

- If you must cross into the oncoming lane to make a turn, watch out for vehicles coming toward you. Give them room to go by or to stop. However, don't back up for them, because you might hit someone behind you.

Figure 2-8:
Correct turn

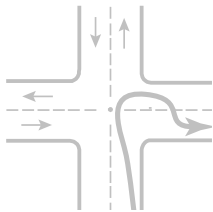
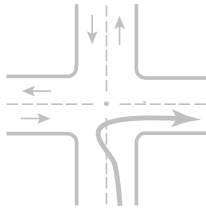


Figure 2-9:
Incorrect turn!



Left Turns. On a left turn, make sure you have reached the center of the intersection before you start the left turn. If you turn too soon, the left side of your vehicle may hit another vehicle because of off tracking.

After you have completed your turn, move into the right most traffic lane when traffic is clear. See Figure 2-10.

If there are two turning lanes, always take the right-hand turn lane, as shown in Figure 2-11. Don't start in the inside lane because you may have to swing right to make the turn. Drivers on your left can be more readily seen.

Figure 2-10: Turn into the lane closest to the lane from which you came. Allow for off tracking if your vehicle is long. Return to right-most traffic lane when safe and traffic permits. Don't return to the right lane at or near other intersections.

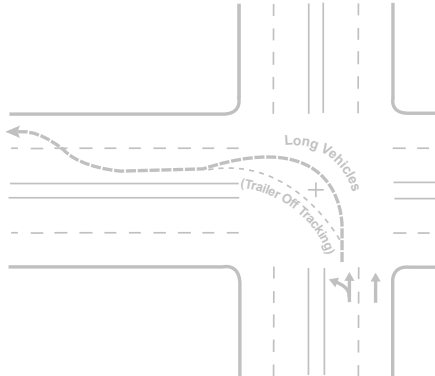
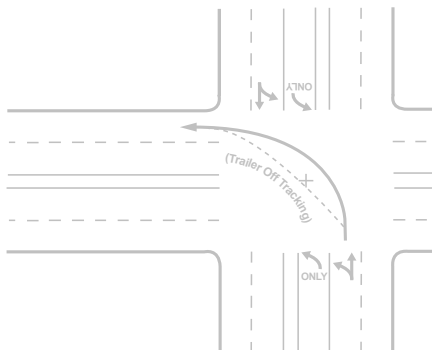


Figure 2-11: If there are two left turn lanes, use the right-hand lane.



CIRCULAR INTERSECTIONS

There are many types of circular intersections:

Roundabouts. A Modern Roundabout usually is referred as a roundabout. The circular design of the roundabout is far different than either the large traffic circle or the mini traffic circle. Roundabouts are designed with an average outside diameter of 120'–250' depending on the number of lanes. They are designed to allow low speed entry and low speed circulating traffic with yield control at all entries.

A single lane approach to a roundabout is the simplest type of approach consisting of only one lane. Truck aprons are often included on single lane entries to allow off-tracking of turning trucks or to allow oversized-overweight vehicles to navigate the intersection.

Generally there are two types of pavement marking at the approach to a dual lane roundabout. See figures 2.11a–f on the next two pages.

Large traffic circles or rotaries. Large traffic circles or rotaries are typically located in the eastern part of the US. These are larger circles typically 600 feet to 800 feet in diameter. They are typically signed and marked to require vehicles on the circle to yield to those vehicles entering the circle. They typically allow speeds of 35–50mph on the circle. They allow large trucks to navigate into and around the circle easily. There may be a large park area in the center with some parking allowed along the inside edge of the circle. Over the years since their original installation traffic volumes have increased substantially and they have become more of a safety hazard. Some of the large traffic circles are being removed and replaced with other types of intersection control such as the smaller, safer, and more efficient modern roundabout.

Small mini traffic circles. Small mini traffic circles are typically located in residential or neighborhood areas of a community. They are rather small raised curb islands, 10'–50' in diameter, in the middle of a typical 4-legged intersection. Many times the approach will be signed with stop signs on 2 or possibly all 4 legs of the intersection. They are typically very unfriendly for large trucks to make turns or go through the intersection. In northern climates they may be difficult for full sized snowplows to navigate.

Figure 2.11a (below) shows a typical single white pavement marking line separating the entry lanes. In this situation a large truck is expected to straddle the lanes at entry to make any maneuver, be it a through movement, right or left turn. Generally, truckers will try to protect the right side of their vehicle by not allowing other autos from driving on their right side, or blind side.

