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First published 1992
ISBN 011 551054 0

Acknowledgements

HMSO and DSA are grateful for the help given by Cambridgeshire Constabulary and Cambridgeshire Tyre Service.

Introduction

“Safe driving for life”

Despite the volume of traffic on our roads today, driving can still be a pleasant and rewarding experience. It also remains a convenient means of transport.

However, these modern crowded conditions make it even more important for you, the driver, to question the actions of other road users and make safety your responsibility.

The Driving Standards Agency (DSA) is an executive agency of the Department of Transport. Its primary aim is to promote road safety through the advancement of driving standards.

The Driving Manual has long been recognised as an essential reference book for every motorist, regardless of experience, and for instructors too.

This new edition has been completely revised and updated to take account of the many changes in roads, vehicles, driving technique and procedure. Now written in an easy-to-read style with full colour graphics, The Driving Manual offers every driver the opportunity to improve their driving standards.

Safe driving is all about developing the right attitude and approach, combined with a sound knowledge of defensive driving techniques. It means not only driving with courtesy and consideration for everyone else, but being prepared to make allowances for the mistakes of others.

Read this book carefully - and put into practice the advice it gives.

Above all, make sure your aim is **“Safe Driving for Life”**

David E. Norris
Chief Driving Examiner
Driving Standards Agency

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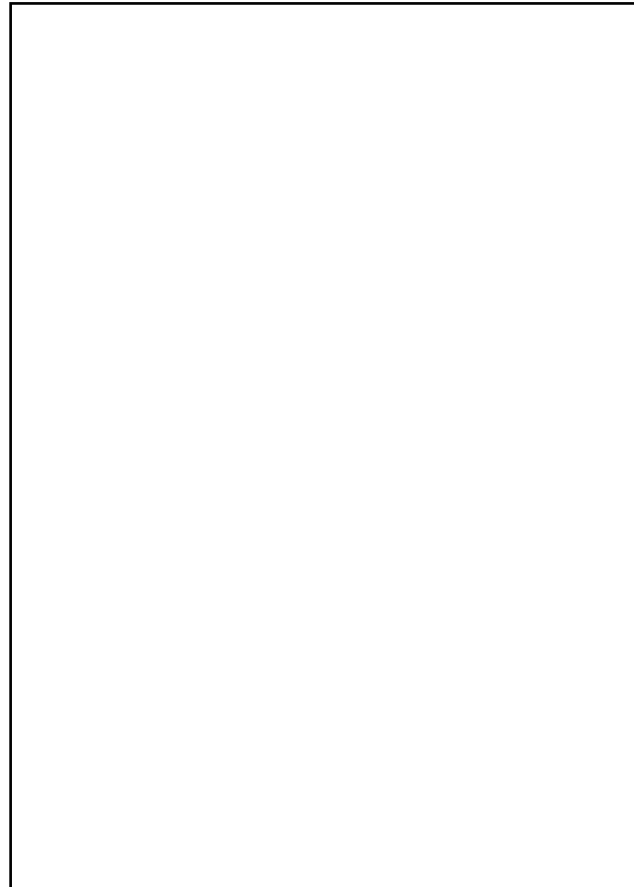
2 The Driving Controls

The controls on modern vehicles are relatively straightforward.

Each control demands a particular skill, and using them together effectively and safely takes time to learn.

However, the functions of each are easy to remember.

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2 The Driving Mirrors

Position

Many vehicles have three driving mirrors.
An interior mirror
Two exterior mirrors, one on the nearside *left-hand* door and one on the offside *right-hand* door.

Function

To allow you a clear view behind.

How to use the mirrors

Mirrors are vital to safe driving. They are important enough to have all of Section 3 devoted to how to use them properly.

Mirror-Signal-Manoeuvre

From this stage on, the importance of the Mirror-Signal-Manoeuvre routine will be stressed. It's one of the most important principles of safe driving See **Section 3**.

