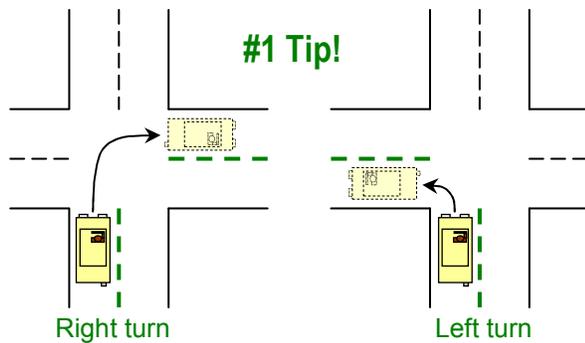


British Isles Driving Tips

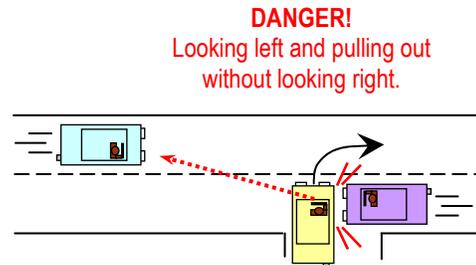
How to keep out of trouble when driving on the "wrong" (left) side of the road!
Based on a experiences gained in May 2006.

Keep the Center Line on your *right*.

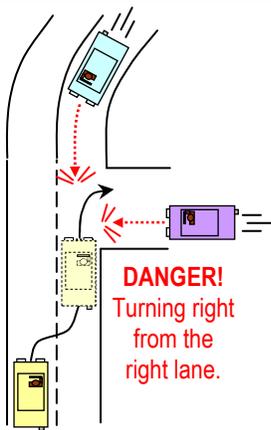


This is the most useful tip for driving on the left. If the road or parking lot has no center line, imagine one.

Check *right* before turning right.



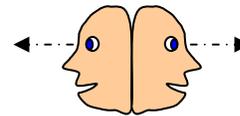
Scenario: You're coming out of a driveway, parking lot, or side road and plan to turn right. Since you'll be pulling into the far lane, you look to the left for oncoming traffic but forget to look right and dangerously pull out in front of oncoming traffic!!



Make right turns from the *left* lane.

Scenario: You're driving in the left lane, as you should, and want to make a right turn into a driveway, so you revert to old habits and scoot over into the right lane to make the turn...directly into hidden oncoming traffic coming from two directions!!

Always look both ways!



Even after you get used to driving on the left, you may come upon a one-way or other street in which the traffic comes from an unexpected direction or a confused foreigner may *really* be driving on the wrong side of the road. Looking both ways also applies when you're walking or biking across a road.

Use an Online Trip Planner

the **AA**.com

Visit www.theaa.com, and enter your starting and ending cities to get a detailed route including *signposts*, elapsed time, and mileage. Petrol stations, restaurants, hotels, etc. are also listed, which makes the route seem more complicated, so highlight, copy, and paste each route to a word processing program, delete what you don't want, then print a copy to take with you.

Know Your "Signposts"



The *signposted* city you see with the highway number on a road sign is usually the city at the *terminal end* of that road, not necessarily the city you're traveling to. Signposts seldom specify north, south, east, or west; e.g., in Ireland, N4-Sligo ends at Sligo (west), whereas N4-Dublin terminates at Dublin (east).

Map Tips

GB
Map

- Study the map *before* setting out to drive.
- Use a yellow highlighter to mark your route or your destination cities. Otherwise it's too easy to lose your place each time you put the map down.
- Fold the map so that your current location is on top.
- Know the exit just *before* the one you want, so you'll be ready for the turn.
- If you take a wrong turn, pull over to a safe place to check the map *before* returning to your error point.

Routes Painted on Roads



In many places, in addition to overhead signs, road numbers are painted in the lane you should be in. Sometimes the destination city or direction is posted as well. This is a great feature we need on U.S. roads.



London Congestion Zone!

If you drive through downtown London's Congestion Zone, cameras will snap a picture of your car registration (license plate). Unless you call the Zone Authority's phone number and charge the fee to your credit card *on the same day*, you'll get a stiff fine which your rental company will deduct from your credit card along with a hefty service charge. Search the web for up-to-the-date info.



mph?
kph?

Miles or kilometers?

U.K. and Ireland speed limit signs look the same!

- U.K. uses miles & mph (U.K. includes Northern Ireland)
- Ireland uses km & kph

kph x 0.6 = mph, e.g., 60 kph x 0.6 = 36 mph

Learn UK Speed Limits

Often speed limits aren't posted. Instead you'll see a white sign with a black slash that means assume/resume maximum speed as follows:



- M# (Motorway): 70 mph
- A# (A-class highway): 60 mph
- B# (B-class road): posted mph
- General limit: 30 mph

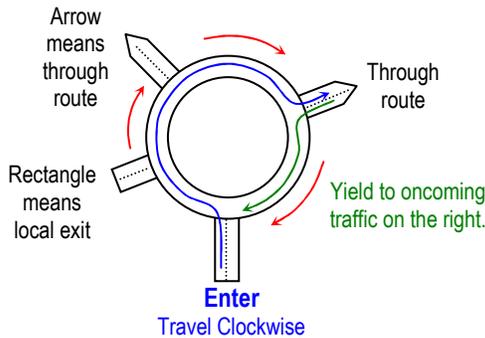
Caveat: Since limits can change, ask in country!



Don't Speed Big Brother is watching!

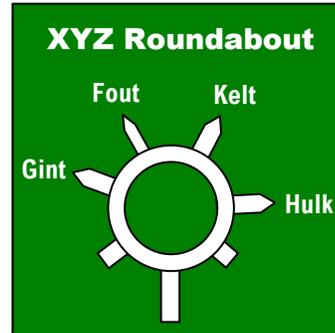
Roadside cameras throughout the U.K. snap photos of speeding cars and mail tickets to the owner or rental company, which then charges the driver. Camera zones will have warning signs, but unless you're a local and know where they are, you may come up on one too quickly. So if you must speed, be sure to smile!

Learn About Roundabouts



Although they take some getting used to, you may come to like roundabouts (aka traffic circles). Statistically safer than standard intersections, they improve traffic flow and can feed multiple routes. Some roundabouts also have traffic lights for pedestrian crossings or congestion metering control.

Count Your Destination Spoke



Hulk is the 5th spoke.

It's easy to get confused in a roundabout. So on the sign that appears before the roundabout, find your destination and count its spoke. Once in the roundabout count spokes until you reach yours. If you're unsure, don't make a panic exit—keep circling until you find it.

Unlabeled Road Signs



No Entry



No Stopping (Clearway)



Exit is in: 300 yds

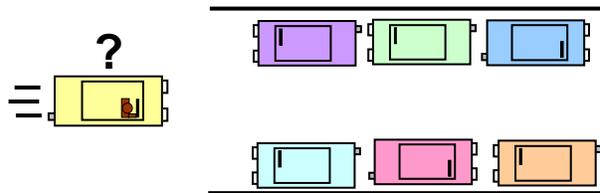


200 yds



100 yds

Cars park both ways!



Cars parked in opposite directions can make it hard to know which side of a street you should be driving on. Keep or imagine the center line on your right.

Common Mistakes

Even after you get used to driving on the left, you're likely revert to your old ways on occasion, especially after a non-driving day. For example, getting into the left front seat, then realizing the steering wheel is on the other side; bumping into curbs with the left-side tires; getting honked at for indecision or cutting others off. Thankfully, most British Isles drivers are fairly tolerant of mistakes and don't honk often.