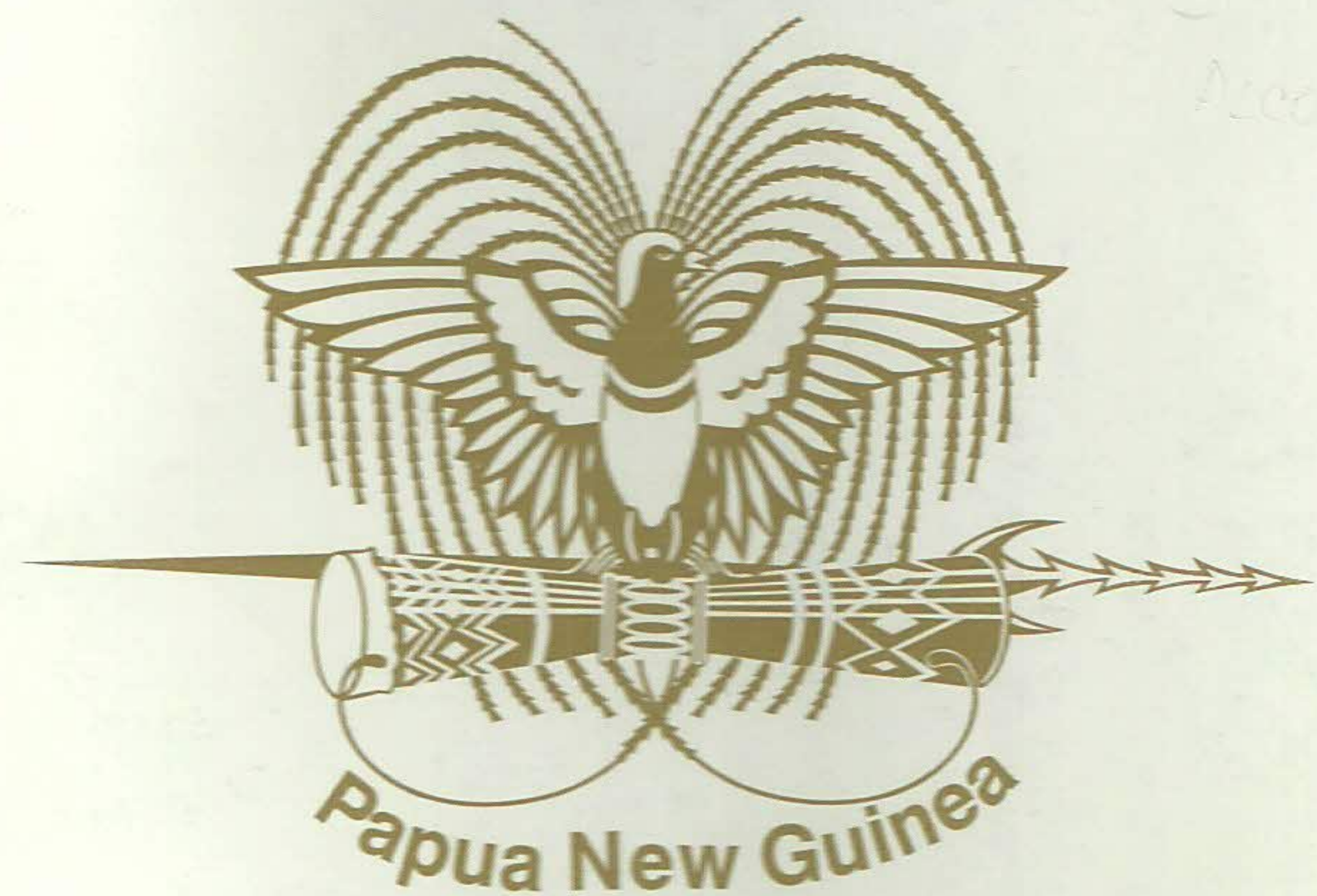


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# MOTOR TRAFFIC HANDBOOK

*An initiative of the  
National Road Safety Council & Police*







## **PAPUA NEW GUINEA MOTOR TRAFFIC HANDBOOK**

**This is a safety handbook.**

**It explains the rules which drivers and other road users must follow in order to make our roads safe to travel on.**

**Know these rules and develop a good road sense.**

**Failure to follow them could mean you are breaking the law as well as endangering your own and other lives.**

*An initiative of the  
National Road Safety Council & Police*

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## ROAD CODE

### Types of Licences in Papua New Guinea

To drive cars and trucks in Papua New Guinea you must have a licence to show that you can drive a particular type of vehicle properly. Before you can learn to drive on a public street you must have a Learner's Permit. To obtain a Learner's Permit to drive a car, a utility or a motor cycle you must be at least 16 years and nine months old. To obtain a learner's permit for any other class of vehicle you must be 21 years old and have already had a driving licence for one year.

You cannot get a driver's licence until you are seventeen years of age. Until you are 21 years old you can only drive cars with less than 8 seats and other vehicles weighing 2 tonnes or less.

When you pass your driving test, you will be issued with a Provisional Licence for the first one year and you must have a "P" plate on the back of your car and a "P" plate on the front of the car when you are driving. You must obey the road laws very closely or your licence might be taken from you by the Superintendent of Motor Traffic.

To drive an ordinary motor car, you must have a Class One Licence and, with that licence, you cannot drive a car which can carry more than eight passengers. This licence also allows you to drive a truck if it is not heavier than two tonnes before it is loaded. You may also drive a tractor or other machine if you have been tested on a tractor or other machine. (This does not include a P.M.V.).

To drive a car which cannot carry more than eight passengers (taxi) but which carries passengers for money, you must have a Class Two Licence, with P.M.V. permit. With this licence, you may also drive the same as for a Class One licence.

With a Class Four licence, you can drive all the vehicles in Class one and Three as well as semi-trailers and large trucks with trailers behind them. A Class Five licence is for riding motor cycles only.

A Class Six licence is for all passenger vehicles with more than 8 seats and any other vehicles not covered by the other classes of licences.

### 1. KEEP TO THE LEFT

The first rule of the road is to keep to the left. This means that you must always drive with the left hand wheels of your car as near as possible to the left-hand footpath. Do not stay in the centre of the road, especially when you are driving a heavy or slow-moving vehicle.

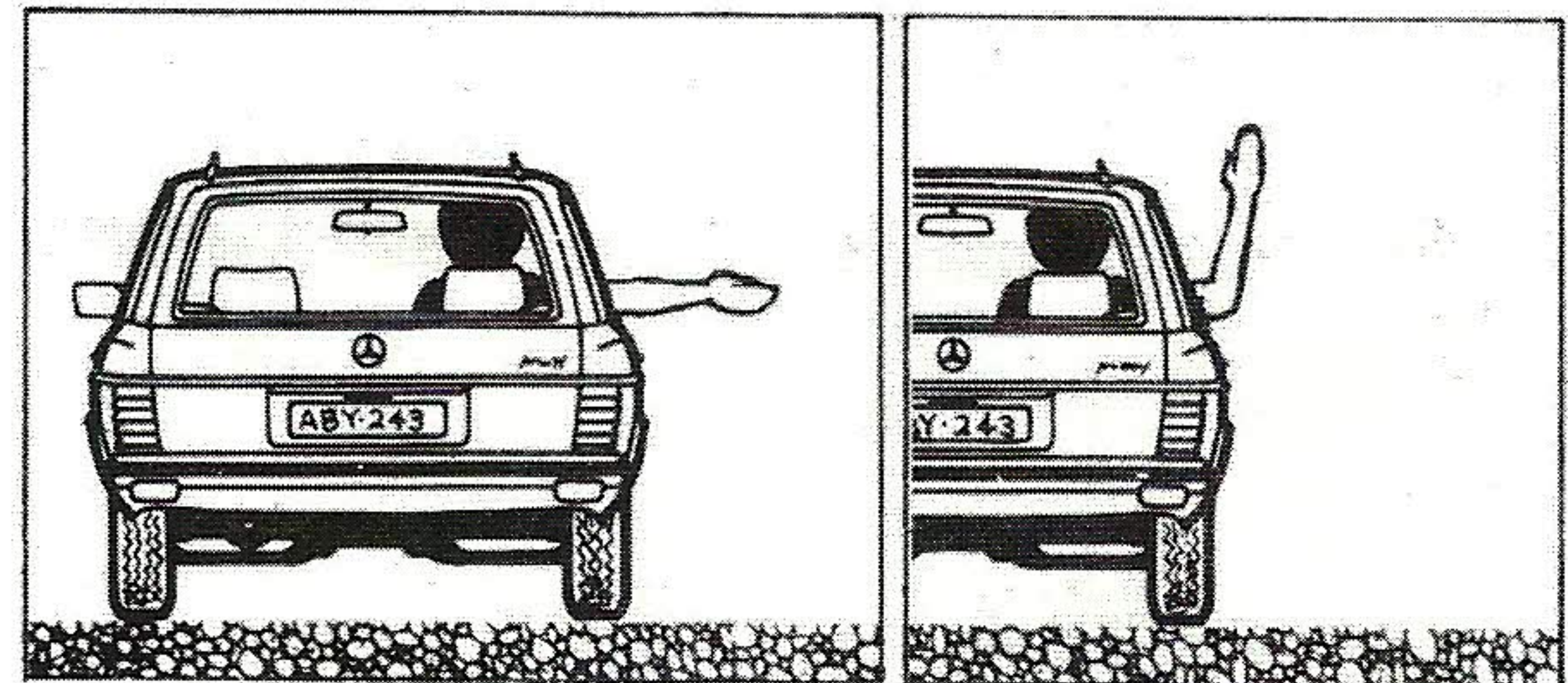
### 2. OBEY A POLICEMAN AND CARRY YOUR LICENCE

Always, when you are driving, you must obey a policeman when he asks you to do something or signals you to do something. Everytime you drive a motor car you must have your licence with you. It is an offence to drive a car or any other vehicle unless you have your licence with you at the time you are driving. It is not good enough to say you have left it at home and you will be reported for the offence. Taxi drivers and bus drivers must also produce their PMV permit.

### 3. SIGNALS

It is most important, that when you are going to slow down or stop or turn to the right or left, you give a signal, so that the following driver and everyone else will know what you are going to do. You may give a right or left signal with a flashing light signal instead of using your hand BUT you must be sure that the signal is working and that you turn it off when you finish turning. When you give any signal, it must be clear and in plenty of time (at least 30 metres).

Hand signals will be given as shown below.



TURNING RIGHT

STOPPING, SLOWING  
DOWN OR TURNING LEFT



#### 4. KEEP INSIDE YOUR CAR

When a car is moving, it is an offence to put any part of your body outside the car, unless you are going to give a hand signal for stopping, slowing down or turning. This means that you cannot drive along with your elbow resting on the window ledge or have any part of your body out of the car. Passengers must also not put their arms out of the window whilst the car is moving. The driver is responsible for his passengers. He can be prosecuted if passengers disobey this rule.

