

## Road traffic regulations and information for independent travellers

### General regulations (only a fragmentary selection of rules):

- Traffic drives on the right, a red light means stop and green means go.
- **Passing on the right is prohibited** (exception: slow going inner-city traffic).
- Don't cross drawn through white lines (for example to pass other vehicles).
- Drivers are required to carry a valid driver's licence, the vehicle registration documents and proof of insurance (provided by car rental) .
- It is compulsory to keep a hazard warning triangle and first aid box in the car.
- The minimum driving age is 18 years.
- The law requires **seatbelts to be worn in both front and rear seats**. Child seats are mandatory for children up to the age of four, and children up to the age of 12 or a height of 1.50m must use booster cushions.
- **Motorcyclists must wear helmets**.
- The **blood alcohol limit is 50 milligrams per 100 millilitres of blood**. Drivers found to be over the limit (breath test and blood sample) can expect severe penalties and the loss of their driving licence. If a driver who has been drinking is involved in an accident, whether or not he caused it, he will be punished for drink-driving even if he is below this limit.
- **Mobile phones** may only be used in conjunction with a hands-free system.
- Failure to comply with road traffic laws can be punished by a fine or even the loss of your driving licence.

### Speed limits (only a fragmentary selection of rules & signs!):

- For cars without trailers, the speed limit outside built-up areas is 100 km/h.
- Within built-up areas the limit is 50 km/h. Road signs with the name of the town or village indicate that you are entering a built-up area and signs with a red line through the place name indicate that you are leaving. A maximum speed of 130 km/h is recommended on the autobahns. There are speed limits at several autobahn segments – obey the signs.



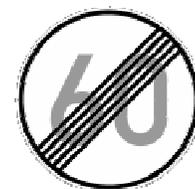
Begin built-up area



End built-up area



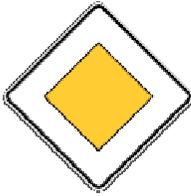
speed limit 60km/h



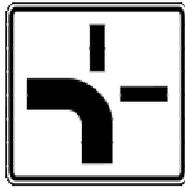
end of speed limit

## Right of way **only a fragmentary selection of rules & signs!**

- **Having the right of way** is indicated by the following signs:



You are on a first-class road (= right of way)



The first-class road you are on turns left.



You have the right of way at the next intersection only.

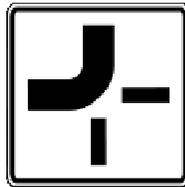


Oncoming traffic has to yield the right of way.

- **To yield the right of way** is indicated by the following signs:



You are on a second-class road and must yield the right of way.



The second-class road you are on hits a first-class road.



You have to stop completely and to yield the right of way.



You have to yield the right of way to oncoming traffic.

- If there are no applicable signs, you have to follow the rule **„Right before Left“**: If two or more vehicles approach an intersection, traffic coming from the right side always has the right of way. This is very common in residential areas.

## Parking **(only a fragmentary selection of rules & signs!)**

- Parking is permitted in designated areas indicated by special signs or if there is no traffic sign indicating that parking is prohibited.



Parking lot



only with parking ticket



only with parking disk



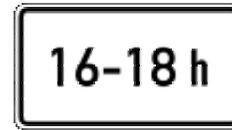
parking disk



Stopping restriction  
(no waiting)



no-parking zone  
(parking prohibited)



time limited zone  
(example: 4-6pm)

### Selected important signs (only a fragmentary selection of signs!):



access course to  
the „autobahn“



number of the  
„autobahn“



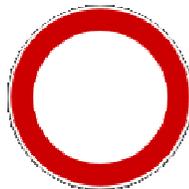
„autobahn“ exit



signpost at the  
„autobahn“



One-way-street



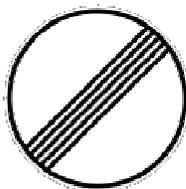
no entry



no entry (wrong side  
of a one-way street)



To pass other cars  
is prohibited.



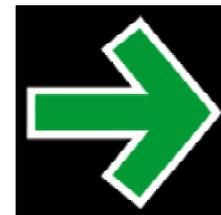
All prohibitions  
are abrogated.



signpost at country  
roads.



number of  
country roads.



green arrow at stop  
lights: turning right  
is allowed (stop!).

### Gas Stations:

- The majority of Gas Stations have **self service**.
- You need to know which **type of gas** your vehicle requires (Benzin bleifrei = Gas unleaded, Super bleifrei = Gas super unleaded, Diesel fuel).
- In Germany you fuel the car first. **You have to pay at the cashier inside**. They usually accept credit cards, but you always should be prepared to pay cash. Most importantly: **You have to leave your (locked) car at the gas pump until you have paid!** Otherwise you might be accused of defraud.

## Miscellaneous information:

- There are no tolls for cars on Germany's autobahns.
- On the autobahns (or other highways with two or more lanes in one direction) slower traffic has to keep right. Left lanes should only be used to pass traffic, afterwards you are supposed to reintegrate in the right lane if possible.  
**Passing on the right is strictly prohibited!**
- In Germany the stoplights are located in front of the intersections. That means you are supposed to stop directly in front of the stoplights. **Right turns** on red are only allowed if there is a „**green arrow sign**“ (see above) installed. You have to stop and yield the right of way to all traffic.
- Orientation: You will not find any signposts indicating a direction such as „north“ or „east“. **For orientation you have the road numbers and destinations.** You need to know (or to look up in a map) the major cities on your route and further on. As an example: You are leaving Leipzig and you want to take the autobahn # 9 to travel south to Thuringia. When you approach the „autobahn“ you have to decide, if you take the access course „Berlin“ or „Munich“. That means, you need to figure out – in advance – which of these destinations is located south to pick the correct access course.

Drive safely! **The German American Connection** wishes you a perfect trip!