

The Highway Code: 8 changes you need to know from 29 January 2022

Rules for all types of road users will be updated in The Highway Code to improve the safety of people walking, cycling and riding horses.

1. Hierarchy of road users



The introduction section of The Highway Code will be updated to include 3 new rules about the new 'hierarchy of road users'.

The hierarchy places those road users most at risk in the event of a collision at the top of the hierarchy. It does not remove the need for everyone to behave responsibly.

It's important that all road users:

- are aware of The Highway Code
- are considerate to other road users
- understand their responsibility for the safety of others

The 3 new rules are numbered H1, H2, and H3.

Rules that will change

- Rule H1 H2 and H3 (Introduction)

2. People crossing the road at junctions



The updated code will clarify that:

- when people are crossing or waiting to cross at a junction, other traffic should give way
- if people have started crossing and traffic wants to turn into the road, the people crossing have priority and the traffic should give way
- people driving, riding a motorcycle or cycling must give way to people on a zebra crossing and people walking and cycling on a parallel crossing

A parallel crossing is similar to a zebra crossing, but includes a cycle route alongside the black and white stripes.

Rules that will change

- Rule H2, 8, 19,170.195 and 206

3. Walking, cycling or riding in shared spaces



There will be new guidance in the code about routes and spaces which are shared by people walking, cycling and riding horses.

People cycling, riding a horse or driving a horse-drawn vehicle should respect the safety of people walking in these spaces, but people walking should also take care not to obstruct or endanger them.

People cycling are asked to:

- not pass people walking, riding a horse or driving a horse-drawn vehicle closely or at high speed, particularly from behind
- slow down when necessary and let people walking know they are there (for example, by ringing their bell)
- remember that people walking may be deaf, blind or partially sighted
- not pass a horse on the horse's left

Rules that will change

- Rule H1, 13,(Rules for pedestrians) 62 and 63 (Rules for cyclists)

4. Positioning in the road when cycling



There will be updated guidance for people cycling about positioning themselves which includes:

- riding in the centre of their lane on quiet roads, in slower-moving traffic and at the approach to junctions or road narrowings
- keeping at least 0.5 metres (just over 1.5 feet) away from the kerb edge (and further where it is safer) when riding on busy roads with vehicles moving faster than them

People cycling in groups

The updated code will explain that people cycling in groups:

- should be considerate of the needs of other road users when riding in groups
- can ride 2 abreast - and it can be safer to do so, particularly in larger groups or when accompanying children or less experienced riders

People cycling are asked to be aware of people driving behind them and allow them to overtake (for example, by moving into single file or stopping) when it's safe to do so.

People cycling passing parked vehicles

The updated code will explain that people cycling should:

- take care when passing parked vehicles, leaving enough room (a door's width or 1 metre) to avoid being hit if a car door is opened
- watch out for people walking into their path

Rules that will change

- Rule 67 (Rules for cyclists) and 213 (Road users requiring extra care)

5. Overtaking when driving or cycling



You may cross a double-white line if necessary (provided the road is clear) to overtake someone cycling or riding a horse if they are travelling at 10 mph or less (Rule 129).

There will be updated guidance on safe passing distances and speeds for people driving or riding a motorcycle when overtaking vulnerable road users, including:

- leaving at least 1.5 metres (5 feet) when overtaking people cycling at speeds of up to 30mph, and giving them more space when overtaking at higher speeds
- passing people riding horses or driving horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 10 mph and allowing at least 2 metres (6.5 feet) of space
- allowing at least 2 metres (6.5 feet) of space and keeping to a low speed when passing people walking in the road (for example, where there's no pavement)

Wait behind them and do not overtake if it's unsafe or not possible to meet these clearances.

People cycling passing slower-moving or stationary traffic

The updated code will confirm that people cycling may pass slower-moving or stationary traffic on their right or left.

They should proceed with caution as people driving may not be able to see them. This is particularly important:

- on the approach to junctions
- when deciding whether it is safe to pass lorries or other large vehicles

Rules that will change

- Rule 67, 76 (Rules for cyclists) Rule 76 (Rules for cyclists)
- Rule 163 (Using the road) Rule 212 (Road users requiring extra care)
- Rule 215 (Road users requiring extra care)

6. People cycling at junctions



The code will be updated to clarify that when turning into or out of a side road, people cycling should give way to people walking who are crossing or waiting to cross.

There will be new advice about new special cycle facilities at some junctions.

Some junctions now include small cycle traffic lights at eye-level height, which may allow cyclists to move separately from or before other

traffic. People cycling are encouraged to use these facilities where they make their journey safer and easier.

There will also be new guidance for people cycling at junctions with no separate facilities.

