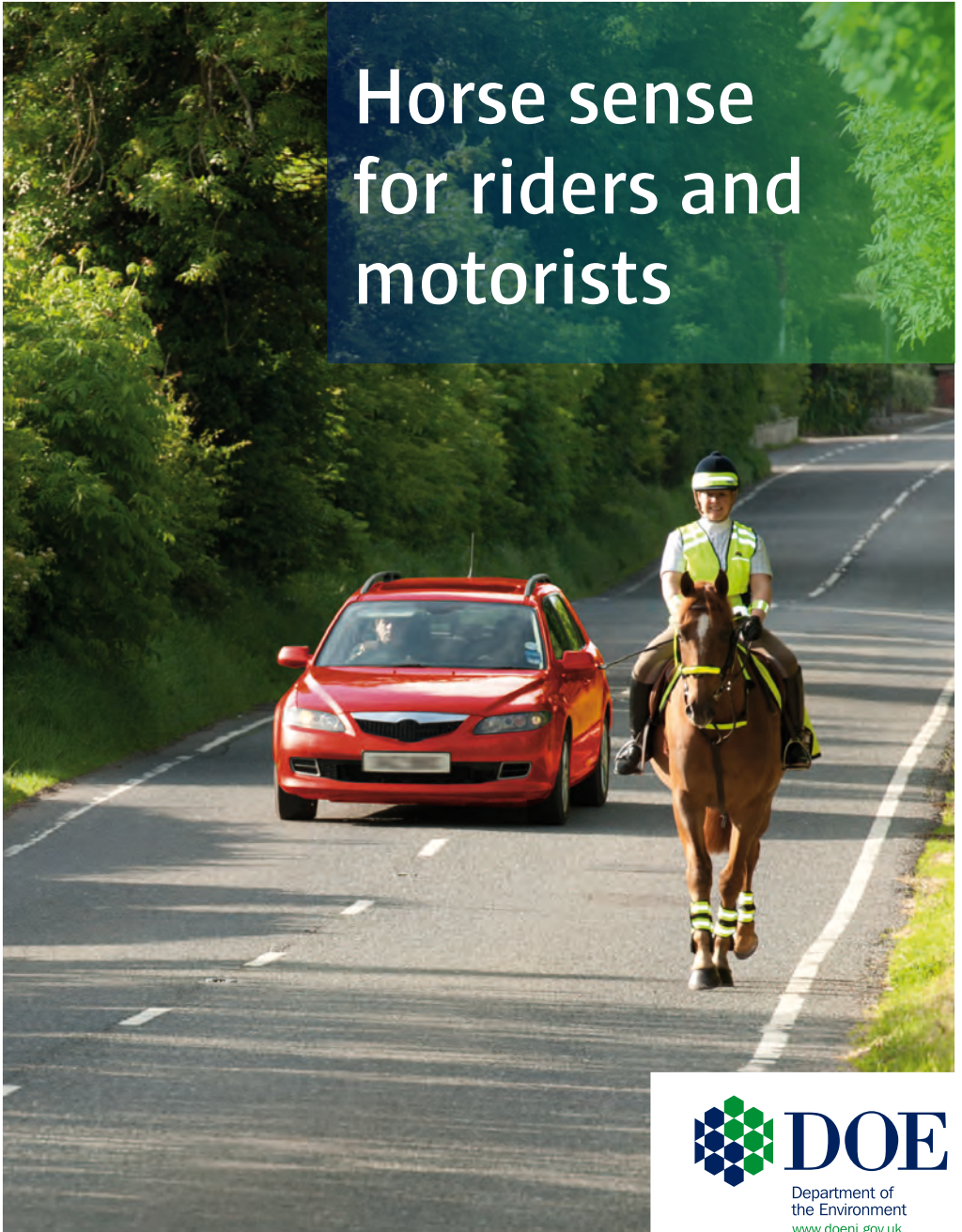


Horse sense for riders and motorists



Horse sense – for riders

Follow The Off-Road Horse Riding Code of Conduct

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under control.
- Consider other people.

Be safe and be seen

Safety equipment (Rules 49 & 50)



The Highway Code NI says that when riding you should always wear boots or shoes with hard soles and heels.



Children under the age of 14 **MUST** wear a helmet which complies with the Regulations.

It **MUST** be fastened securely. Other riders should also follow these requirements. These requirements do not apply to a child who is a follower of the Sikh religion while wearing a turban.

Don't be a dark horse

Here's something to reflect on. Hi-vis clothing at night gives a driver an extra 3 seconds to see you - this could save your life.

All riders should wear bright, fluorescent and reflective clothing. The best advice is to wear fluorescent by day and reflective by night. Or, better still, both. It could save your life and that of your horse.



