

Horse safety on the roads ----- in Australia -----



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Acknowledgements



Horse Safety Australia

South Australian Police

The British Horse Society

Disclaimer

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Forward

When I joined Pony Club at the age of 13, I was given a shiny A5 booklet on horse and rider safety produced by the South Australian Mounted Police in 1989, which I still own. At the time, I rode about three kilometres on the verge of a public road to get to Pony Club rallies every fortnight. I later kept horses in and around Yatala Vale, Golden Grove and Fairview Park. If I wanted to take my horse for a trail ride, I rode through local creek beds and parks – crossing several bitumen roads to get there.

Some 30 years later, horses, riders and drivers have not changed very much. However, the coincidental familiarity that urban and suburban people may have had with horses from locals riding through the suburbs is in decline as natural spaces increasingly exclude horses and housing development takes over many suburban agistment properties.

At the same time, there has been some increased peri-urbanisation which has brought horses, riders and other road users together in new ways.

People who are 'first in family' horse owners may have purchased a hobby farm to start a life with horses, learning about the importance of safety for themselves along the way. People who have moved to peri-urban areas from the city to enjoy a rural idyll might find themselves driving past horse riders with little to no knowledge of how horses behave and the danger they can pose to drivers. Moreover, horses who were previously kept in inner-city suburbs are now less habituated to roads and drivers. Some of the parks that I used to ride my horse through as a teenager are now off-limits to horse riders. Now that I keep horses in the Adelaide Hills, I ride on dirt roads to get to National Parks. I no longer have to worry about Obahn buses passing my horse, but I might encounter cyclists, motorcyclists, trucks, trailers, livestock, walkers and other horse riders.

Wherever you ride, horse and rider safety is as important as it ever was or will be. The roads are potentially dangerous for all users – some are just vulnerable for different reasons. I spent a decade of my academic career conducting research on horse rider safety. In 2015, I published findings from a survey where over half of all riders (52%) reported having experienced at least one accident or near miss in the prior 12 months. This is alarming, given that every accident or near-miss to a horse and rider is a potential accident or near-miss to a driver, passenger, cyclist or pedestrian.

Unlike other road users, horse riders need to accommodate a sentient decision-making animal into their road-use experience. As such, rider safety is not just dependent on a knowledge of road rules or the use of protective equipment like helmets and high vis clothing. It relies on the rider having a thorough understanding of horse behaviour and developing an effective relationship with the horse so that they can prevent, mitigate and effectively respond to road incidents. Riders must be continually assessing themselves, their situation and their horses – who can behave differently from day to day, if not minute to minute.

That is why this booklet has been produced. It provides horse riders with the foundation knowledge in all relevant aspects of horse and rider safety on the road. It also contains important updates to horse knowledge and road rules that have occurred since I first started riding.

Still, the road safety of horses and riders is dependent on all road users being patient and aware. I hope that horse riders use this booklet to improve their personal safety practices on and around horses. I also hope that horse riders engage productively with other road users to share information about horse behaviour and create positive relationships. It doesn't matter if you are a rider, cyclist or a driver, sharing the road means sharing a responsibility for everyone's safety.

Dr Kirrilly Thompson, PhD

*Vice-Chair of The Horse Federation of SA
Participation and Development Manager, Pony Club Australia
Adjunct Senior Research Fellow, University of South Australia*



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Introduction

Owning, handling and riding horses can provide us with much enjoyment as well as physical and social benefits.

Through raising awareness about the nature of horses and how to prepare for riding on the roads, we can make informed decisions that will contribute to the safety of all road users.

Horse safety on the roads in Australia is an educational resource and is not a replacement for the Australian Road Rules, or State and Territory Acts or Regulations, or Local Council by-laws. All horse riders and handlers will need to be familiar with the Australian Road Rules specific to their local area.

Checklist for riding or leading a horse on the roads:

1. Rider or handler is familiar with the 'Australian Road Rules'
2. Rider or handler has let someone know about the planned route and expected time of return
3. Rider or handler is wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
4. The horse and rider or handler are a good match for maximum control and safety
5. Rider or handler has first practiced skills for the roads in an enclosed area
6. The horse has received the training required for safer riding and leading on roads
7. The horse is healthy and will be comfortable with the road surface and type of ride
8. Saddlery and equipment are maintained and well fitted
9. Rider or handler carries communication and identification of both horse and rider
10. The horse has been trained to load into a float in the case of an incident.

Preparing to ride on the roads

About horses

Horses have evolved to graze and browse for up to 17 hours a day and live with other horses in small groups, which provides a high level of social interaction. Horses are reactive by nature, often running away from frightening situations.

It is through an awareness of natural behaviours that it is possible to train a horse to be ridden or led, including in higher risk environments such as on roads with traffic.

By observing horses, riders or handlers can learn more about their own horse's ways of communicating through body language and behaviours. In recognising the small behaviour changes, it is possible to train and ride horses successfully. Similarly, by noticing these small changes, it may help prevent an accident by taking proactive steps to manage a potentially dangerous situation.

Horse's eyes are positioned on the side of the head, providing a very wide field of vision. Lowering their head helps them to see objects close to their body, while raising their head helps them to see into the distance.

The positioning of the head and neck helps to communicate where the horse has his attention.

The ears are also an indicator of where the horse is directing its attention. Ears forward usually means that the horse has its attention held by the situation in front of them, while ears to the side generally mean the horse is relaxed. Ears pinned backwards is a sign that the horse is agitated by a situation, perhaps caused by another horse being too close, or a loud noise.