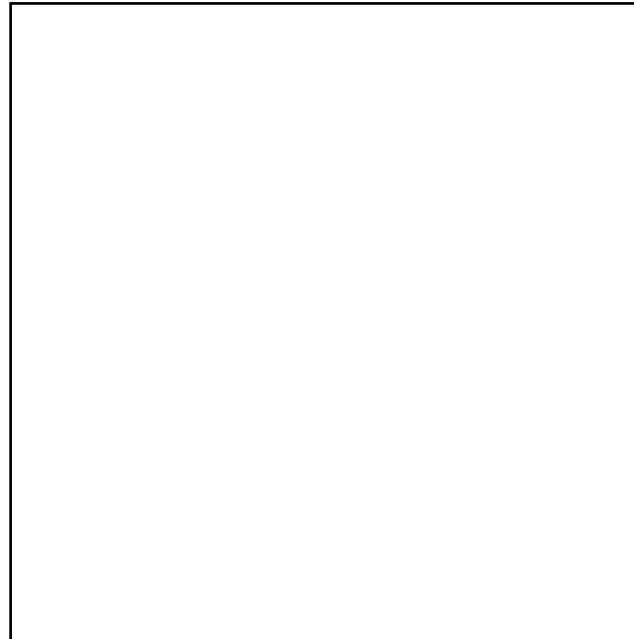


Fig 2.11 The Driving Mirrors

2 Other Controls

Visual aids - the instrument panel

For detailed information and guidance on use, see your vehicle owner's handbook.

Position

The visual aids are grouped on the instrument panel directly in front of the driving seat.

The main aids

Temperature gauge can sometimes be a warning light. On some vehicles, a 'rev counter' to tell you the engine speed in revolutions per minute *rpm*.

Direction indicator repeat light.

High beam indicator light usually blue.

The **speedometer** to tell you how quickly the vehicle is travelling in miles and kilometres per hour. It's usually a dial, with a needle showing the speed, but it's sometimes a digital display.

A fuel gauge.

On diesel engines, a **warming-up coil indicator lamp**.



Fig 2.12 Instrument Panel Items

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2 The instrument panel (cont'd)

Warning lights for equipment protection

- **Oil pressure** (often amber). This shows if the oil is dangerously low or isn't circulating as it should be
- **Water temperature**, if the engine is overheating (can be a gauge)
- **Ignition warning light** - usually red

Warning lights for safety

- Brake condition warning light
- Doors open warning light
- Handbrake applied light
- Four-way hazard flashers
- Rear fog-lamp warning light
- Rear screen heater indicator light
- Seat-belt warning lights
- Fog/head/side lamps indicator light
- Boot lid unlocked warning light

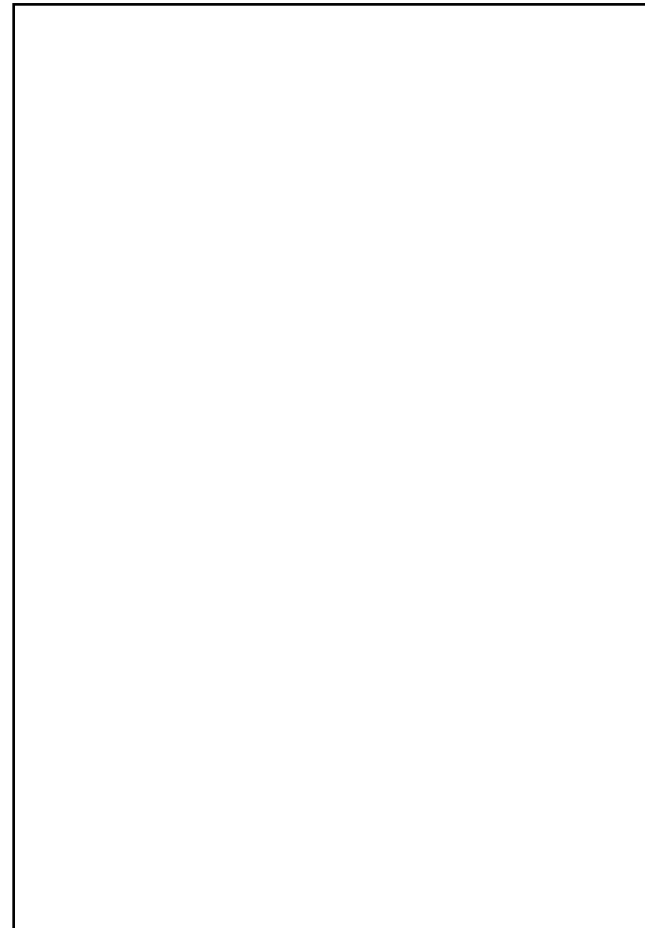
Other visual aids

- Fuel economy indicator
- Low brake fluid level
- Brake pad wear warning light
- Seat belt warning light
- Handbrake 'ON' warning light

Function

To enable you to...

