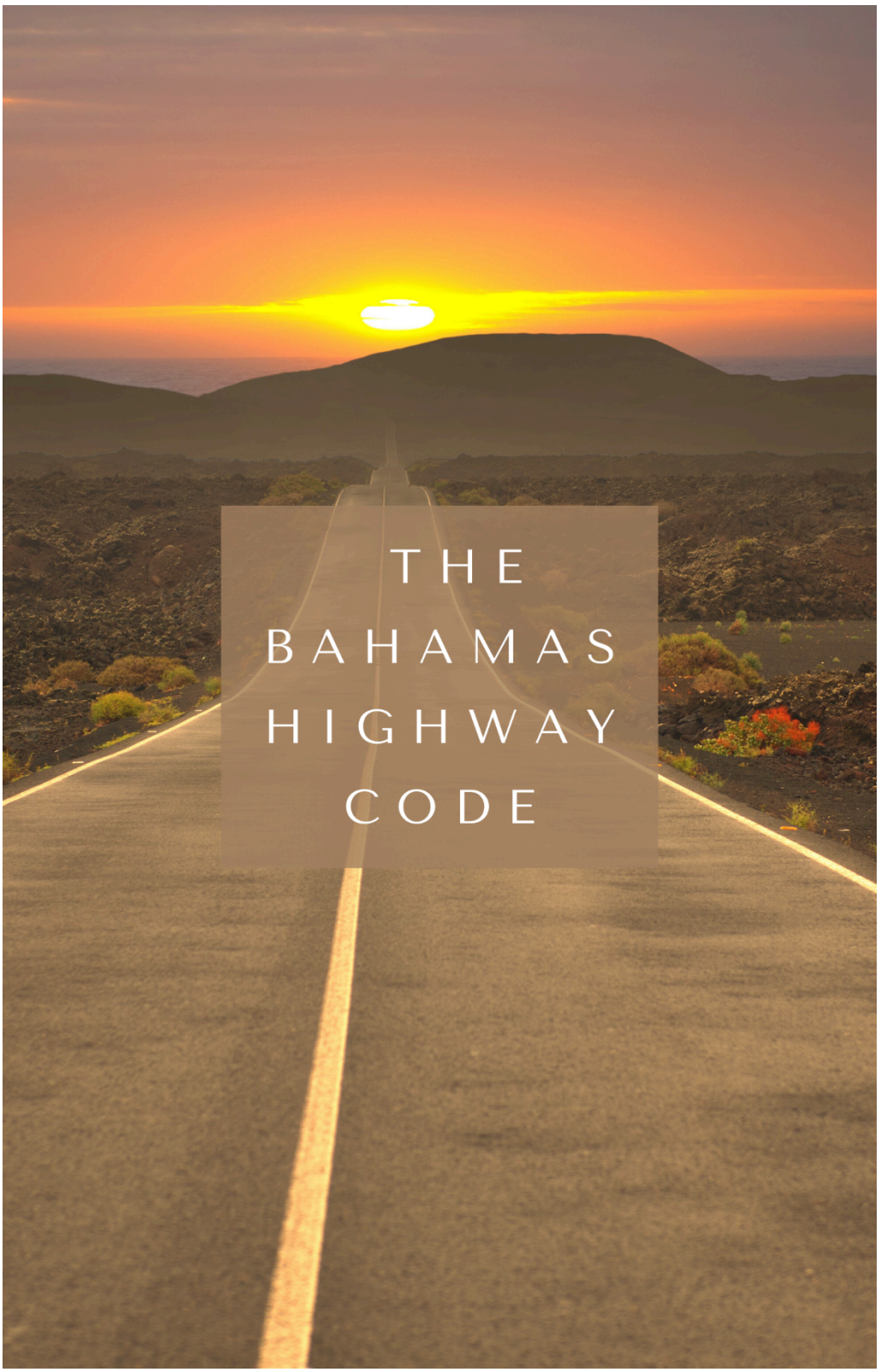

THE
BAHAMAS
HIGHWAY
CODE

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# ***Introduction***

Welcome to the Bahamas, a beautiful tropical paradise!

If you plan on cruising this tropical paradise, you must be prepared for some tricky intersections, complicated traffic laws, and lots of signs about parking on small islands. You don't have to be a road warrior to get around here, but you have to have some basic knowledge of the rules of the road.

The Bahamas has a few rules that are just like your state's: you've got to drive on the left side of the road, you have to have your headlights on when it's dark out, and you're driving, and people who come into your lane could be dangerous and should be avoided. But a few things are different in the Bahamas than in most other places.

There are a lot of different rules and regulations for driving in the Bahamas, so it's essential to be aware of them before getting behind the wheel.

The Highway Code for the Bahamas is a guide to safe driving on public roads in the Bahamas. It is designed to ensure that you drive safely and responsibly and comply with all applicable road laws. The Highway Code is not a law, but all road users must know and follow it. The code itself is broken up into different sections, each of which deals with a specific topic. For example, there are sections on driving safely in bad weather conditions and obeying traffic signals.

The code covers parking, emergencies, signs marking road position, behaviour, intersections, traffic laws, and pedestrian crossing.

The Bahamas Highway Code is a short document, but very important. It can help you get to your destination safely and comfortably so that you can return to the beach and eat some conch fritters.

It is a great way to ensure you're always in the know about driving. Whether you're a first-time driver or a seasoned pro, these laws will help keep you safe on the road and avoid any embarrassing situations that could come with breaking them.

