

# WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT DRIVING IN NEW ZEALAND?



## Kia ora Welcome to New Zealand.

Driving is a great way to see our beautiful country! However, there are a few things that you may not be used to when driving in New Zealand. For example:

- We drive on the left side of the road
- We have a unique give way rule at intersections
- Hilly, narrow or winding roads mean that your journey may take longer than you expect

Make sure you have a safe and enjoyable journey - please take a few minutes to read this brochure before starting out.



### Keep left

Always drive on the **left** side of the road. If you drive on the right hand side in your own country, please take a moment to re-familiarise

yourself with this rule before pulling out onto the road after a break - it's easy to forget where you are!

### Giving way at intersections



**Always use your indicators when turning.**

Stop completely the give way (yield) to all traffic.



Slow down and be ready to stop and give way to all traffic.

At an intersection where one vehicle will cross the path of another, and both are waiting on stop or give way signs (or where there are no signs), special give way rules apply.

### In general:

- If you are turning, give way to all vehicles that are not turning
- In all other situations, give way to vehicles crossing or coming from your **right**.



### No left turn on red

In New Zealand, you're not allowed to turn left at an intersection when the traffic lights are red.

### Two of the give way rules

#### The left- turn versus right-turn rule

The new rule now require all traffic turning right to give way to vehicle coming from opposite direction and turning left. This applies at cross roads, T-intersections and driveways where both vehicles are facing each other with no signs or signals, or the same signs or signals

**The uncontrolled T-intersections rule** ("uncontrolled" means when there are no signs or signals to tell you what to do) At an uncontrolled T-intersection, all traffic from a terminating road (bottom of the T) should now give way to all traffic on continuing road (top of the T). This will bring it into line with T-intersections where there are Stop or Give Way signs on the terminating roads.

For more information, login to [www.Itsa.govt.nz](http://www.Itsa.govt.nz)



Land Transport NZ  
Ikiiki Whenua Aotearoa

## Travelling times

It's easy to underestimate travelling times in New Zealand. Although distances may seem short on paper, New Zealand roads may be narrower than you are used to, cover hilly terrain and vary from motorways to unsealed gravel roads.

If you're tired you're much more likely to have a crash. Here are some tips to help you start alert.

- Get lots of rest before a long drive.
- Take a break from driving every two hours.
- If possible, share the driving with someone else.
- Avoid large meals and drink plenty of fluid.
- If you begin to feel sleepy, try to nap for up to 40 minutes.
- If you're feeling very tired - find a place to stay overnight.

## Driving speeds

Speed limit signs show the maximum speed you can travel. However, at times you may need to drive at a slower speed due to road or weather conditions.

Different speed limits apply throughout New Zealand - look out for the speed limit signs.



On most of New Zealand's main roads the speed limit is 100km/h unless a sign says a lower speed applies.



In urban areas, the speed limit is usually 50km/h unless a sign says otherwise.



### Safety Belts

By law, everyone in the vehicle must wear safety belt - whether they're in the front or the back.

## Alcohol

Don't drink and drive - the laws against this are strictly enforced in New Zealand and penalties are severe.



### Overtaking

Most roads in New Zealand have a single lane each way, but provide passing lanes at regular intervals - these should be used where possible. You must not cross a solid yellow line on your

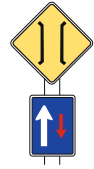
side of the centre-line, as this indicates it's too dangerous to overtake.

## One lane bridges

Many roads in New Zealand have one lane bridges on them. At one lane bridge, vehicles travelling in one direction must give way to vehicles going in the other direction. Any of the signs shown below indicate that you are approaching a one lane bridge. Slow down and check for traffic coming the other way. The smaller red arrow shows which direction has to give way.



These two signs show you must give way to traffic coming the other way across the bridge.



This sign indicates you can proceed across the bridge.



### Animals on the road

Watch out for farm animals and horses on the road, particularly in rural areas. When you see them slow down and do not sound your horn - it may startle them. You may need to stop and let the animals go past you or move slowly up behind and follow the farmer's instructions.



### Winter driving

Look out for this slippery surface sign in wet or icy conditions - slow down and avoid braking suddenly. Snow and ice can make roads even more hazardous, particularly around mountain passes. Rental vehicle companies will often supply chains if you're likely to be driving in these conditions - make sure you know how to fit them before setting out.



### Unsealed (gravel) roads

Avoid unsealed roads if possible. If you need to drive on them, remember they can be very narrow. Reduce your speed to below 40-50 km/h and slow down even further when approaching oncoming traffic as the dust will obscure your vision.



### Parallel parking

In New Zealand, you can be fined or towed away for parallel parking on the wrong side of the road. You may only park in the direction of traffic flow on your side of the road (ie on the left side, unless it is a one-way street).

### Protect your property

Whenever you park your vehicle LOCK all doors, boot and windows. Take valuables with you or remove from sight. Remember, lock it or lose it!

For more information on New Zealand, login to [www.newzealand.com](http://www.newzealand.com)