K53 CLLT / English

Rules of the Road Study Guide

Read, revise and print useful study material in your language. No registration is required.

K53 CLLT is independent preparation. Its practice questions and screens are not the official test or its complete question bank, and practice scores cannot guarantee a pass.

Selected study topics. Use the linked online lessons for further study; this guide is not the complete syllabus or every exception in road law.

Keep left, overtake right

Choose the correct side and lane, change position safely and understand the narrow shoulder exception.

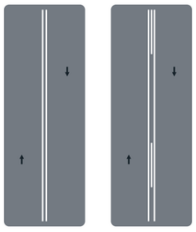
Use the left side and carriageway

The general principle is to keep left and normally overtake to the right. The following lesson, “Overtaking and being overtaken”, explains the conditions and exceptions.

Drive on the left side of a two-way roadway without obstructing or endangering approaching traffic. On a divided public road, use the left-hand carriageway unless a traffic sign or traffic officer directs or permits another course. The empty carriageway on the other side of the divider is not an overtaking lane for your direction.

If an obstruction requires you to move towards or across the centre, first establish that there is enough clear road and that approaching traffic will not be endangered or obstructed. A gap that forces an oncoming driver to brake is not a safe gap. Obey prohibitory markings and do not use a general “keep left” rule to disregard an authorised direction.





A signal is a request, not priority

Before changing lanes, check traffic ahead, beside and behind. Use mirrors and the appropriate observation for the vehicle’s blind areas, signal in good time, then move only when the lane is clear and the movement will not obstruct or endanger another road user. Keep checking while changing position; another vehicle may enter the same gap.

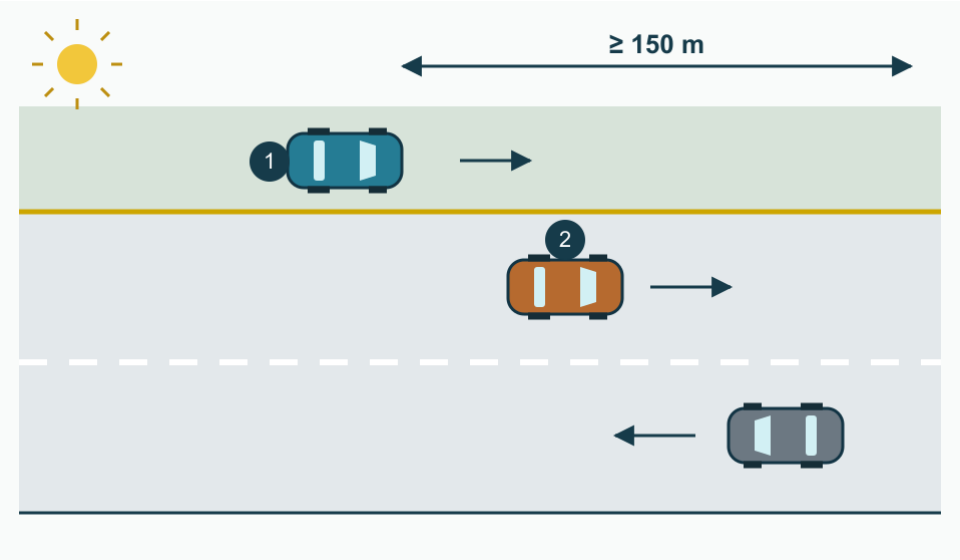
Do not drift across a lane line because your route is about to turn. If the safe opportunity has passed, continue to a lawful alternative. A large vehicle needs more space and may hide a motorcycle alongside it; allow for the full vehicle and load, not just the cab.

The limited daytime shoulder exception

The driver of a motor vehicle may move onto the left shoulder to let another vehicle pass only under all the conditions below. This concession does not allow an ordinary following driver to overtake on the shoulder. A lawful traffic-officer direction is a separate case.

Check the shoulder itself for pedestrians, cyclists, stopped vehicles, debris and a dropping edge. If any condition fails, stay in the roadway and allow the other driver to wait. Courtesy must remain lawful and safe.

In the diagram, 1 is the motor vehicle moving onto the left shoulder to allow vehicle 2 to pass. There is one lane in each direction and it is daylight. People and vehicles on the road must be clearly visible at a distance of at least 150 m. All the other safety conditions must also be satisfied; the picture alone does not authorise shoulder use. It is not to scale.



- It must be between sunrise and sunset.
- The road must have one traffic lane in each direction.
- Your vehicle must be being overtaken by another vehicle.
- You must be able to do so without endangering yourself, other traffic, pedestrians or property.
- People and vehicles on the road must be clearly visible at a distance of at least 150 m.

