

Horse Sense for New Motorists



There are over three million riders in the UK and they all have to use the roads from time to time. However riders and their horses and ponies are particularly vulnerable on the roads.

On average there are over 8 horse-related traffic collisions every day in the UK and 5 riders are killed each year.

Motorists and riders both have a right to use Britain's roads - a right to safe and enjoyable travel. Both share a responsibility to understand each other's needs.

Riders would almost always prefer not to use the roads - but it is often necessary to reach bridleways and other facilities off the road. Some areas have few or no bridleways.

It may not always be obvious to vehicle drivers why horses and riders are doing what they are doing, but there is usually a good reason!

This information sheet aims to help motorists understand the needs of riders and their horses and help to improve safety for all. We are also promoting safer riding on the roads, to local riders.

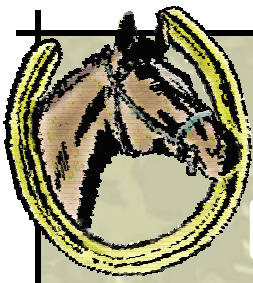
Did you know?

Riders are advised to ride in single file, especially where the road narrows and when approaching bends. They are also advised to keep to the left of the road even when turning right - it is unsafe to position a horse between lines of traffic where they can panic, getting sandwiched in with no escape route.

However, whilst it might not be obvious at first, there are usually good reasons if you do see horses in double file:

- U the horse on the inside may be young and nervous and may need the security of a steadier horse between them and the traffic.
- U the inside rider may be a child or a novice who needs escorting

Riders should signal their intentions but drivers should be aware that horses are unpredictable and a rider on a young or frightened horse may have their hands full!



Tips for Safer Motoring Around Horses



Please Slow Down and Pass Wide!

In addition, please remember:

- U Give horses plenty of room and be ready to stop
- U Don't make sudden or loud noises
- U Avoid braking suddenly
- U Wait for approaching traffic to pass – please do not try to squeeze between a horse and oncoming vehicles
- U Look out for signals from the rider – they may request a motorist to slow down if they are aware of danger - or if they sense an impending action or reaction from their horse
- U Take extra care when passing children and young riders
- U Treat horses as a potential hazard and expect the unexpected!
- U Expect to see a horse round the next bend – or a cyclist, child or animal for that matter!
- U Drivers should always slow down and riders should acknowledge this safety measure – however it not always possible to give a wave of thanks if two hands are needed to keep control! A nod and a friendly smile are however an easy method of thanks!



This leaflet has been produced by the West Stafford Bridleway Improvement Group, which aims to improve the bridle path network in the area to the West of Stafford and also to promote safer riding and road safety, T 01785 662283. Further information on these issues can also be provided by the British Horse Society, Stoneleigh Deer Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 2XZ, T: 01926 707712, www.bhs.org.uk