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United States • DDS Knowledge Exam

Georgia

Study Guide

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Contents

01 Chapter 1: Traffic Laws 1

02 Chapter 2: Teen Driving Laws 6

03 Chapter 3: Signs, Signals & Markings 9

04 Chapter 4: Safety Guidelines 13

05 Chapter 5: Sharing the Road 17

CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1: Traffic Laws

1.1 Three Most Basic Georgia Traffic Laws

All drivers in Georgia must adhere to three fundamental traffic laws that form the basis of road safety. These include obeying all traffic control devices like signs and signals, following the directions of law enforcement or firefighters even if they contradict signals, and never driving on a closed roadway.

- ✓ You must obey all traffic control devices, such as lights and signs.
- ✓ You must obey the traffic directions of a law enforcement officer or firefighter, even if it goes against what a traffic control device indicates.
- ✓ You must never drive on a roadway that has been officially closed for construction, special events, or any other reason.

1.2 Right-of-Way at Intersections Without Signals

Understanding right-of-way at uncontrolled intersections is crucial for preventing collisions. When two vehicles arrive at the same time at an intersection with no signs or signals, the driver on the left must yield to the driver on the right. At a four-way stop, the rule is 'first to arrive, first to proceed.' If two vehicles arrive simultaneously at a four-way stop, the vehicle on the left must yield to the vehicle on their right.

- ✓ At an uncontrolled intersection, if two vehicles arrive at the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left must yield to the driver of the vehicle on the right.
- ✓ At a four-way stop, vehicles proceed in a 'first to arrive, first to proceed' order.
- ✓ If two vehicles reach a four-way stop at the same time, the driver on the left must yield to the driver on their right.

1.3 Yielding Right-of-Way for Turns and Merging

Drivers must yield the right-of-way in several common situations to ensure traffic flows safely. This includes yielding to all oncoming traffic when making a left turn. When merging, drivers must adjust their speed and position to enter the new lane safely, and drivers already on the roadway should change lanes if possible to allow merging traffic to enter.

- ✓ When making a left turn at an intersection, or into an alley or driveway, you must yield the right-of-way to all traffic coming from the opposite direction.
- ✓ When approaching a yield sign, you must slow down and be prepared to stop, proceeding only when it is safe.
- ✓ When merging, you must adjust your speed and vehicle position to merge into the new lane safely.

1.4 Responding to Emergency and Maintenance Vehicles

When an emergency vehicle approaches using its lights and siren, drivers must safely maneuver out of their way. This typically involves slowing down, moving to the right shoulder of the road, and stopping. You must not block an intersection. Similarly, drivers must yield to all highway maintenance vehicles and workers in a construction zone.

- ✓ For approaching emergency vehicles with active lights and sirens, you must slow down, move to the right shoulder of the road (or as far right as possible), and stop.
- ✓ Do not position your vehicle in a way that blocks an intersection or prevents the emergency vehicle from making a necessary turn.
- ✓ You must yield to all highway maintenance vehicles and workers within a construction zone.

1.5 School Bus Stopping Laws

Drivers must pay special attention to school buses. When a bus activates its flashing yellow lights, you must slow down and prepare to stop. Once the flashing lights turn red and the stop arm extends, all traffic approaching the bus must stop and not pass while it is loading or unloading passengers. The only exception is on a highway divided by a median; in this case, vehicles traveling on the opposite side of the median are not required to stop.

- ✓ When a school bus displays flashing red lights and its stop arm is extended, you must stop and not pass the bus.
- ✓ On a highway divided by a median, vehicles traveling on the opposite side from the stopped school bus are not required to stop.
- ✓ Flashing yellow lights on a school bus are a warning to slow down and prepare to stop.

1.6 Prohibited Passing Zones and Distances

Passing other vehicles is prohibited in specific zones for safety reasons. These zones are marked by signs or pavement markings, such as a solid yellow line on your side of the center line. Passing is also illegal within certain distances of intersections, railroad crossings, bridges, and tunnels, or when there is oncoming traffic.

- ✓ Passing is prohibited within 100 feet of a railroad crossing, bridge, viaduct, or tunnel.
- ✓ Passing is prohibited when a solid yellow line is on your side of the center line or in a 'Do Not Pass' zone.
- ✓ You must not pass if an oncoming vehicle is within 200 feet of your vehicle before you can safely complete the maneuver.

1.7 Georgia's 'Move-Over' Law

Georgia's 'Move-Over' Law requires drivers to create a buffer lane for stopped emergency, sanitation, or utility service vehicles displaying flashing lights. If you are approaching such a vehicle on the shoulder, you must move over to the next lane if it is safe to do so. If you cannot move over, you must slow down to a speed below the posted speed limit and be prepared to stop. Violations can result in a fine of up to $500.