#### 5. DON'T DRIVE TOO CLOSE TO THE CAR AHEAD

The law does not say how far you must travel behind another car, but it does say you must be far enough behind him to stop if he does. You must drive far enough so that if the other driver stops you do not have to suddenly put on your brakes very hard. In rainy or foggy weather it is more dangerous than at ordinary times, so be very careful at these times and drive a long way from the car in front.

The distances shown below are good distances to travel behind another car when the weather is good and the road is good.

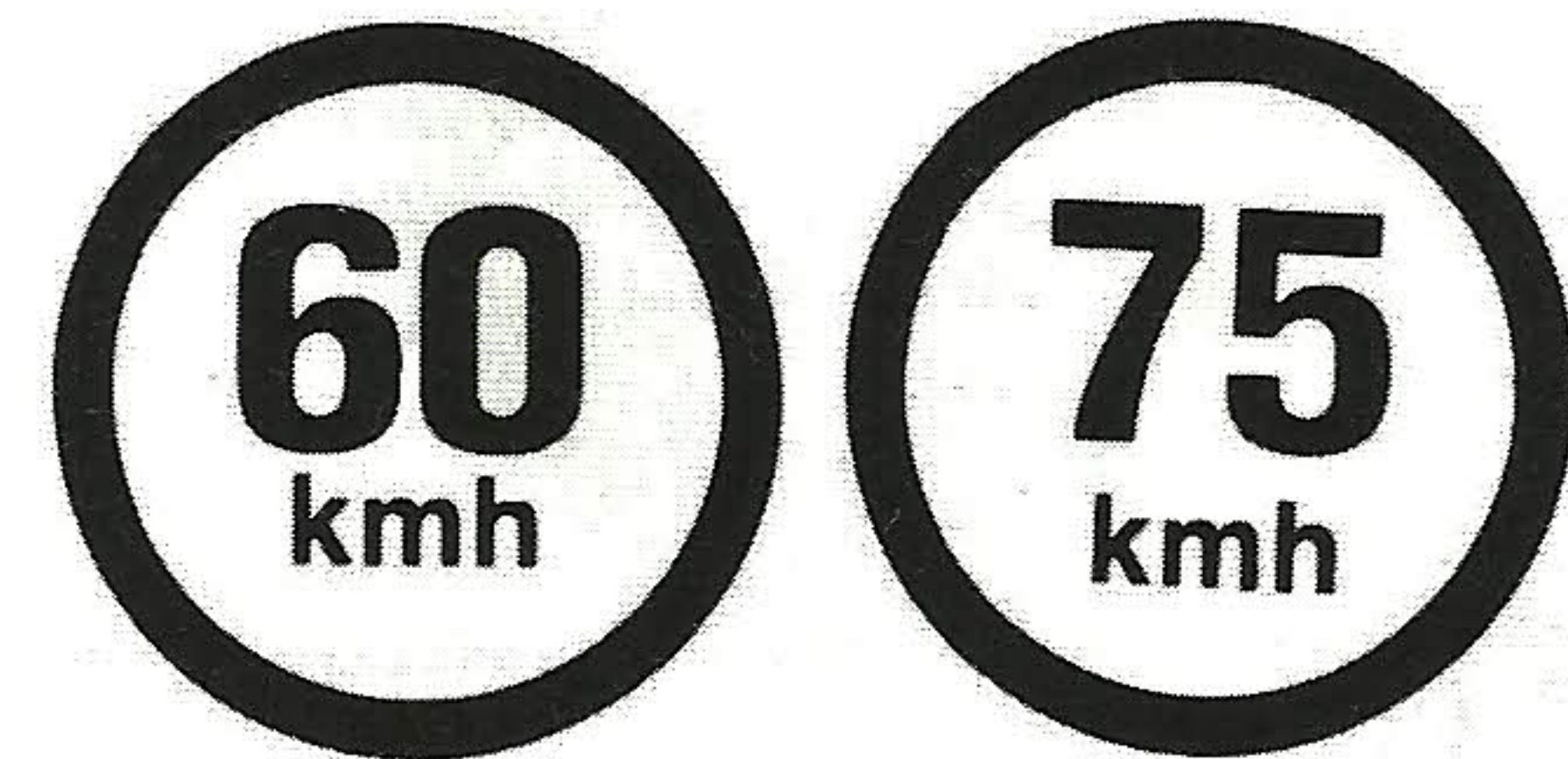
10km/h - stay 1 car length behind  
30km/h - stay 3 car lengths behind  
50km/h - stay 5 car lengths behind  
65km/h - stay 6 car lengths behind



TRAVELLING TOO CLOSE

#### 6. SPEED LIMITS

Never drive at a speed or in a way that is dangerous to any person. If you do this, then you are committing a very serious traffic offence. Some speeds, even 25km per hour can be too fast if, for instance you were driving through a crowded market place or near a school ground where there were plenty of people walking about. ALWAYS obey the speed signs - they are for your safety. In the town areas of Papua New Guinea, the speed limit is 60km per hour. You must keep a look-out for the speed signs and always drive carefully. The town area is generally shown by a 60km per hour speed sign erected at the edge of the town area. Outside the town the speed limit is 75 km per hour



#### 7. OVERTAKING

Unless there is more than one traffic lane marked on the road for vehicles travelling the same way as you, you must pass another car on the right-hand side. BUT BEFORE OVERTAKING, make sure that the road behind your car is clear and that there is not another car passing you. LOOK in your rear vision mirror and over your right shoulder and, if the road is clear, give a right turn signal and pull out. Use the horn, making sure that there are no double lines on the roadway and that there is not the top of a hill coming up or any other part of the road which you cannot see. When you have passed the other car, always leave him enough room, and do not turn back to the left too quickly, making the other car put his brakes on or swerve.

When you are going to overtake another car, always make very sure that you can do so without the risk of hitting another car coming the opposite direction.



## **DO NOT OVERTAKE AT OR APPROACHING:-**

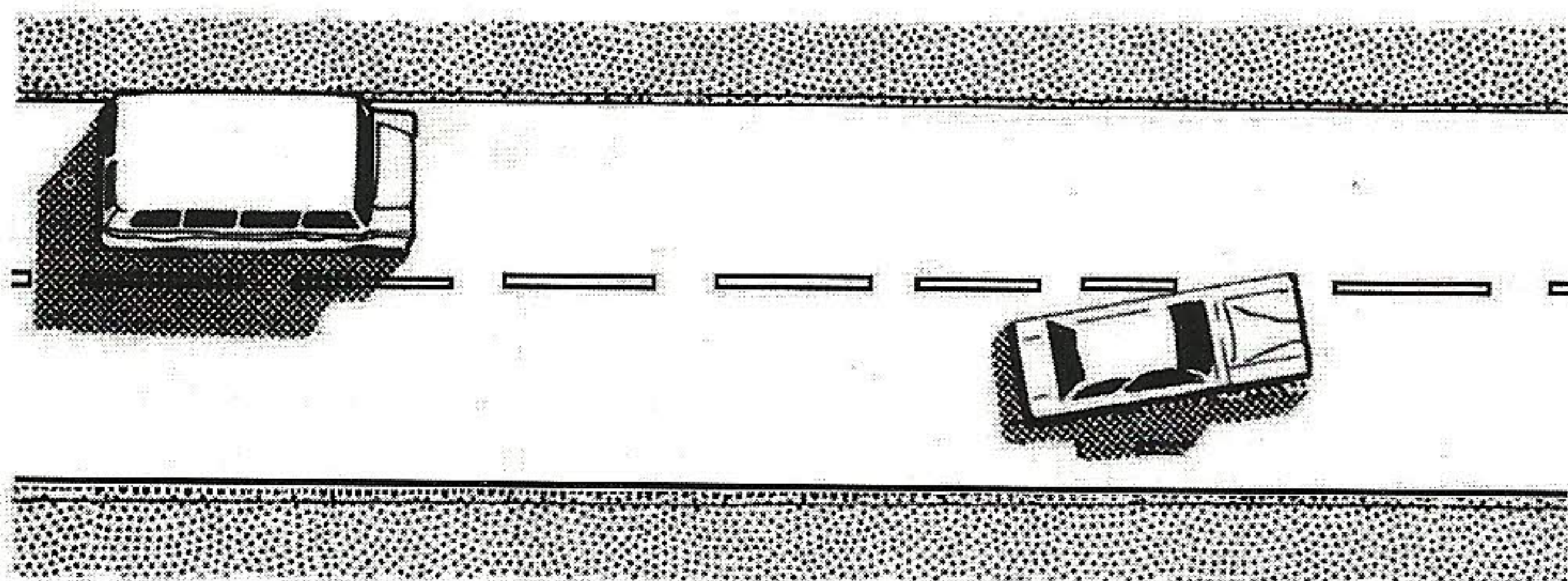
a pedestrian crossing;  
an intersection;  
a corner or bend in the road;  
the top of a hill where you cannot see over the other side.

## **DO NOT OVERTAKE:-**

where the road is narrow;  
where the road is marked with double lines and the line near you is not a broken one, that is, it is one long line on your side;  
if you cannot see the road ahead for any reason at all.

## **8. CAR OVERTAKING YOU**

When another car is overtaking you, always move over to the left and give the other driver plenty of room to pass, and do not move out to the right or go any faster than the speed you are travelling, until he pulls back into the left in front of you.