Make a lawful pass easier

When being overtaken, keep as far left as is safe and do not accelerate. You do not have to enter an unsafe shoulder. Near a stationary bus, expect pedestrians to step out where they cannot see approaching vehicles; reduce risk before reaching its concealed front or rear.

Worked situation

It is dusk on a road with one lane each way. A truck follows closely and flashes its headlights. The motor-vehicle shoulder concession requires daylight and all the other conditions, so pressure from behind does not make shoulder driving lawful. Maintain a safe position and speed, then use a lawful stopping place if you need to let traffic pass.

Position checklist

Choose the lawful side, check the full movement, signal before changing position and maintain safe clearance. Use a shoulder only within its specific exception; never treat it as a general passing lane.

Junctions, circles and crossing a road

Enter only when the full movement is safe, follow the controlling instruction and use the correct circle priority.

Have room to complete the movement

Before crossing a road or entering a junction, establish that you can complete the movement without endangering or obstructing traffic. Look for the space where your whole vehicle will finish, not just a gap at its front bumper. A queue beyond an intersection can leave you blocking other traffic even after a green signal allowed you to approach.

Check each approach and look again for road users who are harder to see, particularly motorcycles, cycles and pedestrians. A large turning vehicle needs time and space for its rear and load to clear. Do not rely on a driver's wave when another traffic stream remains hidden.

Traffic circles and controlling instructions

At a traffic circle, give way to traffic approaching from your right within the circle unless a traffic sign or traffic officer directs otherwise. Approach slowly enough to see the relevant traffic and to stop when necessary. Do not assume your vehicle's size or the fact that you reached the entry first gives you priority over traffic already approaching from the right.

The sign at the junction matters. A mini-circle with its own controlling sign must be interpreted under that sign's rule, rather than treating every circular island identically. Follow the appropriate lane markings and do not change lanes within the manoeuvre without a safe opportunity.





Read the active control

Obey lawful directions from a traffic officer and the signals, signs and markings controlling the junction. A green light is permission to proceed only when the route is safe; it is not permission to block the junction or strike a pedestrian already crossing.

Where traffic signals are not functioning and no officer is directing traffic, official Gauteng guidance is to treat the junction as a four-way stop. Stop, check each approach and proceed in turn only when safe. If arrival order or another driver's intention is uncertain, resolve the conflict cautiously rather than forcing priority.



Worked situation

Your light turns green, but stopped vehicles fill the road beyond the crossing. Entering would leave the back of your vehicle across the other traffic stream. Wait before the junction until enough exit space exists, even if a driver behind hoots.

Approach, decide, complete

Identify the control before reaching the junction, reduce speed, decide who must give way, check all approaches and the exit, then complete a safe movement. Keep watching for pedestrians and changes in traffic while crossing.

Overtaking and being overtaken

Decide whether a pass is lawful, choose enough space and avoid the traps around buses, crossings and blind bends.

Plan the whole pass

Normally overtake to the right. Before leaving your position, check that passing is permitted, that the road ahead is clear far enough for the whole manoeuvre, and that traffic behind is not already passing you. Allow safe lateral clearance, pass without exceeding the applicable speed limit, and return only when you can do so without cutting in.

The space must cover moving out, travelling beside the other vehicle and moving back. A vehicle travelling only slightly slower than you may take a long distance to pass. Do not begin merely because you can reach its rear corner before an approaching vehicle arrives. If the available view or gap is uncertain, wait.





When passing on the left is permitted

Pass on the left only in a permitted situation and when it is safe. The first four cases below do not allow driving on the shoulder or verge to pass. A lawful traffic-officer direction is a separate case; follow the actual direction given.

- The vehicle ahead is turning right or has clearly signalled that intention, and there is safe lawful room on its left.

- In an urban area, a one-way roadway is wide enough for two or more lines of traffic.
- In an urban area, a two-way roadway is wide enough for two or more lines of moving vehicles in each direction.
- A one-way roadway is divided into marked traffic lanes.
- A traffic officer directs the movement.

Crests, curves and concealed people

Do not pass where a crest, bend or other obstruction prevents a sufficient view of approaching traffic. The manual's exceptions concern a pass that can be completed without entering the path of opposing traffic, such as on a one-way road or within your own properly available side. They do not remove another prohibition or the duty to avoid danger.