- ✓ When approaching a stationary emergency, sanitation, or utility vehicle with flashing lights, you must move over to the next lane if safely possible.
- ✓ If you are unable to move over, you must slow down below the posted speed limit and be prepared to stop.
- ✓ This law applies to vehicles displaying flashing yellow, amber, white, red, or blue lights parked on the shoulder.

1.8 Parking Distance Rules from Specific Objects

Georgia law specifies minimum distances you must maintain when parking near certain objects to ensure access and visibility. These numerical distances are frequently tested. For example, you cannot park within 15 feet of a fire hydrant or within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.

- ✓ Do not park within 15 feet of a fire hydrant.
- ✓ Do not park within 20 feet of a crosswalk at an intersection.
- ✓ Do not park within 30 feet of a stop sign, yield sign, or traffic control signal.
- ✓ Do not park within 50 feet of a railroad crossing.

1.9 Georgia's 'Slow Poke' Law

Georgia's 'Slow Poke' Law (House Bill 459) mandates that slower-moving vehicles must move out of the far-left lane (the passing lane) to allow faster traffic to proceed. Regardless of your speed, if you are in the leftmost lane and a faster vehicle approaches from behind, you must move over to the right, unless specific conditions like turning left, avoiding hazards, or heavy traffic make it necessary to stay in that lane.

- ✓ Slower drivers must move out of the passing lane (the far-left lane) to allow faster-moving traffic to pass.
- ✓ Regardless of the speed you are traveling, you must move from the leftmost lane when faster traffic is approaching from behind.
- ✓ Exceptions include when preparing for a left turn, when traffic conditions make it necessary, or when avoiding an obstruction.

1.10 Rules for Turning on a Red Light

In Georgia, it is permissible to make a right turn on a red light after coming to a complete stop and yielding to all traffic and pedestrians, unless a sign specifically prohibits it. It is also permissible to make a left turn on red, but only from the left lane of a one-way street onto another one-way street, after a complete stop and yielding to all traffic and pedestrians.

- ✓ A right turn on red is permitted after a complete stop and yielding to traffic and pedestrians, unless a sign prohibits it.
- ✓ A left turn on red is only permitted when turning from a one-way street onto another one-way street.
- ✓ Before making any turn on red, you must come to a complete stop and ensure the way is clear.

1.11 Procedure for Passing on a Two-Lane Road

To pass safely on a two-lane road, you must wait for a designated passing zone, check mirrors and blind spots, and signal your intent. After passing, you should not return to the right lane until you can see the entire vehicle you just passed in your rearview mirror. It is illegal to increase your speed while another vehicle is trying to pass you.

- ✓ Before passing, check mirrors and blind spots to ensure no one is passing you.
- ✓ Do not return to the right lane until you can see the car you have just passed in your rearview mirror.
- ✓ It is unlawful to increase your speed before you have been passed completely by an overtaking vehicle.

1.12 Passing Bicyclists and Motorcyclists

Georgia law has specific requirements for passing vulnerable road users. When passing a motorcyclist, you must pass in an adjacent lane, as they are entitled to the full width of their lane. When passing a bicyclist, you must either change lanes if possible, or if not, slow down to at least 10 mph less than the speed limit (or 25 mph, whichever is more) and leave at least three feet of space between your vehicle and the bicycle.

- ✓ A motorcyclist is entitled to the full width of a single lane; you must pass them in an adjacent lane.
- ✓ When passing a bicyclist, you must provide at least three feet of clearance.
- ✓ If a lane change is not possible when passing a bicyclist, you must reduce your speed to a reasonable and proper speed, which is at least 10 mph less than the posted limit or 25 mph, whichever is more.

1.13 Proper Turning Procedures

To make turns safely, drivers must signal their intention continuously for an adequate distance. For a right turn, approach in the right lane, staying close to the curb. For a left turn, move into the far-left lane (or turning lane), keep your wheels straight until you start the turn, and yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians. After turning, you should end up in the corresponding lane on the new street.

- ✓ You must give a continuous turn signal for an adequate distance to alert other drivers before turning.
- ✓ When preparing for a left turn, keep your wheels straight until you actually begin to make the turn.
- ✓ When turning, you must yield to any pedestrians in the crosswalk of the road you are turning onto.

1.14 Prohibited Stopping, Standing, and Parking Areas

It is illegal to stop, stand, or park a vehicle in many specific locations to ensure safety and traffic flow. These include on sidewalks, within intersections, on crosswalks, in highway tunnels, or on railroad tracks. Double parking (parking on the street side of another parked vehicle) is also prohibited.

