

ITEM 7-5

California Driver Handbook Traffic Lanes

Line Colors

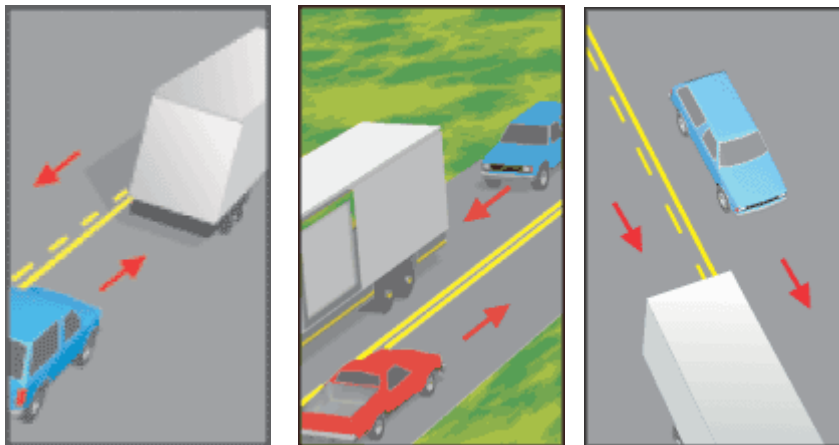
Solid yellow lines mark the center of a road used for two-way traffic.

Broken yellow lines mean you may pass if the broken line is next to your driving lane.

Two solid yellow lines mean no passing. Never drive to the left of these lines unless you are:

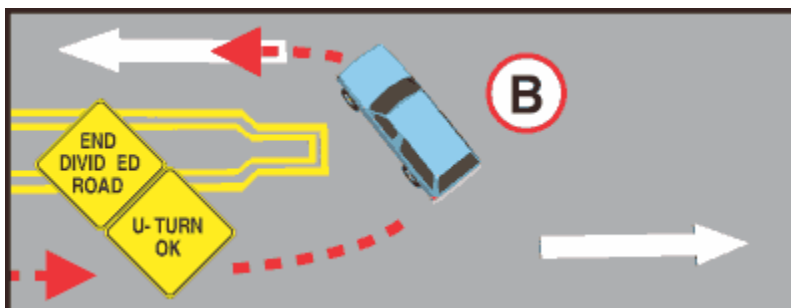
- Turning left at an intersection.
- Turning into or out of a private road or driveway.
- In a carpool lane that has a designated entrance on the left.
- Instructed by construction or other signs to drive on the other side of the road because your side is closed or blocked.

Examples of lane markings



- (1) Solid yellow line: No passing if solid yellow line is on your side.
- (2) Double solid lines: **DO NOT** pass.
- (3) Broken yellow line: May pass if movement can be made safely.

Two sets of solid double yellow lines spaced two or more feet apart are considered a barrier. Do not drive on or over this barrier or make a left turn or a U-turn across it except at designated openings. (See diagram .)



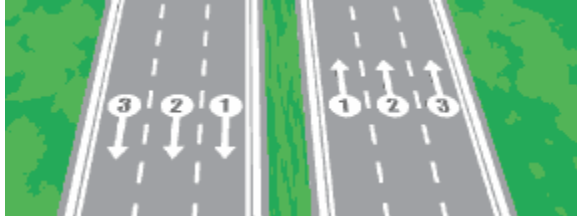
Solid white lines mark traffic lanes going in the same direction, such as one-way streets.

Broken white lines separate traffic lanes on roads with two or more lanes in the same direction.

Choosing A Lane

Traffic lanes are often referred to by number. The left or “fast” lane is called the “Number 1 Lane.” The lane to the right of the “Number 1 Lane” is called the “Number 2 Lane”, then the “Number 3 Lane”,

Example of numbered traffic lanes



Drive in the lane with the smoothest flow of traffic. If you can choose among three lanes, pick the middle lane for the smoothest driving. To drive faster, pass, or turn left, use the left lane. When you choose to drive slowly or enter or turn off the road, use the right lane.

If there are only two lanes in your direction, pick the right lane for the smoothest driving.

Do not weave in and out of traffic. Stay in one lane as much as possible. Once you start through an intersection, keep going. If you start to make a turn, follow through. Last second changes may cause collisions. If you miss a turn, continue until you can safely and legally turn back.

Changing Lanes

Changing lanes includes:

- Moving from one lane to another.
- Entering the freeway from an on-ramp.
- Entering the road from a curb or the shoulder.

Before changing lanes, signal, look in all your mirrors, and:

- Check traffic behind and beside you.
- Glance over your left or right shoulder to make sure the lane you want is clear.
- Look for vehicles, motorcyclists, and bicyclists in your blind spot.
- Be sure there is enough room for your vehicle in the next lane.

