



Road Safety
SCOTLAND

A GUIDE TO SAFER HORSE RIDING ON THE ROAD



safer
scotland
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

BEFORE YOU GO OUT ON THE ROAD, YOU MUST:

- › Always wear a *correctly-fitted* riding hat which has been manufactured to the current recognised standards and preferably has a quality assurance mark. Make sure that it is securely fastened at all times, particularly when mounted, is in good condition and, if you have a fall when wearing it, the hat should be replaced immediately
- › Always wear sensible footwear with a solid heel - never wear Wellingtons or trainers
- › Always check your tack before you set off to make sure that nothing is broken, and that stitching is in good order, especially on stirrup leathers and girths. Make sure the stirrup iron is large enough to fit your foot/boot
- › Always wear brightly-coloured reflective and fluorescent clothing on both you and your horse, no matter what time of day, season, or weather conditions
- › Always carry a fully-charged mobile phone (or money for a public phone) in case of an emergency, but make sure all mobile electrical equipment you carry is switched off while riding, so that you can hear clearly. In addition, do not wear or use anything which could hinder your all-round observation
- › Always carry the name and number of someone who can be contacted in the event of an emergency, as well as details about yourself and contact details for your vet. If required, the police also have a special contact number for a vet in an emergency
- › Study the BHS Riding and Roadcraft manual and read and learn **The Highway Code**, paying particular attention to the relevant sections for horse-riders
- › Make sure you have valid third-party public liability insurance cover, which can be obtained through a broker or specialist insurance provider
- › Always show courtesy to other road users - a smile or nod of thanks is all that is required as this means you do not have to take your hands off the reins
- › Learn some basic first aid for both horse and rider
- › Train for, and take, a nationally recognised Horseriding and Road Safety Test
- › Finally, remember always to give a LIFE-SAVER LOOK before any manoeuvre

DON'T BE A DARK
HORSE:
BE SAFE, BE SEEN,
BE SENSIBLE

RIDING AND ROAD SAFETY

With increased leisure time, more and more horse-riders are taking to the roads. Nobody rides on the road from choice but, for many, there is little option, as they move between one off-road area and another. It is vital, therefore, that all riders seek proper training to help them cope with the ever-increasing volume of traffic.

Road Safety Scotland, along with the equestrian community, aims to encourage a high level of safety awareness among riders, and this booklet has been designed to try and simplify the different manoeuvres which you must learn in order to increase your safety on the road.

Details of the various organisations which can help are on the inside back cover of this booklet.

MOVING OFF

When it is safe to do so, assume the correct position at the left-hand side of the road. The correct road position always allows enough room between the horse and the kerb so that you are clear of drain covers and roadside debris. Look over your right shoulder for approaching traffic. Signal your intention to move off with your right arm fully extended and, when it is safe to do so, move off with both hands on the reins, giving a final **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** as you do so. If there is no traffic, there is no need to signal. If traffic is coming, wait until it has passed before moving off.

BE ROAD AWARE

Remember your observation skills, checking all around frequently, particularly to the rear. This will help keep you aware of the general road situation and provide early warning of any developing hazards.

STOPPING

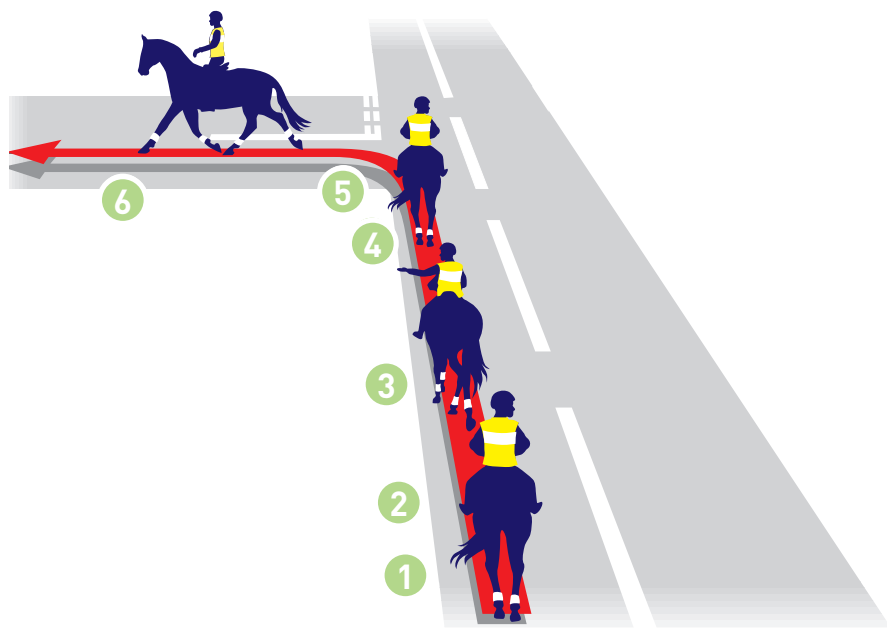
- 1 With both hands on the reins, look all around, particularly to the rear and note any traffic.
- 2 If necessary, signal your intention to pull in.
- 3 With both hands on the reins, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** and stop at the roadside.