(Rule 51)

It is safer not to ride on the road at night or in poor visibility but, if you do, make sure your horse has reflective bands above the fetlock joints. A light which shows white to the front and red to the rear should be fitted, with a band, to the rider's right arm and/or leg/riding boot. If you are leading a horse at night, carry a light in your right hand showing white to the front and red to the rear and both

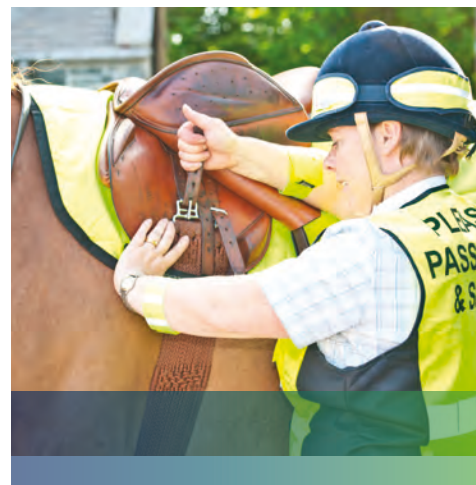
you and your horse should wear reflective clothing. It is strongly recommended that a fluorescent/ reflective tail guard is also worn by your horse.

Saddle up safely

(Rule 52)

Before you take a horse on the road you should:

- Ensure all tack fits well and is in good condition.
- Make sure you can control the horse.



- **ALWAYS** ride with other less nervous horses if you think that your horse will be nervous of traffic.
- **NEVER** ride a horse without both a saddle and bridle.

Taking the reins

(Rules 53 & 54)

Before riding off or turning, always look behind you to make sure it is safe, then give a clear arm signal.

When riding on the road you should:

- Keep to the left.
- Keep both hands on the reins unless you are signalling.
- Keep both feet in the stirrups.
- Not carry another person.
- Not carry anything which might affect your balance or get tangled up with the reins.
- Keep a horse you are leading to the left.
- Move in the direction of the traffic flow in a one-way street.
- **NEVER** ride more than two abreast, and ride in single file on narrow or busy roads and when riding around bends.

You should not take a horse onto a footway, footpath or cycle track. You should dismount at level crossings where a 'Horse Rider Dismount' sign is displayed.

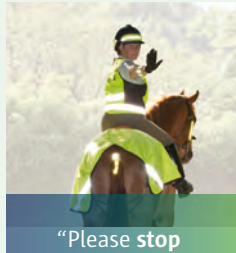
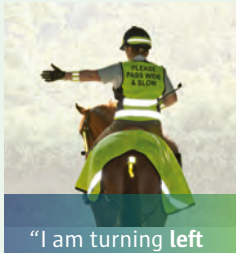
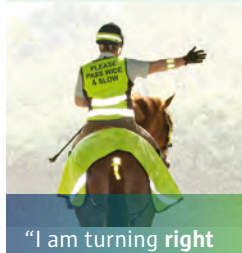
Manoeuvres and signals

Increase your safety on the road - learn how to manoeuvre and signal correctly.

Remember the **LIFESAVER LOOK**: **ALWAYS** give a last look behind before a manoeuvre.

Signals

As a rider you will often be able to hear and see further ahead than motorists. If you are aware of potential danger or if you sense an impending action or reaction from your horse, you may request a motorist to slow down or stop.



Manoeuvre 1 - Moving off.

When it is safe to do so, take up the correct position at the left-hand side of the road. Leave enough room between the horse and kerb so you are clear of drain covers and roadside debris.

