



Signals



Signals should be used as tools of communication with other road users, purpose of signalling is to provide information of your intent and not for rebuking or retaliation. By notifying the road users around you in good time you will minimise the possibilities of misunderstandings and assist the traffic flow. There are seven main techniques that can be utilised to inform other road users of your intentions.

Indicators



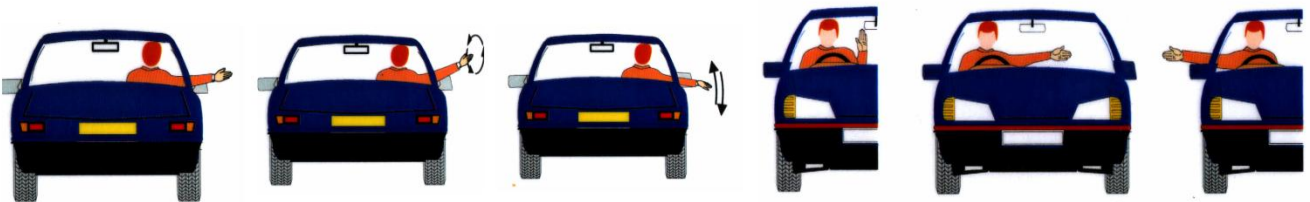
Indicators can be used to provide information on change of direction when turning in and out of junctions including roundabouts, changing lanes, overtaking, when pulling in and moving away from the kerbside.

Brake lights



Brake lights can be use as a advance warning to the following vehicles of your intentions to slow down for on coming traffic on narrow roads, on approach to bends and corners, when giving way to pedestrians who may be crossing the road.

Use of arm signals



Use of arm signals is an extremely efficient way of clarifying confusions or to attract attention of the fellow drivers.

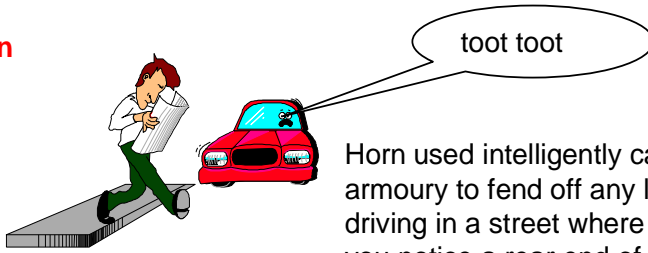
For example when approaching a zebra-crossing by giving a slowing down arm signal you can let the on coming vehicles know that you are slowing down for the pedestrians and that they should do the same, the waiting pedestrians will also get the message that you are giving way to them.

Another example is when you are driving in areas of dense traffic and you wish to change position to right lane, by pulling out your right hand will attract more attention then simply indicating and the following drivers are more likely to accommodate your wish.

(Modern day drivers tend to shy away from using the arm signals but used intelligently in conjunction with other signals the arm signals can be an extremely useful tool in avoiding misunderstandings and emphasizing your intentions.)

Arm signals can also be use to show your appreciation other road users such as thank you.

Horn



Horn used intelligently can be a useful tool in the driver's armoury to fend off any lurking danger. For example if you are driving in a street where there are queues of parked cars and you notice a rear end of a car backing on to the street you can warn the driver of your presence by brief hoot.

The horn can also be useful when you are approaching a sharp bend in a narrow single-track road by tooting you can warn any oncoming vehicles of you being on the other side of the bend. example is

Flashing of headlamps



Flashing of headlamps and sounding the horn are probably the two most misused signals on the roads, these two signals if not used properly can lead to misunderstandings and confusion. The Highway Code states that "only flash your headlights to let other road users know that you are there". Headlamp flashing should not be used to give instructions, such as I am coming through or I am letting you go, but information about your presence.

Between the hours of 11.30pm and 7am you are not allowed to use your horn, during these times you can substitute your head lamps for the horn, for example when driving into an area of greatly reduced visibility, such as round a sharp bend in a country lane, or from a narrow side entrance on to main busy road with pedestrians. In a noisy environment such as motorways where horn is unlikely to be heard. In short if there is a situation where you feel another road user is aware of you being there then consider using your horn or the headlamp.

Reverse lights



warn drivers approaching behind you of your intentions to go backwards and by selecting the reverse gear as soon as you come to a halt you will minimise the chances of other drivers blocking your path by stopping too close to you. For example when reverse parking or parking in the bay.

Warning hazards lights



can be used to warn other drivers of the fact that you have broken down and causing an obstruction, never use the hazard lights whilst driving unless you are on a motorway or a dual carriageway and you want to warn following drivers of an obstruction or a hazard which may require urgent action.

By using the above methods intelligently it is possible to communicate effectively with other road users and minimise the risks of misunderstandings. If you feel a signal would be helpful to another road user or pedestrian then apply it. However, if a signal could be seen as misleading or confusing then don't signal. If you intend to signal make sure you time it correctly. If you signal too early, someone may think you are pulling in or turning into a side road before your intended junction. If you signal too late then you haven't helped anyone. Remember signals should be used to benefit other road users including pedestrians.

Never use a signal to barge your way into the main flow of traffic.

Many drivers don't put anything like the amount of thought and effort into the use of signals. The amount of time wasted, the frustration and the number of accidents caused by poor or even no signalling, is significant.