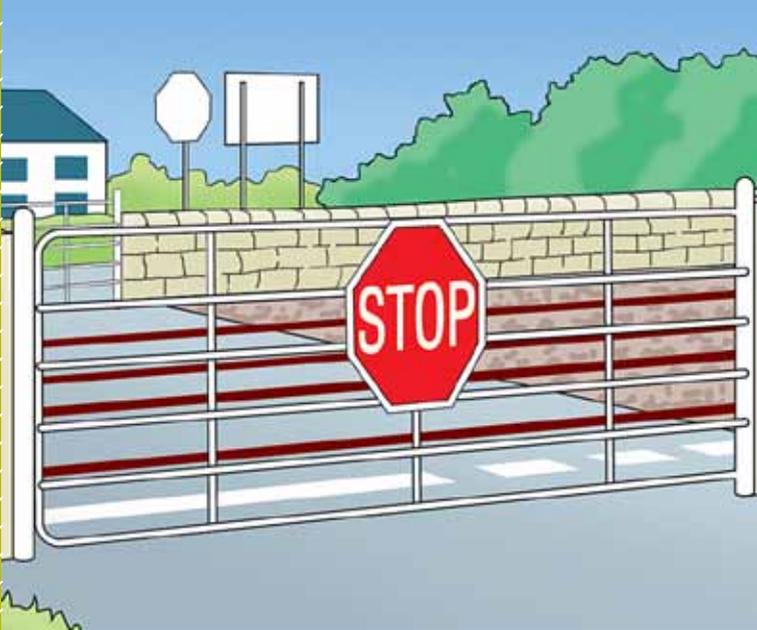


RSA



SAFETY AT LEVEL CROSSINGS

Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre
Road Safety Authority

 Iarnród Éireann
Irish Rail

 RSC
Railway Safety Commission

At railway crossings, careless use costs lives!

Always approach railway level crossings with care. Slow down and prepare to stop. Obey signs and road markings.

Never stop on the railway tracks.

At Unattended level crossings – be wary!

- Stop, look, listen and give way to trains.
- Open all gates before driving across.
- Shut and fasten the gates after you – it's the law and you could save a life!

From the Road Safety Authority and Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail. Visit rsa.ie for more information.

Railway level crossings

Introduction

A railway level crossing is an intersection where a road or passage crosses a railway track.

Drivers and other users **should** be aware of the different types of crossing and **should** know how to cross safely. You **must** always approach a level crossing with care.

This booklet outlines the different types of level crossings and the correct and safe way to use them.

As you approach any railway level crossing you **must** obey the signs and roadway markings, slow down and be prepared to stop.

You **must not** enter a yellow box area unless you can clear it without stopping. You **must** never stop on the railway tracks.

At unattended level crossings:

Use the **Rail Cross Code** each time you cross:

- **Always expect a train**
- **Stop, Look and Listen**
 - **Stop** – two metres back clear of the railway line
 - **Look** – right and left, watching for the lights of approaching trains
 - **Listen** – for a train horn or whistle
- **Give Way to Trains**

Let any approaching train pass, then **look** right and left again
- **When the Railway is clear, cross quickly**

REMEMBER

Never stop a vehicle on the railway tracks.

Emergency actions at level crossings

If your vehicle stalls or an animal strays on the railway:

- move everyone well clear of the railway
- leave the animal or vehicle where it is
- tell the railway controller, using the phone number displayed at the crossing
- state the 'crossing number' shown at the crossing



Example 'crossing number' plate shown at a level crossing

Unusual movements across level crossings

Drivers of very high vehicles should note that at level crossings with overhead electrified lines, such as on the DART network, the safe head-room is 5 metres (16ft 4ins).

You **should** contact the railway in advance, using the phone number displayed at the level crossing, when arranging special events such as matches, funerals or processions that will involve the use of the level crossing.