Do not pass a vehicle that has stopped at a pedestrian crossing to let pedestrians cross when you approach it from the rear. It can hide a person crossing. At a stationary bus, slow down and look for pedestrians who may emerge around either end. A pass that is technically within a lane can still be dangerous.

Worked situation

A car ahead signals right at an urban intersection. There is only a narrow shoulder on its left and pedestrians are waiting beside it. The right-turn signal alone does not permit you to use that shoulder. Wait behind until there is a safe, lawful route past or the car completes its turn.

Five checks before passing

Check permission, visibility, space, speed and the safe return path. If any one fails, do not start. When another vehicle passes you, keep a predictable left position and do not increase your speed.

Following distance and stopping space

Use a time gap, increase it when conditions worsen and leave enough room to respond without panic.

Measure a gap in seconds

The manual teaches at least a two-second following gap for motorcycles and light motor vehicles, and at least three seconds for heavy motor vehicles in suitable conditions. A time gap automatically grows in metres as speed rises. Pick a fixed point beside the road, begin counting when the vehicle ahead passes it, and check that you do not reach it before the interval has elapsed.

These are minimum study guidelines for favourable conditions, not a promise that every vehicle will stop within that distance. You still have to react before braking begins. If you count less than the interval, ease off smoothly and rebuild space; do not suddenly brake to create it.

When the minimum is insufficient

Increase the gap when visibility or grip is poor, the road is wet, the vehicle is heavily loaded, or another condition lengthens stopping or observation. Leave extra room when following a large vehicle that hides the road ahead. Do not copy its speed just because you can still see its rear lamps.

If a driver follows too closely behind you, build more space ahead so that any slowing can be gradual. Do not accelerate beyond a safe or lawful speed and do not brake sharply to punish the following driver. Create a lawful opportunity for that driver to pass when possible.



Worked situation

At a suitable fixed marker you count only “one” before your car reaches the place the leading vehicle passed. The road is wet. You need more than the ordinary two-second minimum, so reduce your speed smoothly until a larger gap opens. The task is to restore reaction and braking space, not merely to complete a count.

Keep the gap usable

Measure repeatedly when speed or traffic changes. If another vehicle fills the gap, rebuild it calmly. A safe following distance is space you can use to see, decide and slow while remaining in control.

Where you may not stop

Recognise no-stopping locations and the limited reasons that justify an otherwise prohibited stop.

A restriction with specific exceptions

The stopping prohibitions apply to a deliberate stop on the roadway. You may have to stop to avoid a collision, obey a traffic officer or because of a cause beyond your control. These exceptions do not permit a convenient delivery, passenger collection or phone call in a prohibited place.

A stop can create danger even when it lasts only a few seconds. Before pulling over, consider sight distance and the path other traffic will need to take around the whole vehicle.

Bridges, tunnels and narrowing roadways

Do not stop where the road’s structure or width makes avoidance difficult.





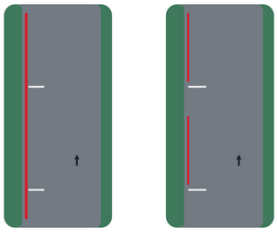
- Do not stop in a tunnel or subway, on a bridge, or within 6 m of one.
- Do not stop on a narrowed portion of roadway, or within 6 m of the beginning or end of the narrowing.

- Do not stop alongside or opposite an excavation or obstruction if doing so would obstruct or endanger traffic.
- Do not stop alongside or opposite another vehicle where the roadway is less than 9 m wide.

Crossings, direction and danger

A lawful stop must also satisfy the general position and crossing rules.





- Do not stop contrary to a road sign.
- Do not stop on the right-hand side facing oncoming traffic.
- Do not stop within the railway reserve at a level crossing.
- Do not stop within 9 m on your approach side of a marked pedestrian crossing.
- Do not stop anywhere else that would endanger or obstruct traffic.

Worked situation

You are asked to drop a passenger 4 m beyond the end of a bridge. The passenger promises to get out quickly. The 6 m no-stopping zone still applies; find a lawful place farther away. If traffic ahead stops to avoid a collision, stopping in response is a different, necessary act.

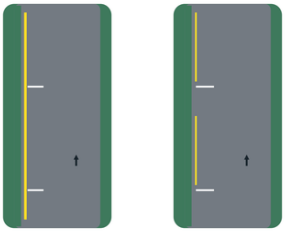
Parking without blocking or hiding danger

Choose a lawful place, apply the distance restrictions and distinguish urban from rural parking.

