

you should read this!

all about

**...your life in your hands**

the facts  
the info  
the issues  
the problems  
the help



# In the beginning

**Why you?**

**Why this?**

**What's ...your life in your hands about?**

Everyone knows how to cross the road safely – let's face it you have been doing just that for years. All those things you were taught in primary school and by your parents have paid off. **You're still here.**

**...your life in your hands** raises serious issues about your safety. It includes some of the rules and the do's and don'ts, but just as important are the situations in which you might have to make decisions.

Choosing to read **...your life in your hands** is your first decision. This booklet will help you answer questions, consider problems, explain risks and debate the issues – and help you keep safe.

Need more details? Just use the click info websites

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# Ground rules

hmmmm!



Would you pass the **road user test**?

Need **help** with the answers?

Try reading the **useful bits** and **facts** pages in this booklet.

More answers will be in the **Highway Code**.

# road user test

1 Traffic is the biggest single killer of –

- a) Under 5 year olds
- b) 5 – 11 year olds
- c) 12 – 16 year olds
- d) 16 – 18 year olds

2 Whose responsibility is it for someone aged 14+ to wear a rear seat belt?

- a) Driver is responsible for everyone
- b) Themselves
- c) Parents
- d) The government

3 This sign means –

- a) Vehicles only allowed
- b) Segregated lane for pedestrians and cyclists
- c) Cyclists cannot overtake pedestrians
- d) Cyclists have to dismount



4 The legal age to drive a car is –

- a) 16 - but only less than 1100cc
- b) 17
- c) 18
- d) 21 – any vehicle

5 Cyclists may use a bus lane –

- a) At any time
- b) Never
- c) Only if the signs include a cycle symbol
- d) Only when following a bus

6 How does alcohol affect road users?

- a) It improves co-ordination
- b) It increases awareness
- c) It improves concentration
- d) It slows down reactions

7 At the scene of a crash, what should you do first?

- a) Protect the scene and warn other traffic
- b) Telephone the emergency services
- c) Shout 'Help!'
- d) Keep safe

8 When walking along a country road at night, you should walk –

- a) Facing the oncoming traffic
- b) On the side where the moon is shining
- c) With your back to the oncoming traffic
- d) On the side that has a hedge

9 The maximum penalty for dangerous cycling is –

- a) A warning from the police
- b) £1000
- c) £2500
- d) £3000

10 In Essex more people aged 12–16 are injured as –

- a) Pedestrians
- b) Car passengers
- c) Cyclists
- d) Riders on micro scooters

# Dream or reality

**Advertising and selling the dream – every day we see how wonderful life can be in the adverts.**

Wonder liquids to clean kitchens to a super shiny finish, mascara that makes eyelashes thick, glossy and long, zit creams that perform overnight miracles. No wonder there are occasions when we never feel quite good enough. Look at what we are meant to live up to.

So what's that got to do with keeping safe and staying alive? Quite a lot really, that's if we believe the dream we are being sold rather than the reality.



**THE NEW GTi 230000**

This saloon can accelerate to **60mph** in less than five seconds

It can accelerate to 100mph in just over 11 seconds, cover a quarter-mile in less than 13.5 seconds and reach 150mph in 30 seconds.

It's a leather-lined, four-door luxury saloon crammed with high-tech goodies with the agility worthy of a cheetah. **GRRRRREEEAT!**





## Crash test report

After the impact, the door was deformed but the body structure was stable. The left front wheel crushed the driver's footwell, causing a body seam to burst. The driver and passenger airbags worked well and the load limiting belts reduced chest injury risks. The knee impact areas included hard contact points which could injure the driver's knees, upper legs and pelvis.

# Different perspectives

**Most students travel on school buses each day without any real problems.**

Anyone experiencing bullying is having a bad time, but what about situations where it could also cause a road crash?

**Who should take responsibility?**

People who were involved in a bullying situation were interviewed.

**Each has an individual perspective.**

How do you think you or any of your friends would react in similar circumstances?

**Consider your response to each of the comments.**

It's worth reading what each person has to say before you make your judgement.



The driver

## Bus driver

Obviously most of the students are fine, a bit noisy and pushy at times, but generally friendly. We have clear guidelines about how we should react to situations. We will report any misbehaviour to the company in the first instance. My main concern is safety and ensuring that there is no danger of a road crash.