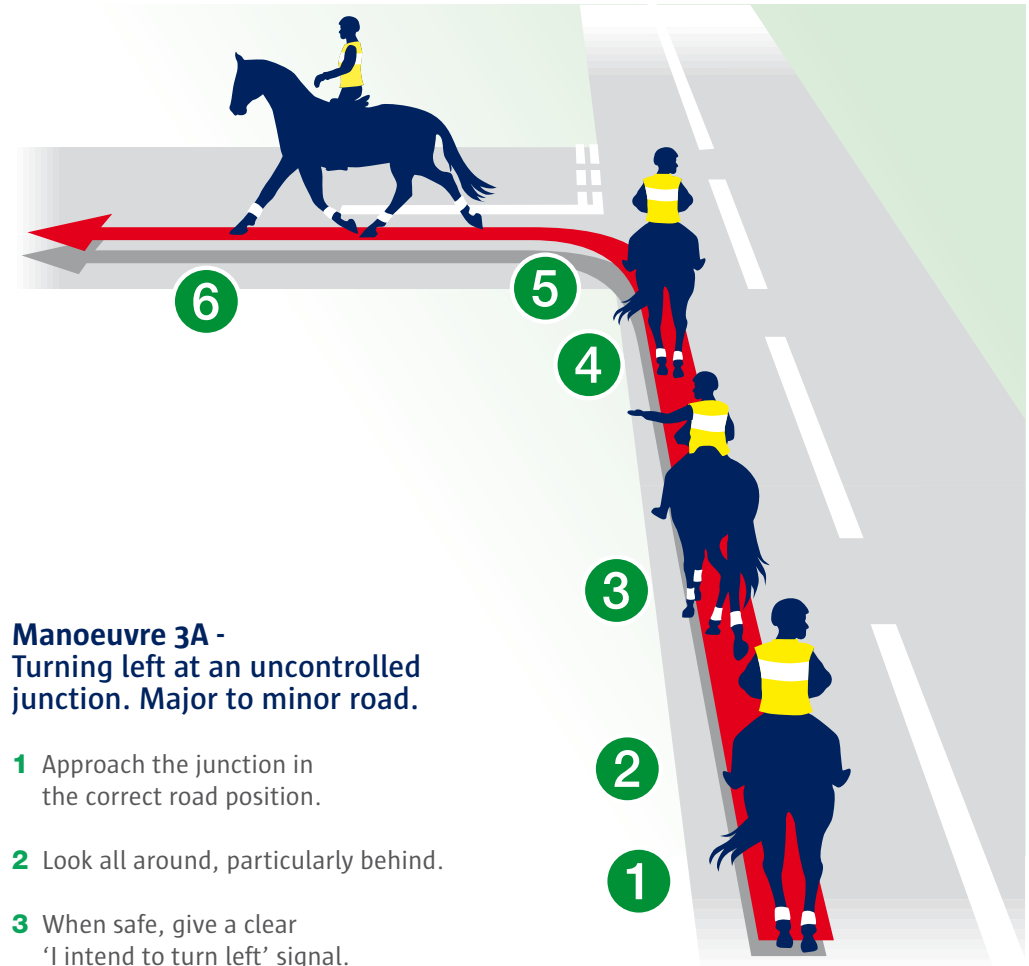
Look over your right shoulder for approaching traffic. Signal your intention to move off, with your right arm fully extended and when it is safe to do so, move off with both hands on the reins, giving a final **LIFESAVER LOOK** behind.

Manoeuvre 2 - Stopping.

With both hands on the reins, look behind and note any following traffic.

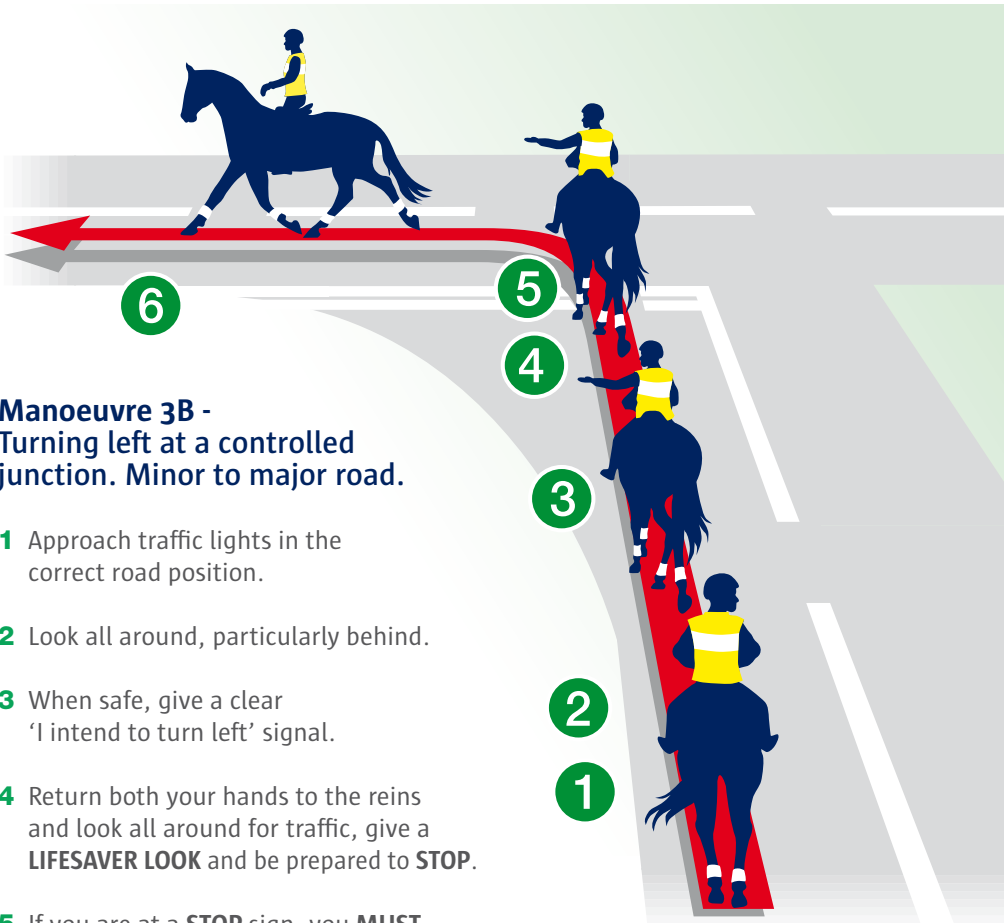
If necessary, signal your intention to pull in.

With both hands on the reins, give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** and **STOP** at the roadside.