# Module 1: Parking

Parking is an issue in any city. You want to avoid traffic jams, especially if you are always on the go or want to get that parking spot before it's taken. Therefore, you must learn the proper and legal way of parking your vehicle.

The highways and expressways of the Bahamas are not that much, unlike those in other countries. They have a few tweaks here and there.

re to make driving on them easier, less congested, and in the interest of public safety

If you want to avoid hefty fines and annoying disruptions to your holiday plans, pay attention to the signs while driving along the highway—and be sure to know the rules for parking in the Bahamas. Many drivers ignore these parking restrictions and get stuck with a hefty fine or their car towed away—which is terrible news.

## *1.1. The mirror, signal, manoeuvre*

When parking a car, remember the mantra "mirror, signal, maneuver." Not only is this the parking highway code for the Bahamas that you should follow to avoid crashing into other cars on the road, but it can also be used to keep you safe from harm inside your car.

When looking in your rearview mirror before pulling out of a parking spot, make sure there are no cars in your blind spot that you don't see in the mirror. If there are, remember to use your turn signal before pulling out onto the road. If you don't have a turn signal, consider getting one; they're relatively inexpensive and make all the difference when driving.

When parking on the road, try to leave a space for others. When opening your car door, be sure not to hit anyone passing by—cyclists and motorcyclists are especially vulnerable when cars open doors in their path.

When backing up or maneuvering your car into a tight corner of a parking lot, remember to "mirror, signal, maneuver" so that you don't hit any other cars or people around you.

## *1.2. Obstructing traffic*

Pedestrians are especially vulnerable to injury from motor vehicles because they lack the metal shell protection that cars and buildings have. Even if they have a metal shell of protection like a motorcycle, they don't have airbags or seat belts to protect them in case of accidents.

This is pretty straightforward—don't park in a way that stops pedestrians from walking down the street. Not only is this annoying for people who need to get around, but it can also be dangerous for them and yourself if you get out of your car and are suddenly faced with someone walking into your path. You may not park in a way that obstructs traffic or prevents vehicles from passing.

## *1.3. Parking in designated places*

Generally speaking, the best way to avoid the risk of a ticket is to park your car where you're allowed to. In this case, there's always the option to trust that a single broken line in a parking space doesn't mean anything. Maybe if a car has been parked there for years without protest, it can't hurt to add yours for just a couple of hours or even days. While this may work fine in certain places, try not to assume it will work everywhere. If you must stop along the road at any time, driving your car off to one side is best to find an area where your presence will not interfere with other drivers.

In the Bahamas, it is wrong to park outside buildings on public streets—like right in front of an entrance—even if no signs are posted. Suppose you park there while assuming that one broken line means nothing, and an enforcement officer will give you a ticket anyway. In that case, you could end up with a hefty fine (and exorbitant processing fees from the court).

A better approach would be to find your way around the building or look for another place where parking is allowed. If you're staying at a hotel or motel and need to unload your luggage before checking in, consider parking at an outdoor location away from entrances.

## *1.4. Parking at night & busy roads*

Turning off the engine and putting the car into the park may seem like no-brainers, but they're two things that people often forget to do when they're rushing to get out of the car. Turning off the engine prevents the car from rolling even a few inches (even a few inches can be

enough to cause an accident). Shifting into the park or taking your foot off the gas prevents your car from shifting itself into driving and moving unexpectedly.

This tip is especially important when parking at night because it's harder for others to see your car's headlights. Park at night with your parking lights on, and use the left side of the road only.

It's also imperative if you're parking on busy roads or where there are lots of other cars on the road—if someone pulls out in front of you without looking and you don't have time to react, an unexpected movement of your vehicle could cause them to crash into you.

# Module 2: Emergency

An emergency, as the term predicts, is an unforeseen circumstance that can happen at any time and to anyone (whether due to a faulty part or bad luck). This can be very stressful, especially when traveling alone or with young children. When driving in the Bahamas, knowing what to do to keep yourself and others safe in an emergency, be it an accident, fire, or other disaster that require immediate action.

## *2.1. In case of a vehicle breakdown*

You're driving to work, running errands, or rushing to get somewhere, and suddenly, you feel something is wrong with your car. The temperature gauge needle is climbing steadily, or a strange rattling sound is coming from the trunk. Whatever it is, something isn't right, and it's time to pull over and ensure your safety and the safety of others around you.

The most important thing is to stay calm and take stock of the situation. If your car is still drivable, pull over safely to the side of the road. It's often best to steer clear of junctions, bends, and other dangerous places. If your vehicle stops on a dangerous stretch of road, consider alerting other drivers with a few car-related methods. You could flash your hazard warning lights, put out a red warning triangle at least 50 yards from the obstruction, or get someone to walk along the road to warn following traffic.

If you have little or any experience, you can look to see what can be done for a quick fix. Do not stand or work on it where passing vehicles could hit you. If you need extensive repairs, such as fixing an engine problem, call for help from a nearby mechanic or tow truck driver. Getting your vehicle repaired or off the road before dark is best. If you have to leave a broken-down vehicle on the road at night, switch your parking lights on and make sure that there is some sign on the road before your vehicle that alerts drivers to its presence.

## *2.2. The highway emergency To-Do*

No matter how safe the road is, accidents still happen. Most accidents can be caused by various factors linked to a few behaviors, such as drowsy driving, driving under the influence, and speeding. Fortunately, in the event of an accident (whether it is your fault or not or you are just a witness) or any emergency, there is a lot of help available.

The first thing to do is to make sure that you are safe. Assess the situation and check yourself and other people around you for injuries. Also, look around for any immediate danger, such as a fuel leak or fire. Once this has been confirmed, you should immediately dial 911 or 919 to call for emergency services.

