



heavy vehicle
road rules

As a professional driver it's your responsibility to know the road rules that apply to all vehicles, especially heavy vehicles.

Speed limits

The maximum speed limit for a heavy vehicle that exceeds a GVM of 12 tonnes or a bus that exceeds a GVM of 5 tonnes is 100 kilometres per hour.

For certain road conditions (e.g. sharp bend, steep descent, winding road), special speed limit signs may be posted for trucks, road trains and buses. You must not drive at a speed greater than the speed shown on the sign.

Speed limiters

Speed limiters are devices that limit a vehicle's maximum speed. If your vehicle falls into one of the following groups, it must be speed limited to 100 kilometres per hour.

A heavy vehicle or bus manufactured on or after 1 January 1988, being either a:

- truck having a GVM exceeding 15 tonnes
- bus used to provide a public passenger service and with a GVM exceeding 14.5 tonnes.

A heavy vehicle or bus manufactured on or after 1 January 1991 being either a:

- truck having a GVM exceeding 12 tonnes

- bus used to provide a public passenger service and with a GVM exceeding five tonnes.

Heavy vehicle drivers

Drivers of heavy vehicles are required to obey speed limits. Penalties on drivers failing to comply with speed limits include demerit points, licence suspension, cancellation or disqualification and fines.

Intersections

At intersections you may have to swing wide to make a left turn. At marked intersections:

- position your vehicle so that any vehicles behind cannot pass on your left
- position yourself to get the best view possible of the road you are turning into.

Heavy vehicle drivers may need to start a left turn further into the intersection than a car so that the back wheels do not run over the kerb.

Crossing or entering traffic

You must choose a suitably large gap in the traffic to get across an intersection, enter a new street or merge with traffic.

Consider the size and weight of your vehicle when crossing or entering intersections, changing lanes, and making other manoeuvres. Also remember that a loaded vehicle will accelerate slower than an empty one.

Before moving from a stationary position at the side of the road or a median strip parking area, you must signal for at least five seconds, check mirrors and blind spots.

Turning

Heavy vehicles need more space to turn wide or cut into traffic so allow enough space on either side of your vehicle to avoid sideswiping other road users or objects.

Turning right from a one way street

A vehicle (or vehicle and trailer) that is 7.5 metres or longer and has a DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE sign displayed on the back, can turn right from the lane on the immediate left of the far right lane.

Plan your turn early so that you are in the correct part of the intersection and you have time to signal. Avoid turning too soon because the side of your vehicle may hit vehicles on your right as the back of your vehicle cuts in to the turn.

On a road with two right turn lanes, always use the turning lane on the far left.

A vehicle of 7.5 metres or longer may display the words 'do not overtake turning vehicle' on one of the rear marking plates.

If your vehicle (or vehicle and trailer) is under 7.5 metres long, you must not display this sign on the back, and you must turn within the lanes marked on the road at all times.



DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE

Overtaking

There are additional risks associated with overtaking while driving a heavy vehicle.

It is very important to watch for small vehicles, such as motorcycles or cyclists. Before pulling out check your mirrors and glance down to check for vehicles below your cabin. Air movement caused by a large vehicle travelling fast can force a small vehicle off the road, or draw it into the side of a larger vehicle.

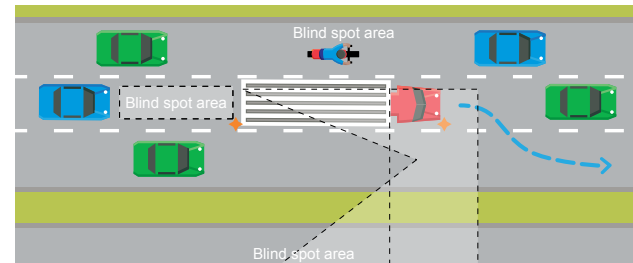
Being overtaken

If it is safe, move into the left lane to allow faster moving traffic to overtake.

It can be dangerous to direct following vehicles to overtake, using your hand or the indicator. You may be encouraging an inexperienced driver to attempt an unsafe move.

Lane changing

It is very important to check that the road is clear when you want to change lanes, or when lanes merge. You also need to check before leaving the kerb and before turning. You must look in the appropriate mirrors and do blind spot head checks before making any of these moves. In a heavy vehicle it is also essential to check down the side door in the cabin.



Before pulling out check mirrors, signal, check blind spot below cabin.

Restricted areas for road trains and B-doubles

Generally road train access is restricted to recommended road train routes as published in the Northern Territory Permit Guidelines. Recommended road train routes are necessary to enhance the free flow of traffic to control damage of the infrastructure and to promote the safety of all road users.