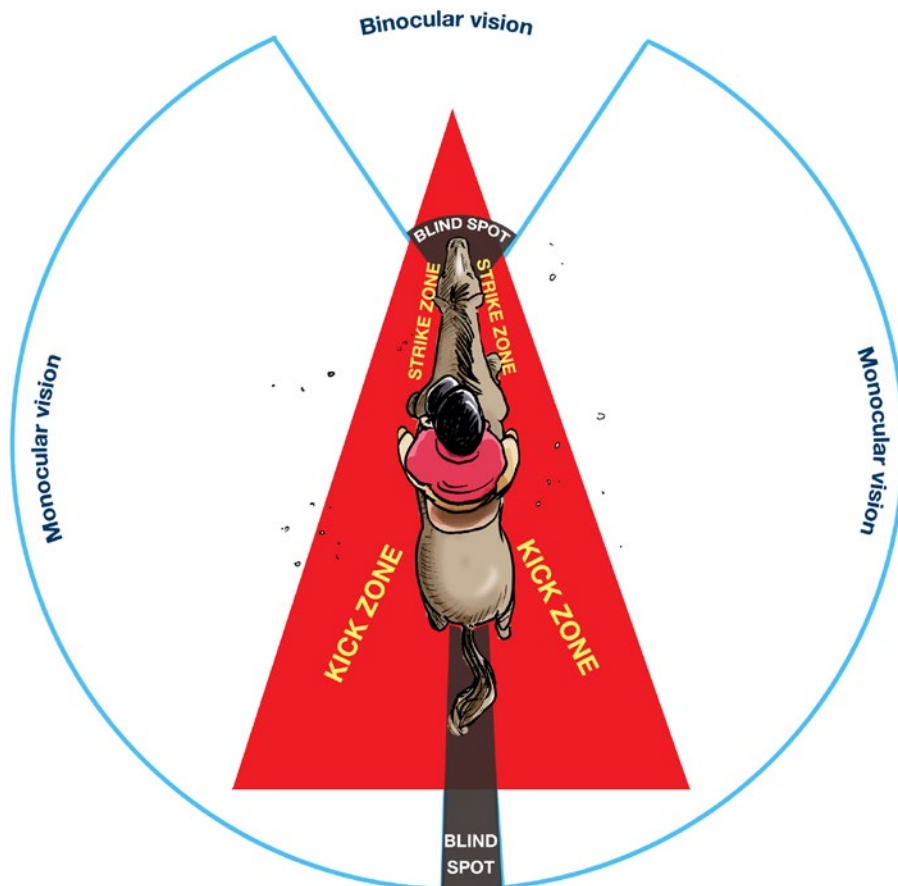
People with experience handling and observing horses will become 'tuned in' to even the most subtle changes in horses.

There will be times when the horse is nervous, or 'shies' past an object, meaning the horse stops and may step or jump sideways or backwards. Some horses may lower their head to take a closer look at the object, perhaps giving a loud snort, while other horses may spin around and on occasion, bolt (run) away.

If your horse senses a problem, firstly stay calm yourself and let the horse stand and assess the situation.

When the horse has relaxed a little and the surroundings are as safe as possible, apply the leg aid to ask the horse to move forward.

At all times remain aware of the surrounding traffic and road conditions. In some situations, it may be safer to dismount and lead the horse past a problem.



Remember, horses have a 'blind spot' directly in front and behind.



Matching the horse and rider

A suitable match between a horse and rider will ensure the best possible outcome for many hours of enjoyable and safer riding. A mismatch increases the risk of a serious incident and potential injuries.

Evaluation in a safe area by a competent horse person should be conducted and may require several sessions in different environments along with information regarding the history and experience of both the horse and rider.

Safe Work Australia has published a 'Guide to managing risks when new and inexperienced persons interact with horses' for workplaces. The SafeWork NSW Code of Practice for 'Managing risks when new or inexperienced riders or handlers interact with horses in the workplace' includes templates to guide assessments for matching horses and riders.

Personal Protective Equipment

Horse riding and handling comes with many risks including falling from a height at speed. Therefore riders should wear protective equipment to help reduce the severity of potential injuries.

Recommended in the Australian Horse Industry Council Code of Practice (revised 2009), riders should wear a sleeved top, long pants, appropriate footwear and a helmet. Equestrian sports organisations such as Equestrian Australia and Pony Club Australia, publish a list of approved helmets. In addition, many riders choose to wear a body protector as used in the sports of eventing and racing.

Brightly coloured clothing, ideally with reflective strips ('Hi-Viz'), will improve your visibility to other road users and is especially important in low light and adverse weather conditions.

Reflective strips added to horse equipment and saddlery such as horse boots, browband, breastplate and quarter (rump) rug further increases your visibility and can be accompanied by lights fixed on the rear of the saddle, stirrups or rider's helmet.

For safety reasons avoid riding or handling horses while wearing jewellery, carrying a bag with a strap over your shoulder by your neck, or clothes which flap wildly in the wind. Take care to avoid moving or holding objects near the horse which may create a reaction causing loss of control.

All personal protective equipment and any saddlery must be fit for purpose (e.g. the stirrup is the right size for the rider's boot), and receive regular maintenance or replacement where required. Horse riders need to be familiar with manufacturers' recommendations, for example, helmet manufacturers recommend replacing helmets every five years, or if the helmet has received a hard blow, even if there is no visible external damage.

