CARS, CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

• LOCAL USERS •

THE **SAFE** USE OF UNATTENDED RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS

SEE **TRACKS?** THINK **TRAIN!**

Iarnród Éireann
Irish Rail

Level Crossings are dangerous places –

Stop, Look, Listen, Live!

An Unattended Railway Level Crossing is one where the user opens and shuts the gates.

These level crossings are also commonly known as Accommodation Level Crossings. Some of them are located on public roads.

This booklet does not necessarily cover every situation that may arise in the course of using a level crossing.

It is the responsibility of the user to ensure that it is safe to cross and that the railway and other users of the railway are not endangered.

Knowing the Dangers

- Trains travel fast and cannot stop suddenly. A fast train may take between 1/2 mile and one mile to stop.
- Shut and fasten all gates at all times. Leaving gates open can result in children or animals wandering on to the line and may encourage unsuspecting drivers of vehicles to go straight on to the level crossing before checking that it is safe to do so. Unfamiliar crossing users or visiting public are more at risk when using Unattended Railway Level Crossings.
- Be very careful in windy weather as wind can mask the noise of approaching trains. Deafness, the use of earbuds or headphones and the use of car radios will affect your ability to hear approaching trains. Remember the wearing of ear protectors will also affect your ability to hear trains. Mobile phones must not be used during the process of working the crossing.
- Be aware that weather conditions such as mist, fog, or snow, as well as vegetation growth may affect the warning you receive of approaching trains.
- Always be very careful during the hours of darkness as confusion may arise between the lights of approaching cars and trains.
- Every time you cross the railway remember the **Stop, Look, Listen** rule.

WHEN CROSSING, FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN ON SIGNAGE DISPLAYED AT THE LEVEL CROSSING

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DRIVING CARS AND LIGHT VEHICLES (VANS), INCLUDING TRAILERS, ACROSS THE RAILWAY

- Make sure that your vehicle, including towbar and trailer, is in good mechanical condition and unlikely to stall on the crossing.
- Make sure that the handbrake is in good working order.
- Make sure that the vehicle is not fogged up inside and that all the windows are clear of snow, ice and dirt and that nothing is blocking your view.
- **Open** at least one window before crossing the railway.
- **Turn off** all radios, stereos and the like and remove any earbuds or headphones. Noise may mask the sound of an approaching train. Mobile phones must not be used during the process of working the crossing.
- Be aware of any dangers that the crossing may hold for you.
- Stop clear of the railway line where you get a good view along the track in both directions. Look for the approach of trains, especially in poor visibility or at night. Watch out for the light on an approaching train. When using the level crossing, open both gates before attempting to bring a vehicle across the railway line. Open the opposite gate first.

- Use the black and yellow marker posts, where provided, when stopping. If there are no such markers then stop at least 2 metres (6 feet) clear of the nearest rail.
- If in doubt, ring the number displayed on the red and yellow sign for further information.
- Should a vehicle suffer a breakdown or become grounded on the level crossing, make sure that everybody gets out and gets clear of the railway line, then telephone or otherwise warn Iarnród Éireann of the danger **immediately** by the best possible means.
- Having used the level crossing, make certain that both gates have been shut and fastened.

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PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS CROSSING THE RAILWAY

- When approaching the railway, pedestrians and cyclists should always remember the **stop, look and listen** rule.
- Pedestrians and cyclists on seeing an approaching train should wait and never run or cycle across the line in front of the train.
- When standing clear of the railway line keep at least 2 metres (six feet) from the nearest rail.
- Take care not to push a pram too close to the line when looking out for trains or while waiting for trains to pass.
- Children of primary school age, especially with bicycles, should never be allowed to cross the railway alone.
- Cyclists must dismount and walk across the line even if the gates are open.
- Should a bicycle wheel or the like become jammed on the crossing in the track, and should a train approach, then the bicycle should be abandoned and the person involved should move to a place of safety, clear of the railway line.
- Dogs must be kept on a lead when using a crossing.

- Pedestrians and cyclists should be alert to notice any problem with a level crossing and should telephone details of such to Iarnród Éireann.
- Always expect a train! Trains can come at any time. It is dangerous to try to 'predict' when a train might come by relying on the railway schedule, a railway signal or the position of the gates at a nearby railway crossing. A railway signal of any colour, or even an attended railway crossing gate placed across the railway, cannot tell you that it is safe to cross.
- Read all the signs at the crossing.
- Remove your headphones, earbuds, hood or any clothing that might affect your sight or hearing.
- Put away your mobile phone.
- Use the **Rail Cross Code** each time you cross.
- Never walk along the railway line.
- Obey traffic lights, where provided.
- Only cross at a marked railway crossing.
- Dismount if you are on a bicycle or horse.
- Hold onto children near the railway and keep dogs on a lead.
- If crossing with a pram, wheelchair or bicycle, take care to avoid getting the wheels caught in the tracks.
- Once you have safely crossed the railway, you must shut and fasten the gates. Even if you found the gates open when you arrived, you must shut and fasten them after you to protect others – **it's the law**. **Failure to shut and fasten the gates is dangerous and you could be prosecuted**.