Manoeuvre 3A - Turning left at an uncontrolled junction. Major to minor road.

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

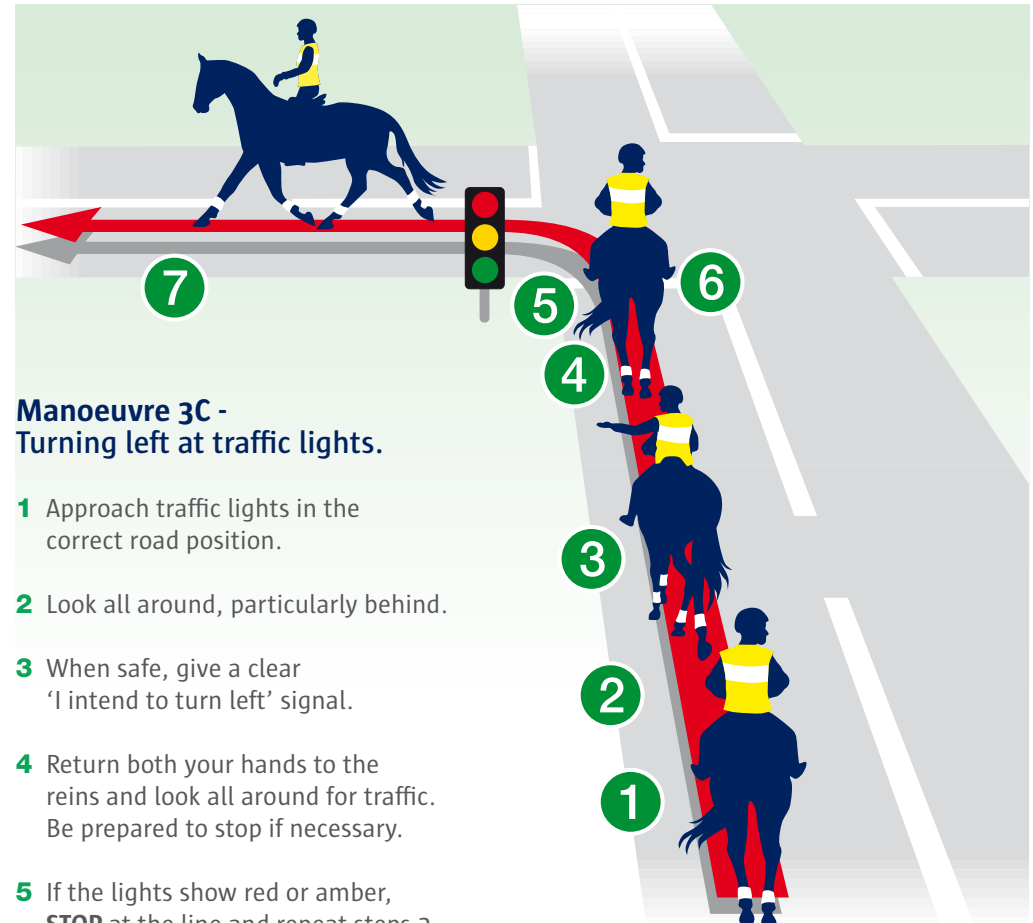


Manoeuvre 3B - Turning left at a controlled junction. Minor to major road.

- 1 Approach traffic lights in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind.
- 3 When safe, give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal.
- 4 Return both your hands to the reins and look all around for traffic, give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** and be prepared to **STOP**.
- 5 If you are at a **STOP** sign, you **MUST STOP** at the stop line marked on the road. Look all around. If safe, signal and return your hands to the reins. If safe, give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** and turn left.