The Parent

## Parent

My son hasn't said anything about using the bus, but lately he has seemed reluctant about going to school. He was fine last year, so I don't know if there is really a problem or whether it's just the normal teenage moods. I sometimes think I ought to question him more, but if I try he just stops talking.



Bus company manager

## Bus company manager

We have clear guidelines about behaviour. If any pupils misbehave, vandalise the bus, get into fights or intimidate other pupils then they lose the right to use the school



**The Bully**

**Bully**  
It's nothing but a bit of a laugh. We don't do much, but some people just ask for it. My friends think it's funny anyway. It's just messing around.



**The Teacher**

**Teacher**  
We are very concerned that all our students are able to travel to school in safety. If anyone has any worries, then they can talk to any teacher in complete confidence. We do have a school policy on safer travel, but even more important than the policy document is being able to listen to students' problems so that help and support can be given.



**The onlooker**

**The onlooker**  
It does go on. I don't think everyone sees it, certainly the bus driver hasn't noticed. He only really notices if it gets noisy. There are three boys in Year 10 who give a younger boy a hard time. Sometimes I feel like saying something, but they are older than I am and I don't want them to start on me.



### **The sufferer**

It started with just simple name-calling, but sometimes I get pushed and shoved. It's not easy for other people to see. I think it might have started when I sat in a seat where one of the older boys wanted to sit. Now it seems that I can't sit anywhere without being in the wrong. One of the worst times is when they know that the bus is coming up to a bend and they shove me off my seat so it's difficult not to fall over. Of course, then they just laugh.

### **How would you respond if you were any of those people? Could this situation affect everyone who travels on the bus?**

Read through the general advice given below. What do you think is the best advice for the boy who is being bullied on the bus? If you were his friend is there any other advice that you would suggest?

#### **Advice on what to do**

- Understand that you are not to blame – you did not choose to be bullied
- Talk to someone you trust – your parents or a teacher
- Let the bullies think they are not getting to you – don't let them see you upset
- Keep with others
- Practise saying things like 'leave me alone' or 'no' – then try it out
- Chat to other people who have been bullied – use their experience to help you
- Be proud of who you are – stand up for yourself

#### **Advice on what not to do:**

- Don't ignore the bullying and try and pretend it isn't happening
- Don't challenge the bully or get into a shouting match
- Don't think that your problems are not important

# Future life... travel choices

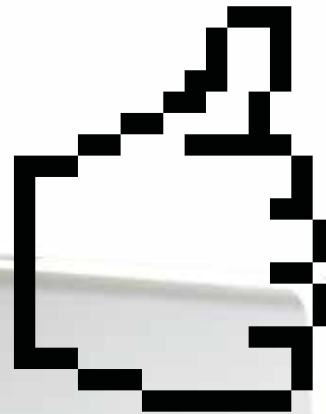
## Miss piggy

What is it with men? Do they like looking stupid? Why be a good driver when you can screech round corners and think it's cool.



## Blitz

What's yr prob?  
Lighten up lady, they ain't killing anyone



Chat place-  
Discussion board-  
have your say, rant away!



## Amp

I think the main problem with a lot of drivers is arrogance, it's the "I'm a brilliant driver" syndrome after a while they really start to believe it themselves, but lets face it the last time a hot hatch went flying past, what word went through your mind?



Miss piggy  
Right



## Tone

No chance for arrogant drivers round here – there's so much traffic they crawl.

### Amp

Yep, blitz,  
they do kill.

### Tone

Yeh - but a least they  
aren't polluting the air -  
try living in a town with  
the noise and muck  
that gets chucked in  
your face

### Fleur

Anyone can rant and  
rave about it. We've all  
seen stupid drivers. I've  
seen a few stupid  
cyclists as well.  
Somehow they seem to  
think the rules of the  
road aren't meant for  
them.

### Amp

Cyclists might be a  
pain, but they don't  
often kill anyone either.  
Two wheels good - four  
wheels bad. If more  
people got on their  
bikes it might be a  
better place to live.  
There are some people  
around who could  
definitely do with the  
exercise.

### Blitz

Oh great, so we all  
have to start wearing  
lycra do we? And since  
when has a helmet  
been a must have  
fashion item? Try  
getting where you want  
to go when you live in  
a village where it's rare  
to see a bus (let alone  
catch one). Ok for you  
townies with choice -  
the car I want is not  
only gonna be cool, it's  
gonna be fast.

