

CITY OF MESA

DRIVER HANDBOOK



**Provided by
MESA POLICE DEPARTMENT
METRO RESOURCES DIVISION
TRAFFIC UNIT
(480) 644-3533**

**City of Mesa
Driver Handbook**

The Mesa Police Department strives to ensure that all streets of this city are as safe as possible for its citizens, by enforcing all motor vehicle laws and removing unsafe drivers and vehicles from our roadways. As such we have implemented a photo safety program that utilizes cameras to capture violators who speed or run red lights and we encourage City employees to report violators through “Operation Drive and Arrive”.

This Driver Handbook provides a summary of some of the most common traffic laws and driving questions. Please take time to review it and share the information with other drivers.

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Arizona Department of Transportation

Arizona driving laws may be different than laws from other states. The Arizona Department of Transportation, Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) is the state agency that handles driver licenses and motor vehicle registrations. Title 28 of the Arizona Revised Statutes explains traffic laws for Arizona.

Driver License:

- Arizona requires that you obtain an Arizona driver license and registration immediately if you work in Arizona or you remain in Arizona for a total of 7 months or more during any calendar year, regardless of your permanent residence.
- Arizona issues an “extended” driver license that expires at age 65 but your photo and vision will need to be updated every 12 years. Drivers 60 and over receive a 5-year license.
- You are required to notify MVD within 10 days of any change to your address or name.
- For those without a driver license a State Identification Card is available. Those over age 65 or those receiving Federal Supplemental Security Income disability checks receive the card for free.

Vehicle Registration:

- When you buy a vehicle you must apply for a title within 15 days of the purchase.
- When you sell a vehicle you should remove and retain the license plate. Then within 30 days you must transfer that plate to another vehicle, turn in the plate, or submit a signed statement that the plate was destroyed.
- The law states that you must carry your registration card in the driver’s compartment in the vehicle for which it is issued. (Because of the problem with Identity Theft we recommend you do not keep your registration in the vehicle when it is unoccupied)

Telephone Numbers and Websites You May Need

Arizona Dept. of Transportation, Motor Vehicle Division

Driver license and vehicle registration information.

602-255-0072

www.dot.state.az.us

511

Travel information service including traffic conditions and road closures.

1-800-505-BABY (1-800-505-2229)

To report an unrestrained child in a moving vehicle.

602-255-3216

Governor’s Office on Highway Safety

480-644-KIDS (480-644-5437)

Child Safety Seat information and inspections

480-644-3533

Mesa Police Department Traffic Unit

http://www.cityofmesa.org/police/traffic/redlight_cameras.aspx

Mesa Police Department Red Light Camera Locations

http://www.cityofmesa.org/police/traffic/speed_radar.aspx

Mesa Police Department Speed Radar Van Locations

http://www.cityofmesa.org/transportation/Traffic_Signals.aspx

in “Related Links” click on “Freeway Construction” to see freeway construction schedules

in “Related Links” click on “Maricopa County Dept. of Transportation” to see road closures or restrictions

- Check the Mesa Police Department’s website for information on driving refresher classes for older adults offered by the Metro Resources Division, Mesa Police Traffic Unit.

Please drive carefully.

Driving Under the Influence

It is unlawful for you to be in control of a vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor, any drug, or any combination of liquor or drugs if you are impaired to the slightest degree.

Safety Belt Law

All front seat occupants of a motor vehicle must have the lap and shoulder belt fastened while the vehicle is in motion or if only a lap belt is installed then the lap belt must be fastened while the vehicle is in motion.

All passengers under the age of 16 years of age must have the lap and shoulder belt fastened or if only a lap belt then the lap belt must be fastened while the vehicle is in motion.

Child Car Seat Safety

Arizona law states that you shall not operate a vehicle on the highways in this state when transporting a child who is under five years of age unless that child is properly secured in a child passenger restraint system. In general children should be in a car seat until they reach 80 pounds and four feet nine inches tall.

	Infants	Toddlers	Older Children	Older Children
Weight/Age	Until at least 1 year old AND at least 20 pounds	Over 1 year old AND over 20 pounds, up to 40 pounds	Over 40 pounds until at least 8 years old unless 4 feet 9 inches tall..	4 feet 9 inches or taller
Type of Seat	Infant seat or rear-facing convertible seat	Convertible/forward-facing/high-back booster with harness	Belt-positioning booster (high-back or no-back)	Vehicle seat belt
Seat Position	Rear-facing only Harness straps are at or <u>below</u> shoulder level.	Forward-facing Harness straps are at or <u>above</u> shoulder level.	Forward-facing Use belt-positioning booster seats with lap/shoulder belt combination only.	Use lap and shoulder belt.
Remember	Do not place infants in the front seat of vehicles with air bags.	5-point harnesses provide the best protection.	Make sure the lap belt portion fits tight across the child's upper thighs to avoid abdominal injuries	The child's back should be against the seat back with knees bent at the edge of the seat

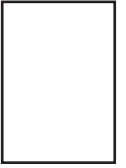
Traffic Signs

The shape of the traffic sign gives information about the meaning of the sign. Being familiar with the shapes can help you when visibility is poor.

