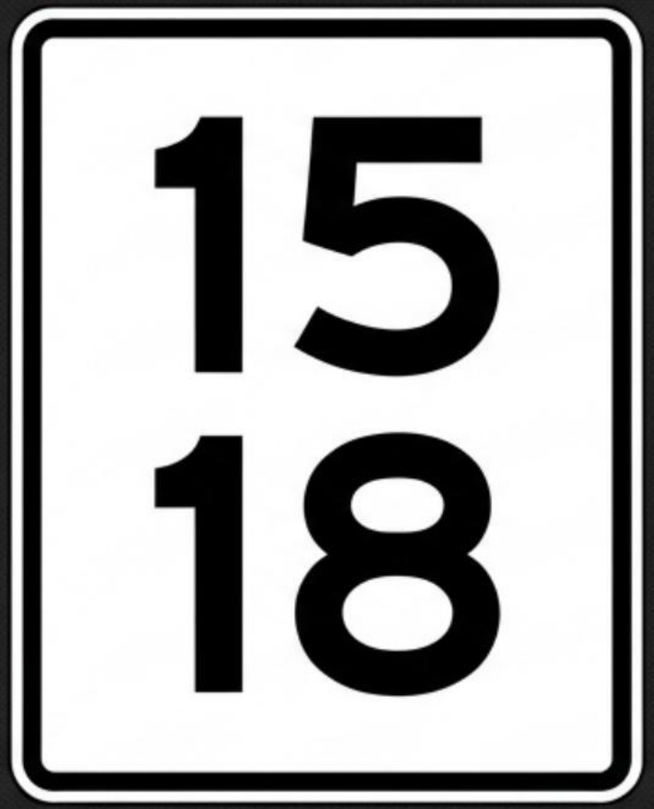
Cracking the PennDOT Code: Signs, Signals & Markings



Your **plain-language, visual study guide** for the **Pennsylvania Driving Test.**
The real PennDOT test is short and unforgiving. You face **18 questions**.
You must answer **15** correctly to pass.
You have a **3-question** margin of error.

Don’t memorize. Learn the language of the road.

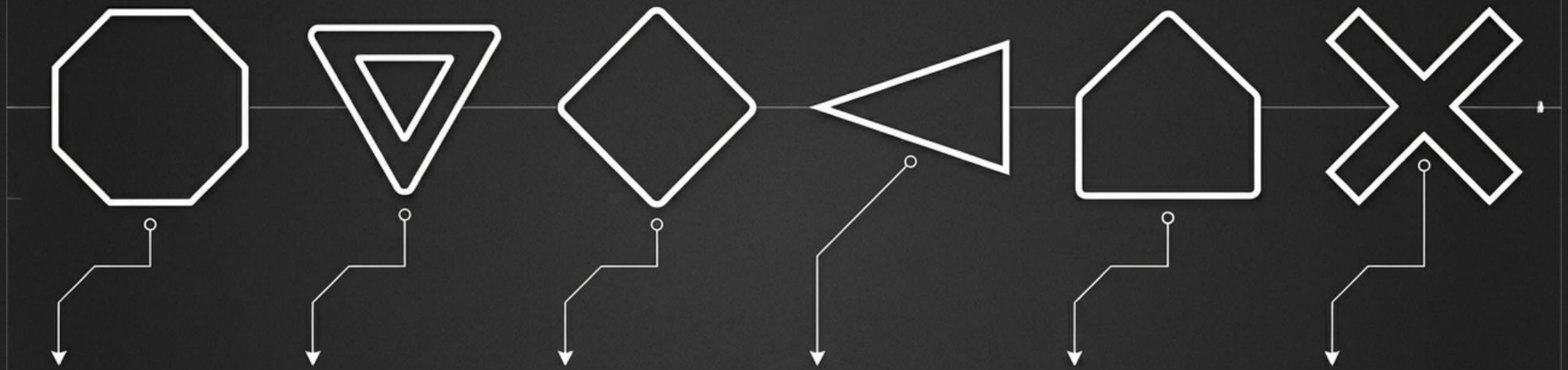


If you try to memorize hundreds of individual signs, you will fail. Instead, learn the master key. Pennsylvania sorts signs into 3 basic categories:

1. **Regulatory** (The rules)
2. **Warning** (The hazards)
3. **Guide** (The directions)

Learn the strict code of colors and shapes, and you can read a sign you’ve never even seen before.

