

DRIVING IN NEW ZEALAND

Paradise, Glenorchy

100% PURE NEW ZEALAND

newzealand.com

Self-driving is a great way to explore New Zealand but there are a few things you may not be used to. For a safe and enjoyable journey make sure you are familiar with all of New Zealand's road rules before starting out.

Always drive on the left side of the road.



Alcohol and drugs

Don't drink or use drugs then drive – the laws against this are strictly enforced in New Zealand and penalties are severe.

No left turn on red

In New Zealand you may not turn left at an intersection when the traffic signals are red.

Giving way at intersections

In general, if you're turning, give way to all vehicles that are not turning, and remember to use your indicator.

Sharing the road with cyclists

Always slow down near cyclists, pass slowly and only when safe, and try to leave a space of 1.5 metres. Indicate in plenty of time and respect cycle lanes.

Driving speeds

Speed limit signs show the **maximum** speed you can travel. At times you may need to drive at a slower speed due to road, weather or traffic conditions.

Hand-held mobile phones

Using a hand-held mobile while driving is illegal, this includes, writing, reading or sending text messages.

Drivers are only permitted to use a mobile phone when the device is completely hands-free or mounted securely to the vehicle – and touched infrequently and briefly.



On most of New Zealand's main rural roads, the speed limit is 100km/h unless a lower speed sign is displayed. The speed limit is 100km/h on motorways.



This sign indicates the default rural speed limit of 100km/h, but the road is unlikely to be suitable to travel at that speed. You may need to drive at a slower speed.



In urban (built up) areas, the speed limit is usually 50km/h unless a sign says otherwise.



Travelling times

It's easy to underestimate travelling times in New Zealand. Distances may seem short on paper, but New Zealand roads may be narrower than you're used to, cover hilly terrain and vary from motorways (freeways) to unsealed gravel roads. Use the **travel calculator** on newzealand.com to work out travel times and distances.

Get a good night's sleep before you drive. If you're tired you're much more likely to have a crash, so make sure you take plenty of breaks and if possible share the driving with someone else.

Safety belts and child restraints

By law, everyone in the vehicle must wear a safety belt or child restraint – whether they're seated in the front or the back. Children under 7 years of age must be secured in an approved child restraint.



Winter driving

Look out for this slippery surface sign in wet or icy conditions – slow down and avoid braking suddenly. Snow and ice can make roads even more hazardous. Rental vehicle companies will often supply chains if you're likely to be driving in these conditions – make sure you know how to fit them before setting out.



Unsealed (gravel) roads

Avoid unsealed roads if possible. If you need to drive on them, remember they can be very narrow. Reduce your speed and slow down even further when approaching oncoming traffic as dust could obscure your vision and loose stones could chip your windscreen.



Overtaking

Most roads in New Zealand have a single lane each way, and some provide passing lanes at regular intervals – these should be used where possible when overtaking.



Do not cross a solid yellow line on your side of the centre line to pass a vehicle, as this means it's too dangerous to overtake.

One-lane bridges

A number of roads in New Zealand have one-lane bridges where vehicles travelling in one direction **must give way** to vehicles going in the other direction. Slow down and check for traffic coming the other way. The smaller red arrow shows which direction has to give way.



These two signs show you must give way to traffic coming the other way across the bridge.

This sign shows that if no traffic is approaching, you can proceed across the bridge with caution.

Railway crossings

Signals, bells and barrier arms: You must stop when signals start flashing. Don't cross until the barrier arms have lifted, the lights have stopped flashing and the bells have stopped ringing.



Railway Crossing with a Give Way or Stop sign: When you see a **Stop** sign at a crossing, stop and only cross the track if there are no trains approaching. When you see a **Give Way** sign, slow down and be ready to stop and only cross the track if there are no trains approaching.

Animals on the road

Watch out for farm animals on the road, particularly in rural areas. When you see them, slow down and do not sound your horn. You may need to stop and let the animals go past or move slowly up behind and follow the farmer's instructions.



To download a full copy of 'What's different about driving in New Zealand?' visit nzta.govt.nz