- ✓ Parking is prohibited on a sidewalk, within an intersection, or on a crosswalk.
- ✓ Parking is prohibited upon any bridge or overpass, or within a highway tunnel.
- ✓ Double parking, which is stopping on the street side of any parked vehicle, is not permitted at any time.

CHAPTER 2

Chapter 2: Teen Driving Laws

2.1 Georgia's Graduated Driver's Licensing Program (TADRA)

The Teenage and Adult Driver Responsibility Act (TADRA) is a graduated driver's licensing program for teens aged 15 to 18. It consists of three phases that allow teens to gain driving experience and privileges gradually, provided they maintain a clean driving record.

- ✓ TADRA is a three-step graduated licensing process for drivers aged 15 to 18.
- ✓ TADRA includes school enrollment requirements and provisions for license suspension for certain dangerous behaviors like DUI or excessive speeding.

2.2 Joshua's Law Driver Education Requirements

Joshua's Law mandates that 16 and 17-year-olds must complete a DDS-approved driver education course to obtain their Class D Provisional License. This includes both theoretical instruction and practical driving experience.

- ✓ To get a Class D license at age 16 or 17, you must complete a driver education course with 30 hours of classroom/online instruction and 6 hours of on-the-road training with a certified instructor.
- ✓ Applicants must also complete a cumulative total of at least 40 hours of supervised driving experience, including at least 6 hours at night.

2.3 Class CP Instructional Permit Rules and Conditions

The Class CP Instructional Permit is the first step in Georgia's TADRA program. It allows a teen to practice driving under specific supervision. Applicants must be at least 15 years old and pass the vision and knowledge exams.

- ✓ An applicant must be at least 15 years old to obtain a Class CP Instructional Permit.
- ✓ A Class CP permit holder may only drive when accompanied by a person at least 21 years of age who is licensed to drive a Class C vehicle and is seated beside the driver.

2.4 Class D Provisional License Requirements

The Class D Provisional License is the intermediate step in the TADRA program. To obtain it, a teen must be at least 16, have held a Class CP permit for one year and one day, completed Joshua's Law requirements, and passed the road test.

- ✓ To apply for a Class D license, you must be at least 16 years old and have held a Class CP Instructional Permit for one year and one day.
- ✓ Applicants for a Class D license must present proof of completion of the Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program (ADAP).

2.5 Class D Provisional License Curfew for Teen Drivers

A major restriction for Class D license holders is a mandatory driving curfew. This rule is strictly enforced with no exceptions for work, school, or other activities.

- ✓ A Class D license holder is not permitted to drive between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 5:00 a.m.
- ✓ There are no exceptions to the Class D license driving curfew.

2.6 Class D Provisional License Passenger Restrictions

To limit distractions for new drivers, the Class D license has strict, phased passenger restrictions during the first year. These rules differentiate between immediate family members and other passengers under the age of 21.

- ✓ During the first six months after issuance, a Class D driver can only transport immediate family members.
- ✓ During the second six months, a Class D driver may transport only one passenger under 21 years of age who is not an immediate family member.

2.7 License Suspension for Non-DUI Offenses Under Age 21

Georgia law mandates license suspension for drivers under 21 convicted of specific serious traffic offenses. A first conviction results in a six-month suspension, while a second conviction results in a twelve-month suspension.

- ✓ The license of a driver under 21 will be suspended for a conviction of hit and run, racing, reckless driving, or fleeing from a police officer.
- ✓ Exceeding the speed limit by 24 miles per hour or more is an offense that results in a mandatory license suspension for drivers under 21.

2.8 DUI Conviction Penalties for Drivers Under 21

Georgia has a zero-tolerance policy for underage drinking and driving. The penalties for a DUI conviction for a driver under 21 are severe, with suspension periods determined by the Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) level or refusal to test.

- ✓ For a driver under 21, a first DUI conviction with a BAC of .02 or greater but less than .08 results in a minimum 6-month license suspension.
- ✓ For a driver under 21, a first DUI conviction with a BAC of .08 or greater, or for refusing a chemical test, results in a minimum 12-month license suspension.

2.9 Penalties for Violating the Hands-Free Georgia Act

Georgia's Hands-Free law imposes strict penalties that escalate with subsequent convictions. A first conviction results in a fine and one point on your license. The fines and points increase for second and third convictions within a 24-month period.

- ✓ A first conviction for violating the Hands-Free Act results in 1 point on your license and a fine of up to $50.00.
- ✓ A third or subsequent conviction for violating the Hands-Free Act results in 3 points on your license and a fine of up to $150.00.