Employers are required to consult with employees or volunteers about Personal Protective Equipment as part of an overall approach to managing safety risks in the workplace. Further information is available under 'Personal Protective Equipment' on the Safe Work Australia website.

Sample Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) checklist:

- Helmet
- Riding boots
- Sleeved shirt and trousers
- Hi-Viz reflective clothing and gloves
- A safety vest, if appropriate
- For the horse, tack up with Hi-Viz saddlery and equipment with reflective strips
- Carry communication and identification of horse and rider
- A small water container, halter and twine for tying up the horse in an emergency.



Safer practices around horses

Attentive riding

All horse riders and handlers on roads are legitimate, yet they are 'vulnerable' users, meaning there is no crash protection in the case of an accident compared to a motorised vehicle.

It's just as important to be attentive when riding or leading a horse on the road as it is for driving a car. It is easy to talk with friends or answer a mobile phone call and become distracted. Please note that talking on the phone when riding on the roads is an offence as the horse is a vehicle.

An attentive rider rides pro-actively to keep the horse moving and straight past unfamiliar objects, without letting the horse become a traffic nuisance, such as allowing the rump to swing into traffic.

If a hazard is likely to unsettle the horse, there may be an opportunity to adjust the line of travel (e.g. move into a driveway as a large truck passes), or find a way to avoid potential problems altogether, such as using alternative routes.



Developing a pro-active approach to riding and staying alert to situations around you can be described as 'defensive' riding.

Defensive riding and leading skills include:

- Anticipate the unexpected
- Have control of the horse's speed and direction
- Take steps to avoid accidents, e.g. remain visible on the road to other users
- Never assume other drivers will act in a certain way
- Never assume that drivers will guess how you or your horse may react
- Demonstrate respect for all road users
- Adapt to the road conditions.

Horse behaviours are confusing to many people. A dog that is jumping around with his tail wagging is generally happy and playful. In contrast, if a horse moved about similarly while being ridden (including swishing the tail), it is likely to be nervous or frightened. A member of the public may not be able to tell the difference, which is a risk that riders need to consider.



A nervous rider may also become a risk to other road users if it prevents a pro-active approach to riding. There are ways to manage this such as building confidence prior to riding out on the roads, riding out with a more experienced horse and rider or working with a coach or an accredited equine-assisted therapist.

Over-confidence may mean that the horse and rider become a hazard on the roads. Examples include riding at a trot or canter around corners, cutting across roads with not enough distance to oncoming traffic, or waving arms while talking with friends confusing drivers who may be looking for a hand signal.

Finally, riders who are oblivious to their riding actions may also become a hazard, e.g. straggling behind in a large group, leaving gaps for cars to pull in. Vehicle drivers may become frustrated and attempt dangerous overtaking, toot the horn or take other potentially dangerous actions.

Emergency dismount

Experienced riders will stay on the horse in most situations, but there may be an emergency event requiring a fast, safe dismount from either the left or the right side of the horse. If possible, stop your horse before you do this. You may need to dismount while the horse is still walking, but do not dismount if the horse is in a faster pace or bolting.

- Use the 'Lifesaver look' LOOK. CHECK. LOOK AGAIN
- Remove both feet out of the stirrups
- Dismount
- LOOK. CHECK. LOOK AGAIN
- Take the reins over the horse's head and lead forward to a safer place
- Once you are in safer place, cross the stirrups over the saddle to avoid them getting caught or bouncing on the horse's side
- As you lead off, position yourself between the horse and the traffic.

Practice the emergency dismount procedure regularly in an enclosed area.

Hand signals

Use the 'lifesaver look' LOOK - CHECK - LOOK AGAIN

When riding on the roads, always be aware of the situation around you. Look, listen and think ahead.

Using hand signals lets other road users know what your intentions are but are not a guarantee of safety. Sun glare, for example, may mean that other road users do not see your signals, or do not see you and your horse at all. It may be necessary to repeat a turn, stop or slow down hand signal, depending on traffic conditions or horse behaviour.

Tips:

- Wear light coloured gloves
- Never hold a riding whip in the hand that is signalling
- Thank other road users.



How to do a hand signal for 'slow down':

- Use the 'Lifesaver look' LOOK. CHECK. LOOK AGAIN
- Turn in the saddle to face the driver or traffic
- Extend your arm out level with your shoulder
- Face the palm of your hand down, close fingers and thumb
- Move your arm up and down slowly
- Hold the signal for long enough that your intentions are clear to other road users.



How to do a hand signal for 'stop':

- Use the 'Lifesaver look' LOOK. CHECK. LOOK AGAIN
- Turn in the saddle to face the driver or traffic
- Extend your arm out level with your shoulder with your arm bent and your hand upwards.
- Face the palm of your hand forwards, close fingers and thumb
- Hold the signal for long enough that your intentions are clear to other road users.



How to do a hand signal to indicate a turn:

- Use the 'Lifesaver look' LOOK. CHECK. LOOK AGAIN
- Extend your arm out level with your shoulder. If turning left, use your left arm, if turning right use your right arm
- Face the palm of your hand forwards, close fingers and thumb
- Hold the signal for long enough to make sure your intentions are clear to other road users
- Repeat all steps if necessary until the turn is completed.

Travel in a horse float (trailer)

Occasions may arise where a horse will need to travel in a float. Perhaps a return trip home is required if an incident occurs out on the ride. As with many skills, handlers and horses benefit from regular float loading practice. Horses who usually travel in trucks may also need to practice loading into a float.