The shape reveals the job



STOP
The only octagon on the highway. Visible even in fog or snow.

YIELD
Give right-of-way.

WARNING
Posted before the hazard.

NO PASSING
The only pennant warning sign (sits on the left side of the road).

SCHOOL
The only pentagon on the roadway. Downward arrow means you are at the crosswalk.

RAILROAD
Treat exactly as a yield sign.

The color delivers the message



Regulatory exceptions (Stop, Yield, Do Not Enter).



Standard regulatory signs (Speed limits, Reserved Parking).



Highway warning yellow. (Fluorescent Yellow-Green = Pedestrian/ Bicycle/School).



Work zones.



Highways exits (Green) and **Services** like gas/food (Blue).

Octagon stops you. Triangle yields. Diamond warns you. Pentagon means school. Orange means workers.

Regulatory signs are the law on a stick







These tell you what you must or must not do. A speed limit is the maximum under ideal conditions, not a target.

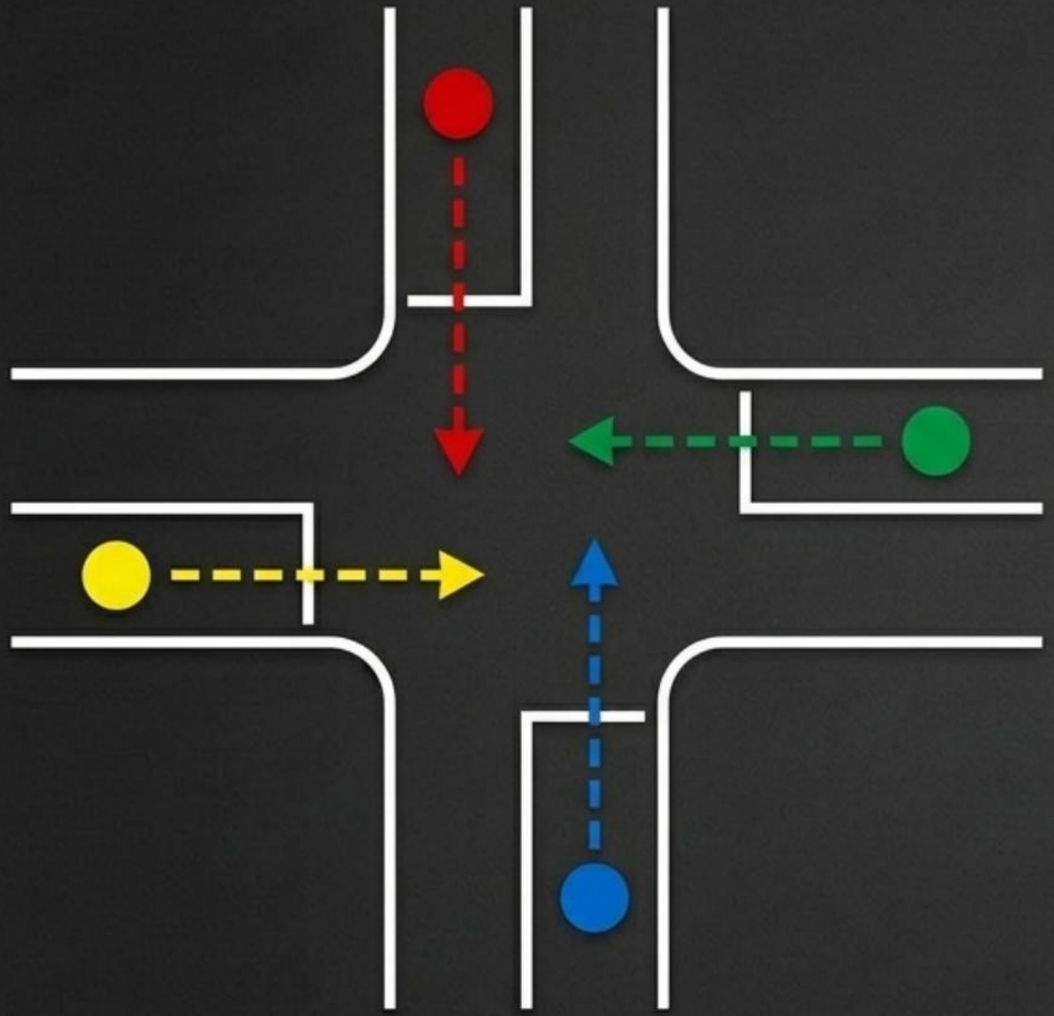
At a Yield sign, stop only when necessary; proceed only when there's a sufficient gap.

