

## Road rules for animals, including horses and animal drawn vehicles

Horse riders and carriage drivers are permitted to travel on roads, unless a Road Access Sign says otherwise, or if the road is a designated freeway. A Road Access sign may look like the following:



Animals and animal drawn vehicles, including horses, are treated in the same way as other vehicles under the Road Traffic Code 2000, which means that almost all road rules that apply to cars or bicycles will also apply to horse riders and carriage drivers. This includes common rules such as:

- Obeying traffic signs, such as Give Way signs, Stop signs, or No Entry signs.
- Obeying all traffic lights and road markings.
- Giving way to pedestrians.
- Other road rules as appropriate.
- It is illegal to ride under the influence of drugs or alcohol to the extent as to be unable to properly control the animal.
- It is illegal to ride or drive an animal recklessly.



However, unlike most vehicle drivers, people riding animals are permitted to use footpaths and nature strips provided they give way to pedestrians. Some other rules that apply to animal or horse riders and carriage drivers are:

- Horses can be ridden on paths and nature strips, unless otherwise signed.
- Horses can be ridden on the shoulder of a road, or to the left of any continuous edge line, in the same direction as traffic.
- Horses can be ridden across roads, but must give way to other traffic.

- Horses cannot be driven or ridden across a pedestrian crossing or children's crossing. The rider or driver **MUST** dismount and walk the horse across.
- Give hand signals when changing direction.
- A rider cannot lead more than one other horse.
- Horses must not be tethered to moving vehicles or led by a person in a motor vehicle.
- If you are leading a horse while walking, you are considered a pedestrian (rather than a vehicle) and must obey laws applying to pedestrians.
- If you are leading a horse, use the path or nature strip if provided. If a path or nature strip is not available, then walk facing oncoming traffic.

## Vehicle Standards for Animal Drawn Vehicles

- A two-wheeled animal drawn vehicle, such as a carriage, must be equipped with two lights on opposite sides of the vehicle if you are driving at night or in hazardous weather conditions. The lights need to be bright white at the front, and red at the back.
- An animal drawn vehicle with four wheels or more (unless it is a pole-type trailer) must have two bright lights equipped at the front (no more than 1.9m from the ground) and one bright red light at the back no higher than 1.5m from the ground.
- In addition to this rear light, you must have two rear reflectors fitted if driving at night.
- Your animal drawn vehicle must be equipped with an appropriate brake.

For a full rundown on all the rules and regulations applying to animals and animal drawn vehicles, especially in regard to lighting requirements on carriages driven at night, visit [Road Traffic \(Vehicles\) Regulations 2014](#).

## Safety tips for riders

- Ride on the nature strip as a first option. While you can legally ride on the road or road shoulder, the nature strip is safest if there is one available, and in turn, road shoulders are safer than riding on the road.
- Ride as far left as possible.
- Always check your surroundings, and behind you, before changing direction.
- Listen and pay attention to your animal. Don't ride on the road if your horse is unsettled.
- Always wear your helmet when driving or riding any animal.
- Wear light coloured clothing during the day, or reflective clothing at night, to help make you visible to other road users.
- Avoid riding at night, if possible, but if the need arises, wear a reflective vest and attach reflective bands such as leg bands to your animal.
- If you are driving a carriage at night, ensure your carriage is fitted with the required lighting front and back as laid out in the [traffic regulations](#).