

Meeting Traffic

Priority

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The term 'meeting traffic' refers to any situation where a vehicle has to enter the road space of an oncoming vehicle due to an obstruction, narrowing of the road or other hazard, causing it to change its speed and/or position. The most common meeting situation occurs where there are parked cars. You must scan the road well ahead for any hazard situations to give yourself plenty of time to plan your approach.

MSM

Meeting traffic is a hazard situation and so we use the MSM routine on approach. When you see a meeting situation developing use your mirrors immediately to assess the following traffic. Only give a signal if it's necessary. Most of the time your position is enough to inform others of your intentions. Whether you manoeuvre through the gap or hold back depends on who has priority.

Priority

The basic rule of priority is - if the obstruction is on your side of the road then you should give way. In illustration 1 the blue car should give priority to the oncoming traffic when it reaches the green car. However, the red car should give priority to traffic to pass the yellow and grey cars. Although this rule is generally well observed by most other road users you should never assume the other driver will always give priority. Be prepared!

In illustration 2 neither vehicle has priority as there are parked vehicles obstructing both sides of the road (the green car and the purple van). In this situation you need to assess the other drivers intention. Can you make eye contact, is he slowing, changing position or giving any signals? If you don't know - don't go!

Hold Back Position

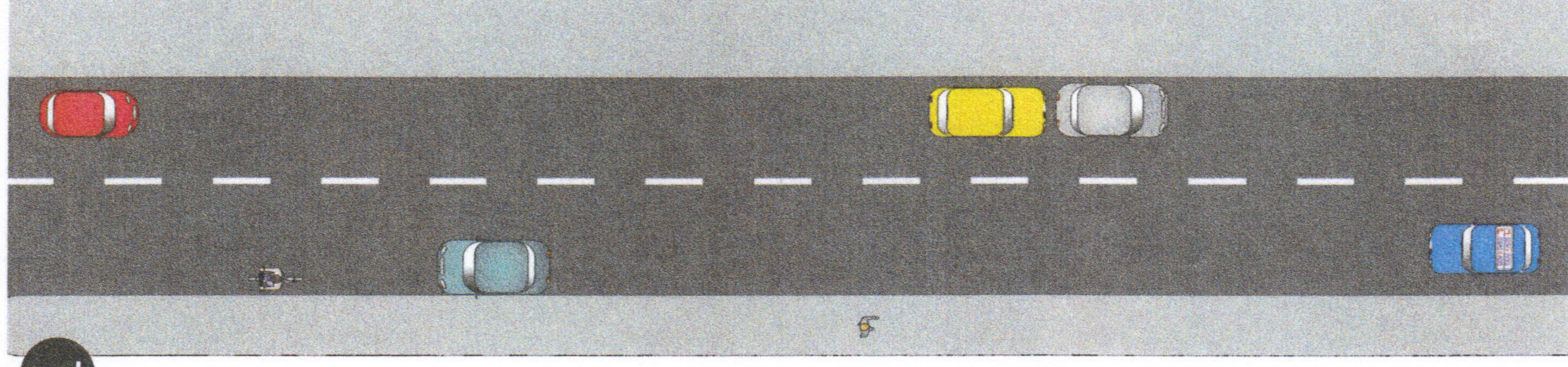
If you need to stop and give way you need to wait in a safe 'hold back' position, this is illustrated at @. This position allows: good visibility of the road ahead; adequate clearance for the oncoming vehicle; cyclists and motorcyclists space to pass on the left and easy manoeuvring to pass through the gap. It also reinforces your intention to any following traffic. When the road is clear check the road ahead, your mirrors and blind-spots before moving off. Remember your position is 'in the road' so beware of cyclists on your left and motorcyclists to your right.

Moving off and choosing a safe gap is your responsibility. If another driver flashes his headlights or waves, you need to be sure that the signal is for you and his intention is to give way. Never assume.

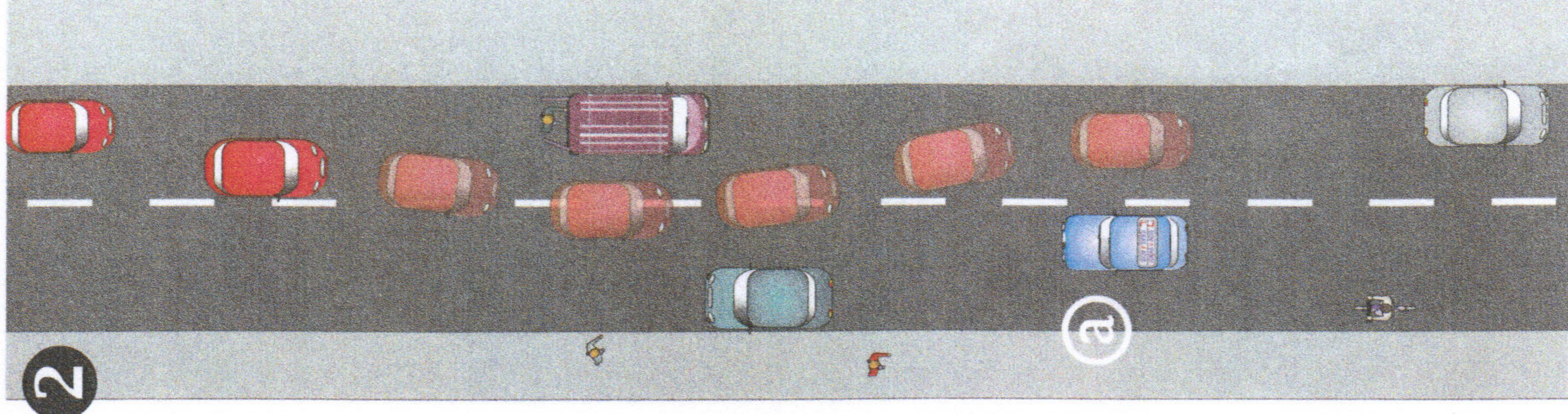
Quick Quiz



Strive2Drive
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1



2

1. Why is it important to hold back a reasonable distance (about 2 car lengths) from the parked car?
2. True or false? Priority is taken by the first vehicle to reach the gap.
3. What other hazards can you anticipate in illustration 2?
4. What do the three signs above mean and where might you see them?