Speed Limits

In the ACT, the default speed limits are as follows:

- In a built-up area – 50km/h
- In a rural area – 100km/h

When other speed limits apply, signs indicate the start and finish of the special section. Speed limits are the maximum travel speed for any road.

Learner and Provisional licence holders are permitted to drive to the posted speed limit in the ACT.

ACT Learner drivers/riders driving or riding in NSW are not permitted to exceed 80km/h. Provisional licence holders are permitted to drive to the posted speed limits in NSW.

ACT Learner and Provisional drivers intending to drive in the other States and Territories should check the local speed regulations that apply.

Safe Following Distance

Do not follow another vehicle too closely – this is the cause of most rear end collisions. If you are tailgating a vehicle and it stops suddenly you may not be able to stop in time – and a crash is inevitable.

When following another vehicle an estimation of the appropriate following distance can be obtained by using the ‘3 second rule’ (i.e. keep a gap of at least 3 seconds or more between your vehicle and the one ahead).

Mobile Phones

In the ACT, it is illegal to drive or ride a vehicle while using a hand-held mobile phone. It is also illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone when your vehicle is stopped but not parked – for example when you are waiting at traffic lights.

If your vehicle is not fitted with a hands-free connection or secured in a cradle, you must move your vehicle to a safe location, stop and park the vehicle before answering or making a call.

The writing, sending or reading of text messages on a mobile phone is also prohibited while driving a vehicle, and while the vehicle is stationary but not parked.

Seat Belts and Child Restraints

Seat belts and other restraints must be used whenever they are available. The carrying of additional unrestrained passengers of any age after all seating positions with a seatbelt are occupied is prohibited.

Children under 6 months must be in an approved, properly fastened and adjusted, rear-facing child restraint.

Children between 6 months and under 4 years must be in an approved, properly fastened and adjusted, rear-facing child restraint OR a forward facing child restraint with an in-built harness. If a vehicle has two or more rows of seats, then children under 4 years must not travel in the front seat.

Children between 4 years and under 7 years must be in an approved forward-facing child restraint with an in-built harness OR a properly positioned booster seat with a properly fastened and adjusted seatbelt.

Drivers are responsible for making sure all passengers use a seatbelt or an approved child restraint.

‘Merge’ or ‘Form One Lane’ – What’s the difference?

Merging Traffic

Merging occurs where a lane is ending and a driver is required to merge with traffic in another lane. In this diagram, the driver who is about to cross the broken line must give way to any vehicles in the lane that the driver wishes to enter.

In this diagram, Vehicle A must give way to Vehicle B.

Form One Lane

The ‘Form One Lane’ rule requires a driver to give way to a vehicle in another lane if that vehicle is in front of the driver's vehicle as the lanes merge. The driver in front has ‘Right of Way’.

In this diagram, Vehicle B must give way to Vehicle A.

Roundabouts – What are the rules to observe?

Turning Left

Approach in the left hand lane, operate the left hand indicator before entering the roundabout and continue to indicate throughout the turn. Ensure that you turn into the left lane of any dual lane road.

Turning Right

Approach in the right hand lane and operate the right hand indicator before entering the roundabout. Continue to operate the indicator until you approach the exit lane and then indicate left and exit in the right hand lane.

Making a U-turn

Approach in the right hand lane, operate the right hand indicator before entering the roundabout and continue to operate the indicator until approaching the exit lane. Then indicate left and exit in the right hand lane.

Slip Lanes – Do you know who has the right of way?

If a driver is turning left using a slip lane, the driver must give way to any vehicle approaching from the right or turning right at the intersection into the road the driver is entering, and to any pedestrians on the slip lane.

Turning Left with a Slip Lane

Vehicle B is turning left using a slip lane and must give way to Vehicles A and C.

Turning Left without a Slip Lane

Vehicle B is turning right onto the cross road and must give way to Vehicle A.