

Improve your parking and manoeuvring



Would you like some helpful advice on parking and manoeuvring, but feel silly asking?

Never fear, Richard Gladman, head of driving and riding standards at IAM RoadSmart, is on hand to provide you with some useful hints and tips to build your confidence if you find these manoeuvres tricky.

Selecting the most appropriate car park and parking bay, and how to interpret road signs, restrictions, road markings and the Highway Code when manoeuvring can be daunting for many drivers.

When you drive 'proactively' you apply the principles of safe driving: observation, anticipation and planning, and also the principle of safe stopping.

The following tips can also apply to parking and manoeuvring your vehicle on the road, which will help you to become a safer motorist.

Parking safely

- Select the most appropriate car park and parking bay that maximises safety for you and your vehicle.
- If you can, try and reverse into a parking bay so that you can drive out. It's safer for you and everyone around you. If you do have to drive in, take extra care when reversing out.
- When parallel parking, ensure that you choose a space that is large enough for you to manoeuvre into and out of again. One and one-half times your vehicle length should be enough. Adjusting your nearside mirror downwards will help you monitor the kerb, but remember to adjust it back again.

Manoeuvring in the road

- If you need to turn your vehicle around on the road, try going around the block or to the next roundabout. This will minimise disruption to other vehicles and is safer for you and other road users.
- If you must reverse on the main road or into a side road, look and listen very carefully throughout your manoeuvre. If anything is moving - stop and reassess your situation.
- Do not turn around in someone's driveway; they should expect privacy in their own home.

Stay up-to-date

- Drive with quiet efficiency to safely share road space with other users.

- Keep your knowledge up-to-date, keep your vehicle in good order and make sure to get the latest advice from IAM RoadSmart.

Richard Gladman said: “The ability to pick the right location and method to park or turn around is a skill that develops over time. With a little practice we can all reverse or parallel park, it is about building up confidence and making sure your observation is sound.

“If you have any doubt, stop. A few seconds checking is much better than the time to deal with the damage.”