Where the Guideline does not provide for a specific route or the applicant considers that special circumstances exist, a written submission should be forwarded to the Chief Transport Inspector (contact via the MVR Contact Centre) for further consideration. Further information relating to road train access can be found at nt.gov.au

Road trains and B-double operators planning a journey interstate should plan their journey in accordance with the requirements of that state or territory. For more information relating to interstate road train and B-double access routes go to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator's website www.nhvr.gov.au

A road train must have this sign fitted to the front and rear.

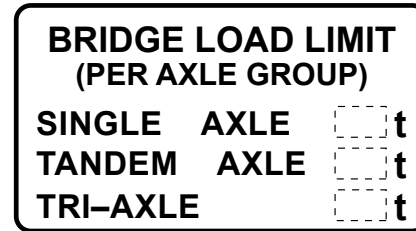
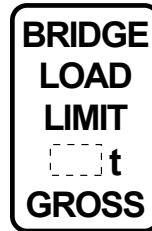
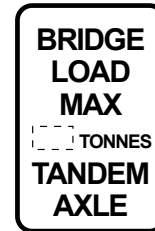


This sign must be fitted to the rear of vehicle combinations longer than 22 metres.



Load limit sign

You must not drive on a road with a load limit sign if the total weight of your vehicle is the same as, or heavier than, the weight shown on the sign. You must not drive past a load limit sign if the total weight (Gross Mass in tonnes) of your vehicle, and any vehicle connected to it, is more than the gross mass indicated in the sign.



No trucks sign

Drivers of long or heavy vehicles, except buses, must not drive past a NO TRUCK sign unless the vehicle is equal to or less than the mass or length specified on the sign.



When the sign does not provide detailed information, no truck (i.e. GVM greater than 4.5 tonnes) is permitted to drive past the sign.

Trucks must enter sign

Heavy vehicle drivers must enter the area indicated by information on or with this sign.



Where heavy vehicles can stand or park

Heavy vehicles (GVM of more than 4.5 tonnes) or long vehicles (7.5 metres long or longer) must not stop on a length of road outside a built up area, except on the shoulder of the road. In a built up area they must not stop on a length of road for longer than one hour.

For more information on where vehicles can stand or park, refer to the Road Users' Handbook.

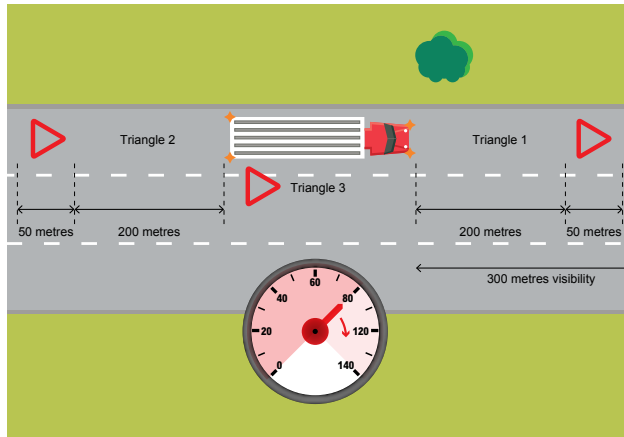
Warning triangles

A vehicle or a vehicle and trailer with a GVM of more than 12 tonnes, must carry three portable warning triangles to use if the vehicle is stopped on the road or roadside and is likely to cause a hazard to other road users.

The display of warning triangles depends on the speed limit in the area and visibility from all directions.

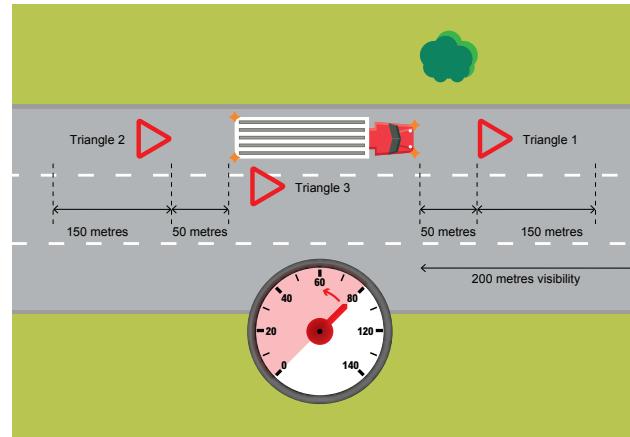
Speed limit 80 km/h or more with no visibility for at least 300 metres

Triangles must be placed between 200-250 metres behind and in front of the vehicle or fallen load. The third triangle placed at the side of the vehicle, to provide sufficient warning to road users of vehicle position or any hazard.