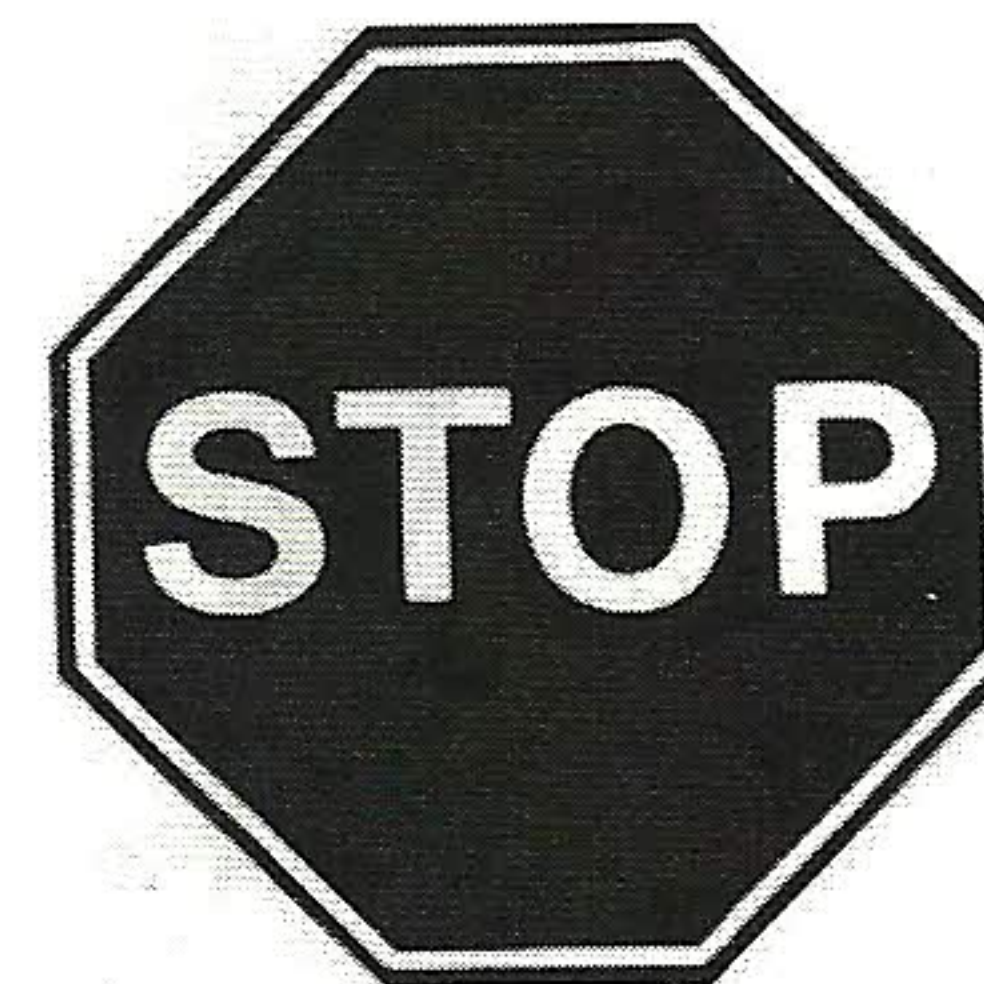
## **9. CURVES AND HILLS**

When approaching a curve or a hill where you cannot see the road ahead for very far (for at least 180 metres), do not go over the centre line for any reason, as a car could be coming the other way and you may cause a very bad accident. It does not matter if there is no line marked on the road - you must still keep to the left.

## **10. "STOP" "GIVE WAY" SIGNS AND TRAFFIC LIGHTS**

In the pictures below, you will see signs which have been put up at some of the more dangerous junctions, that is junctions where there have been some bad accidents. Make sure that you ALWAYS do as the sign says.

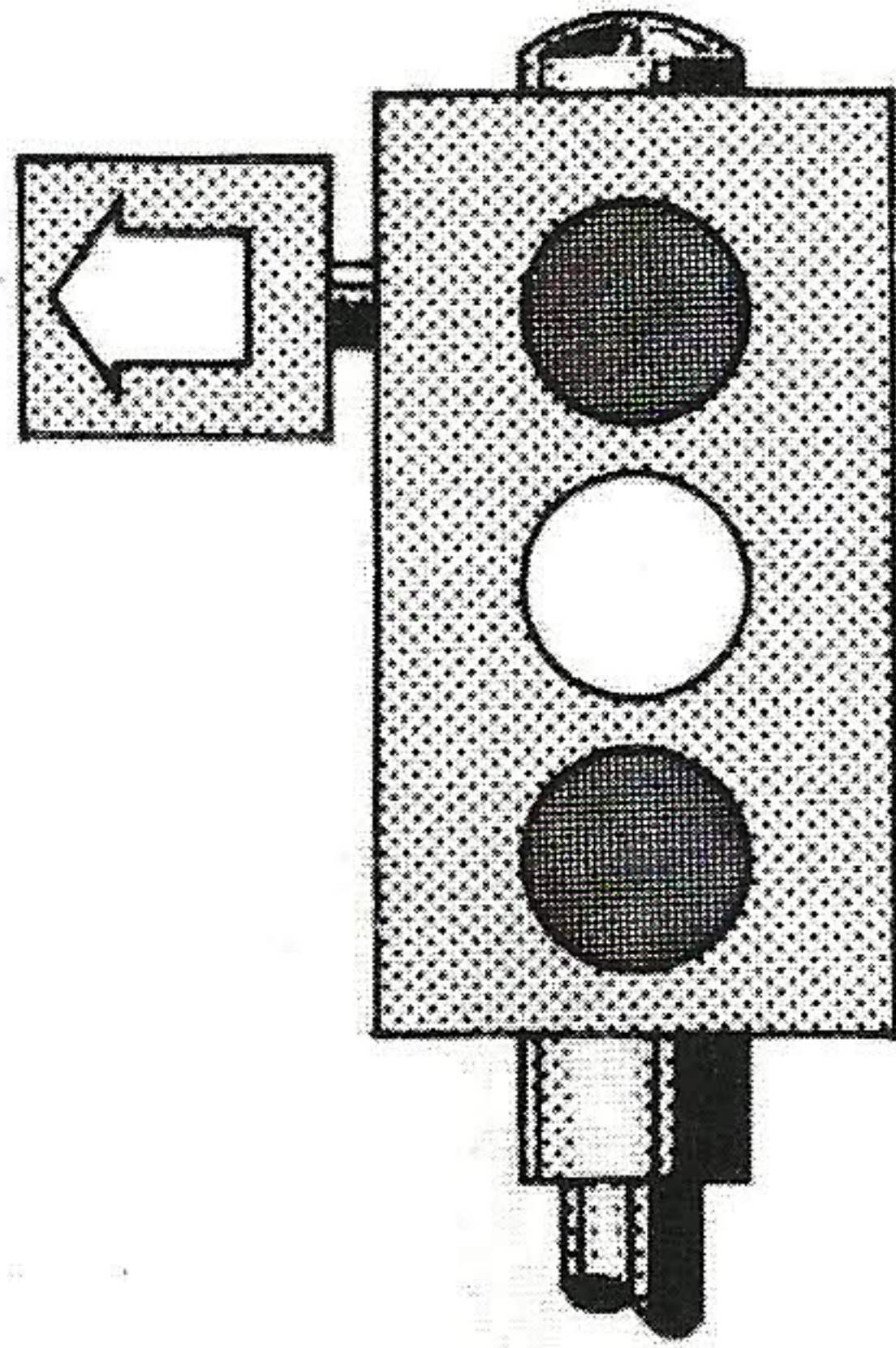
You must always stop at this sign, at the line painted on the road, or, if there is no line, you should stop as near to the corner as possible without going past the corner.



**GIVE WAY.** If this sign is facing you, you must give way to all other traffic ( cars, motor cycles and bicycles).







TRAFFIC LIGHTS. Rules for an intersection controlled by traffic lights:-

RED means stop;

AMBER means stop - unless you are so close to the lights when they change that you cannot stop safely;

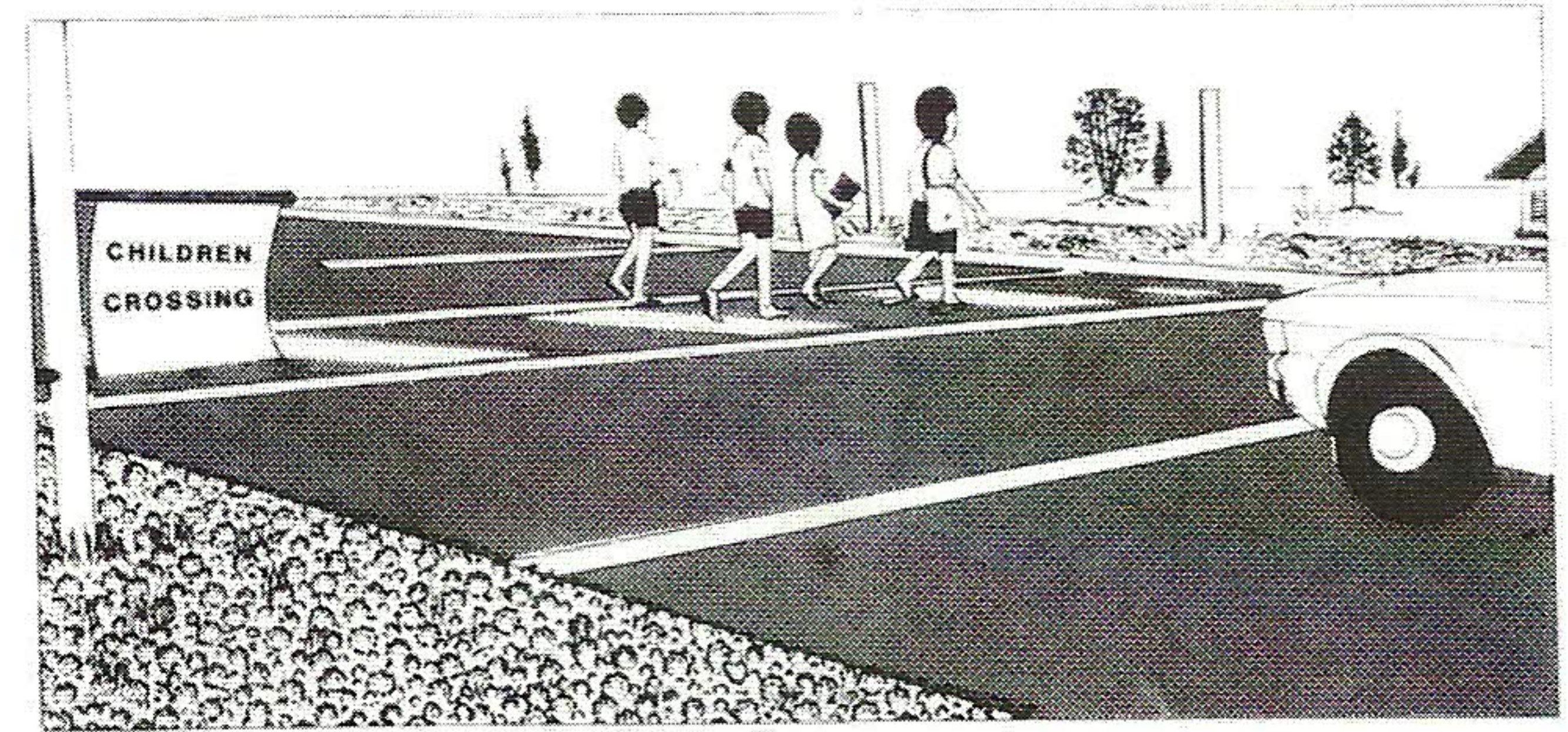
GREEN means go, if it is safe to do so;

GREEN ARROW means go the way the arrow is pointing;

If you see a RED ARROW - stop.