If someone is injured in the crash, call an ambulance immediately. It is crucial to provide the emergency services with specific information regarding the accident's location (street name, well-known landmarks or locations), the number of people hurt, and the seriousness of their injuries.

Wait for the emergency service to validate the information before hanging up the phone. You may also be involved in a police investigation or have to file an insurance claim. In either case, you should report the incident as soon as possible to the local police. They will help you deal with accidents and ensure that all parties are safe. The emergency number is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

While waiting for an emergency response, be prepared to give first aid. Many road crash victims have died unnecessarily or suffered unnecessarily due to inadequate care at the scene of an accident. If you are a trained first-aider, you should give immediate assistance to anyone who has been injured. If not, here are some basic steps that can be taken in an emergency.

**Dr. ABC**

***D - Danger***. Is the risk to the injured still present?

***R - Response.*** Has the victim responded in any way? - Watch for responses to voice or touch commands.

***A - Airway.*** In the absence of a response, examine the airway (throat). Check for breathing after gently tilting the head back to open the mouth, checking the tongue to ensure it is not obstructing the throat, and removing any clear obstructions.

***B -Breathing.*** Check to see if the victim is breathing by placing your ear near their lips for at least 10 seconds to hear and feel the breath. Give the victim two rescue breaths right away by pinching closed their nostrils and inhaling twice into their mouth if they are not breathing

***C - Circulation.*** If there is still no breathing, feel for a pulse. Place two fingers at the neck to check the pulse, and examine the victim's eye color and pupil size. Apply CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation), which combines chest compressions and artificial respirations, until professional help arrives, the victim begins breathing, or you are tired.

**Don't move casualties**

Without a fire, more damage, or other accidents, injured people still inside their vehicles shouldn't be moved. Put a casualty in the recovery position if they are unconscious but breathing and do not appear seriously injured to prevent breathing issues.

The recovery position is a certain posture with victims on their sides that prevents them from choking on their tongue or vomiting if unconscious. The head is slightly cocked back, the upper arm's hand is tucked beneath the cheek, the lower leg is stretched out, and the upper leg is bent at a right angle.

**Treat bleeding immediately**

You must make an effort to stop significant blood loss because a person can bleed to death in just five minutes. Make sure there is nothing in the wound first, and use a sterile dressing from a first aid kit or any other clean padding to apply firm pressure over the wound. Use a bandage or cloth to tie the pad over the wound. It would be best to safeguard yourself when handling someone else's open wounds.

If there are no damaged bones, raise a bleeding leg to stop the bleeding. Stabilize the limb and refrain from moving it if there are broken bones, fractures, or dislocations to prevent aggravating the injury.

In addition to giving first aid, keeping the victim company and making them more comfortable is critical.

## *2.3. Preventing accidents*

Always wear seat belts while driving —they're there for a reason! If you have children, ensure they are in the back seat and properly restrained.

As you drive, always 'read' the road ahead and drive appropriately for the situation. This means allowing a good safety margin—just in case the other road- user does something unexpected. Don't drive at night unless necessary; if you do, ensure your headlights are turned on (and stop at every intersection so people can see you).

Keep an eye out for other cars—don't assume they see you! You don't want someone crashing into your bumper because they didn't see you coming up behind them with your blinker. Slow down when you're approaching junctions, bends, or places with lots of people.

Before leaving the house, check to see that your car is functioning well. The last thing you want when traveling down the highway is an engine fire. Before leaving the house, check that all of your lights are functioning correctly; if not, it may be worthwhile to get them fixed.

## *2.4. Making way for emergency vehicles*

You're driving for an appointment or running late to meet friends when suddenly you hear a loud siren and the flashing lights of an ambulance coming up behind you. While it may seem like a pain, we must remember that when we see these emergency vehicles arriving on the scene of an accident or fire or what-have-you, their drivers are liable to make it there quicker if they know that cars around them are making room for them.

The Highway Code explicitly states that drivers must yield to all vehicles with flashing lights, such as police cars, fire trucks, ambulances, and emergency medical personnel. The new legislation, however, makes it quite clear that when allowing emergency vehicles to pass, drivers must take the proper precautions and keep to the rules of and uphold the law of the road.

Even though emergency vehicles appreciate drivers giving them room to pass, it's crucial to remember that they don't want you to endanger yourself or break the law.

# Module 3: Signs on marking road positions

Road markings are painted lines or symbols on the road used to give information to drivers of motor vehicles to help them help you understand and follow the road rules. They help you know where you should be driving so that you don't accidentally end up in the wrong lane or on the wrong side of the road, when to change lanes, when to stop, and how fast you should be going.

They can also be used for turning lanes, pedestrian crossings, traffic circles, and parking spaces. The road markings may include solid white lines, broken white lines, solid yellow lines, or broken yellow lines. Each type of marking has a specific purpose that helps you understand where you can drive on the road.

If you're new to driving in the Bahamas, knowing what each type of sign means and how they affect your driving decisions is essential.

## *3.1. Markings along the road*

You may come across road markings placed along the side of the road. Several kinds of white lines are painted along the center of the roads. The specific purpose of each type of marking depends on what it looks like, but all of them help keep you safe by providing visual cues about how you should drive. The most important is the double solid white lines.

The double solid marking is often used between lanes on highways or freeways where traffic is heavy, and there is a high risk of accidents. These lines indicate that you should not cross them to change lanes or pass another vehicle. You must stay within your lane, even if no cars are around. Sometimes, the double markings may come in continuous and broken lines.

