

glossary

Adjacent direction – coming from the left or right, across your path.

ANCAP – Australasian New Car Assessment Program, www.ancap.com.au

Angle parking – when a vehicle is parked at an angle and not parallel to the kerb, boundary or edge of the road. The requirement is usually indicated by signs or road markings.

Amber – the yellow colour used for traffic lights.

Approaching – getting closer to, from any direction.

Approved bicycle helmet – a helmet that complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 2063 – Pedal Cycle Helmets, or as approved by the Registrar.

Approved child restraint – for a child under 12 months, an approved child restraint complies with Australian Standard AS/NZS 1754:2000 – Child Restraint Systems for Use in Motor Vehicles.

Arterial road – a main road that carries a lot of traffic between suburbs or within cities or towns.

ATM – Aggregate Trailer Mass – the maximum loaded mass (or weight) transmitted to the ground via the axle or axles of a trailer when the trailer is loaded and connected to a towing vehicle.

Axle – bar on which wheels rotate.

BAC – blood alcohol concentration given as grams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood.

BrAC – breath alcohol content given as grams of alcohol per 210 litres of exhaled breath.

Beam (lights) – angle and brightness of lights – (low or high).

Blind spots (see also head check) – area that is not seen in mirrors.

Black spot/black length – a place or length of road with a high rate of crashes.

Bicycle – a two or three-wheeled vehicle designed to be propelled by human power. Includes a powered cycle, but does not include a wheelchair or wheeled recreational device, wheeled toy or any vehicle with an auxiliary motor capable of generating a power output over 200 watts.

Boom – long pole used to block the road at a railway crossing.

Buffering – positioning your vehicle to create maximum space around you, away from hazards.

Built up area – in relation to a length of road, means an area in which there are buildings on land next to the road, or there is street lighting, at intervals not over 100 metres for a distance of at least 500 metres or, if the road is shorter than 500 metres, for the whole road.

Bystander – person present but not involved in an event.

Cancelled (licence) – you can no longer use your licence; that is, you can no longer drive.

Child restraint – specific seatbelts, seats or capsules that children under a certain age are required to use/wear (e.g. baby restraints, child seats, child safety harnesses).

Clearway – a stretch of road along which stopping and parking are prohibited during certain times of day, such as morning and afternoon peak periods. It is designated by signs with the times marked on them.

Colliding – crashing into.

Crash avoidance space – the space a driver needs to manage in order to prevent a potential crash.

Compliance plate – the plate that identifies a vehicle as being manufactured to safety standards applicable to the time of manufacture.

Compulsory – necessary, required, must do.

Continuing road – at a T-intersection means the road on which the traffic route continues through the intersection. It is not necessarily the top of the 'T' but will be designated by signs and road markings.

Covering the brake – where your right foot is off the accelerator and over the brake pedal without activating the brake. See also 'setting up the brake'.

Default speed limit – the speed limit where there are no speed limit signs.

Defined – explained.

Demerit (points) – there are different points limits for different types of licences (learner, provisional etc). Demerit points are recorded against your licence for a range of traffic offences (e.g. speeding). If you get too many demerit points your licence could be cancelled or suspended.

Device – a piece of equipment.

Diabetes – disease that affects the body's use of sugar.

Disability (driving) – physical condition that could affect your driving.

Disqualified (licence) – you are not allowed to hold or obtain a licence. You can no longer drive.

Dividing line – a road marking formed by a line or two parallel lines, either broken or continuous, designed to indicate the parts of the road to be used by vehicles travelling in opposite directions.

Driver – a person who is driving, riding or in control of a vehicle.

Driving instructor – a person who instructs learner or provisional drivers (for money or reward) on how to drive.

Eco Driving – a style of driving to reduce fuel consumption and help the environment by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Edge line – line marked along the road at or near the far left or right.

Emergency vehicle – a vehicle that is the property of Police, Fire and Emergency Services, an ambulance, or an Australian Protective Services vehicle.

Endorsed – a statement placed on a document (e.g. a licence or registration papers).

Engine capacity – engine size, usually stated in litres or cubic centimetres (cc). One litre = 1000 cc.

Epilepsy – disease that can cause fits.

Exceed – go beyond – as with speed, to exceed the speed limit is to go faster than the speed limit.

Exempt – if you are exempt, a particular requirement does not apply to you (e.g. tests or fees).

Expired (licence) – the date on the licence is in the past and the licence is therefore no longer valid.

Explosive – something that is dangerous because it could blow up.

Fatal – something that results in death.

Fatigue – the experience of feeling sleepy, tired or exhausted. Fatigue affects both your body and your ability to drive safely.

Field of vision – what you can see without moving your eyes or head.

Flammable – easily set on fire.

Flash high beam – to quickly switch the headlights from low beam to high beam and back.

Following distance – the distance between your vehicle and the vehicle travelling ahead of you in the same direction. Following distance is also called ‘headway’.

Foot crossing – pedestrian crossing.

Full licence – a licence other than a learner or provisional licence.

Goods vehicle – a goods vehicle is one designed primarily for the carriage of goods.

Graduated licensing scheme – the licence stages required in order to gain a full licence.

Gross Combination Mass (GCM) – the maximum laden mass of a motor vehicle plus the laden weight of any trailer(s).

Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) – the maximum loaded mass (or weight) permissible for the vehicle as specified by the vehicle manufacturer on the identification plate or, if not specified, as determined by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and identified on the registration certificate.

Hazard – any possible danger that might lead to a crash.

Hazard lights – flashing orange warning lights found on most vehicles.