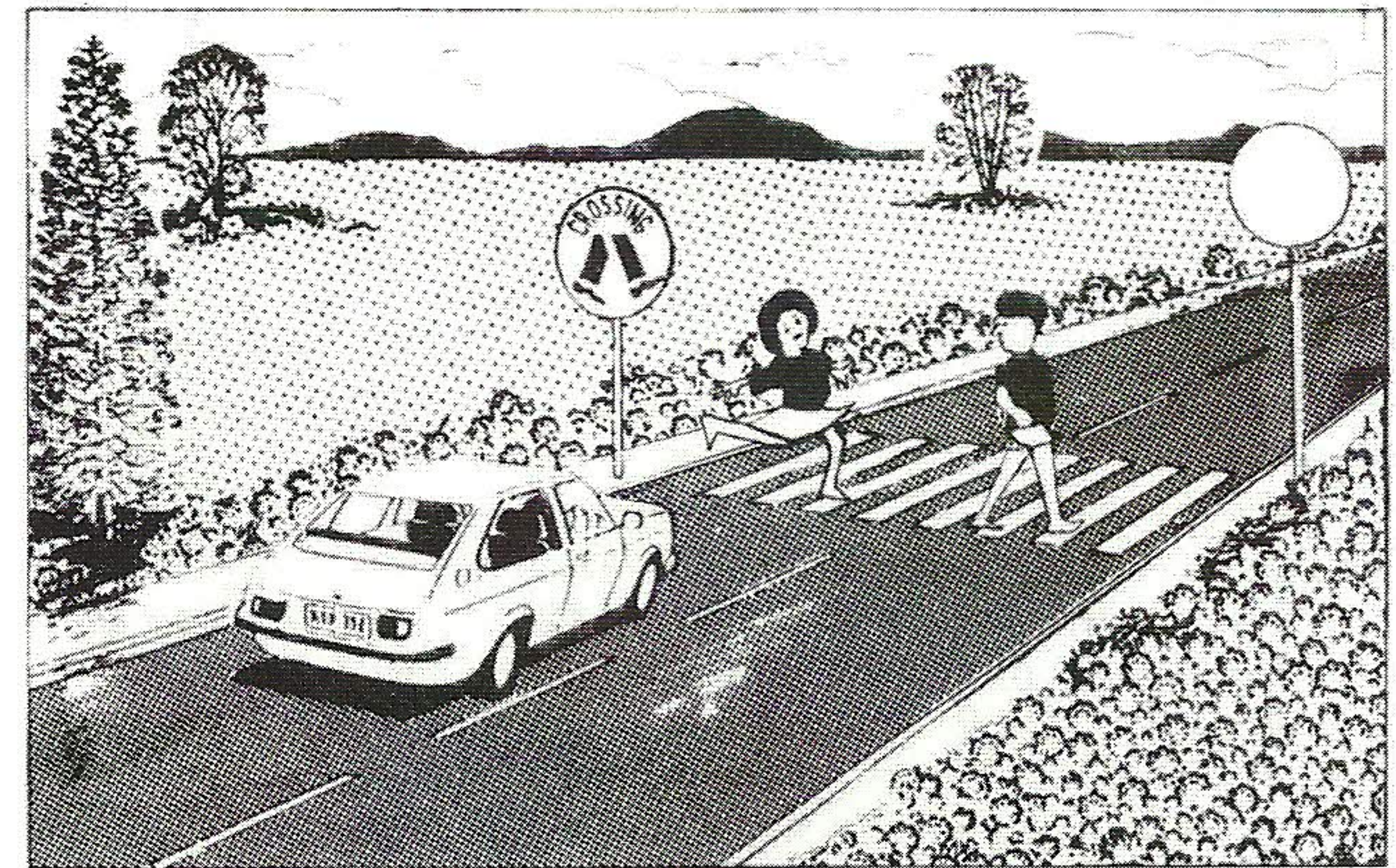
## 11. SCHOOL CROSSING

At many schools, you will see the sign shown on facing page. You must drive very carefully at these places as there are plenty of small children running about. You must not drive faster than 25km per hour across one of these crossings. Also, if there is a car stopped at the crossing, then you must stop too. It is a very serious offence to pass another car that has stopped at the crossing. You must WAIT UNTIL ALL THE CHILDREN HAVE CROSSED THE ROAD RIGHT ACROSS TO THE OTHER SIDE BEFORE YOU CAN DRIVE ON. Always give way to the children.



## 12. PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

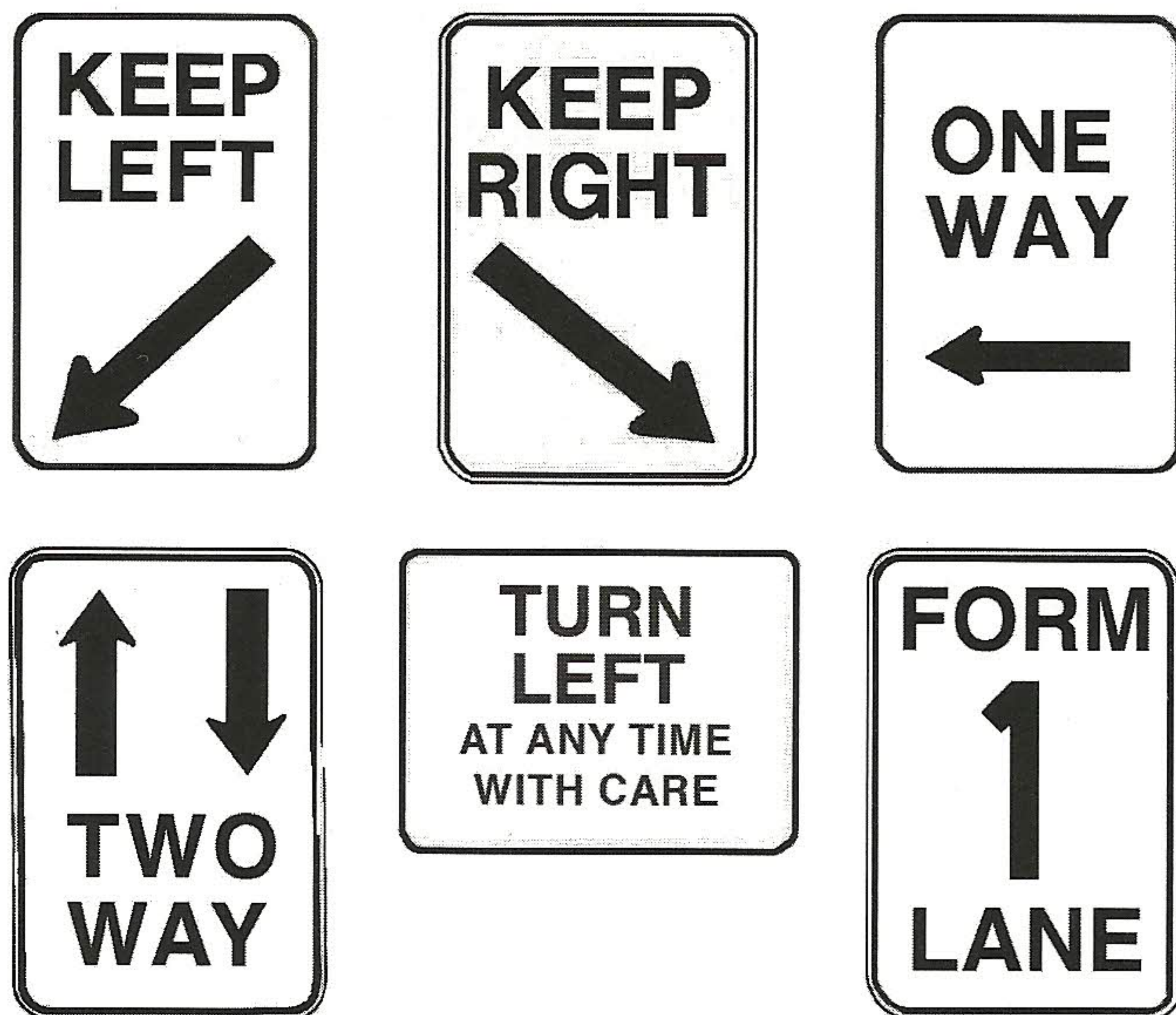
These crossing signs are painted yellow. You must slow and cross at not more than 25km per hour. You must give way to any pedestrian on the crossing and you must not pass another car that has stopped on the crossing.





### 13. TRAFFIC SIGNS

The Commissioner of Police has the job of making sure that all the traffic travels along smoothly and safely. He does this sometimes by putting signs along the road showing drivers what they must do. When you see these signs, you must always do as they say and you will not have any accidents. Some of these signs are shown below.

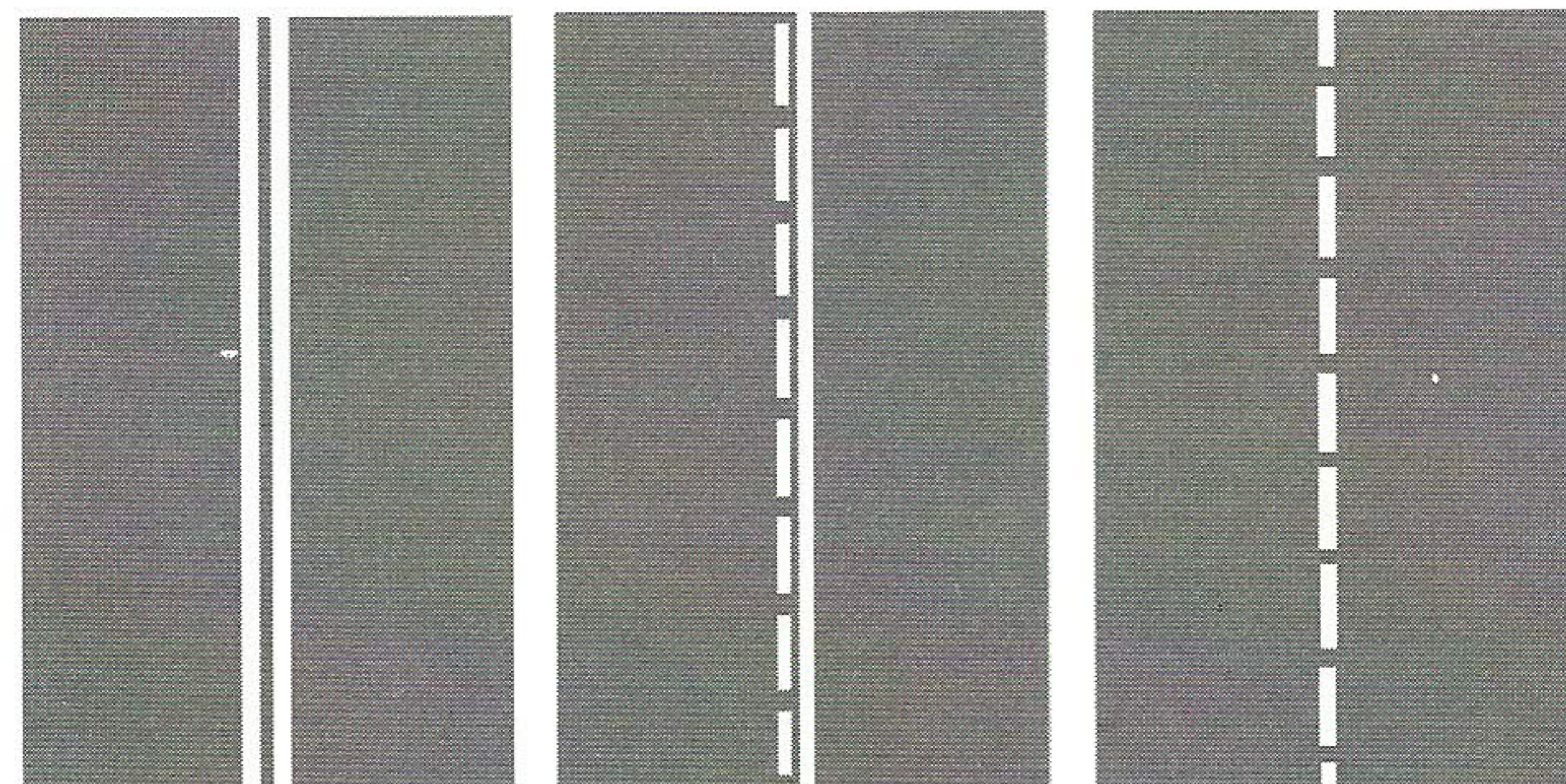


### 14. NARROW BRIDGES

In Papua New Guinea many bridges are only wide enough for vehicles to cross in one direction at a time. There will usually be a warning sign to tell you that there is a narrow bridge ahead and one of the approaches will be controlled by a Give Way sign. If the give way sign is facing towards you as you approach the bridge you must give way to every vehicle on the bridge and to those approaching it from the opposite direction to the way you are travelling.