A solid line means that you must stay in your lane, while a broken line means an opening between two lanes of traffic. When the line nearest to you is continuous, don't cross it unless you need to turn into a side road or pass an obstruction in your lane.

When the line nearest to you is broken, you may cross it if necessary, but only if no vehicles are approaching from either direction, and even then, you should do so slowly and carefully.

You may find cross-hatching markings in dangerous areas that further separate traffic streams. Cross-hatching indicates that passing through marked areas is prohibited. Be alert if you encounter a single white broken line on the road.

If the line lengthens and the gap shortens, it signifies an upcoming hazard ahead that may not yet be visible. This broken line is also known as a warning line, and you shouldn't cross lanes until you see it is safe to do so.

## *3.2. Markings across The Road*

One of the common road markings is the give-way marking. The give way marking is a diagonal white line across the road, usually placed just before a junction or an intersection. The marking tells you that you must give way to traffic coming from the road you're about to enter. The give way marking is used at all junctions, including round, mini-round, and T-junctions.

A double-dotted giveaway marking indicates that you must give way to all vehicles traveling along the road you're about to enter. This is particularly important at junctions where drivers may be tempted to turn into the path of oncoming traffic. You must wait in line before crossing or entering the road.

A single dotted give way marking is often found at the entrance to a roundabout and indicates that you need to give way only when turning right across oncoming traffic. The other common give way marking is the stop line.

A solid white line indicates you to stop entirely and observe before continuing. They are often found across an active traffic lane at an intersection with poor visibility and a high risk of danger. If the solid line is at a set of traffic lights, it indicates where you should wait if the lights are red. Otherwise, you can continue if they're green.

## *3.3. Zebra/Checker Crossing Zig-Zag lines*

Pedestrian crossings are marked with a zebra pattern (parallel white lines on the road surface). The purpose of these markings is to make it clear to drivers that pedestrians have priority at these points. The zigzag lines tell you there is a pedestrian crossing ahead. You should be prepared to stop and give way if a pedestrian wants to use the crossing.

You must not overtake or pass any stationary vehicle, even if you have a green light. Pedestrians should also not cross on the zigzag areas; they should only use the zebra crossing.

## *3.4. Yellow box junction*

A box junction is a traffic-signal control to prevent congestion and gridlock at an intersection. The surfaces feature a yellow criss-cross grid pattern consisting of diagonal painted lines. You should not enter a yellow box junction unless you can clear it completely without stopping except to turn, and you are prevented from doing so by oncoming traffic or other vehicles waiting to turn.

## *3.5. Lane arrow*

Alongside the road are arrows painted on the ground indicating which lane you should be in for the next part of your journey. These arrows can be found at junctions, roundabouts, and slip roads. They can also indicate whether a lane is open or closed for use by traffic in one direction only, such as when there's an obstruction on the road ahead of you.

The arrows are usually painted on the road surface but can also be found on signs. The arrows are often accompanied by the words "keep left" or "keep right." If you see this, you should move into the appropriate lane as soon as possible.

You should follow these instructions as they will help you avoid accidents.

# Module 4: Behavior

The Bahamas highway is the most beautiful of highways— taking you through rugged mountains, tiny bays, and remote villages, that's not to mention the abundance of breathtaking views of sparkling turquoise waters and the cleanest air in the world.

Without a doubt, "it's like driving around in heaven," – but all that beauty inspires awe and can sometimes make it easy to forget some of the basics. So why not brush up on dos and don'ts on how to behave on Bahamas highways?

## *4.1. Inspect your vehicle regularly*

The first thing you should do before getting behind a wheel is to ensure your vehicle is safe. This means checking tires, windshield wipers, headlights, and taillights. You should also make sure that your vehicle has functioning seatbelts and airbags. Even though it's unlikely that you'll have an accident in the Bahamas, if one occurs, seatbelts and airbags can save lives.

The last thing you want to do before getting on the road is to discover a flat tire or an empty gas tank. It's essential to take the time to check over your vehicle before it gets back on the road.

Properly inspecting your vehicle regularly is the best way to ensure that problems can be identified and fixed before they become dangerous.

To ensure safety while driving in the Bahamas, you should double-check whether all passengers are wearing seatbelts. It is required by law to wear seatbelts while driving in the Bahamas, so make sure everyone respects this law.

## *4.2. Stay vigilant*

When you've parked your car and shut off the engine, take the keys with you—because it's all too easy to forget this step and leave the key in the ignition or leave the car running while you get out to run an errand, which is a dangerous thing to do. If you're going somewhere other

than home and leaving your car unattended for a while (say at a gas station), lock your doors and take the keys—just in case someone walks by who might want to take advantage of your absence.

It's a good idea to keep your car locked even if you're going nearby. It only takes a few seconds for someone to break in and take something valuable—so don't make it easy for them

The parking lot is an area that's ripe for crime of all kinds because it's so easy for criminals to disappear into a sea of cars and walk away from their own crimes unnoticed—so it's important to stay vigilant.

## *4.3. Rest when tired*

To make sure you don't fall asleep while driving, here are some things to keep in mind:

If it's been more than 10 hours since you last slept, take a nap before getting back on the road.

Avoid driving more than 10 hours in one day when planning your trips.

Staying awake for 10 hours is fine, but it's important not to drive more than 10 hours in 24 hours.

If you feel your body is telling you to sleep or eat something, don't fight it—give yourself a break. If you think about it from the other side, if you force yourself to stay awake for too long, there's a good chance that later on down the road, your body won't want to cooperate with you when it does want a break.