- Drive safely
- Monitor the performance of the engine
- Protect your engine and other equipment against damage
- See the functions selected



2 Direction Control Indicators

Position

Usually stalks or switches on either side of the steering column

Function

To enable you to use the direction indicators to show other road users which direction you intend to take. The direction indicators are vital to safe driving. Their use is covered in Section 5.

Note

Self-cancelling indicator switches might not cancel after a slight change of direction
Always check.
The warning light and audible warning, usually a ticking noise, operates when the indicators are flashing.

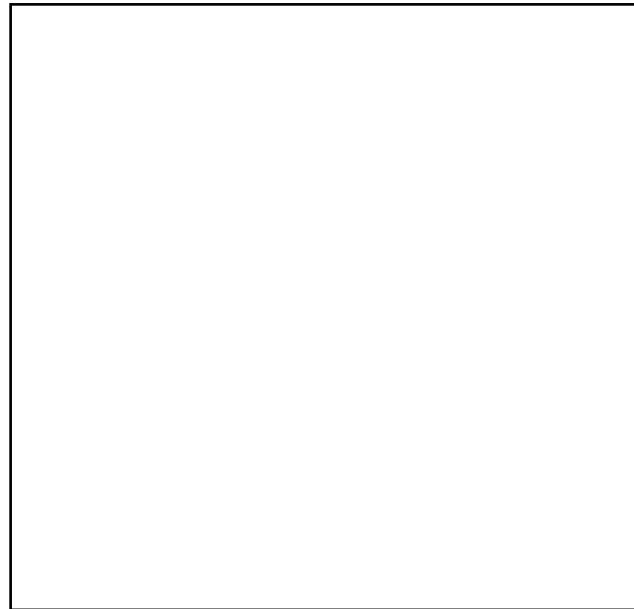


Fig 2.14 Typical position of Direction Control Indicators

Fig 2.15 Typical Control Stalks

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2 Windscreen Washers and Wipers

Position

Usually stalks or switches on the steering column within easy reach.

With practice, you should be able to find the control without taking your eyes off the road. Where they are provided, rear wipers/washers have separate controls.

On most vehicles, the same stalk controls both the wipers and washers. Washers are essential in bad weather.

Function

To keep the windscreen clear of rain, snow or fog.

Note: Some vehicles may be fitted with miniature wipers/washers to keep the headlamps clear.

Regular checks

Check the fluid containers regularly, and keep them topped up.

You can use additives to prevent smearing and assist cleaning, and, especially in the winter, to prevent icing-up.

Wiper blades

Wiper blades are vital to your safety. Replace them regularly or fit **long-life** blades.