In addition, at level crossings with iron gates or automatic half-barriers, or on minor roads where protection is by traffic lights only, you **should** contact the railway, using the phone number displayed at the level crossing, to seek permission before crossing with:

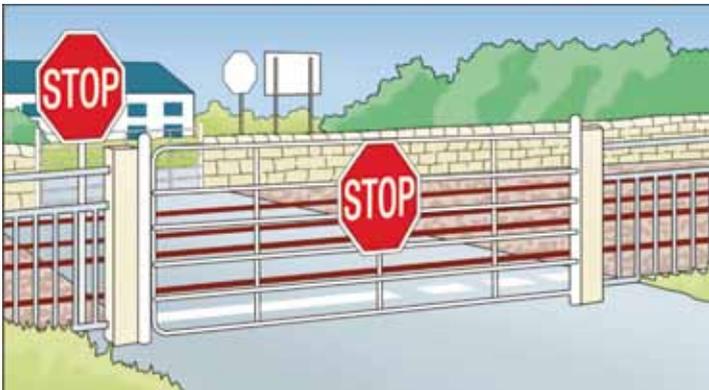
- awkward vehicles – for example, long, low, wide, heavy or slow, vehicles
- vehicles carrying dangerous goods or exceptional loads
- crowds of people or herds of animals

General instructions for the safe use of different types of level crossing

1. Unattended railway level crossings with iron gates

These unattended level crossings are found on minor roads. The railway is normally guarded by iron gates which must be kept shut – there is no other protection. The user has the responsibility to open and shut the gates.

These crossings can be dangerous to use and drivers **should** use all available help to cross safely. It is preferable for drivers to use a bridge or an attended or automated level crossing where one is available.



*Level crossing ahead,
guarded by gates or
lifting barrier*

Drivers – what you **should** do

Prepare

- STOP clear of the gates
- Switch off phone and music systems

- Open windows on driver and passenger sides
- Read instructions at the crossing
- Get a helper to operate the gates if possible

Use the **Rail Cross Code** each time you cross:

- **Always expect a train**
- **Stop, Look and Listen**
 - **Stop** – two metres back clear of the railway line
 - **Look** – right and left, watching for the lights of approaching trains
 - **Listen** – for a train horn or whistle
- **Give Way to Trains**

Let any approaching train pass, then **look** right and left again
- **When the Railway is clear, cross quickly**

Drive across safely

- First walk across and open both gates
- Drive forward and STOP two metres clear of the railway line
- Apply your handbrake
- Look right and left and listen
- Drive across quickly when the railway is clear
- Stop well clear of the tracks on the opposite side

Drivers – what you **must** do

Shut gates at unattended level crossings

- You must shut and fasten the gates as soon as you and any person, animal or vehicle under your care has passed through
- Even if the gates are open when you arrive, you must shut and fasten them after you to protect others
- Failure to shut and fasten the gates is an offence

REMEMBER

Stay Alert...

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN

Give way to trains

Always shut and fasten the iron gates

Failure to do so is an offence.

2. *Attended railway level crossings with gates or barriers operated by railway staff*

These level crossings are manually operated by railway staff. The level crossing is only open to the public when the gates are fully open to the road.



*Level crossing ahead,
guarded by gates or
lifting barrier*

Drivers – what you **must** do

- Slow down approaching the crossing
- Be prepared to stop if necessary

3. Automated railway level crossings protected by road traffic lights only

These level crossings have no barriers or gates. Users must obey the road traffic lights at these open level crossings.



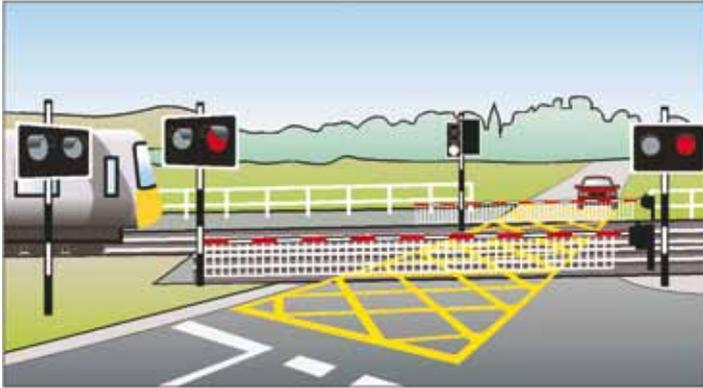
*Level crossing ahead,
unguarded by gates
or lifting barrier*

Drivers – what you **must** do

- Obey the rules for traffic lights
- If you have already entered the crossing move clear as quickly as possible

4. Automated railway level crossings with barriers and flashing red lights

These level crossings have barriers which automatically descend when a train is approaching. The amber light is the same as an amber traffic light – stop safely when the amber light shows. Flashing red lights have the same meaning as a steady red traffic light – stop safely when they show.