It makes much more sense for your body to get its rest when it needs it and for you to keep going when it doesn't. If you feel tired, pull over at a rest stop or somewhere safe and nap. This will ensure that your body gets the sleep it needs and helps prevent accidents later.

## *4.4. When your vehicle breaks down*

We've all been there. You're driving along, minding your own business, when suddenly you require assistance. Maybe you've lost your vehicle and are about to careen off the road. Maybe you've been in an accident and cannot drive away from the scene. Or maybe you're just stuck on the side of the road with a dead battery and hours away from help. Whatever the

case, it's essential to know how best to attract the attention of other motorists so that they don't end up hitting your car while trying to avoid other obstacles.

As a general rule of thumb, always carry one triangle-shaped warning sign when traveling by car so that you're prepared if you have a breakdown or some other kind of problem that requires assistance from another motorist.

Keep it inside your vehicle at all times—that way, it'll be safe from theft and will always be within reach if you need it during an emergency. Once you've used it and gotten all safe again.

## *4.5. Transporting hazardous materials*

Oil or diesel leaks onto asphalt roads can create a very slippery patch of road for another driver to drive over. Slipperiness will make for unsafe driving conditions for other drivers who go careening over the oil or diesel spill; it could also cause them to drive off-road entirely and end up crashing into something.

And since asphalt is tough and expensive to repair without leaving considerable potholes in the road, you could be leading another driver into a situation that damages their car and injury or death to themselves.

Never spill oil or diesel on the road; it could lead to severe accidents and damage the asphalt. If you need to transport hazardous materials through The Bahamas, ensure you know all the applicable rules and regulations.

## *4.6. Always consider the weather*

When the weather gets bad, it's essential to act fast and stay safe. While you may know how to handle yourself in most driving situations, bad weather requires you to be extra vigilant and aware of your surroundings.

The first rule of driving in a storm is to keep an eye on the weather radar and the road. This will help you determine whether or not conditions are severe enough to make driving unsafe

Flooding and falling power lines are common hazards associated with driving in bad weather. If you find yourself driving through water deeper than your vehicle's depth, get out of your car and onto the higher ground immediately. It only takes six inches of moving water to sweep away a vehicle, so don't try to drive through any standing water covering your lane on the highway. Keep an eye out for downed power lines, which can cause severe damage to your vehicle if they make contact with it. If you see any downed power lines, stay away from them.

## *4.7. Maintain the speed limit*

The speed limit is there for a reason, and for the most part, it's for your good. You're more likely to run into trouble when you drive too fast.

Those who consistently break speed limits are more likely to have an accident or get a ticket. It might seem common sense that driving faster than the speed limit is dangerous, but the numbers back it up too.

When you're speeding, you're at greater risk of losing control of your vehicle if you encounter a problem on the road ahead. Even if you never lose control, driving faster can wear down your car parts faster and cause more wear and tear on your tires.

So not only are you risking getting in an accident, but you're also risking breaking down when you least expect it—and that's annoying no matter how fast or slow you're going.

A higher speed means that other drivers will have less time to react to what you do. If you're going faster, other drivers won't be able to see or react as quickly when you make a move.

This means that if you brake suddenly or try to change lanes, it may take them longer to respond and avoid an accident. Speeding is one of the leading causes of car accidents, so it's vital for your safety and the safety of others on the road.

## *4.8. Don't drink and drive*

It's rather obvious, but the first thing that should be mentioned is: don't drive while intoxicated. This is a perilous situation to put yourself in, as even a small amount of alcohol can significantly affect your reflexes and sense of judgment. Even if you've only had one

drink, it can still impair you from reacting quickly enough to dangerous situations on the road.

It may seem harmless to take a quick drink with dinner on the way home from work, but by the time you get home, your blood alcohol level could be well above 0.05%, which is the legal limit for driving in the Bahamian jurisdiction.

However, this does not mean you are safe to drive after just one drink, as 0.05% BAC can significantly affect your reflexes and coordination. The safe maximum BAC is zero, so do not drink and drive.

The most important thing to remember is not to get into your car after drinking. If you have no other way of getting home, use a designated driver or take a taxi or public transport instead of driving yourself when impaired by alcohol.

## *4.9. Drive steadily*

The most important rule on the road is to drive safely. When driving, you should think about several things, which can be difficult to manage well. For instance, you should be paying attention to what other drivers are doing—but if you spend too much time looking at others and not enough looking at the road ahead, it could lead to a collision.

You should also be paying attention to how your vehicle feels—how comfortable it is to handle, how easy it is to accelerate and decelerate, and what kind of fuel economy you're getting so that you can make adjustments in your driving style as needed—but if you spend too much time fiddling with the car and not enough watching the road ahead of you, it could lead to an accident as well.

So while it might seem like a good idea to get where you're going as quickly as possible, take a minute to think about the consequences of going faster. Going fast doesn't mean saving time in the long run: it means using more fuel than if you consistently drive at a slower pace, increasing your risk of being involved in an accident and making yourself and your passengers uncomfortable over the course of driving.

If you want to increase your speed for any reason, there are ways to do it safely. You can practice driving at high speeds on a closed course, for example, or take a class that teaches you how to handle your vehicle in challenging situations.

## *4.10. Overtaking and turning*

Unless you are overtaking or turning, drive on the left side of the road. If there are two lanes, you can use both; but still, keep to the left whenever possible—slow-moving vehicles such as pedal cycles need extra room.