Rectangular

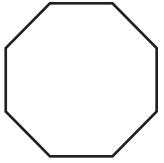
These signs regulate traffic and direct speed and direction.

For example, speed limit signs, "Do Not Enter" signs, "No Turn on Red" signs.



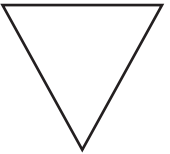
Octagon

This shape is only for stop signs.



Triangle Pointing Down

This sign requires that you yield the right of way.

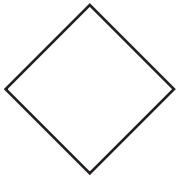


Diamond

These signs are yellow and serve as warning signs.

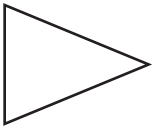
For example, "Pedestrian Crossing," "Signal Ahead," "Slippery When Wet," or turns in the roadway.

Roadway construction signs are also diamond-shaped and will be orange.



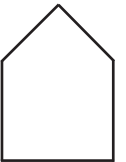
Pennant

These mark the beginning of a no passing zone.



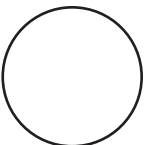
School Crossing (5-sided)

Warns of a school zone and that children may be crossing.



Circular

Warns that you are approaching a railroad crossing.



Pavement Markings

Broken yellow lines separate the lines of traffic and permit passing on the left.



Solid yellow lines and broken yellow lines: Passing is not permitted on the side that is a solid yellow line.



Double yellow lines: Passing is not permitted in either direction and you may not cross the lines unless you are making a left turn.



Broken white lines separate lines of traffic going in the same direction.



Most roadways have three lanes as follows:

#1 lane otherwise known as the fast lane, through lane, or left turn lane

#2 lane otherwise known as the middle through lane or the speed limit lane

#3 lane otherwise known as the curb lane, slow driving lane or the right turn lane

Impeding Traffic: You cannot drive a vehicle at such a slow speed as to impede or block the normal and reasonable movement of traffic except when reduced speed is necessary.

Flash floods are a serious danger during monsoon thunderstorms. Dry wash areas become raging rivers in a matter of seconds so you should never attempt to drive across these areas. Arizona's Stupid Motorist Law states that any motorist who drives around barricades to enter a flooded roadway may be charged for the cost of the rescue.

Collisions

You must remain at the scene of a collision involving injury and/or vehicle damage until you have provided your name, address, driver license number, insurance information and license plate of the vehicle to the other driver(s). You must notify the appropriate law enforcement agency of collisions involving injury or death.

A law enforcement officer who investigates a collision involving injury, death, or damage to property in excess of \$1,000 shall complete a written report.

Driver Safety

Medications

Many medications can cause drowsiness, slow reaction times, and impaired driving ability. The table below outlines some medication's potential effects on your driving ability:

Type of Medication	Medical Conditions Used For	Potential Effects
Analgesics	Arthritis, rheumatism	Drowsiness, inability to concentrate, ringing in the ears
Anti-arrhythmics	Heart arrhythmia	Blurred vision, dizziness
Anti-convulsants	Seizure disorders	Drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision
Antidepressants	Depression	Drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision
Antihistamines	Allergies, Colds, Insomnia	Drowsiness, confusion, reduced reaction time
Anti-tussives	Colds	Drowsiness, blurred vision, dizziness
Antihypertensive	Hypertension	Drowsiness, blurred vision, dizziness
Hypnotics	Insomnia	Drowsiness, dizziness, blurred vision
Sedatives	Anxiety, Insomnia	Drowsiness, staggering, blurred vision
Stimulants	Weight control, Depression, Fatigue	False feeling of alertness, excitability, dizziness

- Check with your physician about the side effects of your drugs and make sure all your physicians know what medications you are taking.
- Do not consume alcohol in combination with medications.



The blue permanent placard is valid for 5 years, provided the medical condition continues, and may be renewed. The red temporary placard is valid for 6 months and if the medical condition continues after 6 months a new application is required.

Emergencies

Breakdown

If your vehicle breaks down on the roadway pull onto the right shoulder as far as possible and turn on your flashers, raise the hood of the car, or tie a white handkerchief to the antenna. If it's dark turn on the inside dome light and/or set out flares or some other warning signals. Wait in your vehicle and do not walk along the roadway. If someone approaches your vehicle open the window only enough to speak with him or her. It's a good idea to carry a cell phone for emergencies.

Blown Tire

Hold the steering wheel and keep the vehicle going straight.

Do not apply the brakes but rather let up on the gas pedal.

Let the vehicle slow down and pull off the roadway and gently apply the brakes.

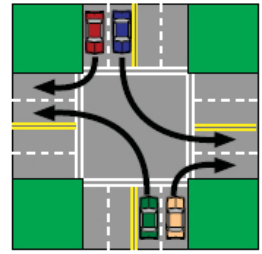
Dust Storm

If you are driving in a dust storm reduce your speed, drive off the highway and stop as far to the right as possible. Turn off your lights, including your hazard lights, and take your foot off the brake. Do not proceed until the storm has cleared.