2.10 School Enrollment Proof for Teen Drivers

To obtain any driver's license or instructional permit in Georgia, applicants younger than 18 must provide proof of current school enrollment or completion. This can be a Certificate of School Enrollment (DS-1) from their school, a diploma, GED, or other approved documentation.

- ✓ Anyone under 18 years of age must present proof of school enrollment or graduation to get a driver's license or permit.
- ✓ Acceptable documents include a Certificate of School Enrollment (DS-1), a high school diploma, or a GED.

CHAPTER 3

Chapter 3: Signs, Signals & Markings

3.1 Identifying Road Signs by Shape

In Georgia, traffic signs use seven basic shapes to convey their meaning quickly. Drivers should be able to recognize these shapes from a distance to anticipate the sign's message. For example, an octagon always signifies a stop, a triangle always means yield, and a diamond shape is used for warnings.

- ✓ An octagon (eight-sided) shape always means you must come to a complete stop.
- ✓ A triangle-shaped sign always means you must slow down and yield the right-of-way.
- ✓ A diamond-shaped sign is used to warn of existing or possible hazards on or near the roadway.
- ✓ A round sign indicates that you are approaching a railroad crossing.
- ✓ A pentagon-shaped sign indicates that you are approaching a school zone or school crossing.

3.2 Understanding and Obeying Regulatory Signs

Regulatory signs, often shaped as vertical rectangles, inform drivers of specific traffic laws or rules. They are legally enforceable, and all drivers, including bicyclists, must obey them. A common feature on prohibitive regulatory signs is a red circle with a slash through an image, indicating that the depicted action is not allowed.

- ✓ You must obey regulatory signs in the same manner as traffic laws.
- ✓ A red circle with a red slash from upper left to lower right means 'No' or that an action is prohibited.
- ✓ Examples of regulatory signs include 'Speed Limit', 'Do Not Enter', and 'No U-Turn' signs.

3.3 Recognizing and Reacting to Warning Signs

Warning signs are designed to alert you to potential hazards or changes in road conditions ahead. They are typically diamond-shaped and yellow with black markings or symbols. Seeing a warning sign should prompt you to increase your awareness and possibly adjust your speed or lane position.

- ✓ Warning signs are usually yellow with black markings and are diamond-shaped.
- ✓ These signs alert you to conditions immediately ahead, such as a sharp turn, a narrow bridge, or a slippery road surface when wet.
- ✓ Signs like 'Stop Ahead' or 'Signal Ahead' give you advance notice to prepare to slow down or stop.

3.4 Navigating Construction and Work Zones

Signs used for road construction and maintenance projects are orange with black markings. These signs are critical for safety, as they warn of dangers and temporary changes in traffic patterns ahead, giving you time to slow down and navigate the work zone safely.

- ✓ Warning signs for construction and maintenance projects are orange with black markings.
- ✓ These signs alert you to dangers ahead and give you enough time to adjust your speed accordingly.
- ✓ You must obey all signs in a work zone, including those indicating lane closures or instructions from a flagger.

3.5 Approaching and Crossing Railroad Tracks

Safety at railroad crossings is indicated by multiple signs and markings. A round, yellow sign provides an advanced warning that you are approaching a crossing. At the crossing itself, a white, X-shaped sign called a cross-buck is present. Pavement is often marked with a large X and two R's.

- ✓ A round sign is an advance warning that you are approaching a railroad crossing.
- ✓ The cross-buck sign is located at the railroad crossing and requires you to yield to any approaching trains.
- ✓ Passing is prohibited at all railroad crossings.
- ✓ A complete stop is required when a red light is flashing at a railroad crossing.

3.6 Driving Safely in School Zones

A pentagon-shaped sign indicates that you are approaching a school zone or school crossing. These signs, which can be yellow or fluorescent green, are placed between 150 and 700 feet before the school grounds. Drivers must be vigilant and prepared to slow down, especially when children are present or when lights on a school speed limit sign are flashing.

- ✓ A pentagon-shaped sign means you are approaching a school zone or school crossing.
- ✓ A school speed limit sign, when its yellow lights are flashing, indicates a reduced speed limit is in effect.
- ✓ These signs are erected not less than 150 feet nor more than 700 feet in advance of the school grounds or crossing.

3.7 Interpreting Traffic Light Signals

Traffic signals control the flow of traffic at intersections. A steady red light requires a complete stop. A steady yellow light is a warning that the light is about to turn red, so you should prepare to stop. A green light means you may proceed, but only if the intersection is clear. If a signal is out of service, the intersection should be treated as an all-way stop.