At a Divided Highway, you can only turn right at the first roadway, and left at the second.

TEST TRAP: Ignoring these isn't just a fine. PA operates on a strict points system.

- **6 points = Corrective action begins.**
- **11+ points = Mandatory suspension.**

The mechanics of a 4-way intersection



1. **The Stop Line:** Come to a complete stop before the crosswalk or line. View blocked? Yield to pedestrians, then pull forward.
2. **First to Arrive:** The first vehicle to reach the intersection moves first.
3. **The Tie-Breaker:** If two vehicles arrive at the exact same time, the driver on the left yields to the driver on the right.

TEST TRAP: If a traffic signal goes dark (power failure), treat the entire intersection as a four-way stop.

Adjust early for yellow warnings



Curve: Slow down before entering the curve, never in it.

Advisory Speed: The highest safe speed for the specific hazard ahead.



Merging Traffic: Vehicles entering a major roadway must yield to traffic already on it.



Slippery When Wet: Reduce speed, increase following distance, do not accelerate/brake quickly, and turn very slowly.

Work zones break the yellow rule



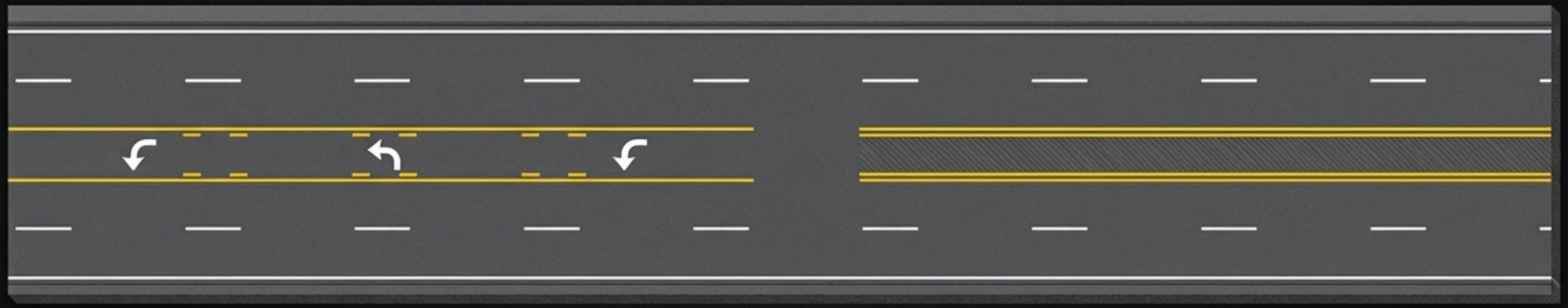
Work zone warnings keep the diamond shape, but they are always orange with black lettering. They require immediate behavioral changes regardless of conditions.