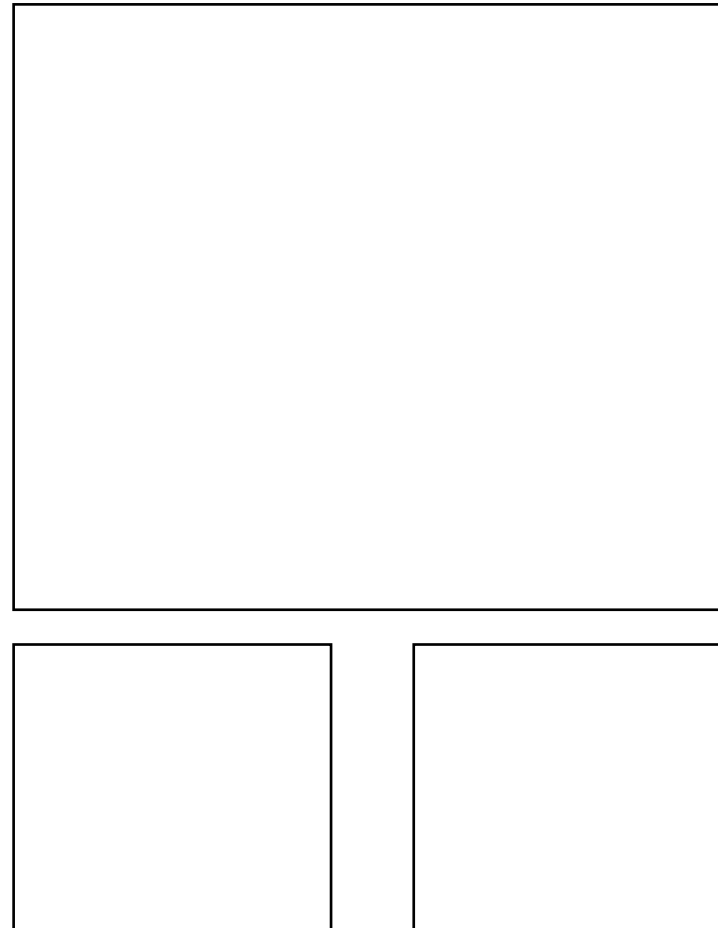


Fig 2.16 Position of Windscreen Wipers / Washer controls

2 The Lighting Controls

Sidelamps and Headlamp controls

Position

On most vehicles, the lighting controls are on a stalk at the side of the steering column. This stalk normally has three positions

Off.
Side or dim dip, rear and number-plate lamps.
Full main or dipped beam and the dipping control.

On some vehicles the dipping control is a separate switch. Normally a warning light *usually blue* shows when the headlights are on main beam. Some vehicles have 'dim-dip' headlamps, which come on as the ignition is switched on. It's impossible to drive these vehicles with the side lamps only switched on.

Use

This will be covered in **Section 11, Driving at night.**

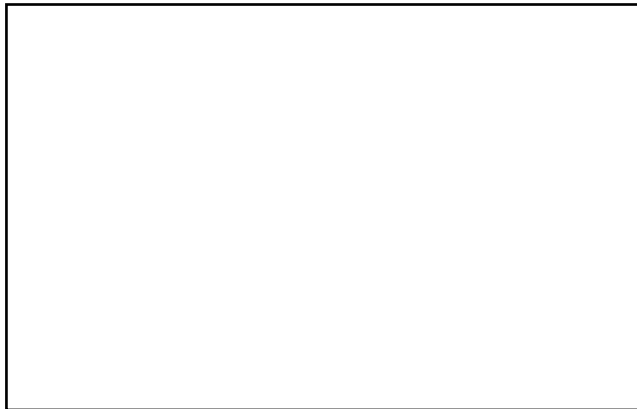


Fig 2.17 Typical Headlamp / sidelamp control

Rear fog lamp switch

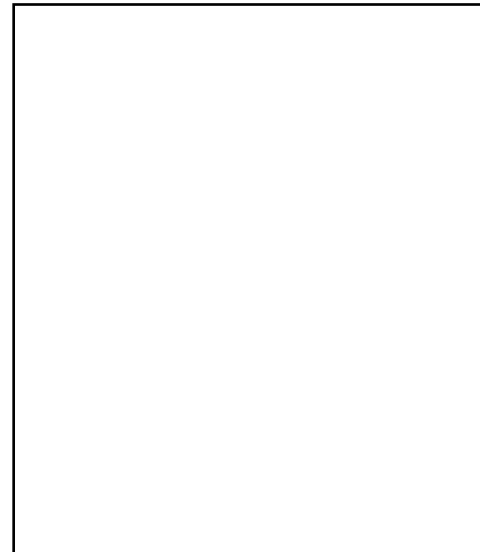
Rear fog-lamps are compulsory on all modern vehicles. They should work only when the headlights are on. A warning light will show when they are on.

Position

Since it's only used in bad weather, the rear fog-lamp switch is usually on the instrument panel rather than on the steering column.

Use

You must only use rear fog-lights when visibility is seriously reduced: 100 metres, 328 feet or less. You must not use either front or rear fog-lights in any other circumstances because they can dazzle and distract drivers.



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Horn

Position

- On most vehicles, the horn control is either
- On the steering wheel
 - On the outer end of the stalk which controls the direction indicators

Function

To warn other road users of your presence.

Use

To tell other drivers you're there, if this is necessary.

Aggressive sounding of the horn is dangerous. It can distract and alarm other drivers.

- You must not sound your horn when
- Your vehicle is stationary, unless there's danger from a moving vehicle
 - In a built-up area between 11.30pm and 7am unless there's danger from another moving vehicle when you're stationary - otherwise flash your headlights.



Fig 2.18 Typical positions of the horn control

Heated windscreen and rear window

Most cars have heated rear windows, and some have heated front windscreens as well.