- ✓ A steady red light means you must make a complete stop before entering the crosswalk or intersection.
- ✓ A flashing red light should be treated like a stop sign; you must stop completely and proceed only when it is safe.
- ✓ A flashing yellow light means you should slow down and proceed through the intersection with caution.
- ✓ If a traffic signal is not functioning, all drivers must treat the intersection as if it were an all-way stop.

3.8 Understanding Traffic Signal Arrows

Arrow signals apply to specific lanes and direct turning movements. A green arrow provides a 'protected' turn, meaning oncoming traffic is stopped. A flashing yellow arrow indicates that you may turn left but must first yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians, as they have a green light.

- ✓ A green arrow means you may proceed carefully in the direction the arrow is pointing.
- ✓ A flashing yellow arrow means you may turn left after yielding to oncoming traffic and pedestrians.
- ✓ A steady yellow arrow warns that the protected turning period is ending and you should prepare to stop or clear the intersection.

3.9 Understanding Center and No-Passing Lines

Yellow lines on the pavement separate traffic moving in opposite directions. A broken yellow line indicates that passing is allowed when safe. A solid yellow line on your side of the road means passing is prohibited. Two solid yellow lines indicate that passing is forbidden for traffic in both directions.

- ✓ A single broken yellow line is used to mark the center of a two-lane road where passing is permitted in either direction.
- ✓ A solid yellow line on your side of the center line means you may not pass.
- ✓ Two solid yellow lines in the center of the road mean that passing is not allowed from either direction.

3.10 Interpreting Lane and Edge Lines

White lines are used to separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction and to mark the edge of the roadway. Dashed white lines can be crossed to change lanes when safe. Solid white lines discourage lane changes and mark the right edge of the pavement. Solid double white lines prohibit lane changes.

- ✓ White dashed lines separate lanes of traffic moving in the same direction.
- ✓ Solid white lines along the side of the pavement are edge lines that serve as a safety guide.
- ✓ When double white lines are solid, lane changes are prohibited.

3.11 Properly Stopping at Intersections

Pavement markings indicate the correct place to stop at an intersection. A solid white line painted across the lane is a stop line. You must bring your vehicle to a complete stop before this line. If no stop line is present, you must stop before the crosswalk. Pedestrians in a crosswalk always have the right-of-way.

- ✓ Drivers must come to a complete stop at the stop line, when present, not at the actual stop sign or traffic signal.
- ✓ If there is no stop line, you must stop before entering the crosswalk.
- ✓ When pedestrians are in a crosswalk, they have the right-of-way over motor vehicles.

3.12 Using Reversible Lane Control Signals

Some roadways use overhead signals to manage traffic flow in reversible lanes. A green arrow indicates the lane is open for travel in your direction. A red 'X' means the lane is closed to you. A steady yellow 'X' warns that the lane is about to close and you should move out of it safely.

- ✓ A green arrow signal over a lane means you are permitted to travel in that lane.
- ✓ A red 'X' signal over a lane means travel is not allowed in that lane in the direction you are going.
- ✓ A steady yellow 'X' signal means you must clear the lane because its direction is about to be reversed.

3.13 Using Guide Signs for Navigation

Guide signs provide information on destinations, distances, and services. They are typically rectangular and come in various colors, such as green for directions, blue for services, and brown for recreational areas. Route markers, exit numbers, and milepost markers are all types of guide signs.

- ✓ Guide signs show locations, directions, or other special information to help you navigate.
- ✓ Milepost markers are placed each mile along the edge of the roadway, with zero starting at the south or west border of the state.
- ✓ Numbered signs are used to designate specific exits, interstates, or state highways.

CHAPTER 4

Chapter 4: Safety Guidelines

4.1 Safe Driving Practices in Fog

Driving in heavy fog is dangerous and should be avoided if possible. If you must drive, visibility is severely limited, making it difficult to judge distances. Using the correct headlights is critical to being seen and being able to see.

- ✓ When driving in heavy fog, you must use your dim (low-beam) headlights. Bright lights will cause glare and make it more difficult to see.
- ✓ Do not drive with only your parking lights or with your hazard lights on; reduce your speed and increase your following distance.

4.2 Understanding and Preventing Hydroplaning

Hydroplaning occurs on wet roads when your tires lose contact with the pavement and ride on a film of water. This loss of traction means you cannot brake, accelerate, or steer. The risk increases with speed and can begin at speeds as low as 35 mph.

- ✓ In a standard passenger car, partial hydroplaning can begin at speeds as low as 35 mph.
- ✓ If your vehicle begins to hydroplane, you should take your foot off the accelerator and let the car slow down. Do not brake or turn the steering wheel suddenly.