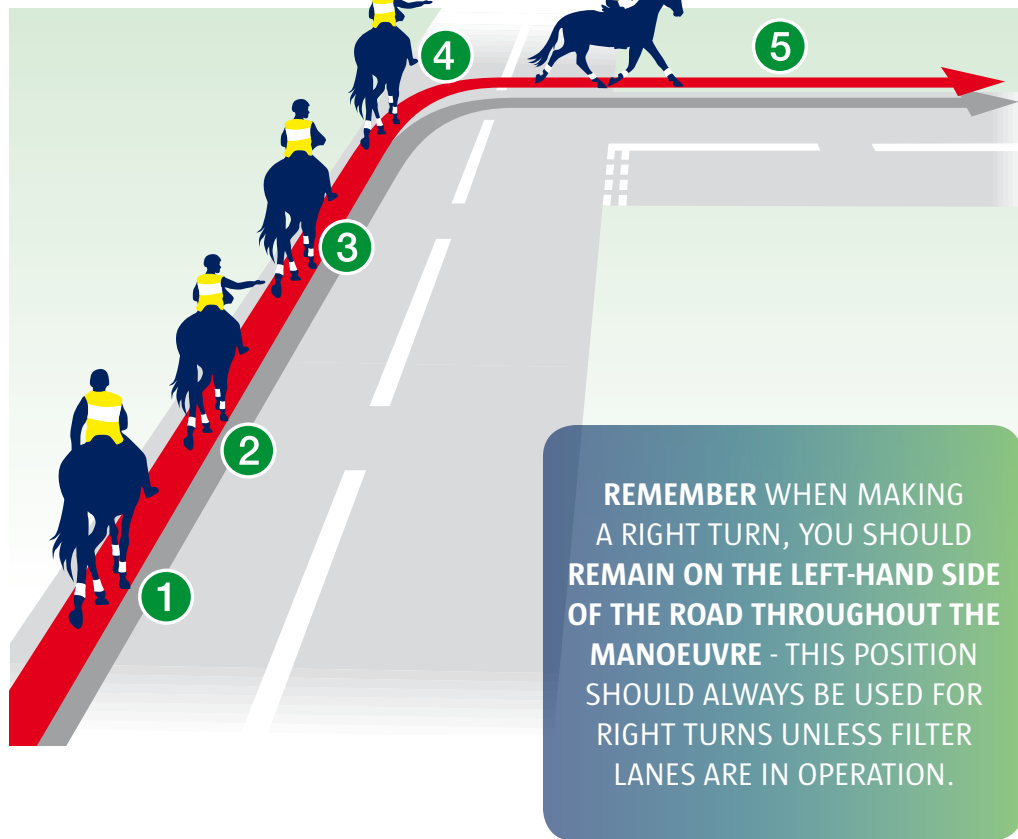
If the junction is a **GIVE WAY** junction, look all around for traffic on your approach and look behind. If it is safe, continue on course, if not then follow the procedure described for the **STOP** junction above.

- 6 Continue on your ride, or, if stopping, use the proper procedure.



Manoeuvre 3C - Turning left at traffic lights.

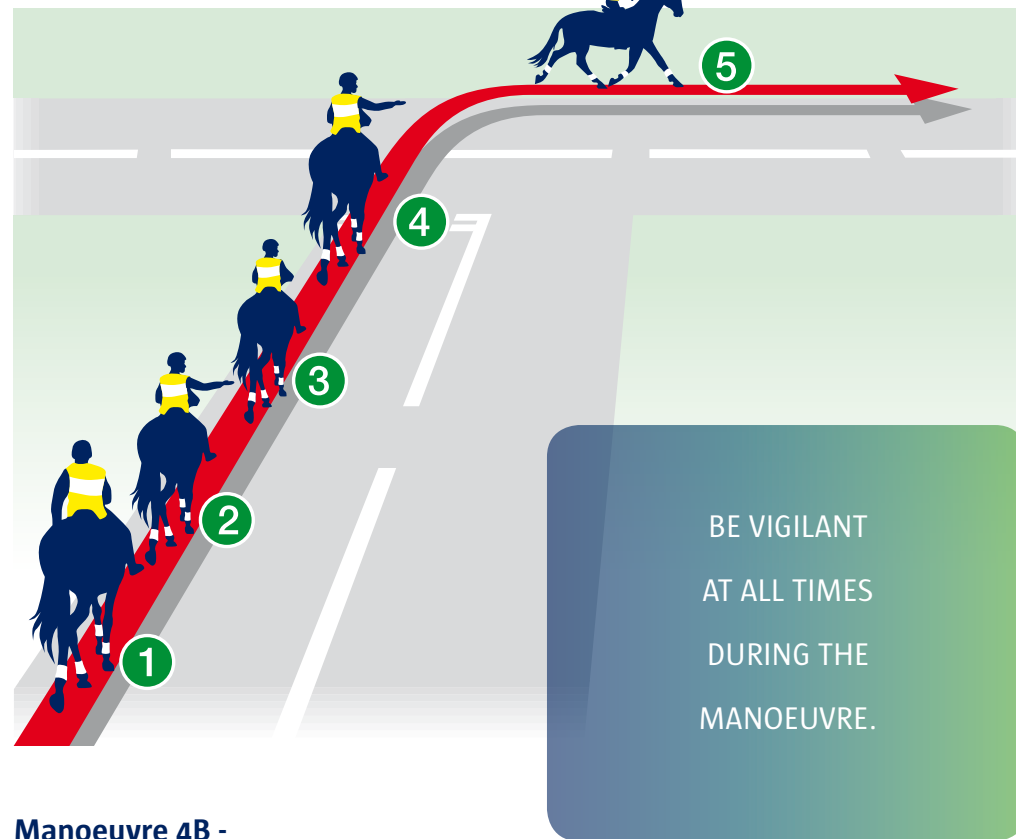
- 1 Approach traffic lights in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind.
- 3 When safe, give a clear 'I intend to turn left' signal.
- 4 Return both your hands to the reins and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to stop if necessary.
- 5 If the lights show red or amber,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



Manoeuvre 4A - Turning right at an uncontrolled junction on a major to minor road.

Unlike other road users, horse riders must stay to the left side of the road before turning right.

