

Signs you must recognize

Sign colors at a glance

 Yellow Warning — hazard or road change ahead	 Red Stop, yield, or do not enter	 Orange Work zone or detour	 White Regulatory — must or must not do
 Green Guide — distance, direction, exits	 Blue Motorist services — gas, food, lodging	 Brown Recreation or cultural interest areas	 Yellow-Green School zone or pedestrian crossing

Road signs to know

 Reverse turn Road turns sharply right, then sharply left	 Curve right Road curves right ahead	 Winding road Three or more curves ahead	 Chevron (left) Sharp left curve — follow arrow direction	 School zone School zone ahead — slow, watch for children	 Stop Come to full stop; yield to all traffic
 Do Not Enter Wrong-way entry prohibited on one-way road	 No passing zone Pennant shape — passing forbidden here	 Lane ends / merge left Right lane ends; merge into left lane	 Signal ahead Traffic signal at intersection ahead	 T-intersection Road ends at a T-intersection ahead	 Railroad crossing Tracks ahead — slow down, look and listen
 Advisory speed Maximum safe speed for a freeway exit ramp.	 Exit only Lane exits freeway — does not continue through	 Worker ahead Road workers on or near roadway — slow down	 Detour Follow alternate route around road closure	 Steep hill Downgrade ahead — control speed, check brakes	 Low shoulder Shoulder lower than road — don't drift off

Sign shapes — 8 shortcuts

Octagon (8 sides) — Always a stop sign

Triangle (point down) — Always yield

Diamond — Warning — hazard ahead

Pentagon (5 sides) — School zone or school crossing

Pennant (triangle, horizontal) — No passing zone only

Rectangle (vertical) — Regulatory — speed, lane rules

Rectangle (horizontal) — Guide or informational sign

Orange triangle (reflective) — Slow-moving vehicle (farm, animal-drawn)

Rules of the road

■ Right-of-way

Uncontrolled intersection — Yield to vehicle on your right when arriving simultaneously

Four-way stop — First to arrive goes first; ties yield to driver on right

Left turns — Yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians in crosswalk

T-intersection — Driver on road ending yields to through road

Entering highway — Yield to all traffic already on the highway

Emergency vehicles — Pull to right curb and stop; do not block intersections

School buses — All lanes must stop when red lights flash on two-lane road

Pedestrians — Always yield to pedestrians in marked or unmarked crosswalks

■ Speed limits — Minnesota defaults

Alley	10 mph
Urban / town road (default)	30 mph
School zone (when posted)	As posted — reduce speed
Slow-moving vehicle emblem	Farm, animal-drawn

Passing, 55+ mph two-lane	Up to 10 mph over limit while passing
Basic speed law	Never faster than reasonable for conditions
Passing sight distance	Must see 700 ft ahead on curves/hills
Return after passing	Be back in right lane 100+ ft before oncoming car

■ Lane markings

Two solid yellow lines — No passing from either direction

Solid yellow on your side — Do not pass from your direction

Dashed yellow — May pass when safe and clear

White stop line — Stop here at intersections and crosswalks

Dashed white — Lane change permitted — check mirrors and blind spot

Solid white — Do not cross; marks edge or turn lane boundary

Yellow-green fluorescent — School zone or pedestrian crossing area

Parallel to curb — Park within 12 inches of curb when parallel parking

■ Turning and signaling

Signal distance — Signal at least 100 feet before turning

When to signal — Every turn, lane change, or pull away from curb — always

Left turn at intersection — Keep wheels straight while waiting; signal throughout