Tips:

- Avoid standing behind a tailgate while raising or lowering, or directly behind a horse when loading or unloading
- Keep an empty bag and 'pooper scooper' in the horse float ready to remove manure from public parking areas
- Keep a first aid kit each for humans and horses with the vehicle and float
- Keep emergency information about your horse handy. (Refer to Appendix 3: Horse Transport Travel Card)
- Regularly inspect the float for safety and maintenance. (Refer to Appendix 1: SA Police Road Safety Centre: Considerations when towing a horse float).



Practice loading and unloading onto a trailer regularly, in preparation for an emergency trip.

Riding on the roads skills checklists

This checklist may assist in planning rider practice sessions, ideally held in an enclosed area. When practising, wear the same horse and rider equipment as will be worn when riding on the roads.

Rider skills checklist:

- Know the road rules e.g. how to negotiate an intersection and roundabout
- Know your hand signals

Practice the following:

- Hand signal to turn left, right, stop and slow down
- Turn left, right and halt and stand (you need to be able to do this holding the reins in one hand)
- Ride past hazards you are likely to encounter, e.g. rubbish bin, dog, pram
- Ride over different ground surfaces similar to what you may encounter
- Negotiate trail obstacles you are likely to encounter e.g. step-overs, gates
- Ride in pairs or as a group (if required for your situation)
- Halt and stand as though you are checking for traffic
- An emergency dismount from both sides of the horse
- Leading your horse from both sides
- Attending an incident such as a fallen rider, e.g. check for hazards, dismounting, holding other horses, calling for emergency services, first aid.

Tips:

On some intersections, markings take road users into the centre of an intersection while waiting to turn. Many horses are likely to find it unsettling with traffic on many sides. It may be safer to ride through the intersection, turn around further along in a quieter area, then come back to turn onto the road you want to ride on.

Horse skills checklist:

- Relaxed, comfortable with Personal Protective Equipment and Hi-Viz horse and rider equipment
- Remains relaxed while the rider mounts and dismounts, and practices hand signals
- Parks (stands still) in quiet spaces or alongside roads
- Obedient with frequent transitions between halt, walk and trot, including in pairs or a group
- Obedient when walking around hazards such as parked cars or past new objects
- Obedient when ridden across a range of surface types and colours, e.g. light, smooth cement or darker road surface with white markings or water running in street gutters
- Obedient when ridden past a variety of road-related infrastructure, e.g. signage, road works
- Obedient when negotiating a range of road and trail obstacles common to your local area
- Loads into a horse trailer (may need to occur if an incident means the horse is unable to be ridden home).

Tips:

Before going out onto the roads, practice skills in a place the horse is familiar with, e.g. an enclosed riding arena. Once the horse is calm, confident, and obedient to the rider or leader, gradually introduce new places to practice the same skills such as halting alongside the walls of buildings or by the front gate. Take measures to avoid the horse moving before the rider has provided instructions. A horse that anticipates can lead to a dangerous situation on the roads.

Riding on the roads

Australian Road Rules

'Australian Road Rules' provide the rules for each state or territory. It is essential that horse riders who wish to ride on the roads keep themselves updated with the rules that apply in their state.

For example, Rule 15 of 'Australian Road Rules' defines a vehicle as including an animal such as a horse that is being ridden or drawing a vehicle.

Queensland, South Australian and Victoria have dedicated web pages about sharing the road with animals. The references section in this book contains the web addresses.

One easy way to make sure you know the road rules is by taking an online quiz relevant to where you are riding:

New South Wales

'Driver knowledge test'

Northern Territory

'Get your driver licence'

Queensland

'Practice road rules test'

South Australia

'Road rules quiz'

Tasmania

'Welcome to the practice driver knowledge test'

Victoria

'Practice learner driver test'

Western Australia

'Road rules theory test quiz'

Council by-laws

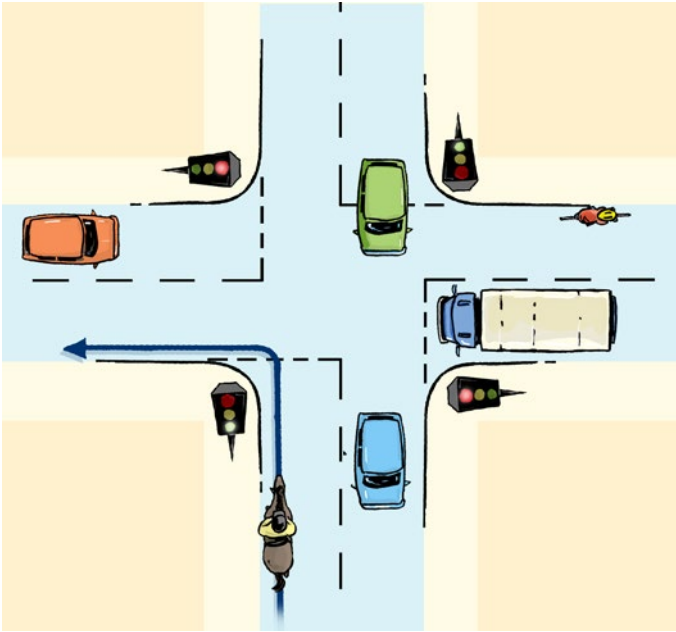
Local councils may have by-laws which outline what can and cannot take place on community land. By-laws may prohibit certain activities or state that permission or a permit is required.

