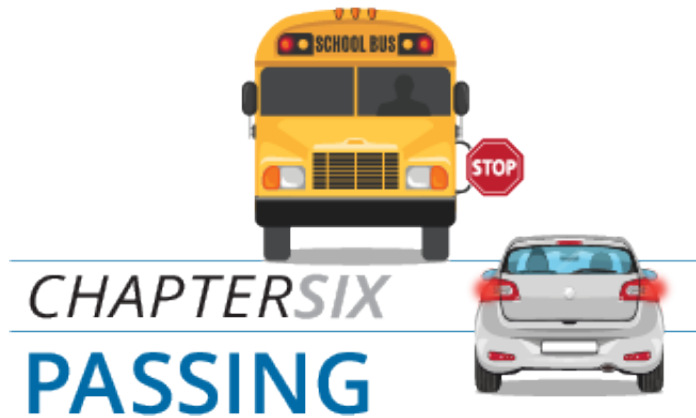


Chapter 6: Passing



Passing

Note: Practice quizzes are available only for those sections of the manual covering rules of the road (Chapters 4 through 11 and Road Signs).

The law requires that we drive on the right side of the road. When we are allowed to pass other vehicles, we usually pass on the left. You are permitted to pass on the right only in certain circumstances and it must be done only when necessary and safe. When you pass other vehicles or change lanes to keep away from hazards, do so with caution and only when necessary. You must not exceed the speed limit to pass another vehicle.

When you pass a motorcycle, remember to give the motorcycle the same full lane width as other vehicles are allowed. Never move into the same lane space as a motorcycle, even if the lane is wide and the motorcycle is to one side.

When you pass a bicycle, be sure to give the cyclist sufficient space to ride. When overtaking a bicyclist from behind, the law requires you to pass on the left at a safe distance until the bicycle has been cleared.

The law requires you to use turn signal lamps or hand and arm signals to indicate your intention to change lanes at least 100 feet (30 m) before you make a lane change. You must never pass a vehicle that has stopped at a crosswalk to allow a pedestrian to go across.

How to Pass on the Left

The left lane is normally used to pass other vehicles. You cannot pass a vehicle on the left if:

- Your lane has a solid yellow center line.

- You cannot safely return to the right lane before you reach a solid yellow center line for the right lane.
- You cannot safely return to the right lane before any oncoming vehicle comes within 200 feet (60 m) of you.
- You approach a curve or the top of a hill on a two-way road and cannot see around or over it.
- You are within 100 feet (30 m) of a railroad crossing on a two-way roadway.
- You are within 100 feet (30 m) of a bridge, tunnel or viaduct on a two-way road and your view is obstructed.
- If you try to pass, you will interfere with oncoming traffic.

If conditions are correct to pass, check in your mirrors and signal your lane change. Before you pull into the left lane, look quickly over your left shoulder, through the back side window, to make sure there is no vehicle close behind you in the left lane. Never depend on your mirrors when you prepare to change lanes. Even correctly adjusted mirrors will leave "blind spots" behind both sides of your vehicle. If a vehicle is in the blind spot, you may not see it in your mirrors. Always quickly look over your shoulder before you change lanes or pass.

When you pass, move completely into the left lane. Before you return to the right lane, signal and look at your interior rear-view mirror and make sure you can see the front bumper of the vehicle you passed. Look quickly over your right shoulder to make sure that you can see at least several feet of pavement between your vehicle and the one you passed. Then return to the right lane.

How to Pass on the Right

You can normally pass other vehicles on the left, some situations allow you to pass on the right. You can pass a vehicle on the right only in the conditions listed below and only if you can pass safely. You cannot drive on or across the shoulder or edge line of the road unless a sign allows it or when indicated by a traffic officer (see [Chapter 4](#)). You may pass on the right:

- When a vehicle ahead makes a left turn.
- When you are on a two-way road that is marked for two or more lanes or is wide enough for two or more lanes in each direction, and passing is not prohibited by signs or restricted by parked cars or other obstructions.
- When you drive on a one-way road that is marked for two or more lanes or is wide enough for two or more lanes, and passing is not prohibited by signs or restricted by parked cars or other obstructions.

If you prepare to pass on the right at an intersection, check the traffic ahead carefully. Make sure a vehicle that is approaching is not prepared to turn left into your path, and watch at the right side of the road for pedestrians, bicyclists, in-line skaters and moped riders.

Before you pass on the right on multi-lane roads like expressways, make sure you check your mirrors, use the correct signals for the lane change and look over your right shoulder for other vehicles. After you pass, make sure to quickly look over your left shoulder and signal before you return to the left lane.

Being Passed

If another vehicle passes you on the left, decrease your speed slightly and stay centered in your lane. When the vehicle has safely passed and is ahead of you, continue at your normal speed.

If you find that you are being passed on the right by many vehicles, you should move into the right lane and allow them to pass you on the left.

School Buses

When a stopped school bus flashes its red light(s), traffic that approaches from either direction, even in front of the school and in school parking lots, must stop before it reaches the bus. You should stop at least 20 feet (6 m) away from the bus. You can identify this bus by a "SCHOOL BUS" sign, the red lights on the top, and its unique yellow orange color.

Before a school bus stops to load or discharge passengers, the driver will usually flash yellow warning lights which are located on the front and back of the bus near the roof. When you see them, decrease speed and be prepared to stop.

When you stop for a school bus, you cannot drive again until the bus starts moving again or when the bus driver or a traffic officer signals that you can proceed. This law applies on all roadways in New York State. You must stop for a school bus even if it is on the opposite side of a divided highway.

After you stop for a school bus, look for children along the side of the road. Drive slowly until you have passed them.

Safety Tip: Most school bus-related deaths and injuries occur while children cross the street after being discharged from the bus, not in collisions that involve school buses.

Remember that vehicles that transport people with disabilities can be equipped as school buses and you must stop for them as you would for other school buses.

The fine when you pass a stopped school bus ranges from a minimum of \$250 for a first violation to a maximum of \$1,000 for three violations in three years. If you are convicted of three of these violations in three years, your driver license will be revoked for a minimum of six months.

Vehicle Owners - [A law was passed in 2019](#) that authorizes school districts and municipalities to use stop-arm cameras on school buses to impose penalties on the owners of vehicles which pass a school bus while the school bus is stopped for the purpose of dropping off or picking up passengers and red lights on the school bus are flashing.

- First violation - penalty of \$250
- Second violation within 18 months - penalty of \$275
- Third violation (or more) within 18 months - penalty of \$300

Questions

Before you go on to Chapter 7, make sure you can answer these questions:

- Under most conditions, on which side can you pass another vehicle that is headed in the same direction?
- What should you do before you pass another vehicle?
- What should you see in your rear-view mirror before you attempt to return to the right lane after you pass a vehicle on the left?
- Under what conditions can you pass a vehicle on the right?
- When can you pass a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk to allow a pedestrian to go across?
- What action should you take when another vehicle passes you on the left?
- What do yellow lights going on and off on a school bus indicate?
- What do red lights going on and off on a school bus indicate?

[Chapter 6 Quiz](#)