Level crossing ahead with lights and barriers. Crossing may also have warning audible alarms.

Drivers – what you **must** do

- Obey the rules for traffic lights
- If you have already entered the crossing move clear as quickly as possible
- Wait for all lights to extinguish and barriers to be raised before moving on

REMEMBER

A flashing red light always means stop

You should never zigzag around the barriers of a level crossing

Pedestrians crossing the railway



Pedestrians – what you **should** do

Prepare

- Switch off phones and music systems
- Read any instructions at the crossing
- Contact the railway in advance, using the phone number displayed at the level crossing:
 - when arranging special events such as matches, funerals or processions that will involve the use of the level crossing
 - to seek permission before crossing the railway with crowds of people or herds of animals at a level crossing with iron gates or automatic half-barriers, or on minor roads where protection is by traffic lights only
- Take extra care with a wheelchair, pram or buggy

Beware

- Never trespass onto a railway line
- Always expect a train
- Supervise children near the railway
- Keep dogs on a lead
- Only cross at a designated level crossing
- Obey traffic lights, where provided
- If crossing with a pram, wheelchair or bicycle, you should cross the tracks carefully to avoid getting the wheels caught in the groove

Use the **Rail Cross Code** each time you cross:

- **Always expect a train**
- **Stop, Look and Listen**
 - **Stop** – two metres back clear of the railway line
 - **Look** – right and left, watching for the lights of approaching trains
 - **Listen** – for a train horn or whistle
- **Give Way to Trains**

Let any approaching train pass, then **look** right and left again
- **When the Railway is clear, cross quickly**

REMEMBER

STOP, LOOK and LISTEN

Give way to trains

Never trespass onto the railway

Pedestrians – what you **must** do

Shut gates at unattended level crossings

- You must shut and fasten the gates as soon as you and any person, animal or vehicle under your care has passed through
- Even if the gates are open when you arrive, you must shut and fasten them after you to protect others
- Failure to shut and fasten the gates is an offence

REMEMBER

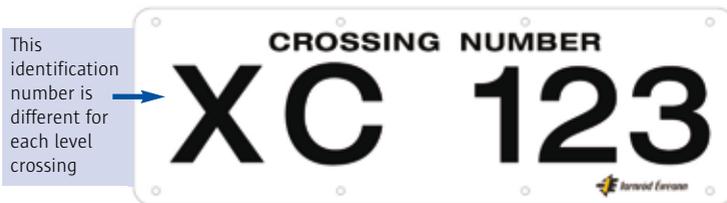
Always shut and fasten the iron gates

Failure to do so is an offence.

Emergency actions at level crossings

If an animal strays onto the railway, or if a pram, wheelchair or bicycle gets stuck on the tracks:

- move everyone well clear of the railway
- leave the animal or vehicle where it is
- tell the railway controller, using the phone number displayed at the crossing
- state the ‘crossing number’ shown at the crossing



Example ‘Crossing number’ plate displayed at a level crossing

Cyclists and horse riders crossing the railway

- As you approach a level crossing, you **must** obey the signs, slow down and be prepared to stop
- You **must** obey the Rules of the Road
- follow the relevant instructions and emergency actions applying to pedestrians at railway level crossings
- Cyclists – cross at right angles to the tracks or else dismount to avoid getting the wheels caught in the groove
- Cyclists and horse riders – dismount and walk across the railway line at iron-gated level crossings and at passages

Working To Save Lives



Plain English
Approved by NALA

Údarás Um Shábháilteacht Ar Bhóithre Road Safety Authority

Páirc Ghnó Ghleann na Muaidhe, Cnoc an tSabhaircín, Bóthar Bhaile Átha Cliath, Béal an Átha, Co. Mhaigh Eo
Moy Valley Business Park, Primrose Hill, Dublin Road, Ballina, Co. Mayo
local: 1890 50 60 80 fax: (096) 25252 email: info@rsa.ie website: www.rsa.ie