Rules may refer to leading or riding horses on local roads, footpaths or community land. It is the responsibility of riders and handlers to familiarise themselves with possible by-laws of applicable councils.

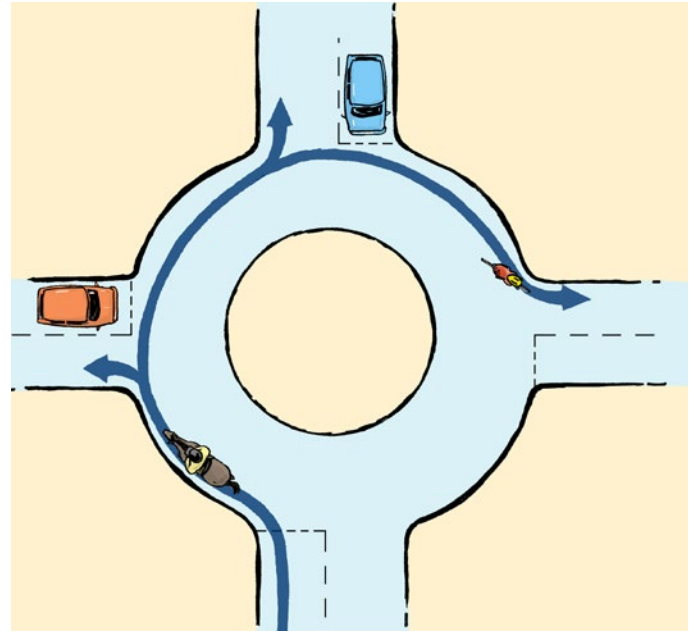
Community events held on the roads

A large group of horse riders planning to use a road for a street parade, historical re-enactments or other community activity may be required by law to notify the local council and police. Each council will have requirements relating to advertising the public notification permitting the event, compulsory signage and volunteers to monitor safety.

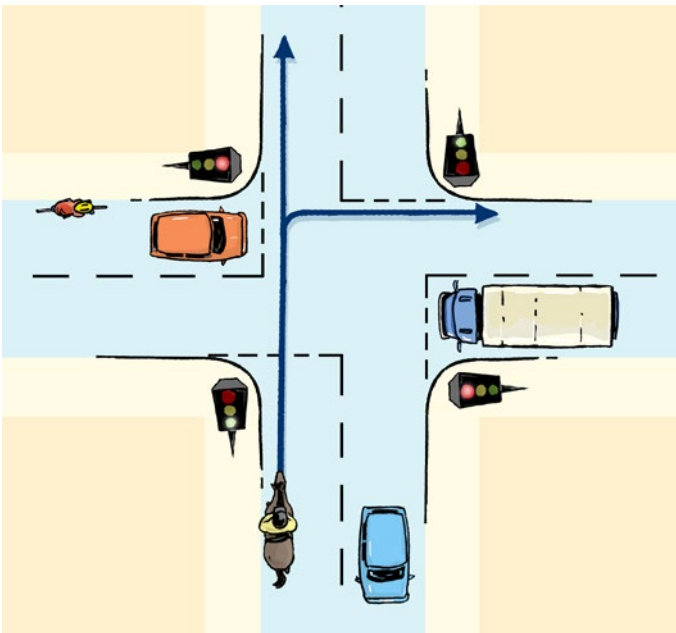
Road Rules Quiz



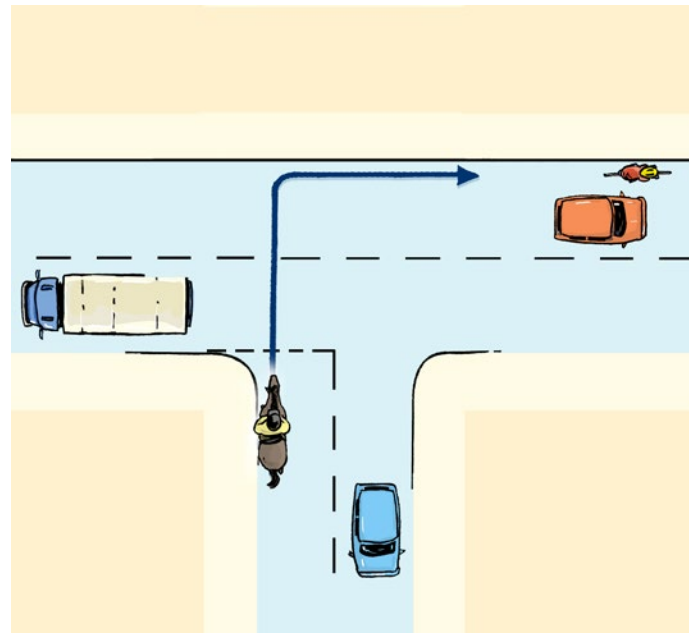
Q1: Left turn at an intersection with a traffic light.
What are the steps to take to execute the turn?



Q3: Left turn at a roundabout.
What are the steps to take to execute the turn?



Q2: Right turn at a Give-way sign.
What are the steps to take to execute the turn?



Q4: Right turn at a major intersection.
Often the white lines indicate you should wait in the centre of the intersection. Many horses will not tolerate traffic all around them. What alternative options for turning onto the new section of road could a horse rider consider?

Refer to Appendix 2 for the answers.

