



PARALLEL PARKING

Aim: To park safely, legally and under full control on the left-hand side of the road, close and parallel to the kerb.

Before You Start

- Reduce speed early and check mirrors for any road user behind you before slowing down to select a parking space.
- Ensure the space is legal (no yellow lines, raised kerbs, crossings, bus stops, blind bends, blind hills etc.).
- Check the space is large enough (approximately 1.5 car lengths).
- Signal left in good time.
- Stop parallel to the car you will park behind, approximately 50cm away (half a car door width) and slightly ahead.

Step-by-Step Procedure

1. Initial Observations (Before Reversing)

- It is vital to complete effective observations to ensure that you are not a danger to other road users.
- As your car will be moving in reverse, and initially with the front end swinging out, it is essential to observe thoroughly and regularly.
 - Centre mirror; wing mirrors; blind spots over shoulder.
- Scan for pedestrians, cyclists and traffic.
- If a vehicle is approaching within 20 metres, pause and assess before moving.
 - Have they seen you?
 - Are they stopping and waiting for you?
 - Are they going to attempt to get past you?
 - Are you blocking a road? Should you reconsider the chosen parking space?

2. Reverse Straight Back

- Select reverse gear and use clutch control (walking pace).
- Keep steering straight.
- Reverse until the rear of the parked car disappears from the rear nearside window (back seat passenger side nearest to the left kerb).





3. Steer Left to 45 Degrees

- Full all-round observation.
- Steer one full turn anticlockwise (left) as you reverse slowly (walking pace).
- Remain aware of the front right corner of your car as it will be swinging out wider to the right.
- Continue reversing slowly until the car is facing approximately 45 degrees to the kerb.

4. Straighten the Wheels

- Observe all around again.
- Steer to straighten wheels as you continue reversing slowly.

5. Steer Towards the Kerb

- When rear door handle on the passenger side aligns roughly with kerb in your left wing-mirror, start to quickly steer clockwise (right) whilst continuing to reverse slowly.
- Reverse slowly until parallel.
- Aim for 10–15cm from the kerb without touching it.
- As you become close to being parallel, straighten the steering wheel so that your car wheels face straight forwards.

6. Final Adjustments

- Move forward slightly if needed to straighten.
- Remain parallel and within a reasonable position (within 2 car lengths i.e. you could not park more than one car between you and the car in front).
- Continue effective observation.

7. Secure the Vehicle

- Straighten wheels.
- Select neutral.
- Apply handbrake firmly.
- Cancel signal and switch off engine if leaving vehicle.

Key Safety Principles (Highway Code & Roadcraft)

- Observation before movement.
- Move only when safe.
- Keep speed very slow for maximum control.
- Be prepared to stop at any time.
- Do not rely on other drivers to give way.
- Pedestrians always take priority.

