitated person, slow down and be prepared to stop.
- Always stop for pedestrians within crosswalks and never pass a vehicle that has stopped for a pedestrian.
- A blind or partially blind person carries a white cane to indicate that he or she cannot see. Whenever you see a pedestrian carrying a white cane, drive with caution and be prepared to stop. Often a blind person will raise his/her cane when they are uncertain of crossing the street in safety. That is your signal to **STOP** and allow him/her to go ahead. The same courtesy should be extended to persons led by a seeing-eye dog. Remember that their lives may depend on you.