Speed limit 80 km/h or less with no visibility for at least 200 metres

Triangles must be placed between 50-150 metres behind and in front of the vehicle or fallen load. The third triangle placed at the side of the vehicle, to provide sufficient warning to road users of vehicle position or any hazard.



Truck and bus lanes



Truck lanes

Truck lanes are in operation in some areas of Australia and are marked by the following sign. Trucks more than 4.5 tonnes GVM must use these lanes.

Bus and bus only lanes

Bus and bus only lanes are operational in some areas of Australia and are marked by the following signs, or by lane markings. Bus lanes are principally used by public buses and are often placed in locations to ensure efficient operation of the public transport network.



Priority for buses

Other vehicle drivers must give way to a bus displaying the give way sign in areas where the sign posted speed limit is 70 km/h or less, when the bus is about to enter or proceed in the lane or line of traffic and the bus is in front of the driver.



You are still required to obey the road rules when entering the traffic.

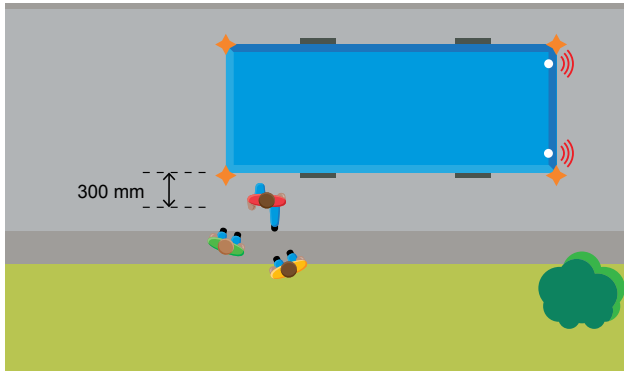
Buses cannot park at bus stops but may wait at a bus stop prior to commencing a regular passenger service.

Buses

Stopping at a bus stop

Bus drivers should pull up so the entrance and exit doors are as close as possible to the kerb at a bus stop.

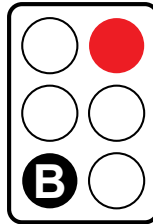
- Signal your intention.
- Stop the bus smoothly.
- Stop parallel with the kerb.
- Stop within 300 millimetres from the kerb measured from the front bus step.
- Stop the bus without hitting the kerb.
- Apply the bus stop brake. If the bus does not have a bus stop brake then you must apply the normal parking brake.
- Indicate for at least five seconds and ensure it is safe to proceed before pulling out of a bus stop.



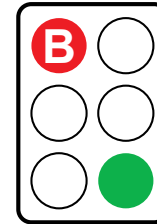
Stop within 300 millimetres of the kerb.

Bus (b) signals

In some areas of Australia B signals separate buses and other vehicles at intersections with traffic lights. B signals are attached to the traffic lights and show a white B on a black background. Some traffic lights have a red, yellow and white signal attached. Shortly before the usual traffic signals change to green the B signal lights up white. Buses may proceed in any direction unless signs or markings indicate otherwise.



White B means buses only go.



Red B means buses stay.
Green means other vehicles go.

Vehicle monitors

Vehicle monitors are devices which automatically record details about the operation of a vehicle at all times, whether the engine is on or off. There are various types of vehicle monitors. Among them are tachographs and electronic boxes, also known as trip computers or black boxes.

Monitors record:

- lengths of time the vehicle is moving and stationary during a journey
- speeds at which the vehicle is driven
- distance the vehicle travels between stops
- the time, date and place of starting and finishing a journey, drivers' details and vehicle identification.

Monitors produce a continuous record of vehicle operation. Vehicle monitoring records may be used to identify drivers and operators who have broken the law and help identify vehicles in which the speed limiter has been tampered with or disabled.

If you own a vehicle with a monitor fitted, you should ensure that:

- your vehicle monitor is working correctly, is properly calibrated and that its seals are intact
- your vehicle specifications are not altered in any way that could affect calibration of the device
- your device is recalibrated immediately when the vehicle specifications are altered or at least every six years
- your drivers are instructed properly in the use of the device
- you recover trip records from your vehicle and store them in continuous date order for at least six months
- you make your records available at the request of an authorised officer
- you check the records for each trip and for each driver to ensure that driving hours and speed limits have been observed
- your drivers continue to keep manual records for each journey if the monitor breaks down.