### 15. ROAD MARKING

To help the traffic move safely, there are sometimes lines painted on the road. These lines can be yellow or they can be white. If there are two long lines painted on the road that are together and not broken, this means that you must not pass the lines with part of your car. If there is one continuous line and one broken line and the broken line is on your side of the road, then you may cross the line, but only if it is safe to do so. If the line which is broken is not on your side of the road, then you must not pass over it.



Where there is a single long broken line down the centre of the road, this is to show you where the centre of the road is and you must stay on the left hand side of this line, except to pass another car. You must be very careful that you do not have an accident with a car coming the other way.

Where a road is marked into three or four smaller roads called traffic lanes, you must always drive in one lane only, unless you are going to pass another car and then you must make sure that you can cross from one lane to the other safely, without causing any other car to put on its brakes or swerve at all.

See the pictures and make sure you understand them well. They are very important. REMEMBER - even if a car in front of you is travelling very slowly, you are NOT ALLOWED to cross unbroken double lines.



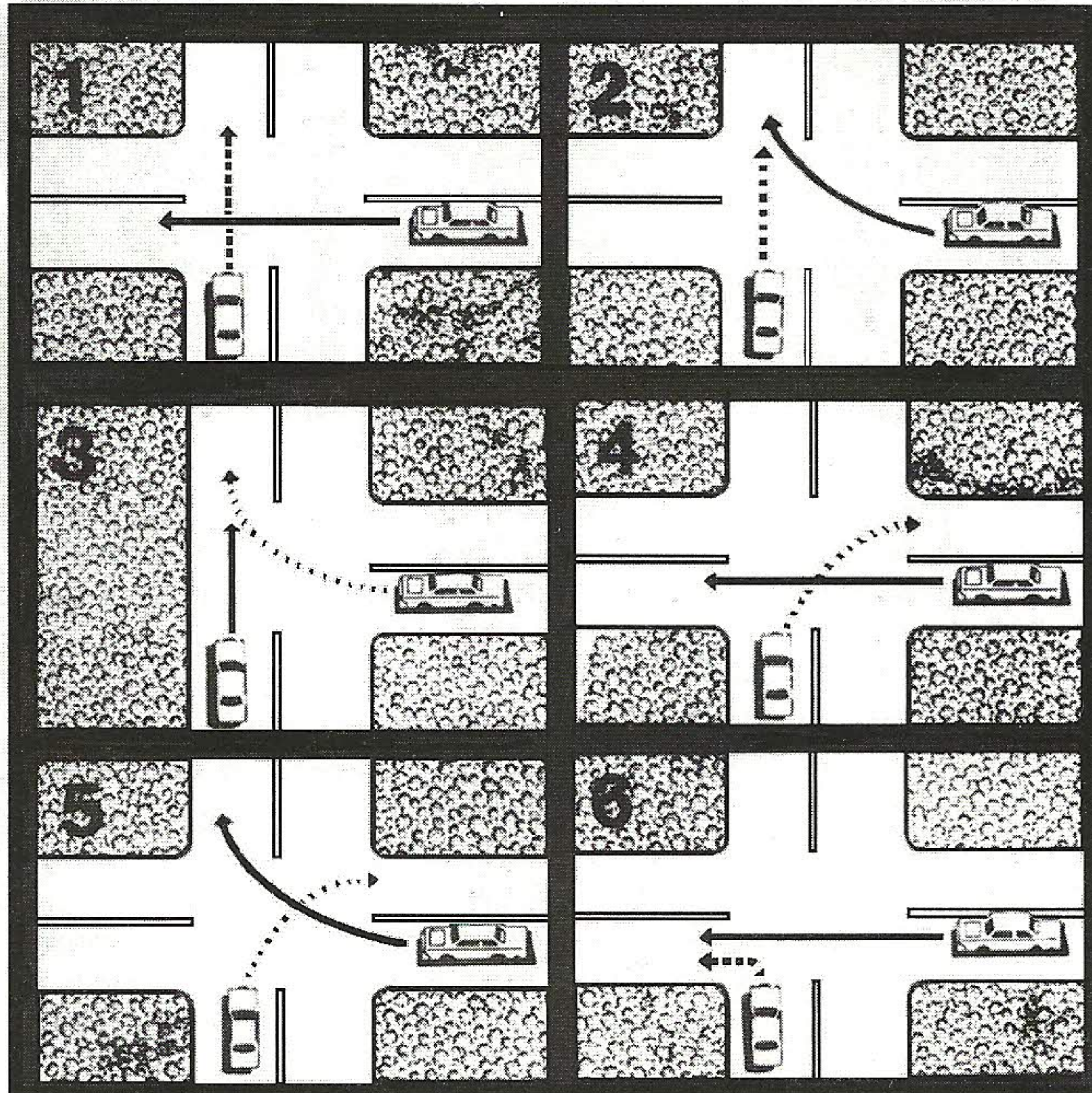
## 16. WHAT YOU MUST DO AT INTERSECTIONS

When your car and another car are approaching a corner at the same time, and if you both drove on, there would be a collision. If the other car is on your right hand side, you must let him go first.

To do this, you must stop or slow down, so that his car goes across in front of your car.

If you are going to turn right at a corner or other place, you must let any car that is coming towards you pass by your car first before you turn.

You can see by the drawing below the right way to make all types of turns at corners. The car marked 'A' always lets the other car go first.



Almost half of the accidents in Papua New Guinea happen at intersections, so be very careful when you are driving up to a corner.

You must not drive into an intersection unless you can drive right through the intersection without blocking the road.

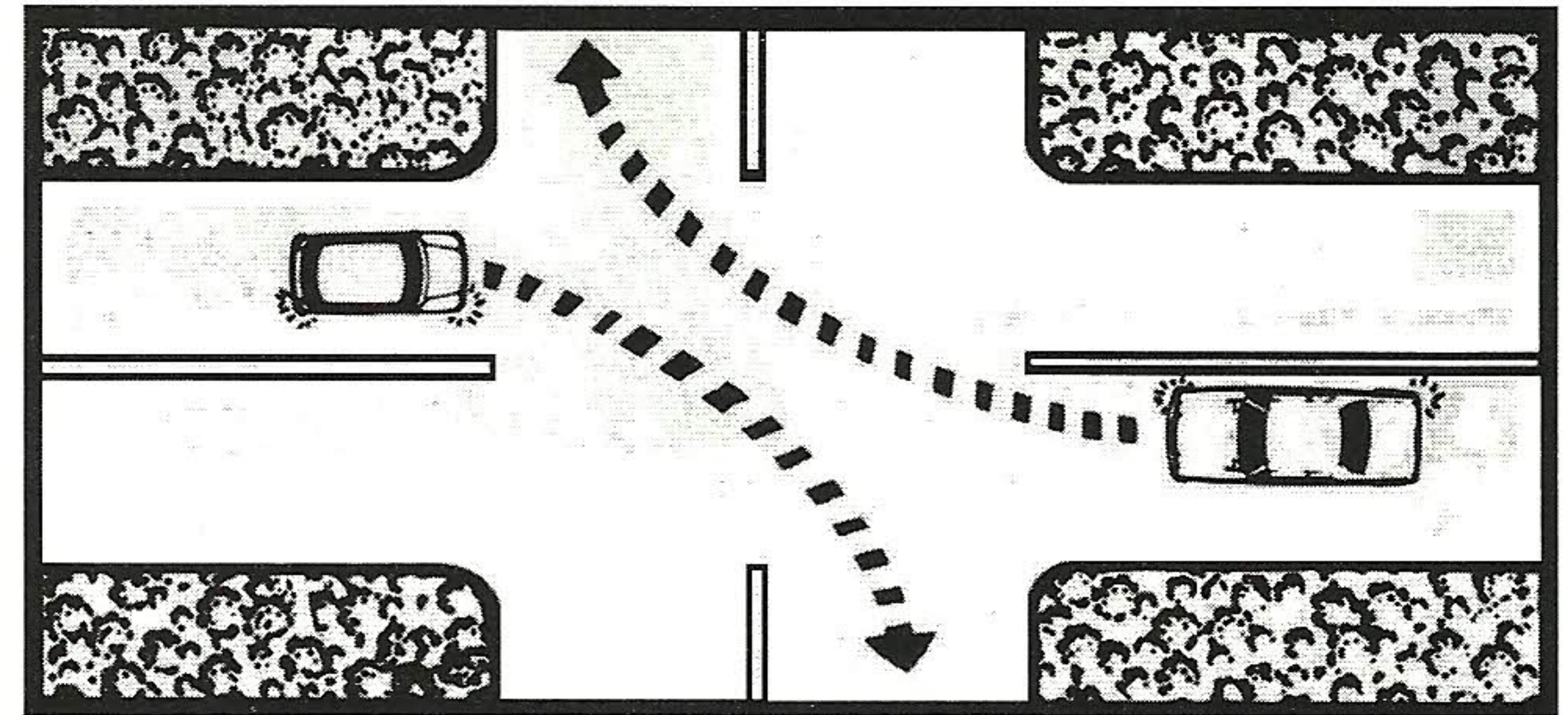
Remember that, even whilst you are driving on busy roads, you must still give way to any other car on your right hand side.

## 17. RIGHT HAND TURNS

You can see by the picture below how to make a right hand turn at a corner. You must drive up to the corner with your right hand wheels just on the centre line of the road, although not over the centre line.

When you approach an intersection with a policemen directing traffic, watch his hands and he will direct you on the way to turn.