4.3 How to Correct a Vehicle Skid

A skid occurs when your tires lose their grip on the road surface, causing a loss of control over braking and steering. This is often caused by braking too hard or turning too sharply on a slick surface. Knowing how to react can help you regain control.

- ✓ If your vehicle begins to skid, you should ease your foot off the accelerator.
- ✓ To regain control, you must turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid (i.e., the direction the rear of the car is sliding).

4.4 Safely Recovering When Your Vehicle Leaves the Road

If your wheels drift off the pavement, it is critical to react calmly and correctly to avoid a more serious crash. Panicking and overcorrecting by jerking the wheel is a common and dangerous mistake that can cause you to skid, flip, or swerve into oncoming traffic.

- ✓ If your vehicle leaves the roadway, take your foot off the accelerator and grip the steering wheel tightly. Do not hit the brake pedal suddenly.
- ✓ Do not try to turn back onto the pavement immediately. Wait until your speed has reduced, check traffic, and then safely merge back onto the road.

4.5 Responding to a Sudden Tire Blow-Out

A tire blow-out is an immediate rupture of the tire that can cause a sudden loss of vehicle control. The correct response involves staying calm and managing the vehicle's speed and direction smoothly.

- ✓ If you experience a tire blow-out, you should grasp the steering wheel firmly and take your foot off the accelerator.
- ✓ Do not apply the brakes hard. Allow the vehicle to slow down and roll to a stop in a safe location off the roadway.

4.6 Maintaining a Safe Following Distance

Following another vehicle too closely is a primary cause of rear-end collisions. To ensure you have enough time to stop, you should use the two-second rule to measure the distance between your car and the vehicle ahead.

- ✓ When following another vehicle, you must maintain at least a two-second space cushion.
- ✓ You must increase your following distance to more than two seconds during inclement weather, at night, or in heavy traffic.

4.7 Entering and Exiting Expressways

Expressways have controlled access, meaning you can only enter and exit at specific interchanges. Using the acceleration and deceleration lanes correctly is essential for merging safely with high-speed traffic.

- ✓ When entering an expressway, use the acceleration lane to increase your speed to match the flow of traffic before merging.
- ✓ When exiting an expressway, you should move into the deceleration lane first and then slow down to the posted exit ramp speed.

4.8 General Safety Rules for Expressway Driving

Driving on high-speed expressways requires heightened awareness and adherence to specific rules. This includes proper lane usage, avoiding other drivers' blind spots, and knowing what to do in an emergency.

- ✓ On a divided highway or expressway, slower traffic must keep to the right.
- ✓ Stopping on an expressway roadway is prohibited, and stopping on the shoulder is permitted only for a genuine emergency.

4.9 Vehicle Tire Safety and Maintenance

Before driving, it is crucial to ensure your tires are safe. This involves checking the tire pressure against the manufacturer's recommendation, typically found on a sticker in the driver's side door jam. You should also check your tire tread depth to ensure your vehicle can grip the road, especially in adverse conditions. The 'penny test' is a simple way to do this.

- ✓ Check tire pressure using the recommended psi located in the door jam of the vehicle, not on the tire itself.
- ✓ To check tread depth with the penny test, if any part of Abraham Lincoln's head is covered by the tread, it is safe; if you can see his entire head, the tread is below the legal minimum of 2/32 of an inch and the tire must be replaced.

4.10 Correct Hand Position for Steering

Maintaining proper posture and hand position on the steering wheel allows for better vehicle control and a clearer view of hazards. The recommended hand placement can vary depending on whether your vehicle is equipped with airbags.

- ✓ As a general rule, place your left hand at the 9 o'clock position and your right hand at the 3 o'clock position.
- ✓ For vehicles equipped with airbags, some manufacturers recommend placing hands at the 8 o'clock and 4 o'clock positions to prevent injury if the airbag deploys.

4.11 Driving on Curves Safely

Curves are potential hazards that require you to adjust your speed. Advisory speed signs often indicate a safe speed for a curve, which is usually lower than the posted speed limit. It is important to slow down before entering the curve, not while you are in it.

- ✓ You should reduce your speed before entering a curve.
- ✓ If you realize you are going too fast in a curve, do not forcefully apply the brakes. Instead, take your foot off the accelerator and apply the brake carefully.

4.12 Rules for Highway Gores and HOV Lanes

Expressways have specific markings to control traffic flow. A 'gore' is a triangular area marked by solid white lines where lanes merge, and it is illegal to cross. High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes are restricted to certain vehicles and have specific entry and exit points.