Figure 2.11a: WIS30 and Thompson Drive in Madison



Figure 2.11b (below) shows an occasional entry with double white lines that provide a separation between the entry lanes. In this situation a large truck is expected to stay in its lane when approaching the roundabout.

- Trucks making a right turn should keep the tractor to the left side of the double white lines, then straddle the double white lines without encroaching into the left lane, to allow off-tracking to the right side as the turn is completed.
- Trucks making a left turn should keep the tractor to the far left side of the left lane and the double white lines. As the tractor moves ahead, the trailer will first off-track to the right and use the space between the white lines. As the tractor moves into the roundabout, the tractor should stay in the left lane while the trailer will off-track onto the truck apron.
- Trucks making a through movement from the right lane should keep the tractor to the left side of the double white lines and straddle the white lines at entry. Then as the truck pulls forward drive the tractor to the far right, or outside of the circle. Trucks making a through movement from the left lane should keep the tractor to the left side of the left lane and allow the trailer to off-track into the double white line area at entry. Then as the truck pulls forward keep the tractor within the inside lane and allow the trailer to off-track onto the truck apron.

Figure 2.11b: STH 35 and Hanley Road near Hudson



Figure 2.11c: (below) The semi is traveling from the right toward the left and it shows a single white line between the lanes at entry. The large truck is making a left turn by straddling the lanes, or encroaching into the adjacent lane on the right, at the entry as well as circulating the roundabout and using the truck apron for off-tracking.

Figure 2.11c: Lane separation, single line, left turn

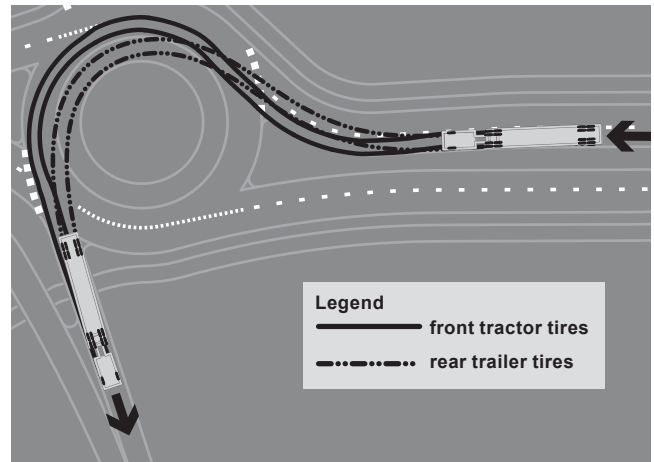


Figure 2.11d: (below) The semi is traveling from the right toward the left and it shows double white lines that separate the lanes at entry. The large truck is making a left turn by driving to the far left and staying in-lane while using the area between the double white lines for off-tracking at entry and using the truck apron for off-tracking in the roundabout.

Figure 2.11d: Lane separation, wide gore, left turn

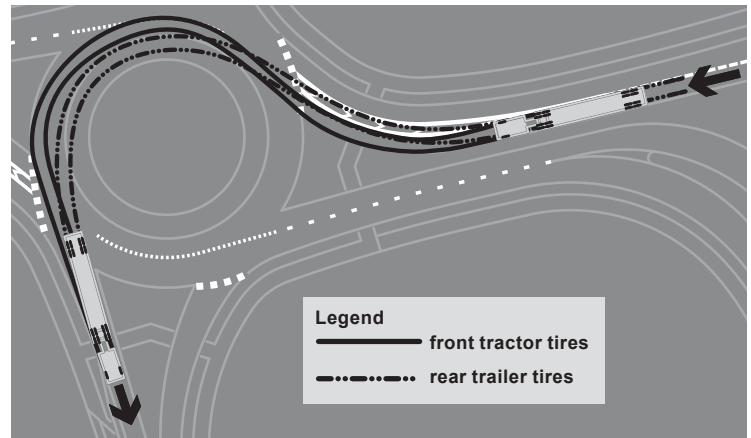


Figure 2.11e; (below) The semi is traveling from the right toward the left and it shows double white lines that separate the lanes at entry. The large truck is making a right turn by driving to the left side of the double white lines and staying in-lane to swing wide and make the right turn, without running over the outside curb.

