

ALL TUTORS – ADOPT THE CONTENTS OF THIS DOCUMENT WHEN COACHING

There have been a few *Excellence through Training* publications put out to the group on social media and appended to the website library, regarding positioning for left-hand bends.

When delivering coaching to our associates this message needs underpinning as it is a safety issue.

Being blunt, we lost Group Tutor Darren Stringer last year, negotiating a left bend. The details of his death are still sub judice as the case has not gone to court, albeit the other party has entered a guilty plea to dangerous driving, so there can be no speculation over the circumstances at present.

However, our *Training Lead*, Adam Abel, *Chair and Examiner*, Chris Hood and *Car Lead*, Ian Wood have been addressing the **negotiation** of **left-hand bends** for some time now. The published documents have explained this as simply and clearly as possible, and Adam has delivered a presentation on the subject to both Tutor Foundation/Refresher courses this year and at a group presentation. The message is still not seeming to get through as we have had **criticism** from an independent **examiner**. Researching the test reports reveal a **pattern** of downgraded (of expected results) test results, primarily relating to **positioning for left hand bends** and **positioning in general**.

The purpose of this document is not to go over the contents of the recent publications. It is to give some practical advice for YOU as the coaches preparing associates for test.

Criticism

*Staying out in the **offside** position too long when entering a **left hand-bend**, compromising **SAFETY**. Remaining in the **offside** position on straight roads as a ‘**default position**’ even with oncoming vehicles on the opposing carriageway*

Allegation

*This is how you **train** your **associates** to position? /This is how you’ve been **taught by your tutor**?*

Do we teach this? Honest answer is probably historically, yes. The adage of ‘Right for a left hander’ is still a simple way to explain positioning and continues to be a simplistic way of discussing positioning. The associates hear this basic description and don’t take in the whole scenario we are trying to explore and get them to understand and want the simple route, rather than in-depth understanding – human nature – path of least resistance.

In respect of offside on ‘straight’ roads – we do encourage ‘commanding the road’. To help get a better understanding of positioning and particularly dealing with a left-hand bend consider the following advice and information;

Left-hand bends are potentially one of, if not the most dangerous manoeuvres a rider or driver can undertake.

Some background information - How wide is a standard British carriageway?

- While **7.3 metres** is the ideal baseline for **main roads**, widths vary across the UK network depending on the environment:
- **Trunk Roads and A-Roads:** Frequently built to the full **7.3-metre** standard, often featuring an additional 1-metre "hard strip" on each side for safety.
- **Urban Bus Routes:** Typically designed with lane widths around 3.2 metres to 3.5 metres to keep traffic moving smoothly while managing tight city spaces.
- **Residential Streets:** Often drop to a total width of 5.5 metres, allowing two cars to pass easily, though larger vehicles must slow down to squeeze by.
- **Country Lanes:** Can narrow down to 4.1 metres (or less), effectively functioning as a single lane with designated passing places.

There isn't a standard but taking the width of most of the 'main' roads to be around 7.3 metres, then **your side** of the road will be around **3.6 metres**.

This is the side you must be able to stop on in the distance you can see to be clear, safely.

RoadCraft discusses positions that can be used and their benefits or otherwise.

It states there are **three positions**.

These are;

- **Nearside**
- **Central**
- **Offside***

*(They must **NOT** be referred to as P.1, P.2, P.3 as these terms are not in RoadCraft.)*

Each of these positions is therefore a **third** of the carriageway width.

Associates need to understand the above and will only do so by passing the information to them, as *RoadCraft* does not go into this depth. It doesn't need to, this is why tutors are there to drill further down and deliver more knowledge and interpretation of *RoadCraft*. This isn't teaching by rote but is giving the associate more *tools in their toolbox*.

**Offside is the furthest right of YOUR OWN SIDE of the road. It must not to be confused with the term "off siding", a manoeuvre placing your vehicle on the opposing side of the road. This MUST NEVER be executed. The painted centre line of a carriageway should NEVER be crossed in normal road use.*

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Taking the width of your own side of the road as **3.6 metres** (approximately) then each position will be **1.2 metres**

The *flexibility* this allows for a *left-hand bend* means the approach to the bend does not have to be to the maximum extension – the centre line.