- ✓ It is illegal to cross the solid white lines of a gore, which is the area of convergence between an entrance ramp and the adjacent travel lane.
- ✓ HOV lanes are marked with a diamond symbol. You may only enter or exit an HOV lane where the dividing lines are dashed white.

4.13 Preventing Drowsy Driving and Highway Hypnosis

Long trips on monotonous expressways can lead to drowsiness or 'highway hypnosis,' a state of unawareness. It is crucial to recognize the signs of fatigue and take action to prevent falling asleep at the wheel.

- ✓ To combat highway hypnosis, you should constantly shift your eyes, focusing on different objects near and far, and check your mirrors frequently.
- ✓ If you feel drowsy while driving, the only safe solution is to pull over in a safe location and rest. Do not rely on stimulants.

4.14 Safe Driving Practices in Winter Conditions

Winter weather can create hazardous driving conditions like snow and ice. Drivers must prepare their vehicles and adjust their driving habits to maintain control and avoid crashes.

- ✓ Before driving in winter weather, you must completely clear snow and ice from all windows, lights, and mirrors.
- ✓ On slick roads, you should reduce your speed, increase your following distance, and apply brakes gently and gradually to avoid skidding.

CHAPTER 5

Chapter 5: Sharing the Road

5.1 Georgia's Pedestrian Right-of-Way Law

In Georgia, drivers must stop and remain stopped for pedestrians in a crosswalk under several conditions. This applies when a pedestrian is on the driver's half of the road or approaching within one lane. Drivers must also yield to pedestrians when turning at intersections, after stopping at a stop sign, and even on a green light if a pedestrian is still in the crosswalk.

- ✓ A driver must stop and remain stopped for a pedestrian in a crosswalk when the pedestrian is on the driver's half of the roadway or is approaching within one lane.
- ✓ Drivers must yield to pedestrians at traffic signals, even when the light is green, if the pedestrian is still in the crosswalk.
- ✓ When entering a street from a driveway or alley, you must stop and yield to pedestrians on the sidewalk.

5.2 Absolute Right-of-Way for Blind Pedestrians

Georgia law provides special protection for blind pedestrians. Any pedestrian using a guide dog or a white cane must be given the right-of-way at all times, without exception. Drivers must stop their vehicle when they see a blind pedestrian attempting to cross a street or highway.

- ✓ Pedestrians using guide dogs or white walking canes must be given the right-of-way at all times.
- ✓ You must stop your vehicle when approaching a blind person who is crossing a street or highway carrying a white cane or being guided by a dog.

5.3 Safely Passing Bicyclists in Georgia

Bicyclists in Georgia are legally entitled to use a full lane. When passing a bicyclist, a motorist must allow a minimum of 3 feet of space. If a lane change to pass is not possible or safe, the driver must slow down to a speed that is at least 10 mph less than the posted speed limit (or 25 mph, whichever is greater) and still maintain the 3-foot passing distance.

- ✓ The minimum legal space for a motorist to pass a bicyclist is 3 feet.
- ✓ Bicyclists are legally entitled to use the full lane on Georgia roads, except for interstates.
- ✓ If a lane change to pass a bicycle is not possible, you must reduce your speed to at least 10 mph less than the posted speed limit or 25 mph, whichever is more.

5.4 Georgia's School Bus Stop Law

Georgia law requires drivers to stop for a school bus that is stopped with its lights flashing to load or unload passengers. The only exception is on a divided highway with a median; in this case, only traffic traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop. On all other roads, including two-lane, four-lane, and roads with a center turning lane, all traffic in both directions must stop.

- ✓ On a two-lane road or a multi-lane road without a median, all traffic from both directions must stop for a stopped school bus.
- ✓ On a divided highway with a median separation, only traffic following the bus must stop.
- ✓ After stopping, you must remain stopped until the bus resumes motion or deactivates its warning signals.

5.5 Penalties for Illegally Passing a School Bus

Violating Georgia's school bus stop law carries severe penalties. A conviction requires a mandatory court appearance and can result in a fine of up to $1,000 and the assessment of up to 6 points on your driving record. For drivers under 21, a conviction for this offense will result in a license suspension.

- ✓ Illegally passing a stopped school bus can result in a fine up to $1,000 and 6 points on your driving record.
- ✓ For a driver under 21 years of age, a conviction for illegally passing a school bus results in a license suspension.

5.6 Commercial Vehicle "No-Zones" (Blind Spots)

Large trucks and buses have significant blind spots on all four sides, known as "No-Zones." These are danger areas where crashes are more likely. The largest No-Zones are on the sides and directly behind the vehicle. A general rule is that if you cannot see the truck driver's face in their side-view mirror, the driver cannot see you.