ALWAYS watch for pedestrians and give way to them.



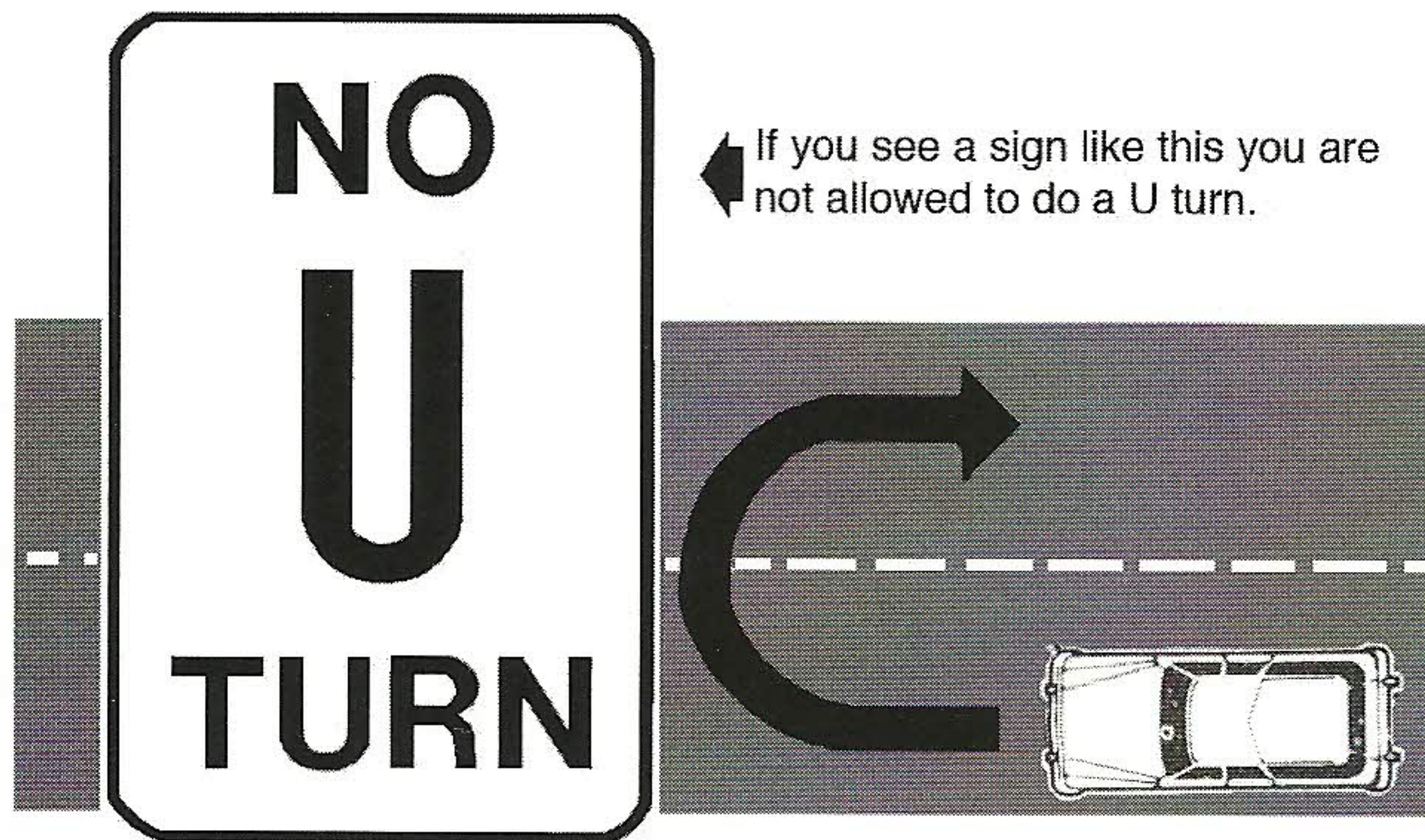
## 18. LEFT HAND TURNS

When you are going to turn left, you must approach the place where you are going to turn, very closely to the left hand side of the road, so that any traffic following you can easily pass you on the right. Give your signal clearly and in plenty of time. Make sure that everyone behind and in front of you knows what you are going to do. When you are turning, watch out for pedestrians. You may give a left hand turn signal by hand (see page 3) or by using flashing light signals. If you use flashing lights make sure you switch them off after turning. Failure to do so is an offence. You must give your signal at least 30 metres before you turn.



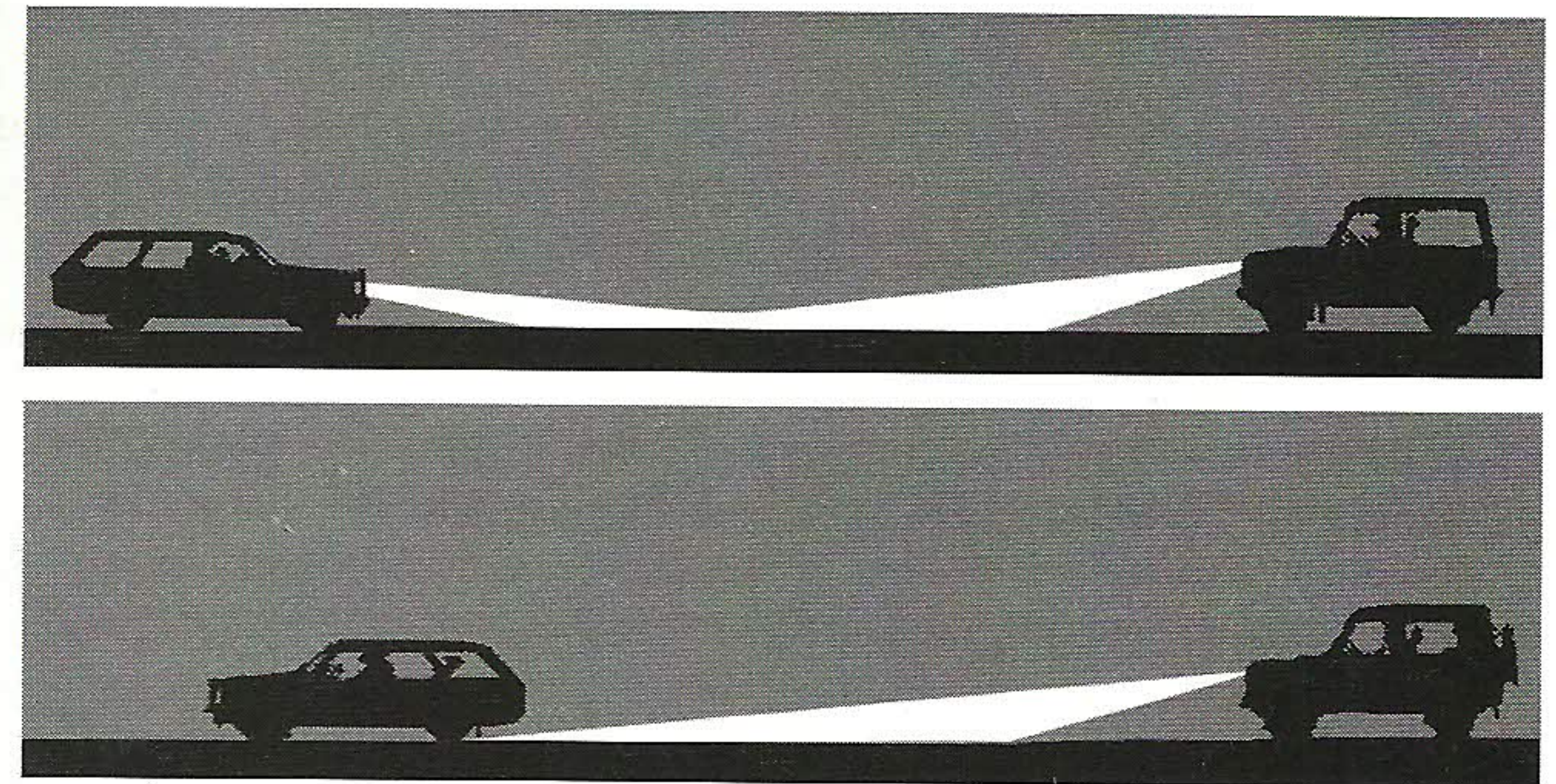
## 19. "U" TURNS

A "U" turn means: turning from the way you were travelling to go back the way you came, along the same road. You must not do this turn if there are double lines painted on the road, or there is other traffic coming from behind or in front of you. If there is traffic coming, you must wait until it has gone before you can turn.



## 20. LIGHTS ON CARS

When the sun has gone and it is getting dark, you must put on your headlights and tail lights. There must be two white headlights on your car, and two red tail lights at the back. When the lights are on full beam, that is with all the bright headlights on, then, when another car comes towards you, you must push the dip switch and put the lights down low. This should be done about 200 metres away from the other car. You must also dip your head lights if you are driving close behind another vehicle. When driving at night keep your front window clean. Drive with your lights dipped in town areas. Do not look into the headlights of a car coming towards you - look towards the left hand side of the road.



Do not drive too far at one time. Driving at night can make you tired very quickly.

Watch out for pedestrians-they are very hard to see in the dark.

## 21. REVERSING YOUR CAR

You must be very careful when you are driving a car backwards. It is an offence to drive a car too far backwards. You must never drive backwards any further than is safe. Later in this book, it shows you how to park your car.

## 22. STOP FOR POLICE, AMBULANCE AND FIRE BRIGADE

When there is some kind of emergency the police cars and the ambulance and fire brigade will use a loud horn or siren to let other drivers know that they are in a hurry. When you hear this horn or siren, you must slow down and pull to the left hand side of the road and let them pass.

## 23. FUNERALS

When some person has died, it is a mark of respect not to drive through the line of funeral traffic.



## 24. TOWING

When you are towing another car with your car, then the distance between the two cars must not exceed 4 metres and should have a red cloth tied in the centre of the rope. When you are towing the other car, it must have a licensed driver in it to steer the car. You should never tow a car or trailer that is heavier than your car. Also, when towing you must have a proper type of connection to join the trailer to the car, so that it will not come off.

## 25. BAD DRIVING HABITS

You must not drive a motor vehicle which makes a lot of noise whilst it is going along. You must not make any unnecessary noise near a hospital. Also you must be sure that your car does not make a lot of smoke from the engine or exhaust pipe. It is also an offence to blow the horn on a motor car unless there is a good reason for it. If your car drops oil and/or other rubbish on the road while it is going along, then you are committing an offence and the police may book you for this. Always make sure that your car is in good condition before you drive it. You must have your vehicle checked every six months at an approved garage and put the safety sticker on your windscreen.

