Safety by Design

Whether Interstates, urban freeways or two-lane rural roads, all U.S. highways are designed with safety in mind.

Safety by Design is a concept created by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). It represents the integration of safety into agency programs, and underscores that the nation's roadway system is built to the highest safety standards.

FACT:

Each state owns, operates and maintains the part of the Interstate highway system within its borders.

Signs, signals, and pavement markings are the language of the road. They communicate with color, shape, and placement.

If you see traffic control devices used in a way you think is confusing or dangerous, contact your state or local highway department.

Pavement Markings: White-Right, Yellow-Left

Colored markings on the pavement give drivers important safety cues. Here are a few tips and reminders that every driver can use. REMEMBER: WHITE LINES separate traffic traveling in the same direction and mark the right edge of freeways and ramps. YELLOW LINES generally separate traffic traveling in opposite directions, and mark the left edge of divided highways and ramps.

The ABC's of Passing

A. Double Solid Yellow Lines:
   > No passing allowed in either direction.

B. Single Dashed Yellow Lines:
   > Passing is allowed in either direction if the road ahead is clear.

C. Solid and Dashed Yellow Lines:
   > If the dashed line is in your lane, pass with caution.
   > If the solid line is in your lane, do not pass.

The Meaning of Shape and Color

The shapes and colors of the signs you see have meaning. Some signs, like STOP and YIELD, are so important to safety that they have their own distinctive color and shape. Other groups of signs share similar characteristics.

REGULATORY SIGNS

STOP, KEEP RIGHT, DO NOT ENTER

WARNING SIGNS

GUIDE SIGNS

INFORMATION SIGNS

Most WARNING SIGNS have a DIAMOND shape, and BLUE signs provide motorist information. Signs in WORK ZONES have their usual shape but their color is changed to ORANGE.
**How Well Do You Know Your Road?**

What does this sign indicate?
A left exit. Notice the position of the exit number panel.

What is unique about this sign?
It's the only warning sign that is round.

What is this? A chevron.
It tells you to watch your speed or expect a sharp curve ahead or change in travel direction.

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**Navigating the Road**

**DECODING THE INTERSTATE SYSTEM**

- One- or two-digit **EVEN-numbered** Interstates are always **EAST-WEST** routes.
- One- or two-digit **ODD-numbered** Interstates are always **NORTH-SOUTH** routes.

**TRAFFIC SIGNALS**

- **RED** – STOP. All states permit “right-turn-on-red” (unless there is a sign prohibiting it), but only after stopping and only if the intersection is safe and clear of pedestrians and other vehicles.
- **GREEN** – GO. When safe.
- **YELLOW** – CAUTION. If you can do so safely, stop before entering the intersection.
- **GREEN ARROW** – GO. When safe, go only in the direction of the arrow.

**PEDESTRIAN SIGNALS**

- Steady WALK or SYMBOL. Pedestrians may cross the street (watch for turning vehicles).
- Flashing DONT WALK or SYMBOL. Pedestrians already in the street should continue across; other pedestrians should not leave the curb.
- Steady DONT WALK or SYMBOL. Pedestrians should not leave the curb.

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**Did You Know...**

- A truck driver can only see you if you can see his/her face in the truck’s rear view mirrors.
- Exiting traffic and through-traffic have right-of-way over vehicles entering the freeway.
- Infants should NEVER ride in the front seat of vehicles with passenger-side air bags. The safest place for children is in the back seat.
- School zones and railroad crossings have distinct pavement markings that warn drivers to use extra caution.

**WORK ZONES:** In any work zone along any road, major or minor, **EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED**! Normal speed limits are reduced, traffic lanes may change, and construction workers and vehicles may be on or near the road.

**RUMBLE STRIPS** are small indentations or narrow, raised strips across the highway or shoulder that are meant to alert you. They wake up dozing drivers; caution drivers about the dangers of passing; and inform drivers of a new or unexpected situation ahead.