If you must stop, leave at least three seconds between you and the car in front of you before moving off—if there's no one behind you, take five seconds. If someone wishes to overtake you, give way by moving over to the left—you don't have to go all the way into the other lane, but if there's a long stretch of road with no shoulder, it doesn't hurt to move over multiple lanes.

## *4.11. Be cautious at junctions*

When you're turning onto a busy main road from a minor, slower road, it's best to take your time and do the turn smoothly. Don't accelerate sharply, and don't even think about getting on the gas until you've completed the turn and are sure there's no one coming in the opposite direction.

By taking your time when making this turn, not only will you avoid hitting other cars as they go whizzing by at speeds as high as 70 mph (though that is illegal in some areas), but you'll also be aware of any cyclists or motorcyclists who may come up beside your car while you're slowing down and preparing to turn in. They may be going faster than you, so giving them enough room not to hit your vehicle when they pass is essential.

Of course, when turning onto a road where pedestrians might be crossing, it's best to avoid this dangerous maneuver altogether by simply driving through an intersection or waiting for the light to change. If any pedestrians are present, stop and wait until it is safe for them to cross—then proceed with caution.

## *4.12. Honking*

There are plenty of good reasons to honk, but drivers should know that honking is not a proper way to communicate with other drivers. Honking should only be used when necessary, such as when there is an imminent danger or when you need to communicate with a driver who cannot hear you (such as the driver of a large truck).

You must use your horn to get the most attention in those instances. Short, quick bursts are more effective than slow, long beeps. Honking also lets others on the road know you're frustrated—and if you're honking while driving aggressively, it could cause others to get angry toward you.

Of course, there are situations where honking is necessary. When another driver makes an error and causes you to take evasive action or break suddenly, it's time for some loud noises. In this case, you might want to sound your horn, flash your lights, and slow down to alert other drivers around you so they won't crash into your vehicle.

# Module 5: Intersection

When driving in the Bahamas, it's crucial to stay aware of your surroundings at all times. You'll share the road with locals, tourists, and many vehicles, including motorcycles, mopeds, and scooters. That means a lot of opportunities for accidents and close calls.

Intersections can be dangerous places; collisions between two cars or people on foot or bike are common, especially when drivers travel fast and misjudge how quickly others can get out of their way or how much space they need to maneuver around them.

The number of deaths from intersection-related crashes has been steadily rising over the past years—many of which were preventable had the driver been familiar with the set of rules for intersections.

To make sure you're always prepared to handle an intersection, keep these tips in mind:

If you're about to turn left at an intersection, check for oncoming traffic by turning your head slightly to the right. If there is an opening, wait until it is clear and safe to proceed.

If you try to make a right turn, you'll have to cross a lot of oncoming traffic, so it's best always to expect another driver to make a mistake and leave a space in their lane. Since they will probably be paying less attention than you are, they may not expect someone like you to be making a turn, so keep your distance from that car.

When you approach an intersection where the light has turned red, and other cars are stopped, don't panic. If you stop early enough, you can take advantage of another driver's mistake by going around them on either side or in front of them; otherwise, you still have time to wait for the light to turn green or traffic to clear so you can proceed forward safely.

You will not have to wait long at an intersection before the traffic light turns red and another driver is already in the left lane preparing to turn. This can be tricky because you cannot slam on your brakes in time if the other driver goes through the red light and into your path.

When this happens, you should either try to stay behind the other car and hope that you get through before it gets too close or drives around it when there's a big enough gap in traffic.

The best strategy is to prepare by keeping some distance between your vehicle and any car directly in front of you as it approaches an intersection. You'll have more time to react if they start making a quick turn without looking both ways.

It's better to be cautious than sorry. When you see an opening in traffic, keep your distance and proceed with caution. If you see a vehicle coming up behind you, slow down and let them through. It's always better to wait and avoid a possible collision than risk getting into one.

When turning right at an intersection, you need to make sure you're paying attention to all of the dangers that are out there. You must watch for pedestrians, cyclists, and motor vehicles. If any of these fail to yield as they should, do everything you can to avoid colliding with them before safely making it to your destination.

## *5.2. Types of intersection*

There are many different types of intersections, each with unique characteristics.

**T-Intersection**

This type of intersection has two roads that cross at right angles. The crossroads are called the arms of the T since it looks like a "T" when viewed from above. The T-intersection is the most common type of intersection you will see on your day-to-day travels.



**Y-Intersections**

Y-intersections are similar to T-intersections, except the roads do not cross at right angles but instead come at an acute or obtuse angle to each other. The intersection is shaped like a "Y" when viewed from above.



**Cross-Intersections**

A cross-intersection is a type of intersection that has four arms. They are also called "4-way" intersections because there are 4 roads that meet at this location.



**Five legs or more**

This type of intersection is formed when there are multiple roads entering the intersection from different directions, but this type of intersection is not common. Some intersections have more than five legs and can have as many as six or seven arms coming together at one point to form a single intersection.



**Roundabout**

A roundabout is a circular intersection designed to control intersections of four or more roadways. In this type of intersection, cars must travel counterclockwise around a center island.



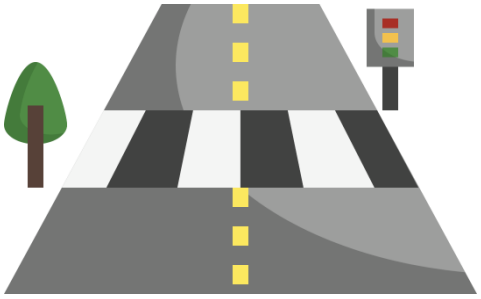
**Traffic circle**

A traffic circle is a circular intersection with a raised center island or another type of divider in the middle. Traffic circles are most commonly used in residential areas.