REMEMBER, the safest place for your hands, at any time, is on the reins.

LIFE-SAVER LOOK:
ALWAYS GIVE A LAST
LOOK BEHIND BEFORE
ANY MANOEUVRE.

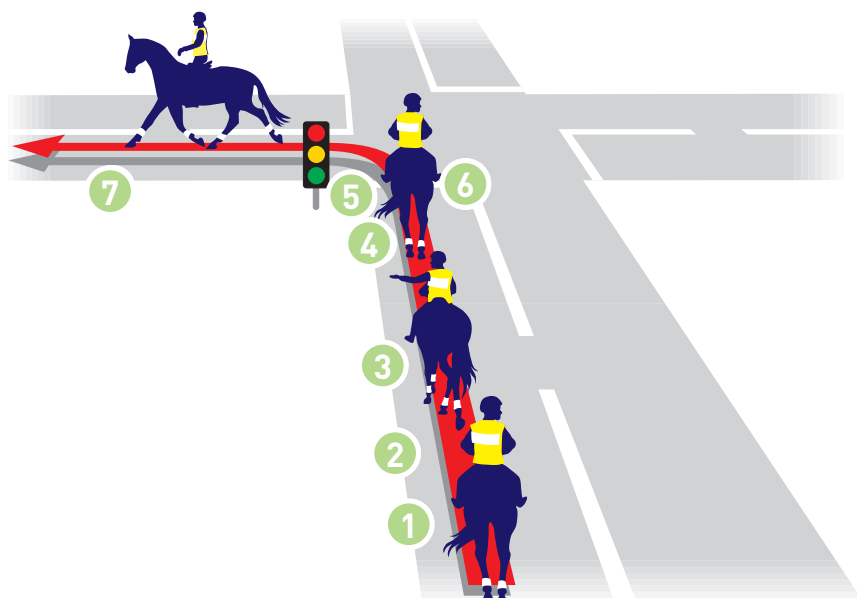
LEFT TURN: UNCONTROLLED JUNCTION - MAJOR TO MINOR

- 1 Approach the junction in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind.
- 3 When it is safe to do so, give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal.
- 4 Return both hands to the reins, and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to stop if necessary.
- 5 If safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK**, and ride into the junction, keeping both hands on the reins and staying parallel to the kerb/verge.
- 6 Continue along the road or, if you are stopping, use the proper procedure as described on Page 2.



LEFT TURN AT TRAFFIC LIGHTS

- 1 Approach the traffic lights in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind.
- 3 When it is safe to do so, give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal.
- 4 Return both hands to the reins, and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to stop if necessary.
- 5 If the lights show red or amber, **STOP** at the stop line, and repeat steps 2 and 3 above. Return both hands to the reins. (If the lights are at green on approach, follow the procedures for the left turn at an uncontrolled junction on Page 3).
- 6 Keep checking so that you are ready to move off immediately the lights change. When the lights change to green, look all round, particularly left and right and, if safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK**, and turn left.
- 7 Continue along the road or, if stopping, use the proper procedure outlined on Page 2.