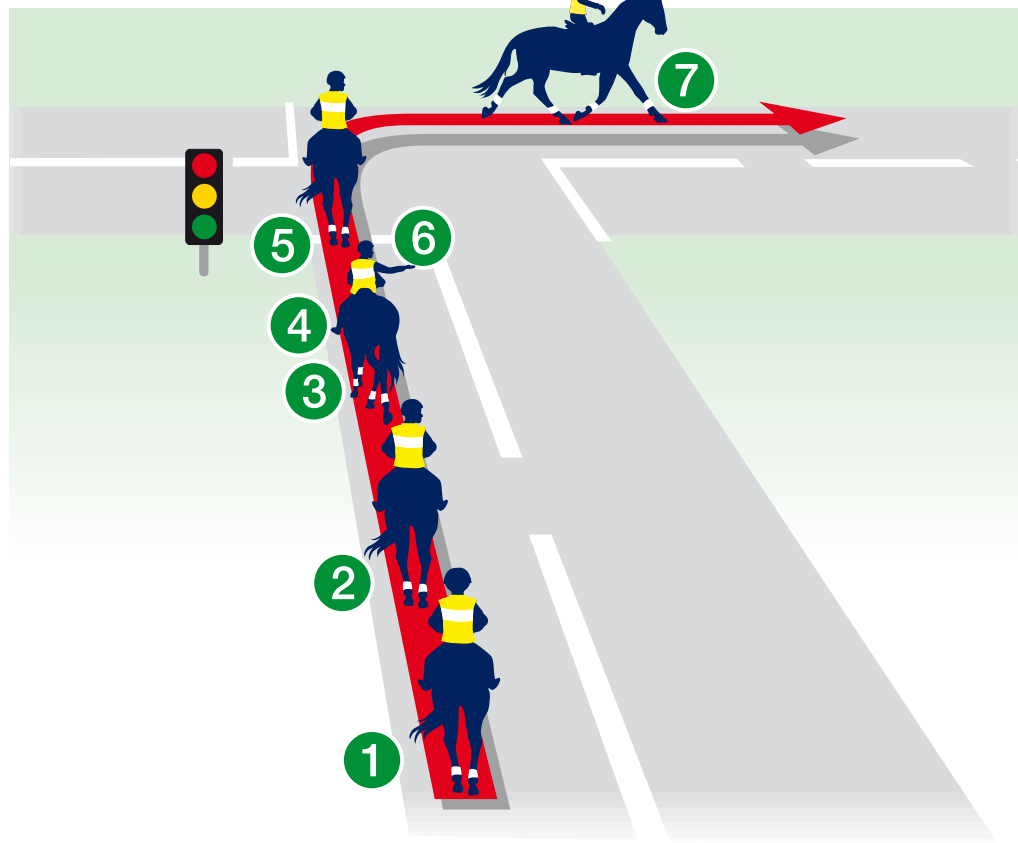
- 1 Approach the junction in the correct road position.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind. When safe give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal.
- 3 Return both hands to the reins and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to **STOP**.
- 4 If safe, give a final **LIFESAVER LOOK** and ride into the junction without cutting the corner.
- 5 Continue your ride, or, if stopping, use the proper procedure.



Manoeuvre 4B - Turning right at a controlled minor to major road.

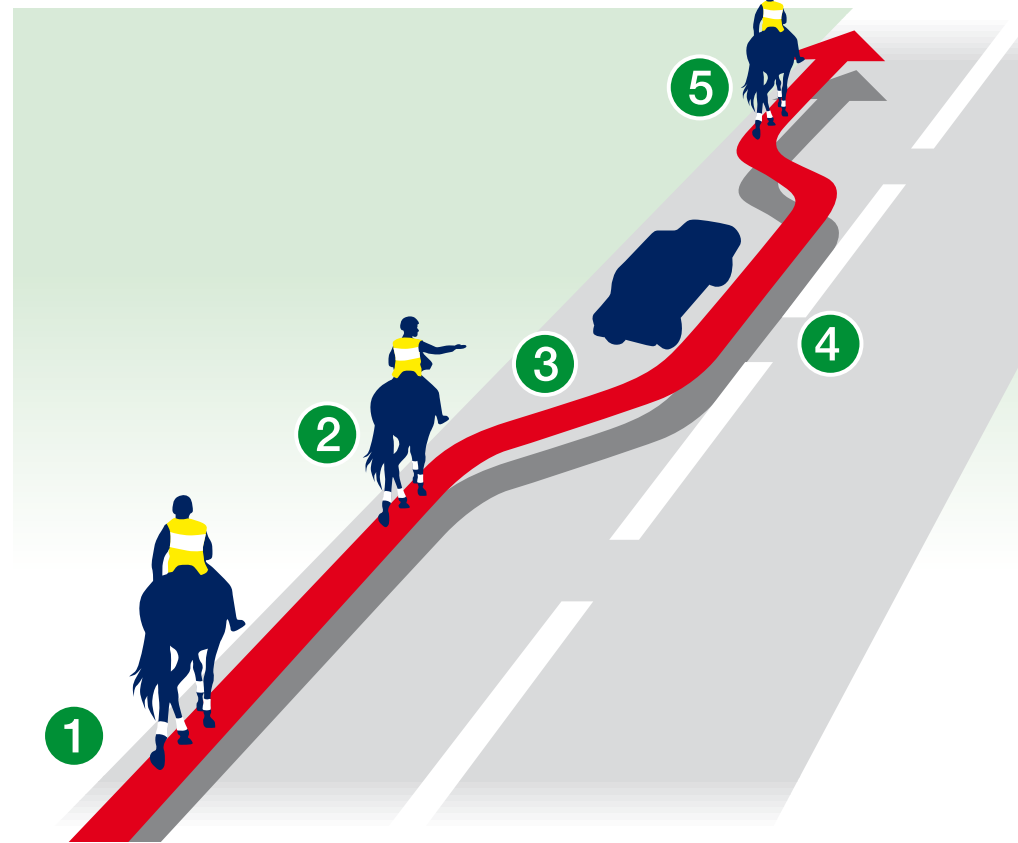
Remember horse riders must stay to the left side of the road before turning right.

