



2022 Potential Highway Code Changes

Cars must give way to cyclists when turning

The [Highway Code](#) is set to undergo a major shake-up in January 2022 when approved by Government, giving overtaking - or undertaking - cyclists going straight on a right of way over drivers turning into junctions.

The Highway Code revisions also include a new Hierarchy of Road Users, which implies automatic culpability for drivers in accidents with more vulnerable road users (cyclists or pedestrians), while another change states drivers should stop and give way to pedestrians waiting to cross the road before turning into or out of junctions. The final major change will be establishing guidance on safe passing distances and speeds when overtaking cyclists or horse riders.

Duncan Dollimore, Cycling UK Head of Campaigns responded to the proposed changes to the highway code stating, “Nearly three-quarters of crashes involving cyclists take place at junctions and there are fourteen Highway Code rules meant to deter drivers from overtaking, cutting in and running into pedestrians and cyclists crossing side-road junctions.

“Multiple rules leads to confusion, whereas, most European countries have a universal priority rule, where whoever is turning into a junction has to give priority to anyone going straight ahead.

“This simple change clarifies the rules at junctions and is a major step towards embedding a custom that could make a huge difference to cyclist and pedestrian safety. It would also give highway designers the confidence to design better cycling and walking infrastructure such as cycle lanes and cycle paths that go across the mouths of side-roads, making them simpler, safer and more efficient for everyone.”

What are the 2022 Highway Code changes as proposed?

Rule H1: New Hierarchy of Road Users

Drivers of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger to others. This principle applies most strongly to drivers of HGVs, LGVs, cars/taxis and motorcycles. Cyclists and horse riders likewise have a responsibility to reduce danger to pedestrians.

Rule H2: New priority for pedestrians at junctions

At a junction, drivers, motorcyclists, horse riders and cyclists should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. You should give way to pedestrians waiting to cross a zebra crossing (currently you only have to give way if they're already on the crossing), and to pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross a parallel crossing.

Rule H3: New priority for cyclists when cars are turning

You should not cut across cyclists, horse riders or horse drawn vehicles going ahead when you are turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane. This applies whether they are using a cycle lane, a cycle track, or riding ahead on the road and you should give way to them. Do not turn at a junction if to do so would cause the cyclist, horse rider or horse drawn vehicle going straight ahead to stop or swerve. You should stop and wait for a safe gap in the flow of cyclists if necessary.



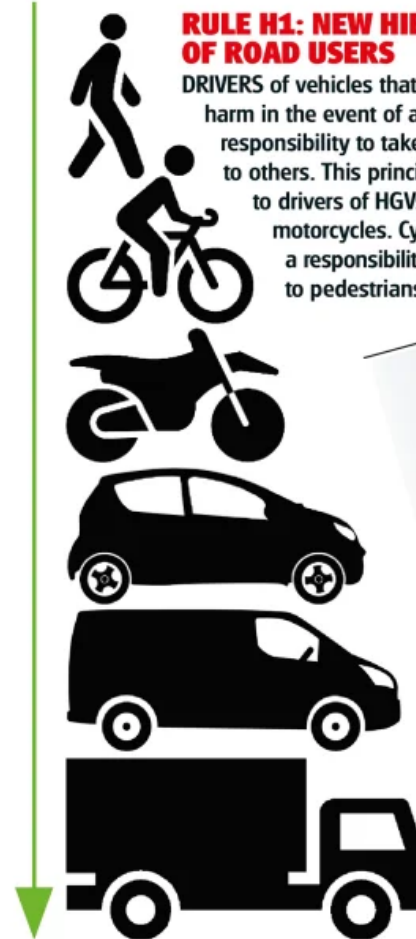
Department of Transport response to question on upcoming changes

Question: What are the penalties for drivers failing to give way to cyclists per the new rules?

Answer: The new rule to give priority to cyclists going straight ahead does not seek to change the law but rather to ensure a more mutually respectful and considerate culture of safe and effective road use that benefits all users. You should not cut across a cyclist just like you would not cut across another motorist.

Although failure to comply with the 'advisory rules' of the Code will not, in itself, cause a person to be prosecuted, The Highway Code may be used in evidence in any court proceedings (under the Traffic Acts) to establish liability. This includes the rules which use advisory wording such as 'should/should not' or 'do/do not'.

Enforcement of the law is a matter for the police who will decide, on the evidence of each individual case, whether an offence has been committed and the appropriate action to take.



RULE H1: NEW HIERARCHY OF ROAD USERS

DRIVERS of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger to others. This principle applies most strongly to drivers of HGVs, LGVs, cars/taxis and motorcycles. Cyclists and horse riders have a responsibility to reduce danger to pedestrians.

Three of the biggest Highway Code changes

RULE H2: NEW PRIORITY FOR PEDESTRIANS AT JUNCTIONS

DRIVERS, motorcyclists and cyclists should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. You should give way to pedestrians waiting at a zebra crossing (currently it's only if they're already crossing), and to pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross a parallel crossing.

RULE H3: PRIORITY FOR CYCLISTS WHEN CARS ARE TURNING

YOU should not cut across cyclists, horse riders or horse-drawn vehicles going ahead when you are turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane. You should give way whether they are using the road, a cycle lane or cycle track. Do not turn at a junction if to do so would cause the cyclist, horse rider or horse-drawn vehicle going straight ahead to stop or swerve. You should stop and wait for a safe gap if necessary.