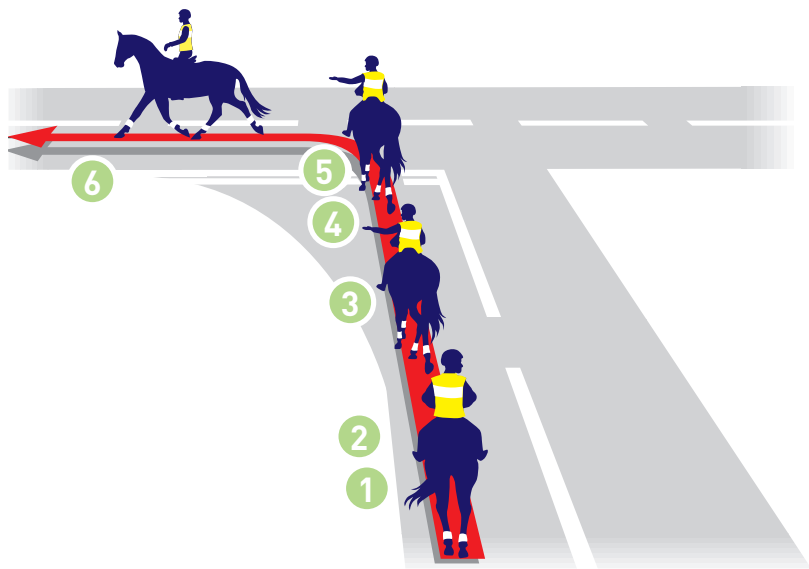


LEFT TURN: CONTROLLED JUNCTION - MINOR TO MAJOR

- 1 Approach the junction in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind.
- 3 When it is safe to do so, give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal.
- 4 Return both hands to the reins, and look all around for traffic. Give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** and be prepared to stop if necessary.
- 5 If you are at a '**STOP**' sign, you **MUST** stop at the road markings. Look all around, particularly left and right. Give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal, and return both hands to the reins. If safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** and turn left.

If you are at a '**GIVE WAY**' sign, it is recommended that you stop. However, if you can see that it is safe to proceed without stopping you must be very vigilant, looking all round for traffic. If it is safe, you may continue on course. If not, you must stop and follow the procedures for a '**STOP**' sign.

- 6 Continue along the road or, if stopping, use the proper procedure outlined on Page 2.



GROUP RIDING ON THE ROAD (1)

Many drivers will not know how to react when they come upon a group of riders, so it may be up to you to control the situation by being alert, aware of developing situations, and ready to adjust your speed as necessary.

- › Think and plan before riding, taking into consideration such things as the weather, time of day, roadworks or any other issues which may affect the safety and enjoyment of your ride. You may also wish to consider if there is an alternative route which would keep you away from busy/hazardous roads
- › Horses and riders should be suitably attired with appropriate reflective and fluorescent materials
- › Do not ride on a pavement, footpath, cycle lane or motorway
- › Horses should be compatible, especially when riding in pairs
- › Young and inexperienced horses and riders should be kept to the inside
- › Do not ride more than two abreast and, where circumstances dictate, ride in single file
- › If riders are in pairs, they should revert to single file on narrow roads or when approaching bends
- › Riders should be capable of riding in pairs and returning to single file quickly and without fuss

**IT IS VITAL TO BE AWARE OF
POTENTIAL DANGERS ON AND
OFF THE ROAD, AND TO KNOW
HOW TO DEAL WITH SITUATIONS
IN A CALM AND FIRM MANNER**

GROUP RIDING ON THE ROAD (2)