Places where parking is prohibited

Before leaving a vehicle stationary, check both signs and the general rules. An absence of painted lines does not make every space legal. Parking is prohibited wherever stopping is prohibited, and wherever a sign prohibits it. Follow a traffic officer’s lawful direction; a forced stop beyond the driver’s control is different from choosing a parking place.





- On the same side of the road, do not park within 1.5 m on either side of a hydrant that is clearly visible and recognisable to moving drivers, or indicated by an appropriate sign.
- Do not hide a road traffic sign.

- Do not project onto the sidewalk or obstruct a public or private vehicle entrance.
- Do not park in a position that makes another road user unable to see or pass safely.

Outside an urban area

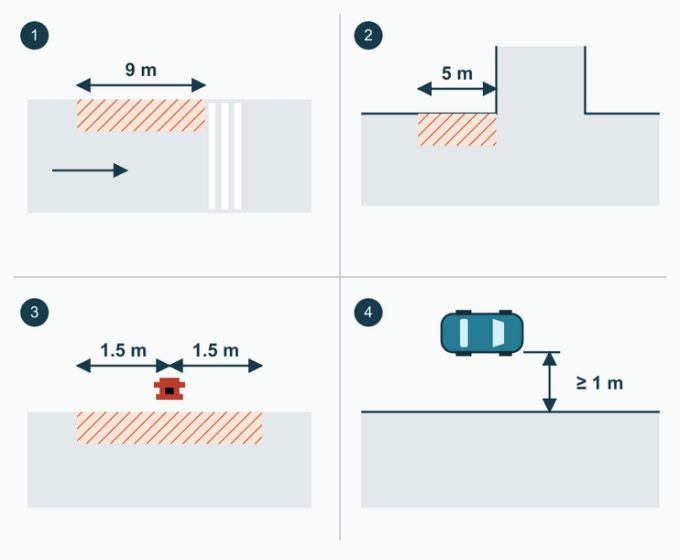
Outside an urban area, keep a parked vehicle off the roadway and every part at least 1 m from its edge, except in a parking place demarcated by an appropriate traffic sign. The shoulder is outside the roadway, but it may still be too narrow to achieve that clearance. Measure to the nearest part of the whole vehicle, not merely the outer tyre.

If no lawful and safe position exists, continue to a suitable stopping or parking place. Hazard lights do not cancel the distance requirement or authorise leaving a vehicle in a live lane.

Within an urban area

Urban parking has additional distance and positioning restrictions. Check the direction of approach to a crossing before measuring its protected area.

Read the four diagram panels separately. Panel 1 shows the 9 m no-parking area on the approach to a pedestrian crossing; panel 2 shows the 5 m intersection clearance; panel 3 shows 1.5 m on each side of a hydrant; panel 4 shows the whole vehicle at least 1 m clear of the roadway edge outside an urban area. The red area marks the crossing approach restriction, not permission to park elsewhere. Other prohibitions still apply. The panels are not to scale. These panels show the ordinary distances. Apply the visible-or-signed hydrant condition and the signed crossing, intersection and rural parking exceptions in this lesson. An exception to one rule does not cancel other stopping, danger or obstruction restrictions.



- Do not park within 9 metres on the approach side of a pedestrian crossing marked by appropriate traffic signs unless an appropriate sign permits parking. Other parking restrictions still apply.
- Do not park within 5 metres of an intersection unless an appropriate traffic sign permits it. Permission under this exception does not cancel other applicable restrictions.
- Do not park on or over the actuating mechanism of a traffic signal.
- Park close to the left edge: the outside of a left wheel must not be more than 450 mm into the roadway from the edge, unless the applicable arrangement lawfully directs otherwise.

- Do not park on a roadway narrower than 5.5 m unless it is one-way and an appropriate sign permits parking.
- Do not park on a traffic island, pedestrian mall or pedestrian lane.

Worked situation

A kerb space is 2 m long and has a fire hydrant at its centre. A small car might physically fit, but the prohibited area extends 1.5 m on either side of the hydrant. Do not use that space. Physical fit and lawful clearance are different tests.

Before walking away

Check signs, location, clearances and obstruction; secure the vehicle so it cannot move and switch off the engine before leaving it unattended. Recheck people and traffic before opening a door or later moving away.