### Miss piggy

ypical - just what we  
need another boy racer  
- get down the front  
and show yr stripes,  
sure you'll look sooooo  
cool.

### Fleur

I can see yr point blitz  
- doesn't mean that  
driving fast makes you  
a good driver though.  
Maybe we should rant  
about poor public  
transport instead of bad  
drivers.

### Amp

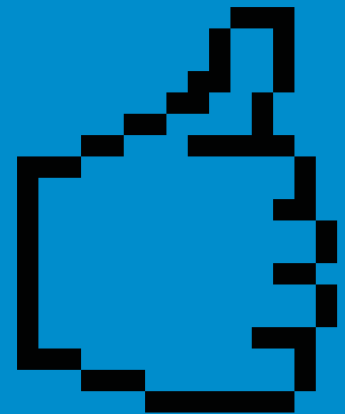
Anyway miss piggy  
why does everyone pick  
on us poor men? Wot  
about the girls? They're  
just as much of a pain  
- everyone knows what  
women drivers are like?

### Miss piggy

Dangerous ground there  
Amp - where's your  
proof? Bet we have  
fewer accidents. I might  
not be able to drive  
yet, but when I pass  
my test I'll a good  
driver - not arrogant.

### Tone

Ooooh, sound like it's  
getting a bit prickly -  
Let's face it there are  
few bad drivers male  
and female. Anyway  
why drive at all? Go for  
it Fleur - let's get those  
cars off the road.



# Dealing with problems – taking action

Sometimes decisions aren't as straightforward as you would like them to be.

## Think about these situations.

What would you do and what do you think is the best advice to give?

### Parent pressure

How does everyone else cope with parents going on and on? Every time I go out I get the third degree about where I'm going and all that. The latest is about my bike. Are the tyres pumped? Do the lights work? (They don't but the olds haven't sussed yet.) Worst of all - "wear a helmet!". I need the bike to get out and about. I don't want my parents taking me everywhere or knowing where I'm going all the time. How do I get them off my back?

TC (15) Basildon

*So you want the freedom but not the responsibility. Unfortunately, life just isn't that easy. If you're not keeping your bike in good condition, then you're taking stupid risks and maybe putting other people at risk as well. Parents worry – it's part of their job description and you storming off in a huff will only make things worse. Try talking and listening to them. If you give them an easier time, they will probably be happy to meet you halfway.*

Useful web site: [www.pupline.net](http://www.pupline.net)



## Should I take sides?

Sometimes my mate's older brother gives my friends and me a lift when we want to go out. The trouble is, he's a bit of a scary driver. He's only been driving a year or so and seems to think he's a rally star. My best mate now refuses to get in the car when he's driving. I still want to get a lift but I feel a bit guilty about my friend.

*JS (14) Colchester*

*It's always difficult to be the safe one. At least your best mate has the nerve to do what she thinks is right. Unless someone has a word with the driver or his parents, it may be the best option to give the rally ride a miss – perhaps he will get the hint then.*



## Back seat

I get a lift to school from my friend's parents. They don't seem that bothered about seat belts and never insist that we wear them when we sit in the back. They don't always put their own seat belt on in the front. So far I've not been wearing the belt but it feels odd as I always wear one when I travel in other cars.

*SP (14) Chelmsford*

*Seems that going with your instincts is the best thing to do. At 14 you are responsible for wearing a seat belt. You don't even have to say anything – just get in the car and belt up. At most your friend might make the odd comment, but if he's a friend he won't make anything of it.*

## Helmet law

Is it only little children who have to wear a cycle helmet by law? At what age can children stop wearing them?



*DK (13) Braintree*

*At the moment, cyclists are not legally required to wear helmets whatever their age, BUT the head is one of the most vulnerable parts of the body. It doesn't take much to imagine what the damage would be to a soft head hitting a concrete road or the edge of the kerb. Many cyclists are also injured off-road. Brain damage or death isn't really the fashion trend for this season.*



## Car crazy

I'm really keen to learn to drive. I know I can't legally get behind the wheel until I'm 17, but what can I do to improve my chances of passing the test as soon as I can?