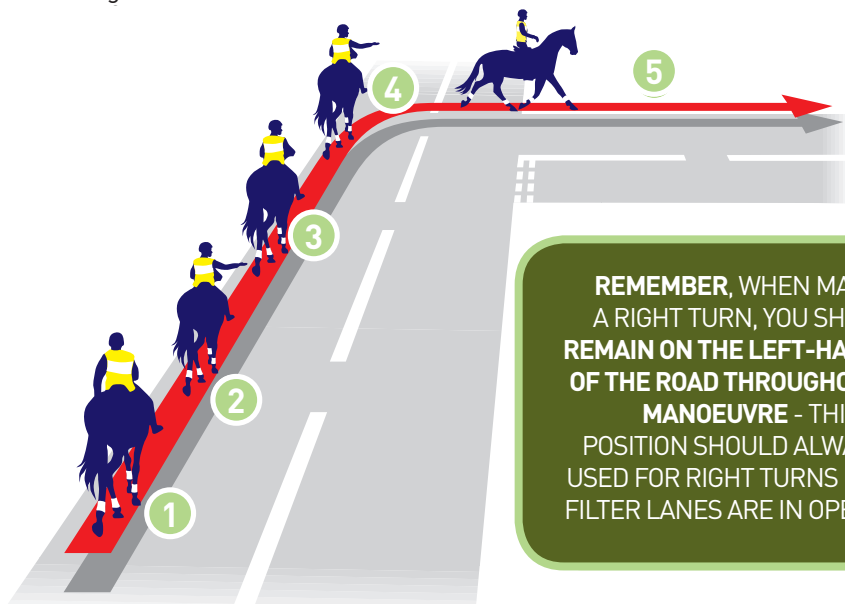
- Avoid constant chatting as this can affect your attention to the task in hand
- There should be a maximum of six riders in a group and a distance of approximately two metres between pairs
- Competent persons should act as leader (front) and escort (rear), with routes, communications, signals, and procedures at various hazards discussed and agreed beforehand
- If there are more than six riders, then several groups, each with its own leader and escort, should be formed. In this case, 30 metres should be left between each group
- Signals should only be given by the leader and escort
- An appropriate pace must be adopted at all times and, provided the riders have been assessed as competent, a trot should be the fastest gait
- Hazards and junctions should be negotiated as a group, under the direction of the ride leader
- Traffic should be prevented from dividing the ride
- Currently the only people permitted to stop traffic are uniformed police officers, traffic wardens and school crossing patrol officers. In the event of an accident, it would be reasonable and acceptable for a responsible person (e.g. fire officer/capable person) to take charge until the police arrive at the scene
- Courtesy should always be extended to all road users, including pedestrians

RIGHT TURN: UNCONTROLLED JUNCTION - MAJOR TO MINOR

- 1 Approach the junction in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind and, if safe, give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal.
- 3 Return both hands to the reins, and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to stop if necessary.
- 4 Look all round, particularly left and right. If safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK**, and ride into the junction without cutting the corner. If it is necessary for you to stop because of traffic, you **MUST** do so.

When the traffic has cleared, look all round, give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal and, if safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** and complete the manoeuvre. (If you have a horse that is unsettled, it may be better to continue to ride straight on until you find a suitable place to make a U-turn, thus approaching the junction from the other side).

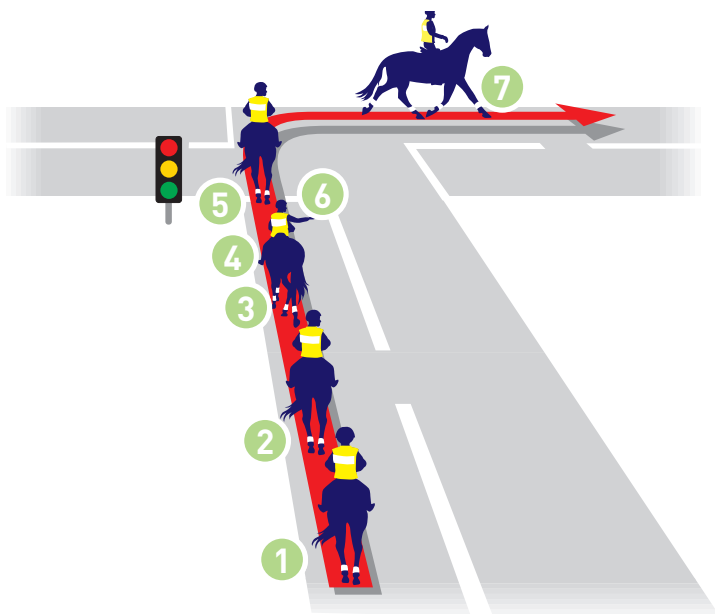
- 5 Continue along the road or, if stopping, use the proper procedure outlined on Page 2.



REMEMBER, WHEN MAKING A RIGHT TURN, YOU SHOULD **REMAIN ON THE LEFT-HAND SIDE OF THE ROAD THROUGHOUT THE MANOEUVRE** - THIS POSITION SHOULD ALWAYS BE USED FOR RIGHT TURNS UNLESS FILTER LANES ARE IN OPERATION