- 1 Approach the junction in the correct road position. Ensure you never get caught between two vehicles.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind. When 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**.
- 4 If you are at a **STOP** sign, you **MUST STOP** at the line. Look all around, signal, return both hands to reins, give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** and move only when it is safe to do so. When safe, ride into the junction without cutting the corner.
- 5 If the junction is a **GIVE WAY** junction, look all around for traffic on approach. If safe give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** and continue. If it is unsafe, follow the procedure for a **STOP** junction.
- 6 Continue your ride, or, if stopping, use the proper procedure.



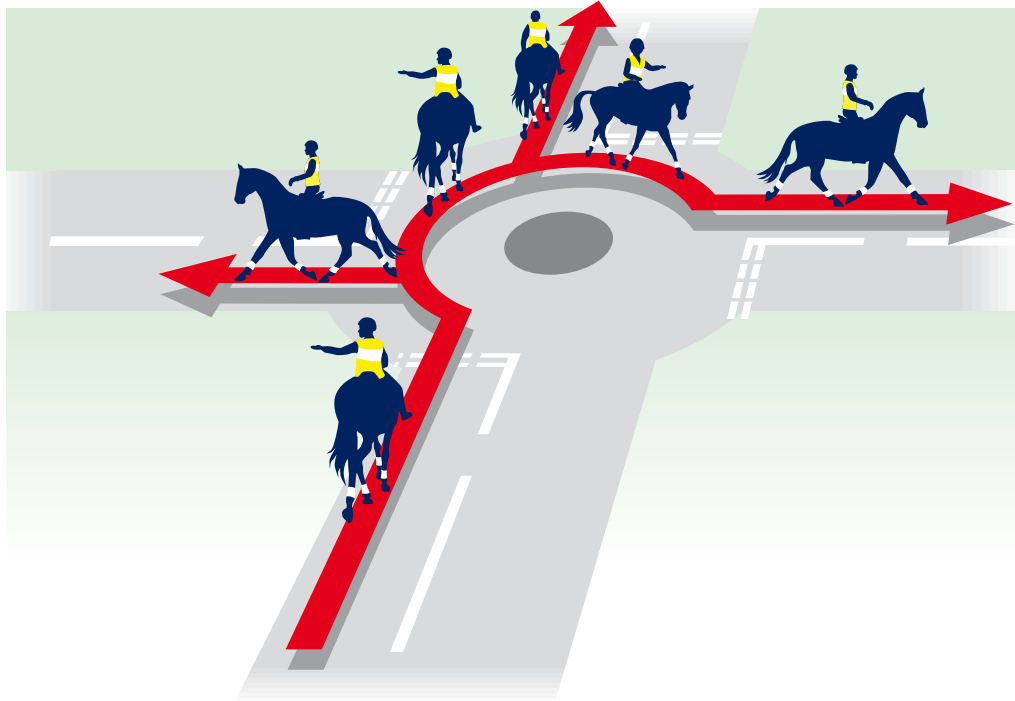
Manoeuvre 5A - Turning right at traffic lights.

- 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 give a clear 'I intend to turn right' signal.
- 4 Return both hands to reins and look all around for traffic. Be prepared to **STOP**.
- 5 If the lights are showing red or amber, **STOP** at the 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 uncontrolled right turn manoeuvre.
- 6 When the traffic lights turn green, look right, left, right and, if safe, give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** and move off into the junction. Turn without cutting the corner.
- 7 Continue to ride, or, if stopping, use the proper procedure.



Manoeuvre 5B - Overtaking parked vehicles or other hazards.