*CG (15) Rayleigh*

*At least you are thinking ahead - but driving isn't just about passing the test. You actually have to pass both theory and practical tests. You can start learning driving theory at any age and your first step might be to get a copy of the Highway Code. There are books and CDs on sale to help you with the theory. Try looking carefully at what is happening around you. When you are being driven in a car (or even in a bus), start looking at the road from a driver's point of view.*

*The advice from a learner driver website is:*

- *Look out for traffic signs, road markings (do you know what they all mean?)*
- *Look for vulnerable road users such as children, cyclists, motorcyclists, horse riders etc.*
- *Think about dangers and hazards and how you could avoid them.*
- *Ask yourself if your driver is too close to the vehicle in front.*

# Useful bits – The Law

Rules and regulations – there seem to be so many. When it comes to travelling on the roads there are certainly quite a few laws telling everyone what they **must** and **must not** do.

Anyone who wants to drive must pass a test on the laws of the road before they can take the practical test and legally drive. There might not be as many laws for non-drivers but it's surprising how many people don't know them.



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## On your feet

This isn't more information about how to cross the road – after all you knew all about that in primary school. (Everyone knows **Stop, Look, Listen**, but can you actually remember the full Green Cross Code?)

## Little known traffic laws for pedestrians

- You **must not** walk on motorways or slip roads except in an emergency.
- You **must not** loiter on zebra, pelican or puffin crossings.
- You **must not** get on to or hold on to a moving vehicle.

## On your bike

There are a few more laws for cyclists – a bike is considered to be a vehicle. That also means that cyclists have to take their responsibilities a bit more seriously.

Traffic laws for cyclists

You **must**

- have front and rear lights lit at night
- have a red rear reflector and amber pedal reflectors
- obey traffic signs and traffic light signals
- keep to the track for cyclists on shared use paths

You **must not**

- carry a passenger unless your cycle has been built or adapted to carry one
- hold on to a moving vehicle or trailer
- ride in a dangerous, careless or inconsiderate manner
- ride when under the influence of drink or drugs
- cross the stop line across the road when the traffic lights are red
- cycle on a pavement
- cycle on a motorway

All traffic signals and signs including those relating to bus lanes also apply to cyclists.

## Penalties for cyclists

### Dangerous Cycling

Maximum fine of £2,500

### Careless Cycling

Maximum fine of £1,000

### Cycling on the pavement

Maximum fine of £500



## In the car

The law says – Always wear your seat belt. Over 90% of drivers and front seat passengers do so, but only around 50% of people travelling in the back belt up.

If you don't wear your seat belt in a crash at 30mph, you'll be thrown forward. The force of the crash will mean that your weight is equivalent to an elephant hitting the person in the front seat. You might be seriously injured, but they might die.

The maximum fine for seat belt offences is £1000, so look at the table below to check out your responsibility.

	Front seat	Rear seat	Who is responsible
<b>Driver</b>	Seat belt must be worn if fitted		Driver
<b>Child under 3 years of age</b>	Correct child restraint must be used	Correct child restraint must be used. If one is not available in a taxi, may travel unrestrained	Driver
<b>Child 3 years to 135 cms in height (and under 12 years)</b>	Correct child restraint must be used	Correct child restraint must be used where fitted. <i>Must use adult belt if:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in a taxi, the correct child restraint not available</li> <li>• on a short and occasional trip, the correct child restraint not available;</li> <li>• two occupied child restraints prevent fitting of a third</li> </ul>	Driver
<b>Child 12 or 13, or over 135cms in height</b>	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Driver
<b>Adult passengers</b>	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Seat belt must be worn if fitted	Passenger



# Useful bits – **First Aid**

**Okay, so you may not want to be a paramedic or the star of Casualty but there's no harm in knowing something about first aid.**

**If there is an emergency, you at least want to be able to act cool and in control. Even better would be getting trained.**

## **The basics**

First aid is the care given by someone to a casualty before the experts arrive. Done properly, it can reduce the effects of injuries and save lives.

## **First reaction**

Your first reaction might be to cry HELP! but think calm, act calm and be in control. It's definitely a good idea not to panic. There is a procedure that you can follow.



## Think about this situation.

While walking home, you and a friend see a road accident. A cyclist falls off his bike as a car overtakes it. The car swerves to avoid it and then hits another car travelling in the opposite direction. The cyclist is unconscious, but breathing. One of the drivers is groaning and shouting for help because his arm is bleeding. The other driver doesn't seem to be moving.