U-turn — Only where you won't disrupt traffic; never on a freeway

No U-turn zones — Prohibited near hills, curves, or where view is blocked

Right turn on red — Stop fully, yield to traffic and pedestrians, then turn

Freeway — missed exit — Never back up or reverse; go to next exit and return

Hands on wheel — Keep at 8 & 4 o'clock or 9 & 3 o'clock positions

■ Following distance and emergencies

Normal following distance — Minimum 3-second gap behind the vehicle ahead

Slippery / poor visibility — Increase following distance beyond 3 seconds

Large vehicles ahead — Increase gap — they block your vision of road ahead

Space cushion — Maintain space on all four sides of your vehicle

Emergency stop (no ABS) — Pump brakes firmly to stop and maintain steering

Emergency stop (ABS) — Press and hold brake; steer out of danger

Skid recovery — Steer in direction you want vehicle to go; ease off gas

Tire blowout — Hold wheel firmly; ease off gas; steer straight; slow gradually

■ Sharing the road

Passing a bicycle — Slow down; keep at least 3 feet clear of cyclist

Passing zones — prohibited — No passing at intersections, hills, curves, railroad crossings

Railroad crossings — Stop if: red lights flash, gate down, stop sign posted, or flagger

Buses and tankers at RR — Always stop at tracks regardless of signals — required by law

Following emergency vehicle — Cannot follow within 500 feet of responding fire truck

Aggressive driver — Avoid eye contact; slow down; let them pass; don't engage

Parked cars — Assume door may open; use extra caution passing parked vehicles

Large trucks on hills — Expect slower speeds; increase following distance on grades

Safety, DUI, parking and test-day

Alcohol and DUI — MN law

Legal BAC limit (21+)	0.08% — illegal at or above this level	Only way to lower BAC	Time — nothing else works
Impairment starts at	Even the smallest amount of alcohol	Coffee / exercise / cold shower	No effect on BAC
BAC depends on	Amount consumed, time between drinks, body weight	Fatigue vs. alcohol	Long hours awake impair driving like alcohol
BAC NOT affected by	Physical fitness	Impairment affects	Concentration, perception, judgment, memory

Hazardous conditions

DO	DON'T
+ Reduce speed on wet, snowy, or icy roads + Increase following distance in poor conditions + Turn headlights on in rain, fog, or low visibility + Steer into a skid to regain control + Look toward right edge if oncoming high-beams blind you + Ease off gas first when slowing on slippery road	– Don't brake suddenly on ice — apply slow steady pressure – Don't swerve sharply if wheels drop off pavement – Don't immediately brake during a tire blowout – Don't follow too closely — you may not stop in time – Don't drive impaired by alcohol, drugs, or fatigue – Don't pass on hills, curves, intersections, or RR crossings

Parking rules

Fire hydrant clearance	No parking within 10 feet	Uphill with no curb	Turn wheels toward edge of road
Parallel park distance from curb	No more than 12 inches	Crosswalk or bike lane	No parking allowed
Uphill with curb	Turn wheels sharply away from curb (left)	Leaving vehicle unattended	Stop engine, lock ignition, remove key, set brake
Downhill on two-way street	Turn wheels toward curb / right	Bicycle lane	No parking in a marked bicycle lane

Equipment and vehicle rules

Brake lights — Must work; signal to others that you are slowing or stopping

Headlights — Required in rain, fog, and low visibility conditions

Steering wheel distance — Maintain at least 10 inches from airbag-equipped wheels

Seat adjustment — First thing to adjust when entering — ensure clear road view

Cell phone (under 18) — No cell use at all while driving — only 911 exception

Unfamiliar vehicle — Spend a few minutes locating all controls before driving

Accelerator sticks — Shift to neutral, apply steady brake, pull off road safely

Power steering fails — Steer harder, reduce speed, pull off road, stop safely

Test-day cheat box — MN DVS

Pass mark	Must score at least 80% to pass	Permit hold (19+)	At least 3 months before road test
Test ages	Same test format for all ages	Supervised hours (with driver ed)	50 hours total; 15 must be at night
Permit fee	\$29.50 — Class D instruction permit (valid 2 years)	Night curfew (first 6 months)	No driving midnight–5 a.m.
Permit hold (under 18)	At least 6 months before road test	Passenger limit (first 6 months)	Max 1 passenger under 20

Last-minute tips

Know your numbers cold: signal 100 ft ahead, follow 3 seconds, park within 12 inches, keep 10 ft from hydrants, BAC 0.08%, urban default 30 mph.