The code will recommend that people cycling should proceed as if they were driving a vehicle where there are no separate cyclist facilities. This includes positioning themselves in the centre of their chosen lane, where they feel able to do this safely. This is to:

- make them as visible as possible
- avoid being overtaken where this would be dangerous

People cycling turning right

The code will include advice for people cycling using junctions where signs and markings tell them to turn right in 2 stages. These are:

- stage 1 - when the traffic lights turn green, go straight ahead to the location marked by a cycle symbol and turn arrow on the road, and then stop and wait
- stage 2 - when the traffic lights on the far side of the junction (now facing the people cycling) turn green, complete the manoeuvre

People cycling have priority when going straight ahead at junctions

The code will clarify that when people cycling are going straight ahead at a junction, they have priority over traffic waiting to turn into or out of a side road, unless road signs or markings indicate otherwise.

People cycling are asked to watch out for people driving intending to turn across their path, as people driving ahead may not be able to see them.

Rules that will change

- Rule H2, H3, 73, 74, 85, 76, 167, 170 and 201(Introduction)

7. People cycling, riding a horse and driving horse-drawn vehicles on roundabouts



The code will be updated to clarify that people driving or riding a motorcycle should give priority to people cycling on roundabouts. The new guidance will say people driving and or riding a motorcycle should:

- not attempt to overtake people cycling within that person's lane
- allow people cycling to move across their path as they travel around the roundabout

The code already explains that people cycling, riding a horse and driving a horse-drawn vehicle may stay in the left-hand lane of a roundabout when they intend to continue across or around the roundabout.

Guidance will be added to explain that people driving should take extra care when entering a roundabout to make sure they do not cut across people cycling, riding a horse or driving a horse-drawn vehicle who are continuing around the roundabout in the left-hand lane.

Rules that will change

- Rule 79 (Rules for cyclists) 167 and 186

8. Parking, charging and leaving vehicles



The code will recommend a new technique when leaving vehicles. It's sometimes called the 'Dutch Reach'.

Where people driving or passengers in a vehicle are able to do so, they should open the door using their hand on the opposite side to the door they are opening. For example, using their left hand to open a door on their right-hand side.

This will make them turn their head to look over their shoulder behind them. They're then less likely to cause injury to:

- people cycling or riding a motorcycle passing on the road
- people on the pavement

Using an electric vehicle charge point

For the first time, the code will include guidance about using electric vehicle charging points.

When using one, people should:

- park close to the charge point and avoid creating a trip hazard for people walking from trailing cables
- display a warning sign if you can
- return charging cables and connectors neatly to minimise the danger to other people and avoid creating an obstacle for other road users

Rules that will change

- Rule 239 (Waiting and parking)

Find out about all the changes

In total, 9 sections of The Highway Code will be updated, with 50 rules being added or updated.

You'll be able to see a summary of all the changes in The Highway Code updates list on GOV.UK from 29 January 2022.

Stay up to date

The Highway Code is essential reading for everyone. It's updated regularly, so it's important that everyone reads it - not just learner drivers.

Many of the rules in the code are legal requirements, and if you disobey these rules you're committing a criminal offence.

If you do not follow the other rules in the code, it can be used in evidence in court proceedings to establish liability.



The full version of [The Highway Code](#) is available, free of charge, on GOV.UK. This will be updated on 29 January 2022.

You can [pre-order an updated version of The Highway Code book online](#) now, and buy a copy at most high street bookshops from April 2022. It will have a new cover design so it's easy to recognise.

You can also download [The Highway Code iOS app](#).

RULE H1: NEW HIERARCHY OF ROAD USERS

DRIVERS of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger to others. This principle applies most strongly to drivers of HGVs, LGVs, cars/taxis and motorcycles. Cyclists and horse riders have a responsibility to reduce danger to pedestrians.

RULE H2: NEW PRIORITY FOR PEDESTRIANS AT JUNCTIONS

DRIVERS, motorcyclists and cyclists should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. You should give way to pedestrians waiting at a zebra crossing (currently it's only if they're already crossing), and to pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross a parallel crossing.

Three of the biggest Highway Code changes

RULE H3: PRIORITY FOR CYCLISTS WHEN CARS ARE TURNING

YOU should not cut across cyclists, horse riders or horse-drawn vehicles going ahead when you are turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane. You should give way whether they are using the road, a cycle lane or cycle track. Do not turn at a junction if to do so would cause the cyclist, horse rider or horse-drawn vehicle going straight ahead to stop or swerve. You should stop and wait for a safe gap if necessary.

OLD RULE: Vehicles have priority at junctions

NEW RULE: Give way to pedestrians at junctions

OLD RULE: Road positioning for cyclists was not previously mentioned in the code, but most drivers expect them to ride near the curb

NEW RULE: Ride in the centre of the lane to make yourself visible in certain situations