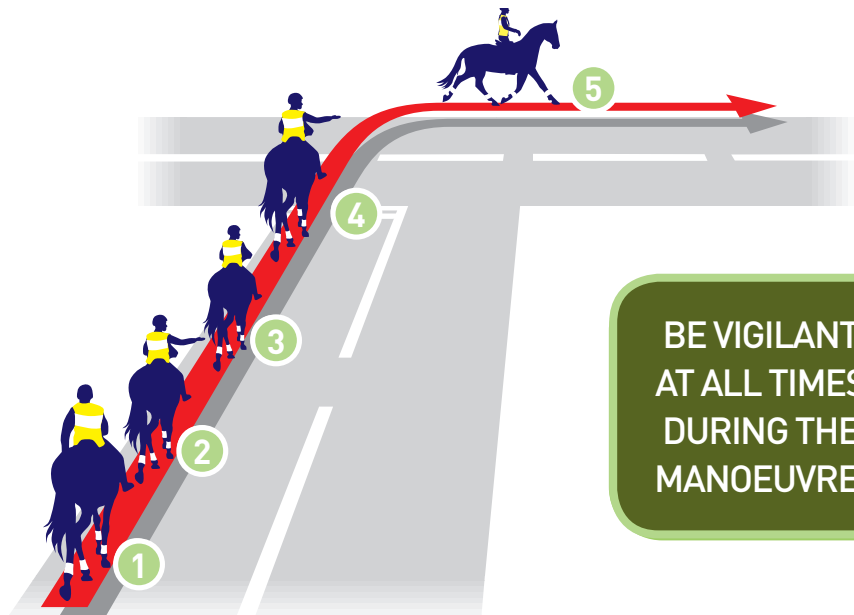
RIGHT TURN AT TRAFFIC LIGHTS

- 1 Approach the traffic lights in the correct road position. Be aware of filter lanes, which you must use in the same way as other road users.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind.
- 3 When it is safe to do so, give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal.
- 4 Return both hands to the reins, and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to stop if necessary.
- 5 If the lights show red or amber, **STOP** at the stop line, and repeat steps 2 and 3 above. Return both hands to the reins. If the lights are green on approach, follow the procedures for the right turn at an uncontrolled junction on Page 8.
- 6 When the lights change to green, look all round, particularly left and right. If safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** and turn right into the junction without cutting the corner.
- 7 Continue along the road or, if stopping, use the proper procedure outlined on Page 2.



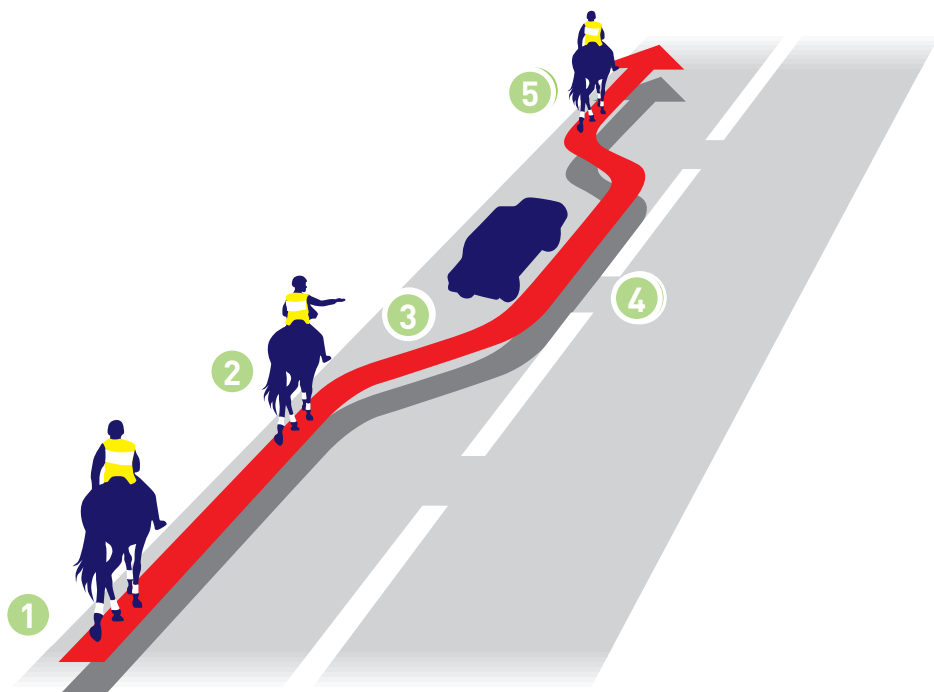
RIGHT TURN: CONTROLLED JUNCTION - MINOR TO MAJOR

- 1 Approach the junction in the correct road position and never allow yourself to be caught between two vehicles.
 - 2 Look all around, particularly behind and, if safe, give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal.
 - 3 Return both hands to the reins, and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to stop if necessary.
 - 4 If you are at a '**STOP**' sign, you **MUST** stop at the road markings. Look all around, particularly left and right. Give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal, and return both hands to the reins. If safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK** and turn right.
- If you are at a '**GIVE WAY**' sign, you need not stop but you must be very vigilant, looking all round for traffic on approach. If it is safe, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK**, and turn right into the junction without cutting the corner. If not, you must stop and follow the procedures for a '**STOP**' sign.
- 5 Continue along the road or, if stopping, use the proper procedure outlined on Page 2.



