

# Getting the facts straight

With the on-going focus on road safety and the state's road toll, it is timely to remind motorists of some aspects of traffic legislation that are often overlooked or misunderstood.

While the majority of drivers do the right thing on the roads, sometimes drivers are unaware that what they are doing is in fact illegal and could result in a ticket being issued, or worse, lead to a traffic crash.

The list below contains some areas of traffic policing that motorists may be unsure about, as well as some offences which are sometimes misunderstood by drivers.

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Offence	Further information	Penalty	Advice
Obstructed view while driving, eg. GPS devices, objects hanging from rearview mirror	Use of a GPS navigational device by a driver is legal, however the placement of the device may become an issue if not positioned correctly. It must not obstruct a driver's view.	\$45 ticket	If an object, such as an item hanging from a rearview mirror, or a GPS device obstructs your vision it must be moved to a different place or removed.
Driver using a mobile phone	Using your phone in any way, including scrolling through your phone's menu options or retrieving messages, is illegal.	\$225 ticket and three demerit points	If you need to use your phone for any reason, you must completely pull off the road and park the car before picking up the phone.
Illegal vehicle modifications	All vehicles on Australian roads must meet certain design and safety criteria. The onus is on the driver to ensure any modification is legal. For example, it is illegal to put low-profile tyres on a utility that was manufactured to be used as a commercial vehicle.	Up to \$150 ticket and three demerit points	If you are contemplating modifying a vehicle or purchasing an already modified vehicle, you need to ensure the vehicle still complies with Queensland regulations. Queensland Transport has further information in relation to modification of vehicles.
Failing to stop at a red light	Includes rolling over the white line at traffic lights, or stopping with your wheels over the white line.	\$225 ticket and three demerit points	You must stop before the white line at a red light and not cross it until the light goes green.
Non-learner driver with L plates fitted	You must not drive a vehicle with L plates fitted if you are not a learner driver (instructors are exempt).	\$10 ticket	If you drive a car that is sometimes driven by a learner driver, ensure L plates are removed when the learner is not driving.
Fail to keep left unless overtaking	When you are driving on a multi-lane road with a speed limit greater than 80km/h, you must keep left unless overtaking.	\$45 ticket and two demerit points	Keeping left is not only courteous to other road users, it is also easier for emergency vehicles to pass traffic in an emergency.
Leaving keys in the ignition or failing to lock your vehicle	Failing to lock your car when it is parked not only increases the risk of your car being stolen, it is also illegal, as is leaving the keys in the ignition if there is no one older than 16 years left in the vehicle.	\$30 ticket	You must turn the engine off and lock the doors if you are parking an unattended vehicle. Also, you must remove the keys from the ignition if there is no one older than 16 years in the car.
U-turns at traffic lights	Most drivers incorrectly believe they can perform a U-turn at traffic lights unless there is a sign advising 'no U-turns'.	\$60 ticket and two demerit points	It is illegal to perform a U-turn at a set of traffic lights unless there is a sign at the lights stating that U-turns are permitted.