- 1 Approach the hazard in the correct position on the road.
- 2 Look all around, particularly behind to see what traffic is following or about to overtake you. When safe signal your intention to pull out.
- 3 Return both hands to the reins, give a **LIFESAVER LOOK** behind and gradually move out. **DO NOT** 'cut out'.
- 4 Leave plenty of room between you and the parked vehicle or hazard so that if a car door opens or there is a sudden movement inside the car your horse will not be startled.
- 5 Return to the correct road position. **DO NOT** 'cut in'. A signal is not required.



Manoeuvre 6 (Rule 55) - Negotiating a roundabout.

Avoid roundabouts wherever possible. If you use them you should:

- Keep to the left and watch out for vehicles crossing your path to leave or join the roundabout.
- Signal right when riding across exits to show you are not leaving.
- Signal left just before you leave the roundabout.

At the entrance to a roundabout, always give way to traffic coming from your right and which is already on the roundabout.

Turning Left

Approach as if you are turning left, look behind and signal as required for turning left.

Straight Ahead

Approach as for turning left, but keep to the outside of the roundabout (left-hand side) and **LOOK BEHIND**. As you pass each exit, signal right to communicate to other road users your intention to carry on round and just before your intended exit you must signal left.

Right Turn

Approach as for a left turn and signal at the exit before the one to be taken. Remember to **LOOK BEHIND** as you pass each exit from the roundabout.

Horse sense for motorists

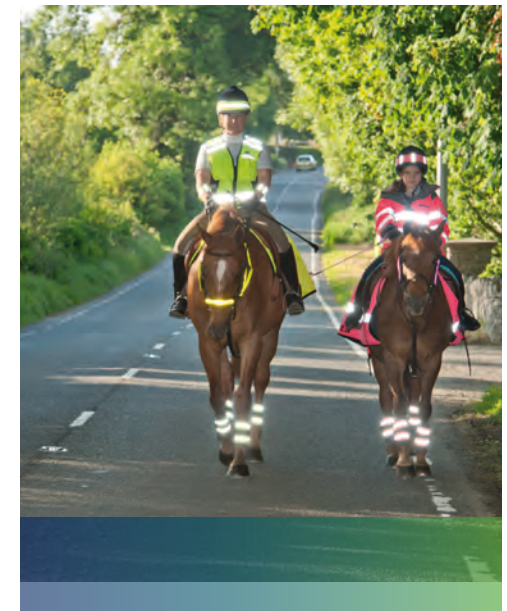
Motorists and horse riders all have the right to share the road. This means they should also share the responsibility and respect each other's needs.



Motorists when passing horses should:

- Drive slowly.
- Give them plenty of room and be ready to **STOP**.
- **SLOW DOWN IMMEDIATELY** when you see a horse. Even though you may have plenty of room to pass, another vehicle could be approaching at high speed.
- **SLOW DOWN** or **STOP** if signalled to do so by the rider.

- **DO NOT** scare animals by sounding your horn, revving your engine, or accelerating rapidly once you have passed them. Horses are unpredictable. Sudden noise or movement can frighten them.
- Horses should be ridden on the left-hand side of the road so look out for them being led or ridden on the road and take extra care.
- Horse or pony riders are often children so take extra care. Remember riders may ride in double file when escorting a young rider or inexperienced horse.



- Keep your speed down at bends and on narrow country roads.
- Watch out for horses on unfenced roads.

Signals from horse riders. (see page 4)

Riders should signal their intentions but drivers should be aware that horses are unpredictable and a rider on a young or frightened horse may have their hands full.

Mutual courtesy and care between motorists and riders is important to prevent intolerance and improve safety. A horse rider should acknowledge a courtesy. However, a wave or acknowledgement is not always possible as two hands are often needed to keep control of the horse.



Look out for horse riders turning right.

Horse riders keep to the left of the road even when turning right. It is unsafe for them to position a horse between lines of traffic where they can panic, sandwiched with no escape route.

Watch out for horse riders on roundabouts.

When on a roundabout, horse riders will normally signal right when approaching exits they **DO NOT** intend to use. Horse riders will keep to the left within the roundabout until reaching their exit, when they signal left.

Remember:

- **DON'T** make any sudden or loud noises.
- Expect to see a horse and rider around the next bend.
- Respect riders' signals.

Treat all horses as a potential hazard and expect the unexpected.

The image shows the cover of a leaflet titled 'The OFFICIAL HIGHWAY CODE for Northern Ireland Revised 2008 Edition'. It features a blue background with white and yellow text. At the top, it says 'All road users' and 'Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland'. Below the title, there are icons for various road users: a pedestrian, a cyclist, a horse rider, a car, a motorbike, and a bus. At the bottom, there is a photo of a person and a graphic of a road with a red circle and a slash over a horse icon, indicating a warning for horse riders.

Have horse sense on the road

Protect yourself from death, serious injury and breaking the law. Download your **FREE** copy of **The Highway Code NI** today - www.nidirect.gov.uk/the-highway-code.

DOE wishes to thank The British Horse Society and Road Safety Scotland for their contribution to this leaflet.

This leaflet is available in other formats.

Call DOE on 0300 200 7838

www.nidirect.gov.uk/roadsafety



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