



Rail Safety Tips for Drivers

Whether you are new driver or a seasoned one, staying safe around railway tracks is all about knowing the rules. Be sure to follow these tips—they could save your life.



KNOW YOUR RAILWAY SIGNS

Railway signs and warning devices are installed along roads and at railway crossings to warn drivers and control traffic. They save lives, so get to know what they mean.



LOOK AND LISTEN FOR A TRAIN

When approaching a railway crossing, slow down, look both ways and listen for trains. Turn off any music, ask passengers to be quiet and open your window to better hear approaching trains. If a train is approaching, or if railway warning signals are activated, immobilize your vehicle behind any gates or stop lines—or no closer than 5 metres from the nearest rail—and wait for the train to pass.



OBEY ALL RAILWAY SIGNS AND SIGNALS

Obey all railway signs and warning devices. At railway crossings with active warning devices, remain stopped until the gates are fully raised and the lights stop flashing. Before proceeding through any railway crossing, ensure you have a clear view of the tracks and are certain no other trains are approaching from either direction, or any track. If the lights begin to flash, or the gates start to lower after you start crossing the tracks, don't stop! It is safer to keep going than to try to reverse.



STAY ALERT

If you can't hear or see a train coming, you can't avoid it. Don't use your cell phone or other devices while driving. Today's trains are fast and extremely quiet, so if you are distracted when approaching a railway crossing, you are putting your life—and the lives of your passengers—in danger.



BE AWARE OF OTHER ROAD USERS

Be aware that cyclists and users of wheeled mobility devices move slower and may require additional room when proceeding through a railway crossing. Also, school buses and other vehicles may be required to stop at all crossings—so be prepared to stop.



NEVER RACE A TRAIN

Racing a train at a railway crossing could cost you your life. A train hitting a car is like a car running over a pop can: the average freight train weighs more than 5.5million kg. In comparison, a car weighs around 1,375 kg. Because of a train's size, it is also hard to judge how far away it is or what speed it is travelling at—some can go as fast as 160 km/h.



LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE IF IT STALLS OR GETS STUCK

A car can break down at any time—and if it happens on railway tracks, it could be deadly. If your vehicle stalls or gets stuck on the tracks, get yourself and all passengers out immediately. Move at least 30 metres away from the tracks to avoid being struck by debris if your vehicle is hit by a train. Contact the railway company immediately and let them know there is a vehicle on the tracks. Railway companies post their emergency numbers and crossing locations on a blue sign under the crossbuck or near the crossing. This information may also be displayed on a nearby signal house. If you don't see a railway emergency number, call 911.



OBEY ALL POLICE OR FLAG PEOPLE

If a police officer or railway flag person is at the crossing, obey their directions. But remember, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure it's safe to cross the tracks by looking in both directions and listening for an approaching train.

REMEMBER:

- Trains can take up to 2 km to come to a complete stop. That's the length of 18 football fields.
- Always drive at a speed that allows you to stop within the distance of your headlights so you have a clear view of the road ahead.
- Take extra care at night and in winter. Snowy or nighttime conditions can reduce visibility, making it hard to see passing trains or railway crossings.
- A motorist is 40 times more likely to die in a collision with a train than in a collision involving another motor vehicle.

Know the Signs and Signals

FLASHING RED LIGHTS

STOP when flashing. DO NOT proceed until the lights stop flashing. If the lights begin flashing after you start crossing the tracks, keep going.

CROSSBUCK

YIELD if a train is approaching. Trains always have the right-of-way.

LOWERING GATES AND FLASHING RED LIGHTS

A train is approaching (even if you don't see it yet). DO NOT proceed until the lights turn off and the gates go up. It's illegal and dangerous to go around lowered gates.

MULTIPLE TRACKS

Multiple tracks are present. Multiple tracks may mean multiple trains. Wait until you can see clearly down the tracks in both directions before proceeding.



PAVEMENT MARKINGS

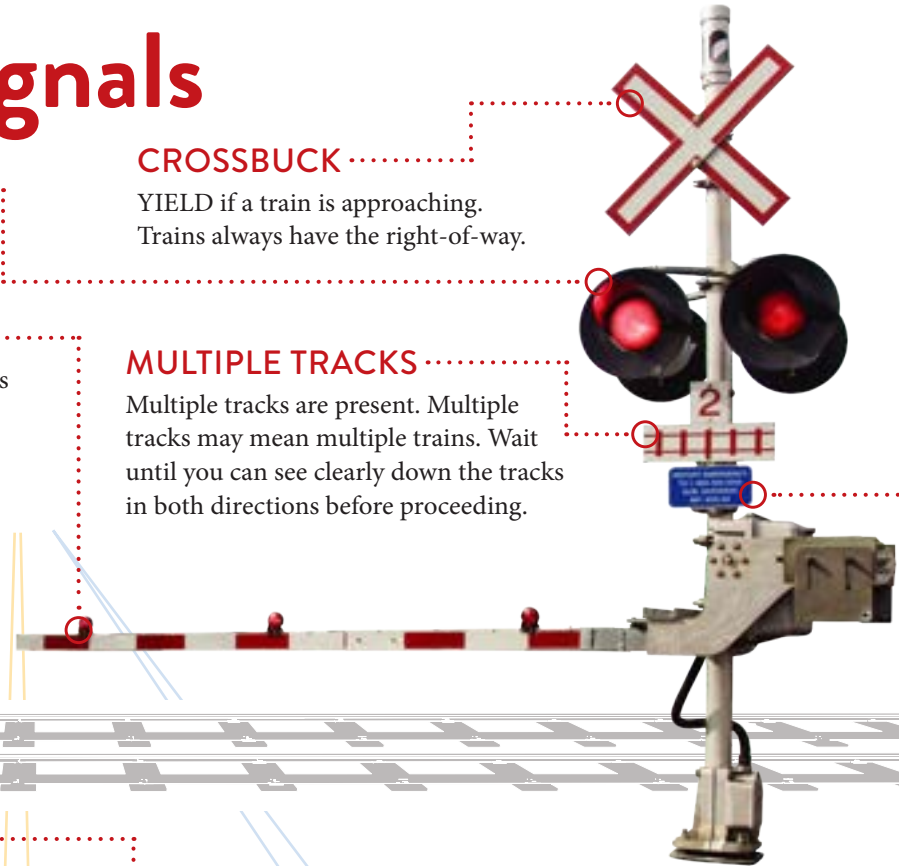
A large "X" and a wide white line on the road mean you're approaching a railway crossing. Stay behind the white stop line while waiting for a train to pass. No stop line? Stop at least 5 metres from the nearest rail.

LOW GROUND CLEARANCE CROSSING

Raised crossing ahead. If you drive anything low to the ground — like a bus, truck, sports car or trailer — you're at risk of getting hung up on the tracks. DO NOT proceed until you know your vehicle will clear the tracks.



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EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SIGN (ENS)

This is the first phone number to call if a vehicle is stuck or stalls on the tracks (this number may also be found on the signal house). You can also dial it to report people, vehicles or debris on the tracks, as well as damaged signs or signals, or obstructed views. The mile post and subdivision listed on the sign will help the railway to identify your location.

ADVANCE WARNING

Slow down, look, listen, and BE PREPARED TO STOP. Typically, this is the first sign you see when approaching a railway crossing.