Bicycle Lanes

A bicycle lane is shown by a solid white line along either side of the street, four or more feet from the curb. The white line will usually be broken near the corner and the words “BIKE LANE” will be painted in the lane. When you are making a right turn and are within 200 feet of the corner or other driveway entrance, you must enter the bicycle lane to make the turn. Do not drive in the bicycle lane at any other time.

You may park in a bicycle lane if your vehicle does not block a bicyclist and/or there is not a “No Parking” sign posted.

Pedestrians are not allowed in bicycle lanes when sidewalks are available. Drivers of motorized bicycles should use bicycle lanes carefully to avoid collisions with bicyclists.

Passing Lanes

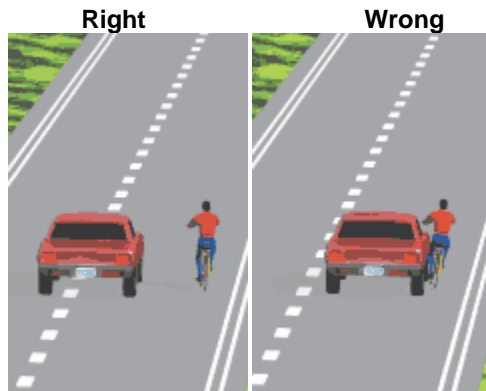
Before you pass, look ahead for road conditions and traffic that may cause other vehicles to move into your lane.

Never drive off the paved or maintraveled portion of the road or on the shoulder to pass. The edge of the main-traveled portion of the road may have a painted white line on the road's surface. Passing other vehicles at crossroads, railroad crossings, and shopping center entrances is dangerous.

Pass traffic on the left. You may pass on the right only when:

- An open highway is clearly marked for two or more lanes of travel in your direction.
- The driver ahead of you is turning left and you do not drive off the roadway to pass. Never pass on the left, if the driver is signaling a left turn.

Be patient when passing a bicyclist, and pass on the left. Slow down and pass only when it is safe. Do not squeeze a bicyclist off the road, and allow a safe clearance when passing a bicyclist.



Carpool /High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) Lanes

A carpool lane is a special freeway lane only for motorcycles, buses, and/or carpools. You may use a carpool lane or on-ramp if your vehicle carries the minimum number of people required for the carpool lane, **or** you drive a low-emission vehicle displaying a special DMV issued decal. Motorcycle riders may use designated carpool lanes, unless otherwise posted.



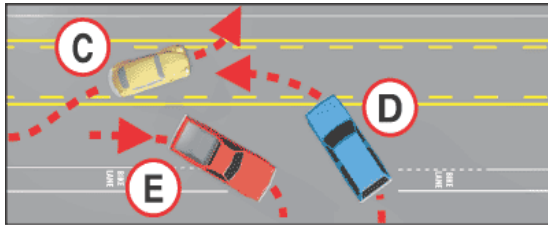
Signs at the on-ramp or along the freeway tell you the minimum number of people per vehicle required for the carpool lane(s). They also list the days of the week and the hours when the carpool requirement applies. The pavement in this lane is marked with a diamond symbol \diamond and the words "Carpool Lane." These lanes are also

known as high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes. Do not cross over double parallel solid lines to enter or exit any carpool lane except at designated entry or exit places.

Vehicles towing trailers are typically not allowed to use carpool lanes, because they must drive more slowly and are usually restricted to the right-hand lane.

Center Left Turn Lanes

A center left turn lane is in the middle of a two-way street and is marked on both sides by two painted lines. The inner line is broken and the outer line is solid. If a street has a center left turn lane, you must use it when you turn left ([CVC §21460.5 \[c\]](#)) or start a permitted U-turn. You may only drive for 200 feet in the center left turn lane. This lane is not a regular traffic lane or a passing lane. To turn left from this lane, signal, look over your shoulder, and drive completely inside the center left turn lane. Do not stop with the back of your vehicle blocking traffic.



Make sure the lane is clear in both directions and then turn only when it is safe. Look for vehicles coming toward you in the same lane to start their left turn.

When turning left from a side street or driveway, signal and wait until it is safe. Then you may drive into the center left turn lane. Enter traffic only when it is safe.

You may drive across a center left turn lane to turn left or to turn into a driveway.

Turnout Areas and Lanes

Special “turnout” areas are sometimes marked on two-lane roads. Drive into these areas to allow cars behind you to pass.

Some two-lane roads have passing lanes. If you are driving slowly on a two-lane highway or road where passing is unsafe, and five or more vehicles are following you, drive into the turnout areas or lanes to let the vehicles pass.