Leading a horse when mounted

Leading a horse whilst riding another is an advanced skill, best practiced in an enclosed area before heading out onto the roads. Some rules apply when leading animals on public roads. Check your state road rules and local government by-laws as local variations may apply.

In summary:

- When leading a horse, position yourself between the horse and the traffic
- When riding a horse, the leading of no more than one other horse is permitted
- The leading of horses by a driver or passenger, while in or on a vehicle, is prohibited
- Leading horses while riding a bicycle is prohibited
- Tying horses to a moving vehicle is prohibited.

Riding as a pair or a group

Riding as a pair or group should be practised at home or riding club before heading out onto the roads. Horses need time to get used to being ridden close to other horses.

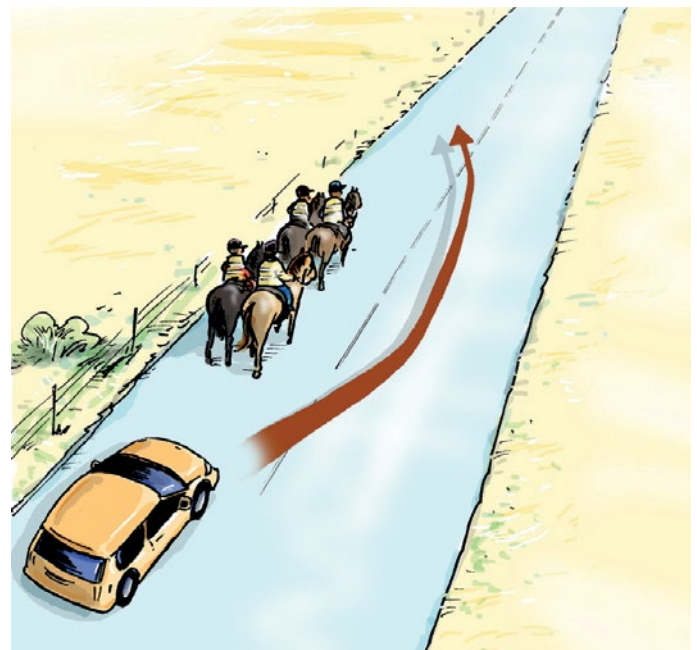
Check the route which you intend to take before riding out, as there may be some sections of the roads which would be more suitable to ride in a single file, such as on a tight bend or a crest.

Familiarise yourself with the relevant road rules. For example, in South Australia riders must not be more than 1.5 metres apart, to allow room for other traffic to pass. And no more than two horses abreast.

Ideally, position experienced riders and horses at the front and back of a group, and the side closest to the traffic.

Checklist of skills to be competent with when riding as a pair or a group:

- Delivery of a pre-ride briefing, including safety, the route and expected time of return
- Walk, trot and halt
- Turning to cross to the other side of the road from single file, pairs or group
- Crossing intersections, turning corners or other skills required
- Maintaining formation when riding around obstacles or parked vehicles
- Responding to a fallen rider
- The last rider (rear) and lead rider using hand signals
- Effective communication between the front and back of a group
- Delivery of a post-ride debrief.



Keep formation when riding as a group on the road, avoiding stragglers.

Footpaths and nature strips

Horse riders are permitted to use nature strips and footpaths unless local rules state otherwise. Horse riders must give way, and if necessary, slow down and stop for pedestrians.

Bike lanes and shared paths

Check and know the rules for riding on a shared path or area.

Some paths allow shared use and permit horses on or adjacent to the path along with bike riders and walkers. For example, on the Amy Gillett Bikeway in the Adelaide Hills, riders need to give way to pedestrians.

Bridges, fords and underpasses

Horse riders can negotiate bridges and underpasses in the same way as other vehicles. If utilising a dedicated footpath, check first for pedestrians and cyclists.

Recreational trails

Increasingly, local councils are recognising the value of planning to incorporate recreational trails within a road reserve. Waymarkers (signage) identifies the direction of the route catering for non-motorised recreational travellers.

Less formal than footpaths, recreational trails often meander in and out of vegetation and community infrastructure, be positioned near the carriageway, (the part of the road on which vehicles drive) or on land between the carriageway and boundary fence.

A range of users access recreational trails, including walkers and cyclists; therefore, horse riders need to exercise care, preparing to slow down or stop when approaching pedestrians or cyclists. Safe and enjoyable roadside trail experiences are enhanced when riders take the time to explain to community members how to pass their horse safely. A smile, a nod and a thank you let people know you appreciate they are also practising safe trail use.