## 26. SIZE OF CARS AND TRUCKS

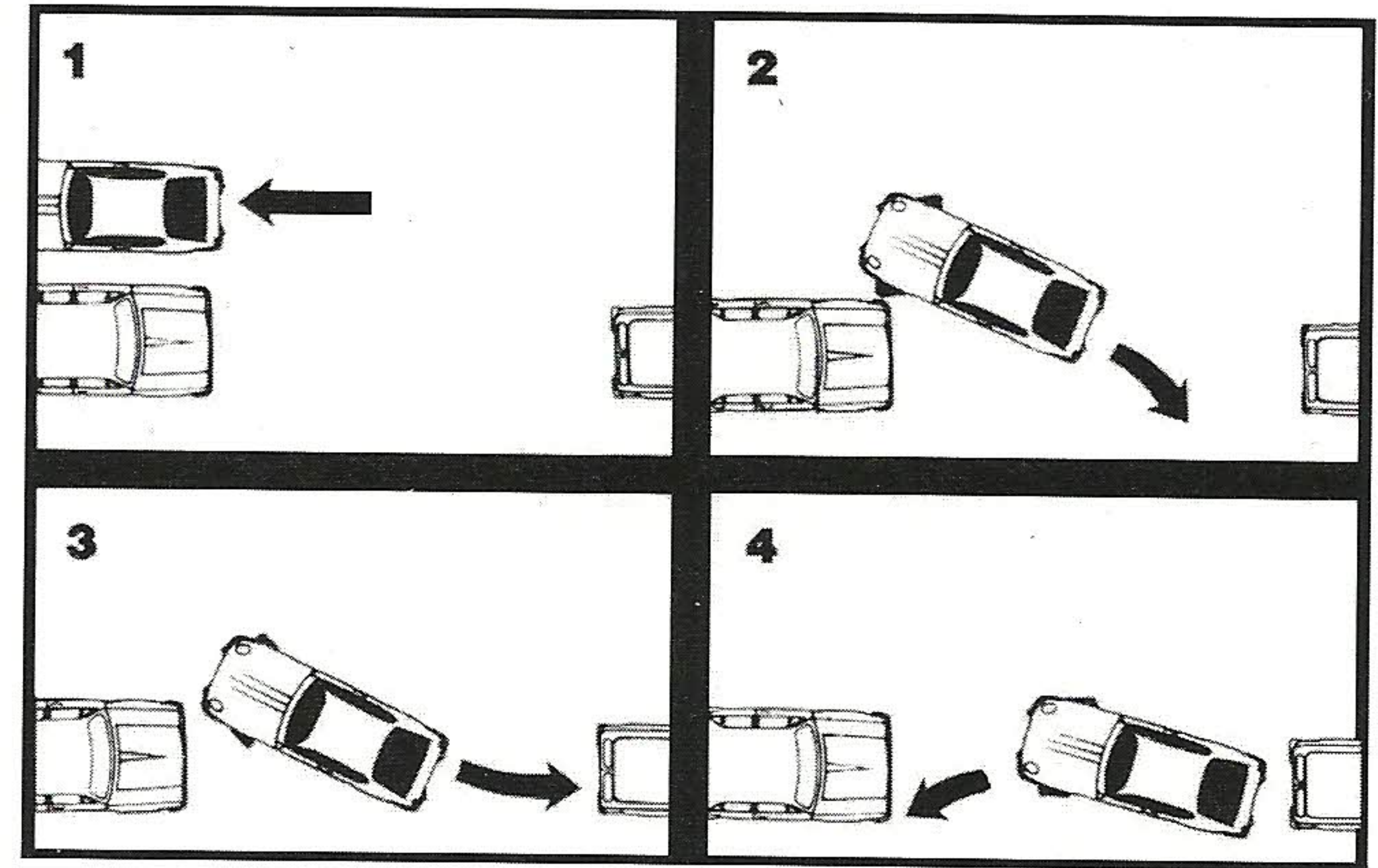
All cars and trucks have to be within certain size limits. If you have a very wide load to carry or a very high load, then you must go to the police station and ask there for a permit to carry the big or wide load.

- (i) Maximum width of any vehicle and load 2.5 metres without special permission from police.
- (ii) Maximum height of any vehicle and load 4.3 metres without special permission from police.
- (iii) The word "TARE" means the unladen weight of the vehicle.
- (iv) The words "GROSS WEIGHT" means the load capacity of the vehicle plus the unladen weight.
- (v) Drivers must ensure that loads are well secured so that they do not fall off.

## 27. HOW TO PARK

When you are in an ordinary street, the way to park is with the left wheels of your car level with the edge of the street. You must not park closer than 1 metre to another car and you must not park between another car and the centre of the road.

When you are parking the best way is to drive past the place where you wish to park and stay at least 1 metre out from the car which will be in front of you and then reverse in as it shows in the picture below. This is called parallel parking. Angle parking means parking at an angle with the front or rear of the car facing the footpath.



## 28. PARKING

Make sure that the brake is on properly.

If you are on a hill, put the car into first or reverse gear. Have the front wheels pointing towards the footpath. This is so that the car cannot run away if the brake slips. Make sure, that no other vehicle or pedestrian is passing close to your car before you open the door to get out. Leave the other drivers room to get out of the parking area.

Do not take up any more room than you need.

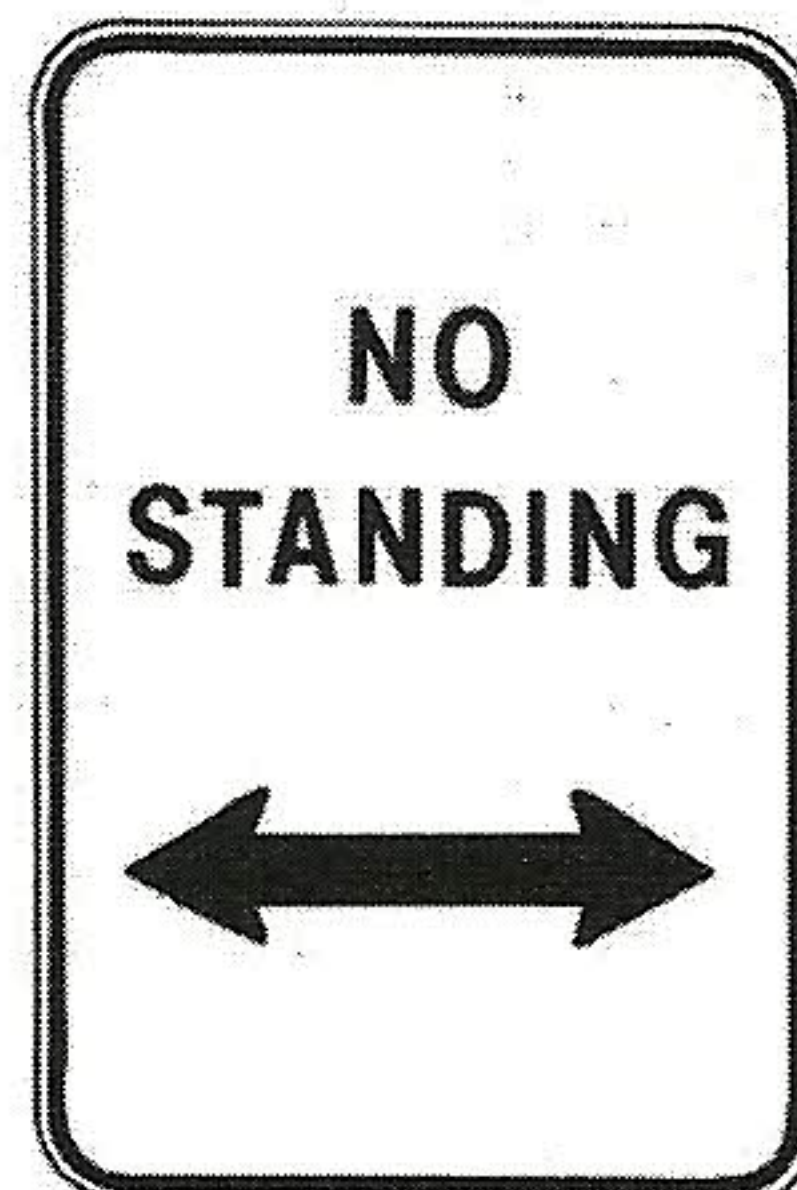


## 29. PARKING SIGNS

The Commissioner of Police has the job of controlling parking in the streets in such a way the other cars can move along without any of the parked cars getting in the way. This is done by putting up signs saying that you can or cannot park in a certain place or in a certain way. ALWAYS obey these signs. If you do not, then you could cause some person to be killed.

The sign NO PARKING means that you cannot leave your car parked at this place, unless you are just letting a passenger out and you are going to quickly drive on.

NO STANDING means that you are not even allowed to stop at this place, even for a few minutes to let passengers off.



## 30. WHERE NOT TO PARK

You must not park:-

- Less than 1 metre from another car.
- Within 6 metres of an intersection.
- Within 6 metres of the approach side of a pedestrian crossing.
- In an intersection.
- Across any driveway or street.
- Less than 4 metres from double lines.
- Where a sign states that you must not park.
- On a hill or curve where your car cannot be seen from a distance of 50 metres.

## 31. ACCIDENTS

When you are involved in an accident, you must first of all stop your car and then give any help you can to any person who has been injured. When your car or the other car is damaged, or when some person has been injured, you must report the accident as soon as possible to the nearest Police station. You must give your name and address and the registration number of your car to any person who is in the other car or any injured person.

REMEMBER - if a policeman asks to see your licence, you must let him see it and give him your name and address.

If there is any glass or parts of the motor car on the roadway after the accident, you or the person who takes the damaged vehicles away must make sure they take the broken glass or parts away too, because they could damage some other person's car later, if you leave them on the road.

## 32. SERIOUS TRAFFIC OFFENCES

If you are brought before a court and charged with a serious traffic offence, such as driving when you have been drinking beer or other liquor, or driving in a dangerous manner or dangerous speed or failing to stop after an accident, you may lose your licence for a very long time, or you may even be sent to prison. So always drive properly and safely and NEVER if you have been drinking beer or other intoxicating liquor.

## 33. PASSENGER ON A MOTOR CYCLE

A person can carry a passenger on a motor cycle if:-

- The motor cycle has the right foot rests for the passenger. Only one passenger may be carried at one time and he or she must sit BEHIND the driver.
- Both the passenger and the driver must wear safety helmets that are fastened on so that they will not fall off.

## 34. HEAVY TRUCKS

When you drive a heavy vehicle that is over four tons in weight, you must carry in the vehicle small warning signs consisting of three red reflective triangles. If your vehicle breaks down, you put these warning signals on the road, one in front of the vehicle one at the back of the vehicle and one beside the vehicle nearest the middle of the road. You do this to tell other drivers that your vehicle is broken down.



### 35. SAFETY IN DRIVING - SEAT BELTS

These are the belts that are in some cars and which are fixed to the body of the car so that, if you are involved in a car crash, you cannot get thrown forward or out of the car on to the roadway and hurt badly. If these belts are in the car that you are driving, ALWAYS put them on before you start the car. These belts may save your life if you have a crash.