TEST TRAP: You must turn on your headlights through a work zone at any hour (day or night). This applies to all posted work zones. Being stopped in a work zone with headlights off adds a mandatory $25 fine.

Decoding the traffic signal matrix

	Steady	Flashing
Full Light	 **Steady Red:** Stop. Right turn on red allowed (yield first). Left turn on red ONLY from one-way street to another one-way street.	 **Flashing Red:** Identical to a STOP sign. Complete stop, look, proceed.
Arrows	 **Steady Green Arrow:** Protected turn. Oncoming traffic is held by a red light.	TEST TRAP  **Flashing Yellow Arrow: NOT protected.** Oncoming traffic has a green light. You must yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians before turning with caution.

Paint with meaning



The Binary Rules

Color: Yellow divides opposite directions (or left edge). White divides the same direction (or right edge).

Line Type: Broken lines can be crossed. Solid lines cannot—except when turning. You may cross solid yellow lines to make a turn.

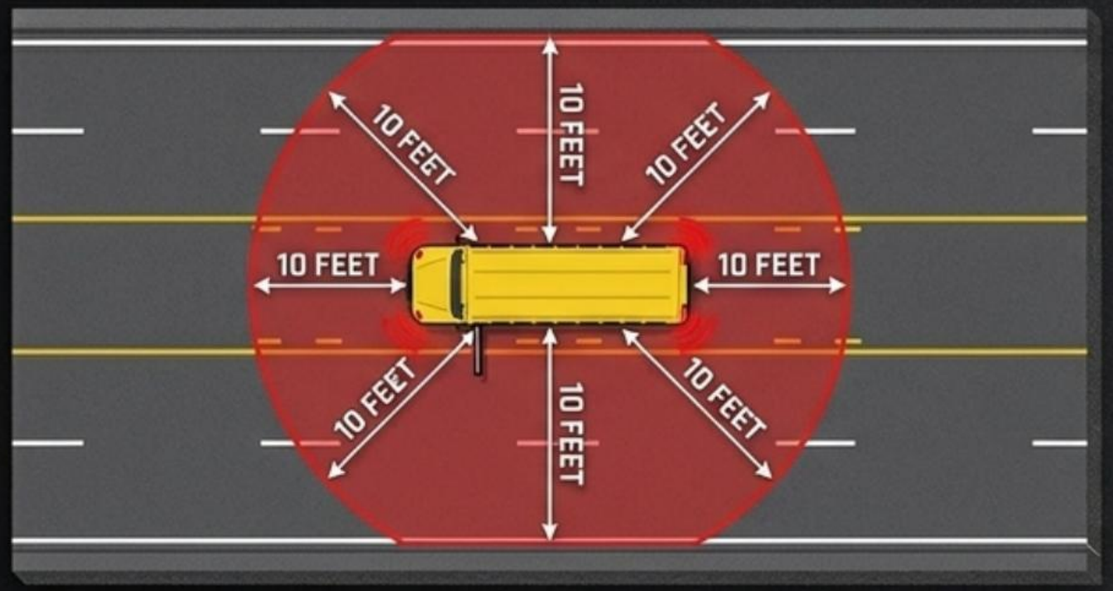
Special Zones

Double Solid Yellow: Passing is illegal in both directions.

Center Turn Lane: Bounded by outside solid yellow, inside broken yellow. Used for left turns only — never for passing or regular travel.