**How would you stop things from getting worse? How would you decide which casualties to help first?**

**What would you say to the emergency services?**

There are some initial procedures.

**Keep safe** Never put yourself in danger. Don't try to be a super hero. Is there anyone else around who can help?

**Warn other traffic** Check for leaking fuel and make sure no-one is smoking.

**Look** How many people are injured? Can you see everyone?

**Decide** Who is the most seriously injured? Check for breathing. The screamer is often not the person who is in immediate danger, but will need reassurance.

**Well** how do you think you would have coped with the accident scenario? Only the very basic procedure is given here; there is certainly a great deal more to learn.

**Try** thinking through the scenario again. Think about the people involved and how they might be feeling.

## Your call

Making the emergency call is not just a case of dialling 999 and screaming for help. It's still necessary to keep cool and in control.

**Emergency 999 calls are free – even from a mobile. (You can also use 112 on a mobile). When the operator answers, they will want to know:**

- which emergency services you require - fire, police, ambulance or coastguard.
- If there are injuries, always ask for the ambulance first.
- your name
- which number you are calling from
- «where the incident is (try to give landmark details as well – High Street isn't quite specific enough)
- description of the incident scene – any potential dangers
- how many casualties and an idea of what injuries there appear to be
- hang up only when the operator tells you to

## Getting trained

To get proper training, contact the British Red Cross or St John Ambulance.

# Know the facts – **Road crashes**

- **The risk –**  
**On average, 10 people are killed on Britain's roads each day.**
- **What age? –**  
**Traffic is the single biggest killer of 12-16 year olds.**

## On your feet

- Experience counts – Of all the pedestrian casualties, 40% are under 15; only 17% of pedestrian casualties are over 60.
- No protection – Pedestrians involved in a road crash are far more likely to be seriously injured or killed than someone in a car.
- Urban jungle – Most pedestrians are involved in road crashes in towns and cities.
- Being hidden – Nearly 30% of pedestrians are injured trying to cross near parked cars.
- Crossing over – More people get injured crossing away from a pedestrian crossing than on the crossing itself.



## On your bike

- Two wheels – Fewer young people are getting injured as cyclists compared to ten years ago BUT fewer young people are cycling.
- A boy thing – More boys than girls are injured riding bikes BUT fewer girls ride bikes.
- Head first – The majority of serious injuries to cyclists are head injuries.



## In the car

- Driving danger – In Essex, people aged 12-16 are increasingly being injured as car passengers.



# Know the facts— Travel data

- Traffic trouble – The way we are using our cars has a price –
- Our roads are among the most congested in Britain
- Road traffic adds to local air pollution which damages health
- Road transport is also the fastest growing contributor to climate change
  
- School run - 20% of morning rush hour traffic is due to the school run.
- Fit to drop - The way we travel is making us a less healthy nation. We drive when we could walk or cycle.

## On your feet

- Fewer steps – In the last twenty years, the proportion of journeys made on foot has fallen by nearly 10% .

## On your bike

- Wasted - Most young people own a bike BUT only 2% cycle to school.

## On the bus

- Bus use – Young people aged 16-20 use the bus more than other age groups.

## In the car

- Cough, cough - Car drivers face pollution levels inside a car two to three times higher than those experienced by pedestrians.
- Zoom, zoom - 70% of car drivers break the 30 mph speed limit.

# My information

Name

Address

Telephone 1

Telephone 2

E-mail

School

Telephone

Emergency contact

Telephone 1

Telephone 2

Parents' work numbers

Telephone 1

Telephone 2

Taxi cab 1

Taxi cab 2

Favourite places

Telephone 1

Telephone 2

Travel numbers

Traveline 0870 6082608

Village Link 01245 437188

Essex Passenger Transport 01245 492211

National Cabline 0800 666666

free phone links to local National Cabline

Member

National Rail Enquiries 08457 48 49 50

London Underground 020 7222 1234

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Development, Highways and Transportation.**

**You can contact us in a number of ways:**

**By telephoning our Helpline:**

0845 603 7631

**By post:**

Essex County Council  
Environment, Sustainability and Highways  
Road Safety  
County Hall  
Chelmsford  
Essex  
CM1 1QH

**By email:**

[roadsafety@essex.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@essex.gov.uk)

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