### 36. CHILDREN

Always put any children you are carrying into the BACK seat, as it is much safer for them there and they cannot get in the driver's way when he is driving the car.

### 37. FRONT GLASS BREAKING

If the front window of your car should break when you are driving along, it will go very white and you cannot see through it at all. If the glass should break, slow down straight away and push the glass out, so that you can see again. The most likely place for the glass to break is where there are lots of stones on the road and cars coming towards you. At these places, always slow down to avoid glass breaking.

### 38. MIRRORS

All vehicles must have at least one rear view mirror fitted so that the driver can see overtaking traffic. On good vehicles this mirror must be fitted externally on the right hand side.

Know what is happening behind you. Always look in your mirror before you overtake, turn, slow down or stop.

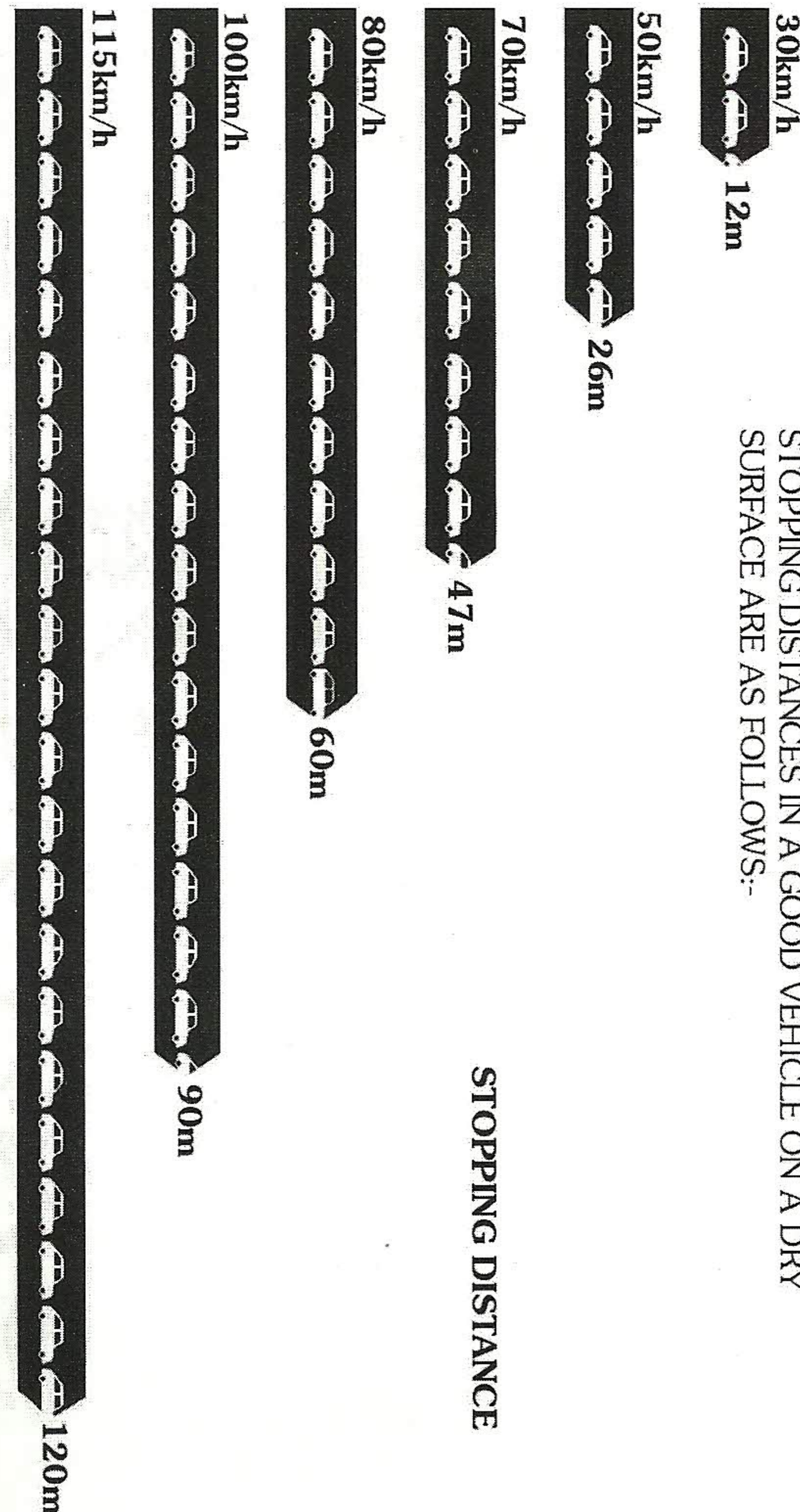
### 39. SAFETY IN DRIVING - SEAT BELTS

A blowout is when a tyre goes flat very quickly when you are driving along the road. This is very dangerous and you should check your tyres often to prevent this happening. If it does happen, then DO NOT PUT ON YOUR BRAKES - that will make the car turn over and you may be very badly hurt. You should take your foot off the accelerator pedal slowly and just steer the car, keeping a tight grip on the steering wheel until your car stops.

40.

### SHORTEST STOPPING DISTANCES

IT TAKES LONGER TO STOP THAN MOST PEOPLE THINK:  
STOPPING DISTANCES IN A GOOD VEHICLE ON A DRY  
SURFACE ARE AS FOLLOWS:-





## 41. EXAMPLES OF TRAFFIC SIGNS



Children



Winding Road



Curve



Low Clearance



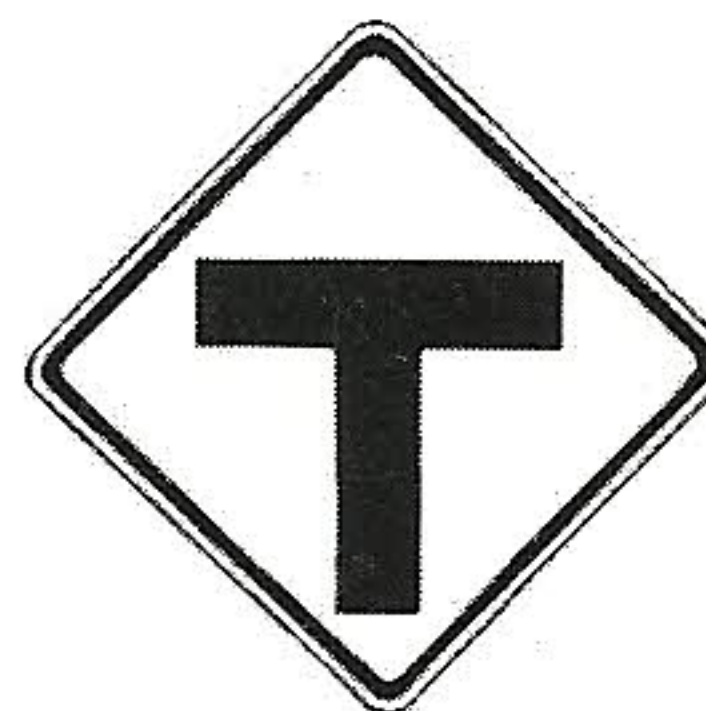
Traffic  
Signals  
Ahead



Liklik wara  
kar ken brukim



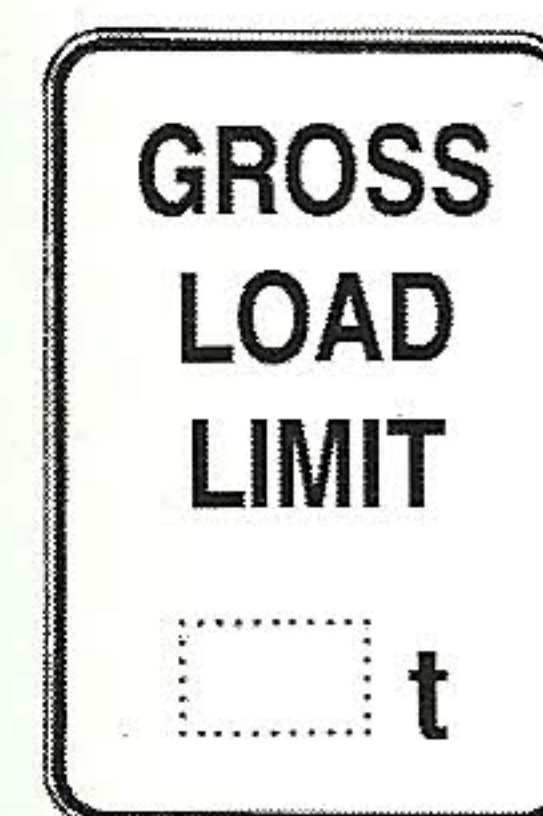
'Y' Junction



'T' Junction



Hair Pin Bend



Gross Load Limit



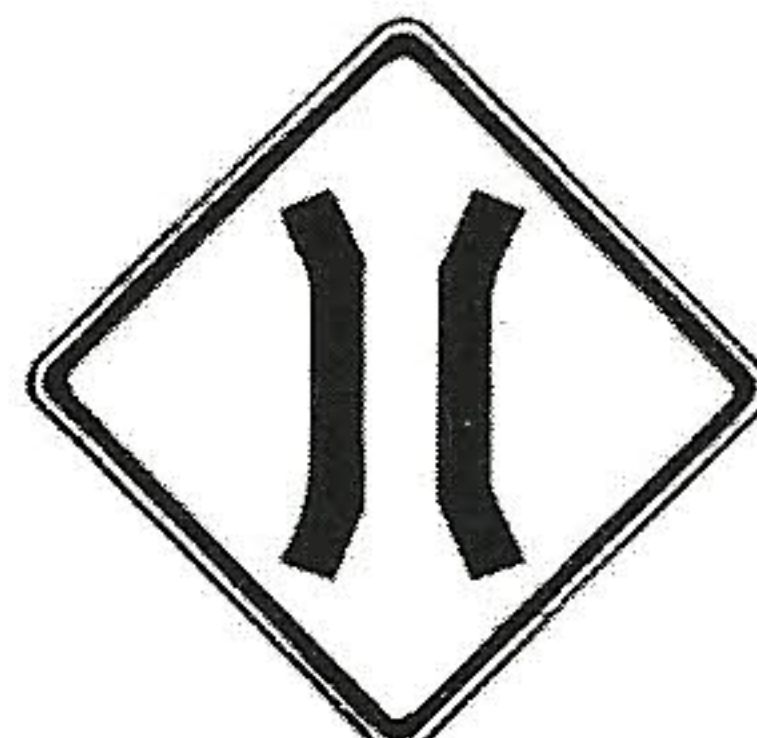
Haus Sik



Rot igo antap



Side Road  
intersection



Narrow Bridge



Give Way  
sign ahead



Road Narrows



Skul



Pedestrian Crossing  
ahead



Cross Roads



Stop  
Sign  
ahead



Hump