

FAQ for the 33rd Amendment of the Road Traffic Code

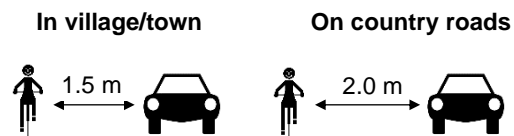
Federal Law Gazette I 2022/122 (<https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/eli/bgbl/I/2022/122/20220727>)
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Which lateral distance must be maintained while overtaking cyclists?

Motor-vehicle operators must maintain the following fixed **minimum** lateral **distances** while overtaking cyclists:

- 1.5 m in town
- 2.0 m outside of town

This also applies to overtaking e-scooters. The safe lateral distance may be reduced accordingly if the motor-vehicle operator is driving a maximum of 30 km/h.



In what situations may cyclists ride next to each other?

Cyclists on bicycle paths, bicycle roads, residential streets, in pedestrian priority zones, pedestrian zones (if cyclists are permitted) and on training rides using road-racing bicycles were already allowed to ride next to each other.

Prospectively, **two single-track bicycles** may also ride next to each other in all designated bicycle areas and on roads for motor vehicles if a speed limit of 30 km/h is stipulated (with the exception of priority roads, one-way streets against the direction of travel and railroads). No one must be endangered, traffic conditions must allow for it and other vehicles must not be impeded while overtaking.

If a **child under the age of 12 is accompanied**, the child and the accompanying person (e.g. the parent) may ride next to each other on any road and also on roads with higher speed limits (with the exception of railroads).

In any case, only the far-right lane may be used when riding next to each other, and city buses must not be impeded.

Are cyclists allowed to drive at a red traffic light?

Cyclists may prospectively only turn right on red or drive straight if a **supplementary sign with a green arrow** at the traffic light indicates this. However, cyclists must stop before doing so and may only proceed if they are not endangering or impeding anyone. They must especially be mindful of motor vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians for whom the traffic light indicates green.



“nach Halt” = after stopping

When does the zipper merging system apply at the end of a designated bicycle area?

Vehicles were already required since 2019 to merge into the continuous lane at the end of a **bicycle lane**. Prospectively, this rule will also apply in **village/town** after a **parallel bicycle path** that merges into the lane when the cyclist maintains the direction of travel. On country roads, cyclists must yield when leaving (footpaths and) bicycle paths according to the flowing traffic rule in case there is no bicycle crossing.

Do special rules apply for groups of cyclists?

Yes, other vehicles must prospectively allow groups of 10 cyclists or more **to cross the intersection together**. The group may also cross the intersection together even if the traffic light has in the meantime switched to red. The preceding cyclist must give a hand signal at the intersection, indicating the end of the group to other vehicles. The first and last cyclist must wear a high-visibility vest.

How must cyclists approach a bicycle crossing?

Cyclists must approach a bicycle crossing without a traffic light at a maximum speed of **10 km/h**. They may also not traverse the bicycle crossing directly in front of another vehicle, thereby surprising the other vehicle operator. These rules continue to apply prospectively. Cyclists may only drive **faster** before the bicycle crossing if no motor vehicles are present in the immediate vicinity.

What must be taken into account when driving past bus and tram stops?

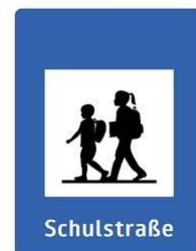
It is prospectively **prohibited** to pass a bus or tram at a stop area on the side on which passengers enter and exit. This applies for as long as passengers enter and exit. If the bus or tram has already closed all doors, one may drive past very slowly – i.e. at walking speed – while ensuring that no other person is approaching the tram or bus.

What must lorry and bus operators be mindful of when turning right?

Prospectively, lorries and buses over 3.5 t may only turn right at walking speed (5 km/h) when potentially endangered cyclists and pedestrians are to be expected. The purpose of this rule is to prevent accidents that are caused by pedestrians and cyclists who are hidden from view while in the blind spot of the lorry or bus; i.e. motor-vehicle operators cannot see them.

What does the new traffic sign “School Street” mean?

Prospectively, school streets may be established in the immediate vicinity of school buildings and school roads. The purpose of this rule is to prevent the occurrence of traffic jams and hazardous situations that may endanger the safety of children. The school street rule will usually only apply on school days and only at times at which students arrive at or leave the school. (Be mindful of the supplementary sign!)



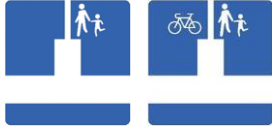
The most important rules in a school street are:

- **Motor-vehicle traffic** is prohibited.
- **Cyclist and e-scooter operators:** Passing through at walking speed allowed.
- **Residents, public-transportation vehicles and the like:** Access and exit at walking speed allowed.
- **Pedestrians** may walk on the road. (Vehicles must not be impeded deliberately.)
- **Vehicle operators** must not endanger or impede pedestrians.

Which other traffic signs are also new?



This traffic sign shows a combination of pedestrian crossing and bicycle crossing.



This traffic sign shows a dead-end street, but pedestrians and cyclists may continue through.



This sign indicates a charging station for electric vehicles.

How must pedestrians behave when crossing a road or while walking on pavement and footpaths?

- **Pedestrian crossings** must continue to be used as before if they are not more than 25 m away. This rule does not apply prospectively if traffic conditions clearly allow for this and vehicle traffic is not impeded.
- **Overpasses and underpasses** must no longer be used. Pedestrians can also cross near overpasses and underpasses.
- Pedestrians must cross the road **in a straight path** without endangering or impeding either themselves or others.
- **Pavements and footpaths** must only be used when it is feasible to do so. E.g. they must not be used if the footpath is icy and there is a risk of falling.

What must be taken into account when parking a car next to a footpath or bicycle path?

Stopped or parked vehicles must no longer protrude onto pavements, footpaths or into designated bicycle areas. Stopping and parking is permissible if the vehicle only slightly protrudes onto the pavement or footpath (e.g. side mirror, bumper) or if the loading activity only takes a maximum of 10 minutes. However, a width of 1.5 m of the pavement or footpath must always remain open. The vehicle may not protrude into designated bicycle areas at all.

When can pavements or footpaths be blocked off in winter?

Cleaning or salting pavements and footpaths and the removal of snow and ice from roofs by **residents** will be explicitly regulated prospectively so that hazardous road sections are only blocked off for as long as necessary to perform the activities.