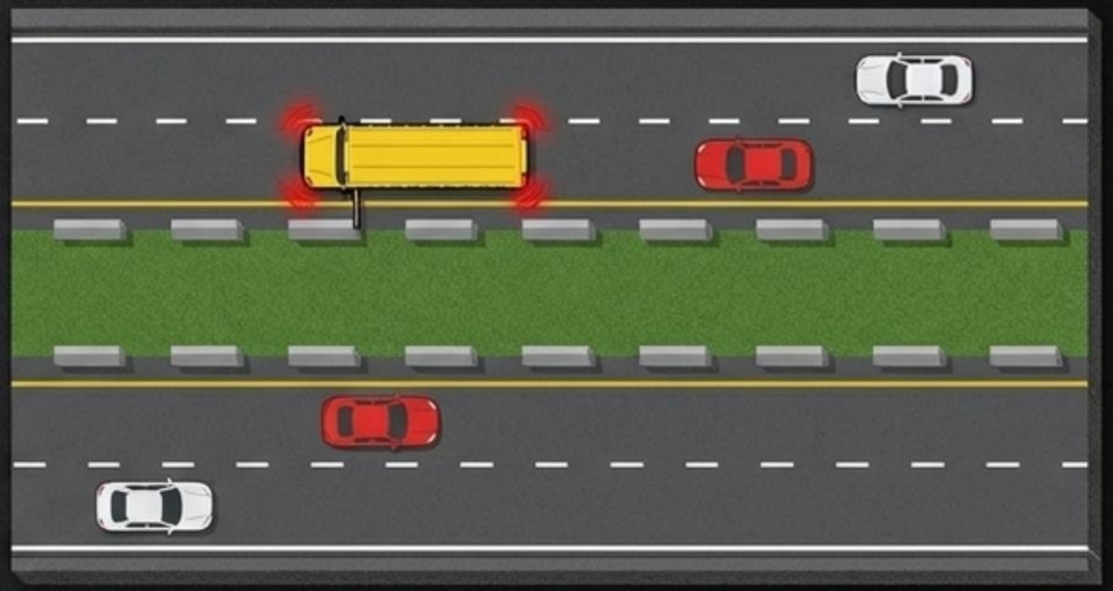
The 10-foot school bus rule

The Rule



When red lights flash, stop at least 10 feet away. Stay stopped until red lights stop, the stop arm is withdrawn, and children reach a safe place.