- ✓ The 'No-Zone' represents the large blind spots around trucks and buses where your car can 'disappear' from the driver's view.
- ✓ If you cannot see the driver's face in the commercial vehicle's side-view mirror, you are in their blind spot.
- ✓ Trucks and buses have large blind spots directly behind them, as they do not have a rear-view mirror.

5.7 Understanding Marked and Unmarked Crosswalks

Crosswalks are designated areas for pedestrians to cross the street. They exist at all four corners of any intersection, even if they are not marked with painted lines. Drivers must not block crosswalks when stopping at intersections to allow for safe pedestrian passage.

- ✓ Crosswalks exist on all four corners of intersections, even when they are not marked by painted lines.
- ✓ When stopping at a red light or stop sign, you must stop your vehicle before the crosswalk.
- ✓ Pedestrians have the right-of-way over motor vehicles when they are in a crosswalk.

5.8 Passing Vehicles Stopped for Pedestrians

On multi-lane roads, never pass a vehicle that is stopped at a crosswalk, as they may be stopped for a pedestrian you cannot see. To improve visibility for other drivers, when you stop for a pedestrian on a multi-lane road, you should stop at least 10 feet before the crosswalk.

- ✓ Use extreme caution and do not pass a car that is stopped at a crosswalk on a multi-lane road.
- ✓ When stopping at a crosswalk on a multi-lane road, stop at least 10 feet before the crosswalk to allow drivers in adjacent lanes to see the pedestrian.

5.9 Impact of Vehicle Speed on Pedestrian Safety

The likelihood of a pedestrian surviving a crash with a motor vehicle is directly related to the vehicle's speed. The risk of death increases dramatically with speed. A pedestrian struck by a vehicle traveling at 40 mph has at least an 80% chance of being killed.

- ✓ The risk of serious or fatal pedestrian injuries increases exponentially with driver speed.
- ✓ When a pedestrian is struck by a motor vehicle traveling 40 mph, the risk of pedestrian death is at least 80%.

5.10 Motorcycle Lane Rights and Positioning

Motorcyclists have the same rights as other drivers and are entitled to the full width of a traffic lane. Drivers of cars should never try to share a lane with a motorcycle. Motorcyclists often adjust their position within a lane for safety, to be more visible, or to avoid road hazards.

- ✓ Motorcycles are allowed the full width of a lane in which to maneuver.
- ✓ Do not share a traffic lane with a motorcycle.
- ✓ Motorcyclists may change lane position to increase visibility or avoid road hazards like potholes or gravel.

5.11 Following and Passing Motorcycles Safely

Because motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars, drivers should maintain a greater following distance. A three to four-second following distance is recommended. When passing a motorcycle, give it a full lane of space and do not merge back into the lane until you are safely clear.

- ✓ Allow a following distance of three or four seconds when behind a motorcycle.
- ✓ In dry conditions, motorcycles can stop more quickly than cars.
- ✓ When passing a motorcycle, allow a full lane to the motorcycle.

5.12 Motorcycle Safety at Intersections

Intersections are the most common location for crashes involving cars and motorcycles, often because a car driver fails to see the motorcycle. Be aware that motorcycle turn signals may not be self-canceling, so a blinking signal does not guarantee the rider is turning. Wait for the rider to begin the maneuver before you proceed.

- ✓ Intersections are the most likely places for a car/motorcycle crash to occur.
- ✓ Do not assume a motorcyclist is turning just because their turn signal is flashing; wait to be sure before proceeding.

5.13 Safe Driving Practices Around Large Trucks

Due to their size and weight, commercial motor vehicles require much more room to stop and maneuver. A fully loaded tractor-trailer traveling at 55 mph needs three times the stopping distance of a car. Never cut in front of a truck and then slow down. When passing, ensure you can see the entire front of the truck in your rearview mirror before merging back.

- ✓ A fully loaded tractor-trailer traveling at 55 mph needs 3 times the distance a car needs to stop.
- ✓ Do not tailgate a commercial motor vehicle, as you will be in their rear blind spot and unable to see traffic ahead.
- ✓ Before merging in front of a truck, make sure you can see the entire front of the truck in your rear-view mirror.

5.14 Environmental Impact of Engine Idling

To conserve fuel, reduce engine wear, and minimize air pollution, drivers should avoid unnecessary engine idling. According to Georgia's guidelines, idling a vehicle for just 10 seconds consumes more fuel than it takes to restart the engine.

- ✓ Idling a vehicle for 10 seconds will consume more fuel than restarting the engine.
- ✓ Minimizing idling time reduces fuel consumption, engine wear, and air pollution.