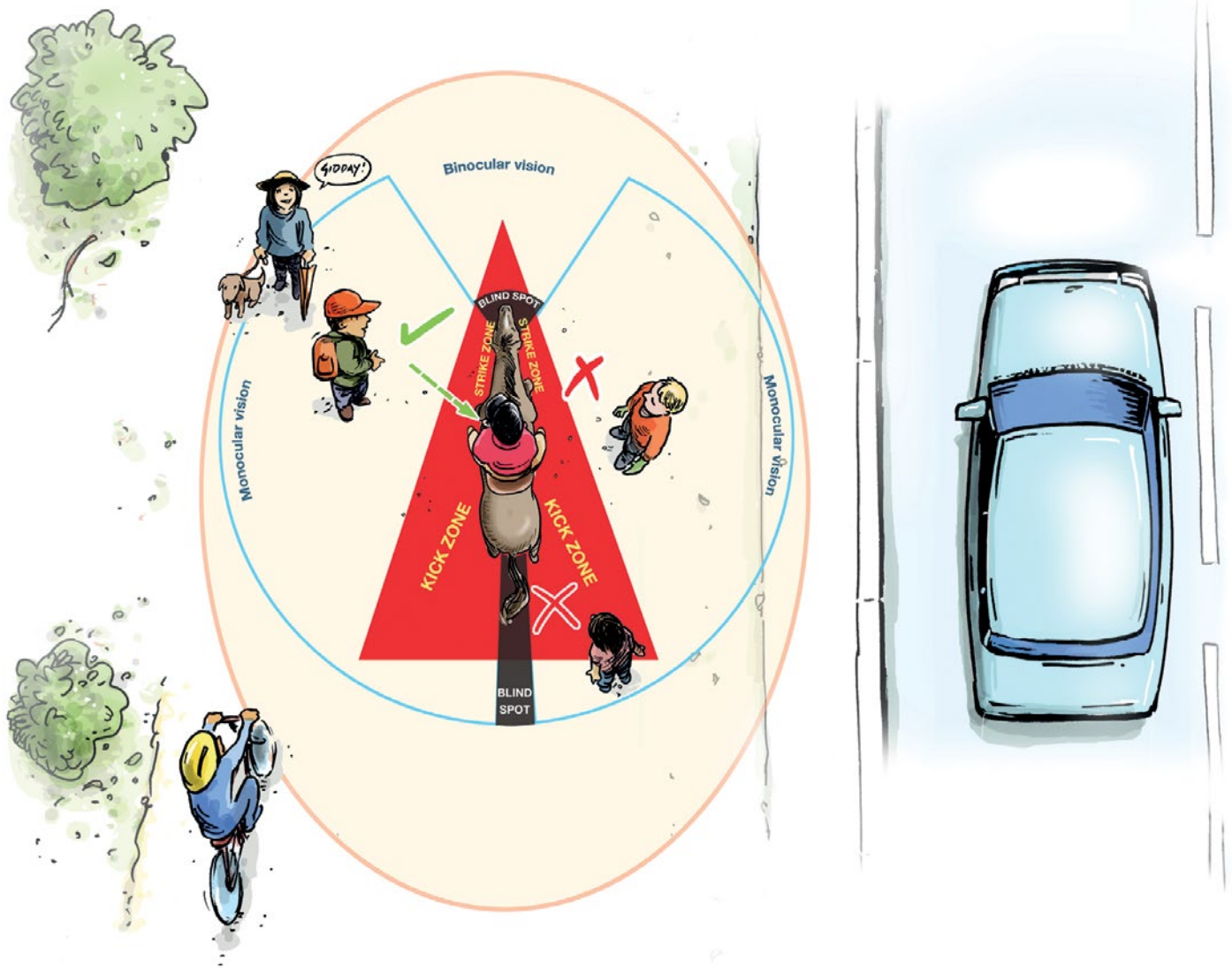


Prepare to slow down or stop when passing other trail users.

Did you know?

- A 'carriageway' is the part of the road on which vehicles travel, including the road shoulder.
- A 'road reserve' is land put aside for use as a road, including the carriageway, footpaths and nature strips. The boundaries are often delineated on each side by fencelines with adjacent properties.
- A 'road verge' is all land between the boundary fence of the road reserve and the edge of the carriageway.

Recreational trails within road related areas



Horse riders:

Watch your horse's body language all times. Horses with a high level of alertness will have their head up, eyes wide and ears alert.

Slow down or stop when passing other trail users. Let others know how to pass you safely.

Remember to thank people, in appreciation of practising safer trail use.

Other trail users:

Please pull aside and wait.

If you are approaching a horse from the rear, slow down, indicate your presence and ask the rider how to pass safely. Leave lots of space.

If you want to pat the horse, ask the rider if it is ok. Approach the shoulder. All people stay on the same side of the horse.

Vehicles drivers:

Slow down and be patient. Don't sound the horn. Pass wide and slow and don't speed off.

Note: This information is a guide only.

Dangerous road conditions

Riding on the roads in low light conditions such as dawn, dusk, fog, in the dark or poor weather will increase risk. It may be unsafe to ride in adverse weather conditions and in the dark.

It is dangerous to enter floodwaters, even at a favourite ford crossing.

There are some road conditions which are higher risk potentially causing a horse to shy or move suddenly and in an unpredictable manner.

To be safe you need to be an attentive and proactive rider, and look out for:

- Changes in the road surface or type of surface
- An oil or chemical spill
- Driveways, spoon drains, ramps, hole covers, potholes
- Infrastructure on or near the road, e.g. signs, maintenance hole cover, roadworks, public seating
- Where surfaces suddenly change colour or texture
- Lines painted on the road surface
- Noise from gas guns used in vineyards and orchards
- Farm machinery and large trucks
- Trucks using air brakes.

While riding, if your horse unexpectedly slips or falls, try not to panic. Aim to kick both feet clear of the stirrups and position yourself to avoid being hurt. If there are no injuries to the horse it should stand up again (it may take a few minutes). Check for hazards and traffic and move to a safer place if need be. Check yourself and your horse for injuries and you will need to decide if your horse can be ridden or led any further or if a horse float/trailer will be required for transport home.

Reporting incidents

If you are riding or leading a horse that is involved in a road-related incident (e.g. collision with a vehicle), you have a legal obligation to:

- Stop
- Assist if safe to do so
- Give your name and address if requested to the driver of any other vehicle, any other injured person, or the owner of any damaged property
- Report the incident to the police within 24 hours.