Function

To keep the windscreen and rear screen clear of

- Internal condensation, and
- Frost and ice on the outside

Use

Use as necessary to keep your front and rear windscreens clear, especially in wet and cold conditions.

Demister

Once the engine has warmed up, you can set the controls to direct warm air to the windscreen, and on some vehicles, the front side windows. The fan control can be set to 'max' to boost the warm air



Fig 2.19 Warning Lights for rear window and heated windscreen

2 Ignition switch and starter

Position

Usually on the steering column
Before operating the starter, make sure

- The handbrake is on, and
- The gear lever is in neutral

In most vehicles, the ignition and starter are incorporated in the same switch.

Some vehicles have a separate starter button. On most vehicles, an anti-theft device is incorporated into the ignition switch. This mechanism locks the steering column and slight movement may need to be applied to the steering wheel to release the device before the ignition key can be turned.

Ignition

The ignition switch and starter are operated by the ignition key.

The first position

Operates some of the electrical equipment, such as the radio.

The second position

Switches on the ignition, instrument panel and gauges. A red warning light will usually show when the key reaches this position.

The third position

Operates the starter.

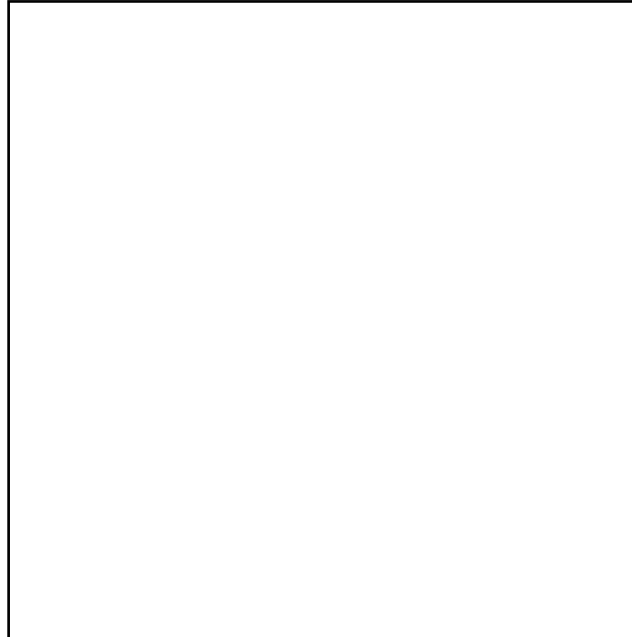
The side lights normally work without the ignition being switched on. The direction indicators and, on some vehicles, the head lamps will only operate when the ignition is switched on.

Use

The starter is usually operated by turning the 4 ignition key to its maximum. As soon as the engine starts, release the key. Don't operate 4 the starter when the engine is running. This 44 can damage the starter motor and engagement mechanism.

Warning

When the vehicle is being towed, the anti-theft device locking the steering column must be released by inserting the ignition key and ensuring that the steering wheel is free to move (unless a suspended tow is being used).



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2 Choke

Position

Usually a pull control on or under the instrument panel. Many vehicles have automatic chokes.

Function

All vehicles with petrol engines have some form of choke. This reduces the amount of air in the air-fuel mixture, and helps to start the engine from cold.

Use

With a manual choke, the further you pull the control out, the smaller the amount of air/fuel mixture. The colder the weather, the richer the mixture needs to be. The amount you need to pull also depends on the make and model of the vehicle.

Automatic chokes

These have little driver control. See the vehicle owner's handbook for any adjustment to the setting. The choke engages if the engine is cold and disengages as the engine warms up.

Until the choke disengages, the engine will run too fast, making the vehicle more difficult to control.

As the engine warms up

With a manual choke, you must push in the control as soon as the engine warms up, otherwise the richness of the mixture

- Could damage the engine by counteracting the effects of the lubrication system, and
 - Will certainly waste petrol
- Also, making the excess petrol will make the engine run too fast, and the vehicle more difficult to control. This is particularly dangerous on vehicles with automatic transmission as it can cause the vehicle to move even when you're not pressing the accelerator (See Section 20)

Diesel engines

A pre-heating device is incorporated in most diesel engines.

The starter should only be operated when the indicator light goes out (where fitted).