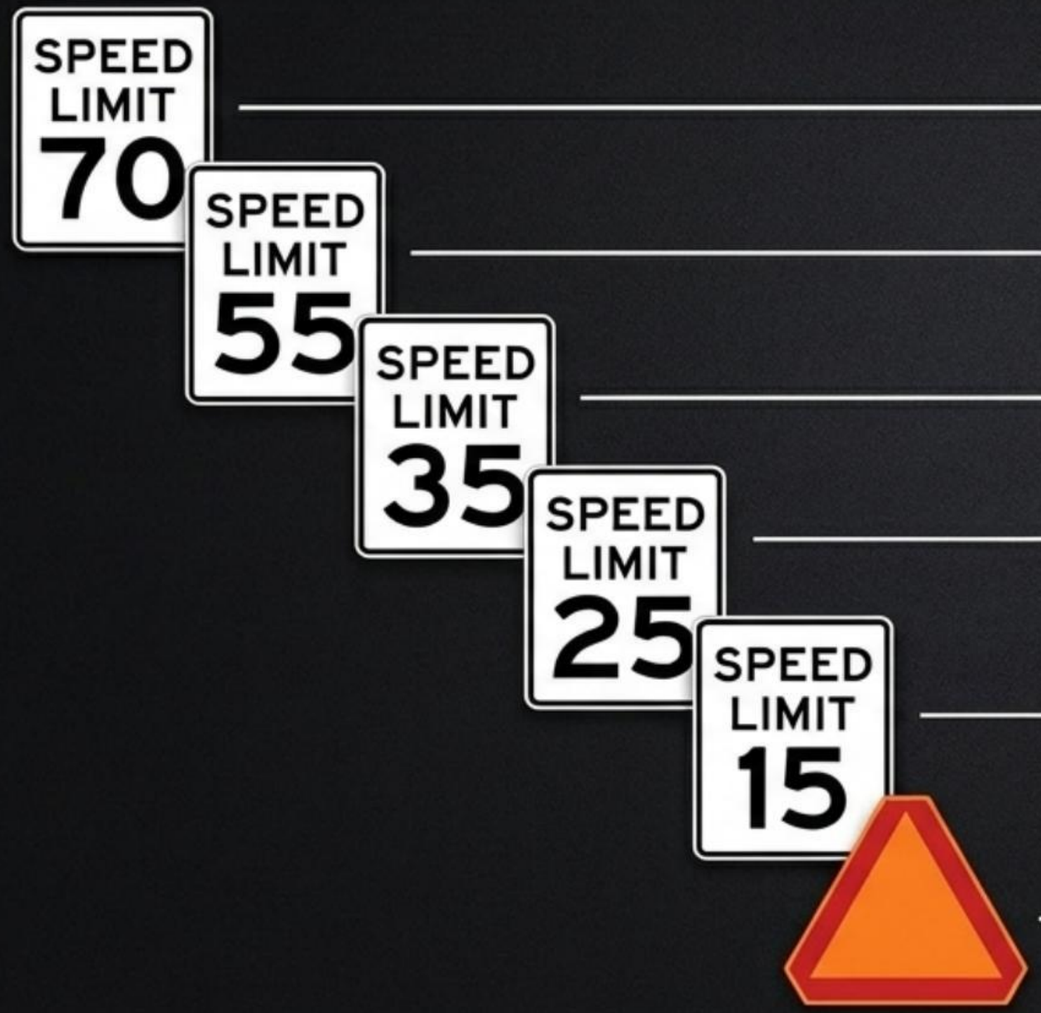
The ONLY Exception



You do not stop if you are on the opposite side of a divided highway separated by a physical barrier (concrete, guide rails, grass median, trees, rocks).

TEST TRAP: Paint alone does not divide a highway. If there is no physical barrier, you must stop.

The exact Pennsylvania numbers



70 mph: The absolute statewide maximum.

55 mph: Statutory default (Unposted Other Locations).

35 mph: Statutory default (Unposted Urban District).

25 mph: Statutory default (Unposted Residence District).

15 mph: School Zones (active when yellow signals flash or during posted times). Exceeding this adds 3 points + fine.

A **slow-moving vehicle emblem** (farm tractors/horse buggies) means the vehicle operates at 25 mph or less.

Test your code-reading (Self-Check)

1. The traffic light at your intersection is completely dark after a severe power failure. What exactly must you do?

2. A traffic light shows a flashing yellow arrow for your left turn lane. Is your turn protected? What must you do before turning?

3. You are driving through an urban district and notice no speed limit sign is posted. What is the maximum legal speed? What about in a residence district?

The Answer Key

1. The traffic light at your intersection is completely dark after a severe power failure. What exactly must you do?
   Treat the intersection as a four-way stop. Stop completely, then proceed in turn when it is safe to do so.
2. A traffic light shows a flashing yellow arrow for your left turn lane. Is your turn protected? What must you do before turning?
   No — it is not protected because oncoming traffic has a green light. You must yield to oncoming traffic and pedestrians, then turn with caution.
3. You are driving through an urban district and notice no speed limit sign is posted. What is the maximum legal speed? What about in a residence district?
   35 mph in an urban district, and 25 mph in a residence district. (Everywhere else defaults to 55 mph).

Final Pre-Test Data Log

The Test:	18 questions (15 correct to pass).
The Categories:	3 (Regulatory, Warning, Guide).
Point Penalties:	**6 points** (Corrective Action) / **11+ points** (Mandatory Suspension).
Work Zone Headlights:	Must be ON day or night ($25 fine if off).
School Bus Distance:	**Stop** at least 10 feet away.
School Zone Speed:	**15 mph** (when flashing/posted).
Unposted Limits:	25 mph (Residence), 35 mph (Urban), 55 mph (Other).
PA Max Speed:	70 mph.
Slow Vehicle Emblem:	25 mph or less.

Driving License Test

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