Head check – looking over your shoulder to the left or right to make sure that there’s nothing in your blind spot. Also known as ‘shoulder check’.

Heavy vehicle – a vehicle with a GVM greater than 4.5 tonnes.

Heavy Vehicle Drivers’ Handbook – a publication that explains road rules that apply to heavy vehicles (buses and trucks).

Intersection – an area where two or more roads meet. It includes an area where vehicles travelling on different roads might collide and the area of any slip lane where roads meet.

Interstate (travel) – travel between jurisdictions; NT to WA for example.

International Driving Permit – a permit issued in accordance with the United Nations Convention on Road Traffic, Geneva 1949, for use in conjunction with a current driver licence.

Interpreter (knowledge test) – a person who understands more than one language and reads the English test questions and then asks the applicant the same questions in another language.

Kerb – concrete edge of a road.

Knowledge test – the Driver Knowledge Test.

Lane – an area of road marked by continuous or broken lines, designed for use by a single line of vehicles.

Law – rules set out by the government that must be followed.

Level crossing – where a road and a railway meet and cross each other at the same level.

Licence class – there are different licences required for driving different vehicles of different sizes (e.g. motorcycle, car etc).

Licence condition – things that affect a licence (e.g. must wear spectacles).

Licence type – kind of licence, such as learner, provisional, full.

Load – items carried on a vehicle from one place to another.

Microsleep – brief, unintended periods of loss of attention that can occur when a person is fatigued but trying to stay awake.

Median strip – a section that divides lanes in a two-way street.

Minimum – least, smallest.

Motorcycle Rider's Handbook – a publication that explains road rules that apply to motorcycles and riders.

Motorised wheelchairs – a three or four-wheeled mobility aid that cannot travel faster than 10 km/h. A user is defined as a pedestrian.

Multi-laned road – a road with more than one lane in each direction. These roads sometimes have a median strip dividing traffic travelling in each direction.

Must – a mandatory requirement.

MVR – Motor Vehicle Registry

MVR Inspectors – MVR personnel authorised to conduct vehicle inspections.

Oncoming (vehicle) – a vehicle approaching you from the front.

Organ donor – a person who wishes to donate their organs (liver, kidney, lungs etc) for transplant after they have died.

Overcrowding – having more occupants in a vehicle than available seats or seatbelts.

Overloaded (vehicle) – a vehicle carrying a load that is too big or heavy for the vehicle to carry it safely or legally.

Overseas – outside Australia.

Overtake – to pass a vehicle travelling in the same direction as you.

Parallel parking – parking with the whole length of the vehicle next to the kerb.

Pedestrian – a person who travels by foot (walker, runner for example). Also includes people in motorised and non-motorised wheelchairs and people using wheeled recreational devices or toys.

Penalised – (penalty) punished for breaking a law by way of demerit points, fines, prison or vehicle confiscation.

Photo licence – MVR-issued driver licence.

Points – see demerit points.

Professional Driver – a motor vehicle driver whose primary work is to transport goods or, a bus, taxi or hire car driver.

Regulations – laws (see law).

Renew (licence) – to replace a licence that is no longer current.

Rev – to increase engine speed.

Revs – engine speed (measured in revolutions per minute, RPM).

Road – an area used by the public for the purpose of driving or riding motor vehicles.

Road-related area – includes an area that divides a road, a footpath, nature strip, cycleway and parking areas.

Road rage – a range of antisocial or aggressive behaviour by road users.

Route – way from one place to another.

Safety chains (trailer) – chains that catch a trailer in an emergency, if the tow connection breaks for example.

Safe gap – a gap in traffic that enables you to turn, overtake or cross an intersection without being involved in a collision or endangering other road users. This means that no other road users should need to take evasive action to avoid your vehicle.

Scanning – constantly moving your eyes when driving so that you can detect hazards that could arise ahead, to the sides and behind your vehicle.

Setting up the brake – where your right foot is off the accelerator and applying light pressure to the brake pedal.

Should – a recommendation, advice.

Shoulder – strip of land that runs down the side on an un-kerbed road.

Shoulder check – see head check.

Single-laned – a road with one lane running in each direction.

Slip lane – a separate lane for a vehicle turning left.

Spectacles – eye glasses or contact lenses.

Speeding – excessive or inappropriate speed, including not adjusting your speed to suit the conditions or speed limit.

Speed limit – the legal speed for any particular stretch of road, licence or vehicle.

Stationary – not moving.

Supervising driver – a person who holds a full Australian licence for the appropriate class of the vehicle and sits beside the learner driver.

Suspended (licence) – you can no longer use your licence; that is, you can no longer drive.

Tow truck – a vehicle that is designed to tow another vehicle.

Towing – attaching and then pulling a trailer or vehicle behind a vehicle.

Traffic offences – actions that break the traffic law (see law).

Trailers – vehicles that do not have an engine and that are towed behind motor vehicles.

Translator – a person who understands more than one language and who rewrites a written document such as a driver's licence in English from another language (see interpreter).

Unattended (child) – a child left with no immediate, supervising, responsible adult.

Unladen – not loaded (see load).

U-turn – a complete change of direction, approximately an 180° turn.

Vehicle combination – vehicles joined together. An articulated vehicle can be a vehicle combination of a car and caravan for example.

Wig Wag light – flashing orange lights used as an early warning when approaching traffic lights or flashing orange lights on the rear of buses.

Work site – an area of road, bridge or road reserve that includes the work area(s) and any additional length of road or bridge required for traffic control such as signs and barriers.