Even at the furthest left point of the offside position, there will be a safety margin of around a metre to the right. (*There are 2.4 metres to the left*)

Does the associate have to be at the maximum? **NO**

Associates must consider;

Bikes

- **Safety**
- **Stability**
- **View**
- **Reducing tightness of the bend**

Cars

- **Safety**
- **View**
- **Stability**

Are they still in the offside position? **Yes**

- Is it **Safe**? Yes, *but that is always relative. What can be seen, what cannot be seen, what can reasonably be expected to occur*
- Is it helping the vehicle to maintain **Stability** (bikes)? *Potentially. Tyre/grip trade off and use of a positive (maintenance) throttle*
- Is it providing a better **View**? *Potentially – but Never compromise Safety for Position. If there is **no advantage for view, surrender it.***
- (**Stability** is here for cars – see above)
- Is it **Reducing the tightness of the bend**? Yes. *There is still a **wider arc** than Central or Nearside positions*

Similar ‘rules’ can be applied to any of the positions, for right bends or even on relatively straight roads. Each position has a 1.2 metre margin to adjust for the optimal position.

- There is **no** such thing as a **default position**.
- The **System** explains that **Information** will lead to creating a **Plan** that will give a flexible approach to deal with **Hazards** by being in the **correct Position** to deal with them

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Appendices

“There are three road positions consider, as are explained (*in the diagram*)”
The pictorial diagram them describes –

- The Nearside Position
- The Central Position
- The Offside Position

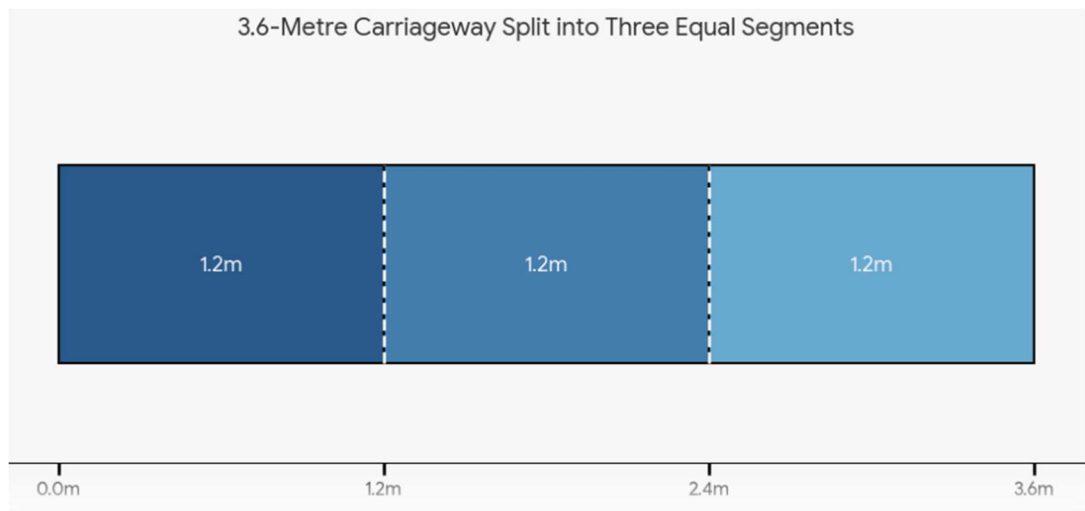
Whilst it doesn't use the terms One-Two-Three the implication of “*There are three positions...*” leads to the common use of P1/P2/P3, particularly when commentating as a form of brevity. Refrain, wherever possible from using this terminology or at the very least, explain that, for efficiency and brevity, the reason why you may refer to them as such.

The pictorial diagrams have the following explanations of their relevance;



The nearside position The benefits of this position are: • It gives early views through right-hand bends • It allows nearside views past lorries and other large vehicles • It allows extra space for oncoming vehicles • It's the best position for left hand turns when there are no other hazards Make sure the nearside road surface is sound and free of drains, debris, dust and grit before using it In Summary • RoadCraft states there are three positions • The positions on the road are described as Nearside Position, Central Position and Offside Position • It does not refer to them as position 1, 2, and 3. • Refrain from this terminology. • If it is used clarify what is meant and the reason for using it/them – brevity and efficiency • Some examiners may challenge your use of words – be prepared to explain before being challenged	The central position This is midway between the better part of the nearside edge and the centre line. The benefits of this position are: • It gives you good margins of safety on both sides • It allows you to change position to either side In wet weather, avoid the central position near junctions and on the final approach to bends, because oil and diesel tend to accumulate in it	The offside position The benefits of this position are: • It gives early views on the approach to left hand bends • It provides increased safety margins from nearside hazards • It's generally the best position for right hand turns Anticipate the possibility of large oncoming vehicles straddling the central line on bends and be prepared to move to the left.
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Nearside Position –
anywhere within this
area in the nearside
position and can be
used flexibly for
Safety

Central Position –
anywhere within this
area in the central
position and can be
used flexibly for
Safety

Offside Position –
anywhere within this
area in the offside
position and can be
used flexibly for
Safety