**Midblock pedestrian crossing**

A midblock pedestrian crossing is a crosswalk that divides a road with a pedestrian pedestrian crossing lane. They are commonly used in residential areas with no traffic lights or stop signs.



# Module 6: Traffic law

Traffic laws in the Bahamas regulate traffic on roads and motor vehicles and declare what those regulations entail. The Road Traffic Authority establishes fair regulations for the use of motor vehicles and protects third parties against accidents caused by cars. These laws address issues related to licensing motor vehicles for hire or reward, regulating public transportation services, and ensuring that all cars in use meet required standards.

## *6.1. Obstructions*

In cases where a car blocks traffic or creates an otherwise hazardous situation:

a. Police officers may remove it from the roadway.
b. The owner of any vehicle removed from a public roadway by the police or other authorized agency shall pay for such removal and storage of their car.
c. If such a vehicle is not claimed within six months of its removal or if the owner cannot be found after this time, it will be considered abandoned property.

## *6.2. Public place*

In any public place or street, no person shall —

a. Without permission or authorization of the person who has control of the vehicle mount and without interfering with its operation.
b. When traveling in a vehicle, hold on to anything that might move (such as the seat belt or another person).
c. Block any vehicle's progress by standing in its path.
d. Ride or otherwise propel a bicycle upon such a public place or street in any manner other than a single file.
e. Throw objects out of a moving vehicle as it is not only dangerous to other drivers, but it's also illegal.

## *6.3. Drivers*

No driver, rider, or person in charge of any vehicle shall:

a. Make a turn until they have reached the corner of the street.
b. Drive to the right of a center line or into an intersection without looking out for other traffic—except when making a left turn at an intersection with no traffic sign.
c. Intentionally interfere with or impede any person lawfully operating a vehicle to take in or discharge cargo.
d. Carry any tree, timber, or iron beam projecting more than one foot from either side of a vehicle—except in cases of necessity when the Commissioner of Police may grant permission to do so.
e. Cause hurt or damage by reckless, negligent, or intentional misbehavior
f. Make their vehicle sound unnecessarily loud or bothersome in any public place.
g. Lie to a policeman or other officer of the law;
h. Drive, ride or push a vehicle on the sidewalk except when crossing directly over it to go into or out of one's property.
i. Ride or drive vehicles where a road has been closed by the Commissioner of Police and Minister for Works.
j. drive their vehicle over any portion of a street where a fire hose is being laid down by someone else;
k. Permit any person to ride in or on their vehicle unless such other person is seated with a safety belt fastened adequately around both the waist and shoulder area. Standing passengers may be permitted in omnibuses as facilities allow it.
l. Ride or carry any other person upon a bicycle, tricycle, or motorcycle unless the permanent seat is firmly in place and used as intended
m. Carry or allow to be carried any loose load, has poorly secured fasteners, or poses a danger to other motorists.

## *6.4. Cyclists*

No person may ride or be in charge of a bicycle while —

a. Ride a bicycle on the sidewalks or paths that connect one public building with another and lead to the main thoroughfare.
b. Lean a bicycle up against public buildings or anywhere else.
c. ride their bicycle with more than one passenger.

d. ride their bicycle with a brake that works on both wheels unless parking in another area where the law does not apply.

# Module 7: Pedestrian crossing

You enter an area of danger as soon as you cross the road. Everyone has the right to use our highways, and we owe it to one another to observe common courtesy in such areas. The pedestrian crossing highway code for the Bahamas is an important document that is a great way to show courtesy to other drivers on the road and pedestrians.

Below are some rules to follow when you cross a road in the Bahamas.

## *7.1. Pedestrians*

If there aren't any pavements or pedestrian crossings on your route and you can't walk along the side of the road, walk facing traffic so that drivers can see you better and give them more time to react if they have to stop suddenly or swerve around you.

Look both ways before crossing and ensure no vehicles are approaching from either direction. Wait until there is a safe gap between vehicles before crossing. Remember, even if traffic lights are flashing red, it is not safe to cross if any vehicles are approaching from any direction.

Cross at a designated pedestrian crossing where possible, but only if it does not put you in danger of being hit by other road users or pedestrians who may be crossing without regard for their safety. Pedestrians have the right of way over vehicles at all places where they may cross unless signs indicate otherwise. Do not cross in front of or behind cars that are stopped at intersections or traffic lights; wait until they move off first.

Pedestrians should avoid crossing the road at night unless they use a white light that can be seen at least 100 meters away. Neither should they use a torch, as this could dazzle oncoming drivers driving at night.

Pedestrians are not allowed to cross at any intersection other than those marked for crossing. When crossing, always look both ways before stepping onto the road and ensure no vehicles are coming from either direction.

If you are crossing in a marked pedestrian crossing area, you should only use the designated crossing point. If there is no designated place for pedestrians to cross, you should walk as close as possible to the edge of the road so you can step off when it is safe.

Pedestrians must also be careful when using a pedestrian crossing as they have less protection than drivers of vehicles. If you are using a pedestrian crossing and see a vehicle coming towards you, then you must move as far away from the edge of the road as possible so that the driver has room to see you and stop safely before reaching you.

Pedestrians should not cross the road diagonally across a pelican or zebra crossing. They must wait for cars to stop and cross straight in front of them.

At any pedestrian crossing point that traffic lights or police officers do not control, pedestrians should not assume that drivers have seen them or will stop if they step out onto the road before it is safe to do so. Pedestrians should make eye contact with approaching drivers before stepping into the road and only do so when it is safe.