Monsoon Thunderstorm

Monsoon thunderstorms bring high winds and heavy rain to Arizona from July through September. During a thunderstorm reduce your speed and proceed with caution. If your visibility is impaired to such a degree that it is not safe to proceed then you should follow the recommendations for a Dust Storm outlined above.

Turns and Intersections



Right Turns

A right turn shall be made as close as practicable to the right curb or edge of the roadway. Unless signs tell you otherwise, turn into the right lane of the road you enter.

Right on Red

You must come to a complete stop before reaching the marked or unmarked crosswalk. **BE SURE TO CHECK FOR SIGNS PROHIBITING RIGHT TURN ON RED.** Most freeway exits from US60 prohibit right turns on the red light.

Left Turn on Red

A left turn on red can only be made when traveling from a one-way street on to another one-way street unless there are signs prohibiting left turns on red.

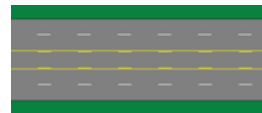
Left Turns

Improper or ill-timed left turns are one of the frequent causes of automobile collisions.

When making a left turn at an intersection enter the middle of the intersection when the light turns green and wait for a safe time to turn. Do not wait at the stop line of the left turn lane and turn when the light is yellow or red. Make the turn to the left lane immediately available for your direction of traffic. When you are turning left at an intersection you must yield the right-of-way to oncoming vehicles and pedestrians.

Center Left Turn Lane

Painted lines mark the center left turn lane on a two-way road; the inner lines are broken and the outer lines are solid. This lane is not a passing lane or a through lane so you must use it only to turn left.



When you turn left from a side street or driveway move into the center turn lane and either immediately merge into traffic or stop your vehicle in the lane until it is safe to merge. You cannot drive in this lane until it is safe to merge.

Signaling

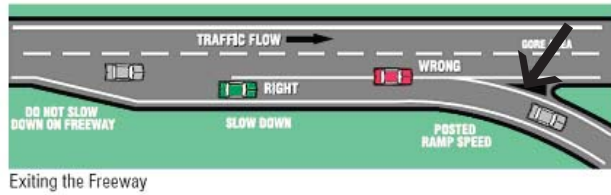
You must signal your intention to turn not less than 100 feet prior to the turn
You must signal your turn prior to stopping or suddenly decreasing your speed to turn.

Signal your lane change **4 seconds** before you turn to give enough notice to other drivers.

Freeway Driving

Gore Area

You may not drive over or park in the gore area. This area is often used by law enforcement for safety stops.



HOV Lane

The "high occupancy vehicle" lane is restricted to the following during certain times of the day, such as 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday (signs are posted indicating the time restrictions):

- 🚗 Vehicles with two or more persons, including the driver
- 🏍️ Motorcycles
- 🚗 Certain hybrid vehicles with alternative fuel vehicle special plates or an alternative fuel vehicle sticker and a hybrid vehicle sticker regardless of occupancy level (bi-fuel vehicles are not allowed in the HOV lane unless occupied by 2 or more persons)
- 🚗 Public transportation vehicles

Spacing

Remember the "**3-second**" rule to create enough space between you and the vehicle in front of you. When the vehicle in front of you passes a sign or some other point, count "one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three". If you pass the point before you finish counting then you are following too closely. In poor driving conditions you should use a 4 to 6 second rule.

Emergency Vehicles

- 🚓 You are not allowed to follow within 500 feet of emergency vehicles and 300 feet of police vehicles in an emergency.
- 🚓 When an emergency vehicle approaches using a siren, flashing lights or other warning devices you must yield the right-of-way. Drive to the right side of the road and stop until the emergency vehicle has passed. If you are in the fast lane or the middle lane you should attempt to move right as far and as safely as possible. It is a good practice to put on your hazard lights when you see an emergency vehicle approaching to alert other drivers.

School Crossing Zones and School Buses

- 🚓 School crossing zone: the speed limit is 15 mph from the first sign until after you pass the second line of the crosswalk. You may not pass another vehicle in a school crossing zone.
- 🚓 School buses: You must come to a full stop before reaching a school bus that has stopped to pick up or drop off passengers. You must remain stopped until the bus moves or until the stop sign arm and flashing lights are no longer shown. You are not required to stop for a school bus on a divided roadway when traveling in the opposite direction. Divided roadway means physical barriers such as a fence, curbing or separation of pavement; lane striping by itself does not indicate a physical barrier.

Parking for Physically Disabled Persons



A parking space designated for physically disabled persons shall be prominently outlined with paint and posted with a permanent sign that is located at least 3 feet but not more than 6 feet above the grade, that is of a color and design approved and that bears the internationally accepted symbol of access and the caption "reserved parking".

A person shall not stop, stand, or park a motor vehicle within these designated spaces unless the vehicle is transporting a person who has a valid placard or special plates and either:

1. The motor vehicle displays the valid permanently disabled or temporarily disabled removable windshield placard
2. The motor vehicle displays international symbol of access special plates that are currently registered to the vehicle.