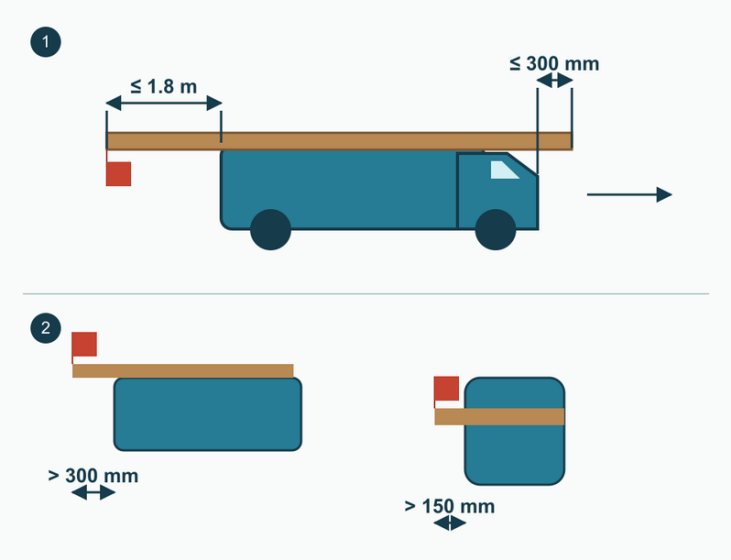
Warn others about a projecting load

Marking is required when a load projects more than 150 mm beyond a side or more than 300 mm beyond the rear. By day, use red cloth flags at least 300 mm by 300 mm, suspended by two adjacent corners. For a side projection, hang flags across the direction of travel at its front and rear. For a rear projection, mark its length with a flag across the direction of travel at the end, and its width with flags parallel to the direction of travel at both sides of that end. If the rear projection is less than 600 mm wide, one flag at its end is sufficient.

Between sunset and sunrise, or when people and vehicles cannot clearly be seen at 150 m because of poor light or weather, use the prescribed lights or retro-reflectors. For a side projection, show white at its outer front edge and red at its outer rear edge. For a rear projection, mark its width in red at the end and its length with yellow on both sides at the end. Where the rear projection is less than 600 mm wide, one rear red lamp or reflector is sufficient to mark that width.

These warnings make an otherwise permitted projection visible. They do not legalise excessive projection or an insecure load. Do not use the simpler daytime flag rule as the complete night-time rule.

Panel 1 distinguishes the ordinary maximum front projection of 300 mm and rear projection of 1.8 m from the warning thresholds. Panel 2 shows that a rear projection over 300 mm or side projection over 150 mm requires the prescribed warnings. Its flags illustrate daytime marking only; use the night or poor-visibility arrangement described above when applicable. The diagram is not to scale and does not override total width, overall length, overhang or secure-loading limits.



Worked situation

A plank projects 500 mm behind a bakkie but remains within the permitted rear overhang. It exceeds the 300 mm warning threshold, so it needs the prescribed daytime flag or poor-visibility/night reflector arrangement. The driver must also secure it and keep lamps and the number plate visible.

Check before accepting a load

Check rated mass, dimensions, fastening, driver view, lamps and plates, required projection warnings and whether carrying people is lawful. Satisfying only the overhang rule is not enough to make the journey lawful.

Sources

Sources checked: 2026-10-16

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https://www.natis.gov.za/images/learners/1_Rules_of_the_Road_v100_Jun_2012.pdf

Department of Transport - SA Learner Driver Manual: Road Traffic Signs (pages: 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 30, 31, 49, 52)

https://test.natis.gov.za/images/learners/2_Manual_on_Road_Traffic_Signs_v100_Jun_2012.pdf

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https://cmbinary.gauteng.gov.za/Media?Item=26&Location=/safety&Type=Services&path=safety/Documents/Legislation/National+Road+Traffic+Act,+1996+(Act+No.+93+of+1996).pdf

Gauteng Roads and Transport - Non-functional traffic signals

https://www.gov.za/news/media-statements/gauteng-roads-and-transport-vandalism-and-theft-targeting-traffic-signals

Government Gazette 32258 - GN R589: National Road Traffic Regulations amendment (pages: 21)

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201409/32258589.pdf

Government Gazette 40420 - GN 1408: National Road Traffic Regulations amendment (pages: 2)

https://www.gov.za/sites/default/files/gcis_document/201611/40420gon1408.pdf

Read online

Keep left, overtake right
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/road-position

Junctions, circles and crossing a road
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/intersections

Overtaking and being overtaken
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/overtaking

Following distance and stopping space
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/following-distance

Where you may not stop
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/stopping

Parking without blocking or hiding danger
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/parking

Secure loads, overhang and passengers in goods vehicles
https://k53-app.co.za/en/study/loads

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