Fig 2.22 Manual choke warning light

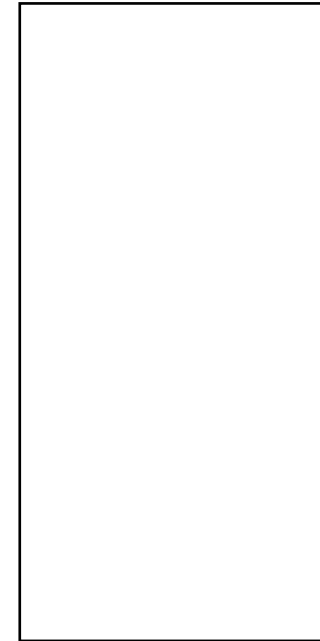


Fig 2.21 Pre-heating warning light

2 Hazard Warning Lights

Position

The position of this control varies. Some vehicles have it on the steering column, others on the instrument panel. It's usually

- within easy reach of the driver's hands
- Clearly marked to prevent accidental use

Use

To warn other road users when you're temporarily obstructing traffic, for example when

- You have broken down, or
- You have to slow down quickly on a motorway or unrestricted dual carriageway, because of a hazard ahead. In this case, use the hazard warning lights briefly (just a few flashes)

Don't use them to excuse stopping in a restricted area, such as on double yellow lines - regardless of how brief your stop. A warning light will flash when the hazard warning lights are in use. Don't forget to switch them off before moving away!

Remember

If another driver is unable to see both sides of your vehicle, the hazard warning lights could be mistaken for a turning signal.

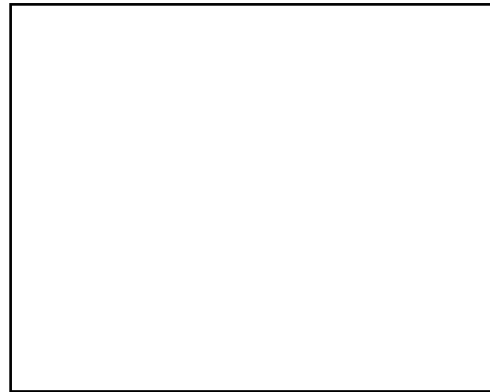


Fig 2.23 Hazard warning lights



Fig 2.24 Hazard warning light switch

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In Conclusion

A final word

Having studied this book, are YOU satisfied with your own standard of driving?

If you are satisfied, should you be?

Every one of us is capable of making mistakes on the road. However, not every driver is prepared to make allowances for those mistakes when they are committed by others.

Watch out for other people's mistakes and be ready to slow down or stop - even if you have the right of way. Never rely on other road users doing the right thing. It's dangerous.

Always be critical of your own standard of driving before you comment on that of another driver. Ask yourself if you always stick to the rules so that everyone else knows what to expect?

Remember, the perfect road user doesn't exist.

Whatever stage you have reached as a driver, always aim for a higher standard. Watch other drivers and copy the best of what you see.

Be tolerant of their worst, and learn how to avoid such errors yourself.

There is no place on today's roads for impatience, intolerance, exhibitionism, aggression or selfishness. If you behave in any of those ways, you're well on your way to having an accident.

The ability to handle your vehicle and react quickly to road and traffic conditions doesn't necessarily make you either a good or a safe driver.

Driving skills will not prevent accidents. Your attitude of mind is just as important, as is having a detailed knowledge of defensive driving techniques. Developing the right attitude and behaviour is something you need to keep working at.

The good driver needs

- A sense of responsibility
- Concentration on the job of driving
- Good anticipation
- Patience and confidence

Above all, show courtesy and consideration to ALL road users.

Reducing the risk of accidents will make our roads safer for everyone.]
So make sure your aim is **"Safe driving for life"**

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Useful Addresses

Driving Standards Agency
Stanley House
Talbot Street
Nottingham NG1 5GU
Tel: (0602) 474222

Guild of Experienced Motorists
Station Road
Forest Row
East Sussex RH18 5EN
Tel: (0342) 825676

Institute of Advanced Motorists
IAM House
359 Chiswick High Road
London W4 4HS
Tel: (081) 994 4403

The Royal Society for the
Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)
The Priory
Queensway
Birmingham B4 6BS
Tel: (021) 200 2461

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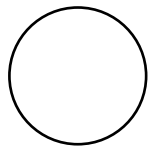
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Do you teach others to drive?
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