If you were riding or leading a horse within the law and demonstrating respect for others but may have been on the receiving end of bad behaviour by another road user, report the incident to the police.

Many horse riders who frequent the roads wear a helmet or body camera, in the same way as vehicle drivers use a dashcam.

Damage

It is a good idea to report road issues to your local council or state transport authority, such as fallen trees, damaged signage or road-related infrastructure, deceased animals or dumping of rubbish.

Insurance

Horse riders and handlers may consider seeking advice about insurance before going out on the roads.

Insurance is available for people and horses. Seek professional advice as to the requirements of an insurance package to suit your situation, e.g. if personal accident insurance is to include riding on the road and Public Liability.

Appendices

Appendix 1: SA Police Road Safety Centre: Considerations when towing a horse float

When you put a horse in a horse float you have a couple of tonnes of unstable weight behind your vehicle. Each horse has its own character: some will travel well and others won't and because horses move around you will feel it through the car. The following guidelines will help ensure your prized equine remains safe and everyone arrives at their destination happily.

How will you tow your horse float or trailer?

Towing with an under-powered or under-braked vehicle is unsafe. Check what you can tow with your vehicle before you start to shop for a new horse float or trailer or if you intend to borrow/hire one for the day. Consider the following:

- What is your towing vehicle's towing capacity?
- What is your tow bar rating?
- What is your tow bar's ball rating?
- What is the tare weight and Aggregate Trailer Mass (ATM) of the horse float you intend to use?
- Does the horse float have adequate safety chains?
- Will I need an electric breakaway system?
- Do the horse float's lights work?
- Is the horse float/trailer registered?

Towing capacity

If your vehicle can be used for towing, there are restrictions imposed by the towing capacity of your vehicle and tow bar which include:

- The trailer's loaded mass (including horses, saddlery, feed, water, etc.) must not exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle or the capacity of the tow bar (whichever is the lowest).
- You must comply with any conditions imposed by the vehicle manufacturer.
- The weight of passengers and items added to your vehicle such as canopies, roof racks and bull bars can all affect your vehicle's towing capacity.
- You must not exceed the weight limit for your class of licence (C class licence is 4.5 tonnes or less).

You can find the towing capacity by looking in the vehicle handbook or by contacting the manufacturer.

Horse float/ trailer

It is essential that you check horse float manufacturer's information so the float or trailer isn't overloaded and the combined weight of the trailer and what it is carrying and the ATM doesn't exceed the towing capacity of your vehicle.

Trailer equipment

- All trailers with a Gross Trailer Mass (GTM) (total trailer mass when attached to the vehicle) of more than 750 kg must be fitted with brakes and all trailers over 2,000 kg must have electric breakaway systems (highly recommended for added safety regardless of trailer weight).
- All trailers must also be attached to the towing vehicle by means of a chain or cable. If the trailer coupling fails, it must allow safe towing of the trailer and should prevent the drawbar from hitting the road. The safety chain on your horse float or trailer coupling must have a rating that is adequate for the ATM of that horse float or trailer, attached with the correct weighted 'D' shackles. Chains should be crossed.

For further information on towing a horse float please refer to the National Vehicle Standards or

www.myllicence.sa.gov.au.

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Appendix 2: Road Rules Quiz Answers

Q1. Left turn at a traffic light:

- As you approach the intersection, give the 'lifesaver look' to the left, the right and behind
- Indicate with a hand signal you intend to turn left
- Check that traffic cannot pass you on your left
- If the traffic light is amber or red, halt behind the white line
- When the light is green, Look. Check. Look again before proceeding
- Continue signalling as you turn left
- Stay in the left lane as you turn left
- Look. Check. Look again when on the new section of road, checking that traffic can see you.

Q2. Right turn at a give-way sign:

- As you approach the intersection, give the 'lifesaver look' to the left, the right and behind
- Indicate with a hand signal you intend to turn right
- Ride at right-angles to the Give-way sign or white line
- Check that traffic cannot pass you on your right
- Check for traffic before entering the intersection (you may need to halt and wait)
- Give the lifesaver look again before turning

- Continue signalling as you turn right
- Stay in the left lane as you turn right
- Look. Check. Look again when on the new section of road, checking that traffic can see you.

Q3. Left turn at a roundabout:

- As you approach the roundabout, give the 'lifesaver look' to the left, the right and behind
- Indicate with a hand signal you intend to turn left
- Check that traffic cannot pass you on your left
- Before entering the roundabout, check for traffic already on the roundabout
- Give the lifesaver look again before turning
- Continue signalling as you turn left
- Stay in the left lane as you turn left
- Look. Check. Look again when on the new section of road, checking that traffic can see you.

Q4. Right turn at a major intersection:

- On some intersections, markings take road users into the centre of an intersection while waiting to turn. Many horses are likely to find it unsettling with traffic on many sides. It may be easier to ride through the intersection, turn around (U-turn) further along in a quieter area and come back to the intersection to turn onto the road you would like to ride on.

Appendix 3:

HORSE & RIDER TRAVEL CARD

In the case of an emergency dial 000. Let the operator know the location and the number of people and horses involved.

Horse's name:

Horse rider's name & number:

Emergency contact's name & number:

Doctor's name & number:

Horse owner's name & number (if different):

Alternate horse carer/ transport name & number:

.....

Address where horse lives:

Property Identification Code (PIC) where horse lives:

Vet's name & number:

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