Figure 2.11e: Lane separation, wide gore, right turn

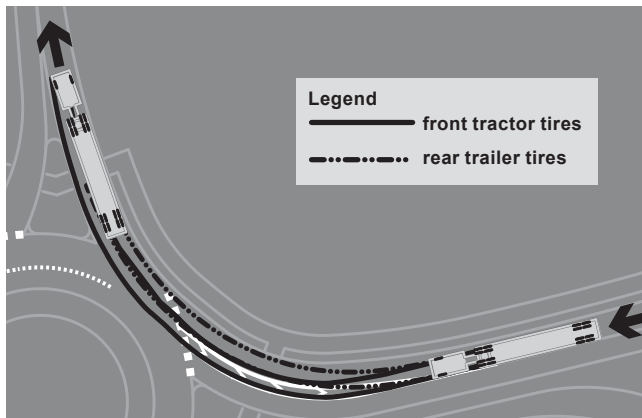
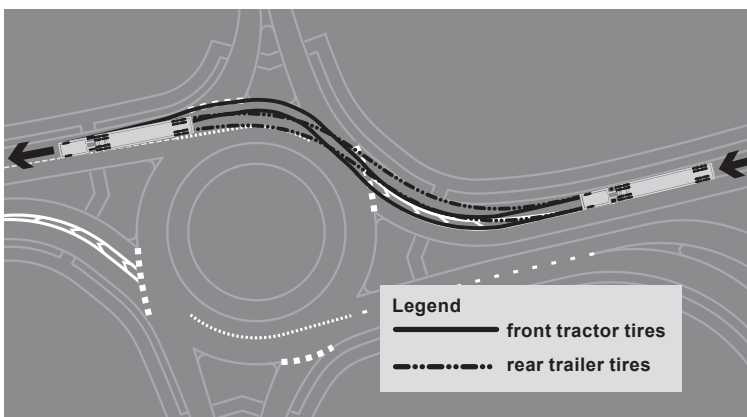


Figure 2.11f: (below) The semi is traveling from the right toward the left and it shows double white lines that separate the lanes at entry. The large truck is making a through movement from the right lane. This requires the tractor to drive to the left side of the double white lines at entry, while staying in-lane. Then as the truck pulls forward drive the tractor to the far right, or outside of the circle. This maneuver will reduce the off-tracking into the adjacent left lane. Some roundabout designs will have an outside lane wide enough to allow the truck to stay in-lane in the roundabout.

Figure 2.11f: Lane separations, wide gore, through movement



SPACE NEEDED TO CROSS OR ENTER TRAFFIC

Be aware of the size and weight of your vehicle when you cross or enter traffic. Here are some important things to keep in mind:

- Because of slow acceleration and the space large vehicles require, you may need a much larger gap to enter traffic than you would in a car.
- Acceleration varies with the load. Allow more room if your vehicle is heavily loaded.
- Before you start across a road, make sure you can get all the way across before traffic reaches you.

Test Your Knowledge

1. How do you find out how many seconds of following distance space you have?
2. If you are driving a 30 foot vehicle at 55 m.p.h., how many seconds of following distance should you allow?
3. True or False? You should decrease your following distance if somebody is following you too closely.
4. True or False? If you swing wide to the left before turning right, another driver may try to pass you on the right

These questions may be on your test. If you are unable to answer them all, re-read Section 2.7: Managing Space.

2.8 Driving at Night

IT'S MORE DANGEROUS

You are at greater risk when you drive at night. Drivers can't see hazards as soon as in daylight, so they have less time to respond. Drivers caught by surprise are less able to avoid a crash.

The problems of night driving involve the driver, the roadway and the vehicle. We will discuss each of these factors.

DRIVER FACTORS

Vision. People can't see as sharply at night or in dim light. Also, their eyes need time to adjust to seeing in dim light. Most people have noticed this when walking into a dark movie theater.

Glare. Drivers can be blinded for a short time by bright light. It takes time to recover from this blindness. Older drivers are especially bothered by glare. Most people have been temporarily blinded by camera flash units or by the high beams of an oncoming vehicle. It can take several seconds to recover from glare. Even two seconds of glare blindness can be dangerous. A vehicle going 55 mph will travel more than half the distance of a football field during that time. Don't look directly at bright lights when driving. Look at the right side of the road. Watch the right lane or edge marking when someone coming toward you has very bright lights.