When waiting on either side of a road for a car or bus to pass, ensure that you are at least five meters away from any vehicle approaching behind or beside you. Do not stand too close to other people, as this could confuse drivers who may think there is only one set of pedestrians on the road when several sets are waiting alongside each other.

When crossing the road, do not walk between parked cars or other stationary objects, such as bollards or barriers. This can be dangerous as these objects cannot move out of your way if a car suddenly approaches from behind or from either side.

## *7.2. Driver*

When you see the pedestrian crossing sign, you must expect to meet pedestrians on the road. If there are no pedestrians, you can proceed without stopping.

The law says that pedestrians must use a marked crossing if there is one available or a crossing point if there is no marked crossing. You should stop your vehicle and let them cross at these points. However, stopping at an unmarked crossing point is not compulsory, although you should always ensure that no pedestrians are on the road or in the area before proceeding.

If the pedestrian has started or partly started to cross, they must be allowed to finish crossing safely. You should wait until they are safe across before moving off.

As a driver, don't pass another vehicle while it is in the middle of the road, next to a pedestrian crosswalk (or any place where pedestrians are likely walking), or if there are signs that say "No Passing."

# Module 8: Roundabout

The roundabout is a circular intersection or junction with one or more lanes for traffic traveling around it. Roundabouts are designed to slow down traffic and reduce rear-end collisions by permitting traffic to flow around a center island in one direction. The roundabout is a safe intersection; it's safer than many other intersections.

Roundabouts come in many different sizes. Some have multiple lanes of traffic, while others only have one lane. Regardless of the size, some basic rules apply to each roundabout—but you'll need to know how best to manage your vehicle through these intersections in the Bahamas.

## *8.1. Before you enter*

Look at the road sign that precedes any roundabout. It should show you what the roundabout looks like, how many exits there are, and which exit leads to which location. Decide on the exit you need to take and the entry lane you should be in before reaching the roundabout so that once inside, it's less confusing for yourself and other drivers who aren't reasonably well-informed or prepared.

As you approach the roundabout, look to your right, and remember the three MSM driving steps (mirror, signal, maneuver). Check your mirror, slow down, and move into the correct lane if there is more than one. Be ready to give way to traffic already in the roundabout because the number one roundabout rule is that traffic entering a roundabout intersection must yield to traffic in the intersection. You should always yield to vehicles approaching from your right at a roundabout in the Bahamas.

After entering the roundabout, drive slowly with due care and pay attention to your blind spots. Keep an eye out for cyclists and motorcyclists, who are especially difficult to see when there is heavy traffic. Also, pedestrians may be crossing the path.

## *8.2. Lane positioning*

In The Bahamas, people typically drive on the left side of the road—a custom that originated under British rule. Thus, if no signs, markings, or situations indicate otherwise, use the left lane when entering and leaving a roundabout.

A good rule of thumb is to stay in the lane that gets you closest to exiting at your desired exit. You should stay in the left lane if you are going less than halfway around a roundabout and on the right if your path takes you more than halfway around the roundabout.

Navigating a roundabout with more than two lanes is trickier. However, there are usually road markings and signs to signal which lane you should be in. Use these and other traffic cues to help guide your decisions.

**When in the wrong lane**

If you realize that the lane you're driving in is not the one that gets you closest to your exit within a roundabout, do not panic. Check your mirrors and if it is safe to switch. Signal and correct lane. If not, continue around the roundabout in your current lane until you have enough time to reposition yourself in line safely. Do not try to cut across traffic to get onto the correct exit ramp.

## *8.3. Signaling*

Signaling is one of the most important things you can do to prevent a collision at a roundabout, as it lets other drivers around you know what you plan to do. Signal your intentions when entering and exiting a roundabout, so you can alert other drivers of your intention.

Also, you must watch for signals from other drivers. You should never assume that a car will leave the roundabout. Always check whether or not they have signaled their intention to exit, just in case.

**When turning left**

Approach the roundabout and signal left. Give way to vehicles already on the roundabout and stay in the left lane. You should keep your indicator on until you are well clear of the roundabout.

**When going straight ahead**

Approach the roundabout and choose a lane (if no arrows exist). You don't need to signal; give way to traffic already on the roundabout. Then merge with the traffic in the roundabout and stay in your lane until you exit. If your lane ends before you leave, merge safely with cross traffic as you exit.

**When turning right (or 3/4 around a roundabout)**

Approach the roundabout. Signal right and give way to traffic on the roundabout. Keep to the right lane, and proceed to your exit while signaling right.

**When making a U-Turn**

Approach the roundabout. Signal right and give way to traffic on the roundabout. Keep to the right lane and proceed to your exit, still staying in the lane.

## *8.4. Mini roundabouts*

In Nassau, Bahamas—in an effort to control traffic congestion in the area surrounding West Bay Street and Arawak Cay—a mini roundabout was installed at this junction. Mini roundabouts tend to be slightly raised circles painted on the ground. Despite this, it's vital that you treat them just like any other roundabout and drive around—rather than over—the circle while approaching or leaving it. Though it may seems like the faster option, driving over a mini-roundabout is dangerous and likely to land you in trouble with the Bahamas police if they catch you.

On a mini-roundabout, you will need to signal left as soon as possible—but not too early. This will help other drivers know your intentions and avoid confusion. You should also watch out for drivers making a U-turn at a mini roundabout.

## *8.5. Roundabout don'ts*

- Do not stop or pack in a roundabout.
- Don't drive near large vehicles, such as buses or trucks, as they take longer to maneuver than cars and may sometimes straddle lanes.