

Best Practice Guide

Cornering



Learn How To Drive Yourself Round The Bends

While cornering may seem like a simple action that you don't have to think about there is actually a great deal of skill involved in cornering safely.

Cornering should be considered as part of the ABCs of driving - together with accelerating and braking - as it is important to know how to accelerate and brake correctly when driving round bends. Getting each of the ABCs right can help you to stay in control of your vehicle when negotiation curves in the road.

Stick To A Safe Speed

Reduce the chances of your vehicle skidding out of control on a corner by sticking to the speed limit and always driving at a speed appropriate to the conditions. This means slowing down even more if the road is wet or icy, as corners and bad weather are a dangerous combination.

Get In Position

Keep towards the kerb-side edge of your lane on the approach to blind corners. This can help you to avoid a head-on collision if any oncoming vehicles are travelling too fast and veering over into your lane as they negotiate the corner.



Get Your Timing Right

It is crucial that you know when to brake and accelerate in order to handle corners safely. Braking too late or accelerating too soon can cause you to lose control of your vehicle and could have devastating consequences if you skid out of control or collide with oncoming traffic. When approaching a corner:

- Smoothly apply the brakes until your vehicle is at an appropriate speed.
- Release the brakes before you begin to turn.
- Maintain a safe speed round the bend.
- Accelerate gently as you leave the corner.

Remember The Three S's

Always take corners Slowly, Smoothly and Steadily to prevent loss of control. Apply the three S's to accelerating, braking and turning round corners.

Be Aware Of The Camber

The camber is the tilt of the road surface. Depending on which way the camber is sloping, it can cause you to slide off the road if you are travelling too fast. An adverse camber is where the road surface is higher on the left side heading into a left-hand bend or on the right side heading into a right-hand bend. In other words it refers to roads that tilt on the same side that the car leans.

At an appropriate speed adverse cambers do not pose any danger, but to a speeding vehicle or a high-sided vehicle they can be very hazardous.



Take Care Of Your Tyres

Tyres that are worn, damaged, under or over inflated are likely to affect the handling of your vehicle and make loss of control on corners more likely.

On a weekly basis you should check:

- Pressure.
- Tread depth.
- For damage such as cuts, splits and bulges.

Look Beyond The Corner

When approaching a corner you should look for clues which can help you to identify potential upcoming hazards. If you can see the tops of houses round the corner you could expect someone to be pulling out of a driveway. If you can see a sign for a school you could expect children to be around. These clues and others can be very helpful for anticipating hazards.

Keep Your Distance

Leave a following distance of at least two seconds from the vehicle in front in case it has to stop suddenly for an unexpected hazard. This is important at all times when driving, but particularly on blind corners where you cannot see the road ahead. By keeping a safe distance you will reduce your chances of rear-ending the vehicle or having to swerve out of the lane to avoid a collision.



Get A Grip

Always use a proper grip on the steering wheel in order to corner correctly. Both hands should be placed on opposite sides of the wheel - this position is comfortable and allows you to make most turns without taking your hands off the wheel. Never turn the wheel using just the palm of your hand.

Pay Attention

You should always give 100% concentration while driving, but this is especially vital when approaching corners as you may have to act quickly in case of an unexpected hazard.

No Passing

Never overtake on a bend, or on the approach to a bend, as you have no way of knowing whether a vehicle is coming in the opposite direction.

- C** Clues can help you to anticipate hazards close to corners.
- O** Overtaking on corners must be avoided.
- R** Remember to brake before you enter a corner.
- N** Never drive with damaged or unsafe tyres.
- E** Ensure you leave a safe distance from the vehicle in front.
- R** Remember the three S's: Slowly, Smoothly & Steadily.
- S** Stick to a safe speed.

WARNING

A common type of crash involves a driver losing control on a bend due to excessive speed, then colliding with a stationary object such as a tree, telegraph pole or wall.