

M2. Reversing to the left

Introduction

Once you have mastered the skill of reversing in a straight line you will be ready to undertake the more difficult skill of reversing round a corner or into a parking bay. The reverse round a corner is basically made up of two straight-line reverses with a steering bit in between. Therefore, the extra skills needed relate to the steering bit and the additional observational checks needed before, during and after the turn. These skills will also enable you to reverse into a parking bay or driveway.

Lesson objectives

By the end of this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain when it would not be safe, legal or convenient to carry out this manoeuvre;
- pull up in a suitable position on the left-hand side of the road just after the side road into which you intend to reverse;
- explain the dangers caused by the car as you start to the turn;
- judge when you should begin to turn depending on the sharpness of the corner;
- make suitable observational checks throughout the manoeuvre and especially before you turn, ensuring it is safe to proceed;
- steer a suitable course as you turn and keep within a metre of the kerb or less if the road is narrow or within the parking bay lines when parking;
- judge when you should begin to straighten up your steering as you enter the side road or the parking bay;
- correct positioning errors;
- deal correctly with other road users;
- recognise when you have reversed far enough into the side road for the driving test;
- complete the exercise on sharp and curved corners on roads with and without gradients;
- remember to fasten your seat belt before driving away safely.

Lesson brief

Reversing to the left forms part of everyday driving for many motorists. The manoeuvres shown below highlight the benefits of being able to reverse safely and confidently to the left.

Parking in bays and driveways

Basic reversing skills are required whenever you visit a car park or park on a driveway. Drivers who reverse into parking bays or driveways find it much easier, and safer to drive out (forwards).

Turning around

The safest and easiest way to turn around and go back in the opposite direction is to drive all the way around a roundabout or around the block. If this is not possible, the next best, and most common solution, is to reverse into an opening on the left.

The reverse to the left is basically two straight-line reverses with a turn in between. Therefore, the only new part is the turn. But the turn introduces some additional learning points.

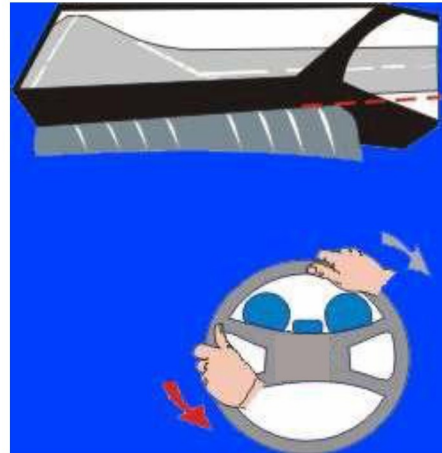
Location

You must never reverse from a side road into the main road. You would only consider reversing into a side road on the left that was a give way junction and had little or no traffic emerging out of it. Again, you would need to consider whether it was legal, safe and convenient.

Hand(s) position on the steering wheel

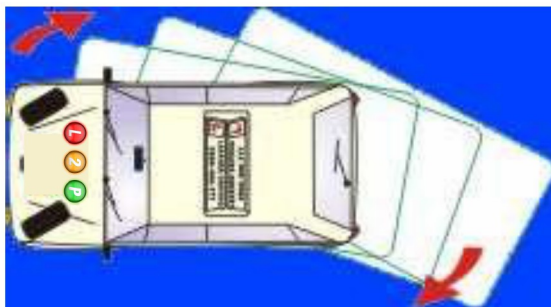
At the point you started to turn you would need to use both hands and the pull push method of steering although it would be offset to the left so that you could maintain observations over you left shoulder.

When looking to the rear the effect of turning the steering wheel on the vehicles position is much less pronounced (because there is no bonnet to act like a gun sight). The effects of steering also appear to be delayed. This is why it is easy to over steer when reversing.



All round awareness

Because you intend to turn into a side road against the flow of traffic extra observations are needed into the side road. Extra observations are also needed to the front, as the front of the car will swing out as you turn and may present a hazard to passing traffic on the major road.

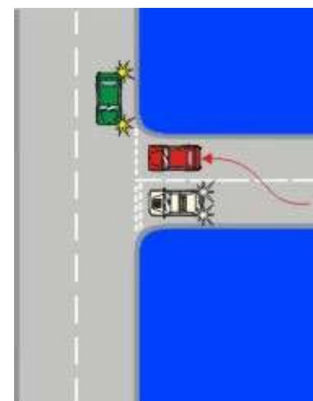


Dealing with other road users

When reversing to the left, be prepared to abandon the manoeuvre and drive forward back to the start position. Until you are well back into the side road, it is potentially very dangerous for other vehicles to overtake you so close to the junction.

Distance you need to reverse into the side road

When reversing to the left on test you are required to reverse back for a reasonable distance (i.e. about 3 to 4 car lengths) into the side road. Wait for the examiner to tell you when to stop, unless you are stopping due to approaching vehicles, pedestrians or other potential hazards.



Highway Code practical references

Rules: 200-203, 206. learning points.