OVERTAKING PARKED VEHICLES/OBJECTS

- 1 Approach the hazard in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind, to see what traffic is following, or about to overtake you. Be aware of oncoming traffic and, if necessary, wait until it is safe. When it is safe to do so, signal your intention to pull out.
- 3 Return both hands to the reins, give a **LIFE-SAVER LOOK**, and gradually move out. Do not 'cut out'.
- 4 Leave plenty of room between you and the parked vehicle/hazard, so that if a car door opens, you will not be caught out. Check inside vehicles for children or pets, as their sudden movement may startle your horse.
- 6 Return to the correct road position. Do not 'cut in'.

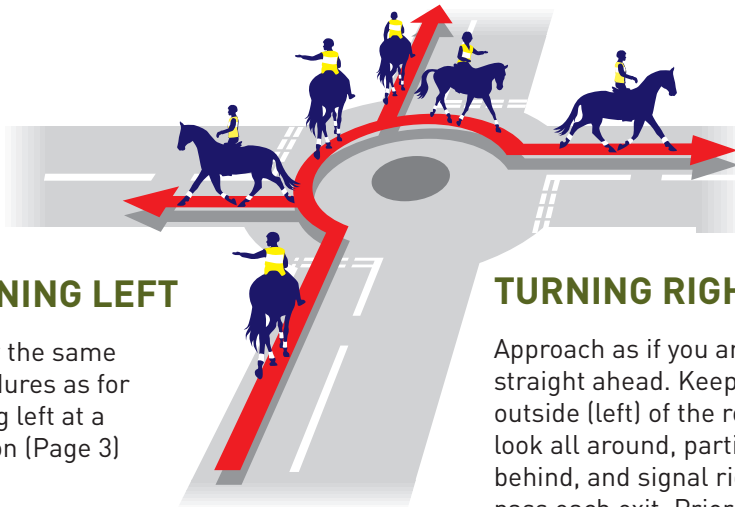


NEGOTIATING A ROUNDABOUT

- Roundabouts present specific hazards to riders and they vary in size and type, so do not take any chances and be extra vigilant
- Keep to the left-hand side of the roundabout throughout the manoeuvre
- Be very vigilant at all times keeping yourself aware of what other traffic is doing
- Drivers will be making decisions about their actions based on what they think you are going to do, so give a short right-hand signal as you approach each exit that you are riding across, and then a left-hand signal before the one you intend to take, leaving other road users in no doubt about your intentions
- Always watch for faster traffic turning across your path

STRAIGHT AHEAD

Approach as if you are turning left at a junction (Page 3). Keeping to the outside (left) of the roundabout, look all around, particularly behind, and signal right as you pass each exit. Prior to exiting give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal, and proceed on course.



TURNING LEFT

Follow the same procedures as for turning left at a junction (Page 3)

TURNING RIGHT

Approach as if you are going straight ahead. Keeping to the outside (left) of the roundabout, look all around, particularly behind, and signal right as you pass each exit. Prior to exiting give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal, and proceed on course.

CONTACT DETAILS



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TRSS

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CHECK LIST OF MAIN POINTS

- 1 Always wear the correct gear and ensure that you and your horse are wearing hi-viz garments
- 2 Ensure tack is in good condition and fitted correctly
- 3 Carry contact numbers, a fully-charged mobile phone and some money
- 4 Familiarise yourself with The Highway Code
- 5 Advise someone of your route and expected arrival/return times
- 6 Make sure you have valid insurance
- 7 Always show courtesy to other road users
- 8 Learn some basic first aid for rider and horse
- 9 Train for a nationally-recognised horse riding and road safety test

FINAL REMINDER:
DON'T BE A DARK HORSE:
BE SAFE, BE SEEN,
BE SENSIBLE

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