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UNUSUAL MOVEMENTS ACROSS RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS

Contact Iarnród Éireann beforehand if you are:

- Arranging special events such as matches, funerals or processions that will involve crossing the railway,
- Driving an awkward vehicle – for example, a long, low, wide, heavy or slow vehicle, moving vehicles with dangerous, unusual or very heavy loads, crossing the railway with a crowd of people, and
- Crossing the railway when herding animals.

Use the phone number which you will find at the railway crossing.

If you are driving a very high vehicle and using a railway crossing with overhead electrified lines, such as on the DART network, please note that the general safe head-room is 5 metres.

EMERGENCIES AT RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS

If an animal strays onto the railway, or if a pram, wheelchair, bicycle or other vehicle gets stuck on the railway, you must take the following actions:

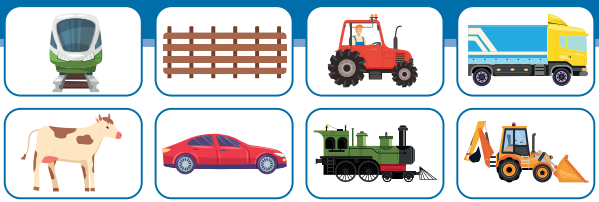
- get clear of the railway, leaving the animal, pram, wheelchair, bicycle or vehicle where it is,
- move everyone well clear of the railway,
- contact Iarnród Éireann using the telephone number which you will find on the instruction sign at the entrance to the crossing, say 'This is an Emergency', and
- state the identification number (crossing number) shown at the railway crossing.

This identification number is different for each railway crossing

Use the **RAIL CROSS CODE** each time you cross:
ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN!

Stop, look both ways and listen

- **Stop** – behind the white line.
- **Look both ways** – watching for the lights of approaching trains.
- **Listen for a train horn** - no radio, no earbuds or headphones!
- Give way to trains – let any approaching train pass, then look both ways again.
- When the railway is clear, cross quickly. Never stop on the railway.
- If there are gates, shut and fasten them after you – it's the law



DOs ✓	DON'Ts ✗
Always expect a train	Don't ever think it's safe to predict when the next train will come
Always use the Rail Cross Code at unattended railway crossings	Don't drive onto the railway until you can see enough free space on the other side
Always obey road signs and markings	Don't blindly follow a vehicle across the railway crossing
Always switch off music systems and put away mobile phones	Don't stop on the railway crossing
Always control children and animals in your care	Don't park and leave your vehicle near the railway crossing
Always dismount if you are a cyclist or horse rider	Don't overtake another vehicle on or when approaching the railway crossing
Always shut and fasten the gates after crossing the railway	Don't play, or wear hoods or headphones, on or near the railway tracks

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If you are a pedestrian and need to cross an unattended level crossing:

READ ALL THE INSTRUCTIONS PROVIDED AT THE CROSSING

Switch off music systems and do not use your phone whilst at the crossing.

Apart from being an offence, failure to use the crossing safely can lead to catastrophic consequences for you, those with you, and others. It is dangerous and such reckless actions, or inactions can have devastating effects for you, your family, and/or friends.

ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN

STOP, LOOK, LISTEN…

STOP – at least two meters before the railway

LOOK – right and left, watching for the lights of approaching trains

LISTEN – for a train horn or whistle

- Give way to trains
- When the railway is clear, cross quickly
- Open and close the gates each and every time you use a level crossing
- Cyclists MUST also dismount before travelling over level crossings

ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN

CONTACT US

This brochure can be downloaded from our website **www.irishrail.ie**.

For enquiries regarding the level crossing you use, or reporting damage to a level crossing infrastructure, contact the relevant Infrastructure Manager in your area:

ATHLONE
Covers the West of the country
090 648 7711

DUBLIN
Covers the North, East and South East of the country
01 703 3651

LIMERICK JUNCTION
Covers the South and South West of the country
062 51083

SEE **TRACKS?** THINK **TRAIN!**

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ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN

STOP, LOOK BOTH WAYS, LISTEN

WHEN THE RAILWAY IS CLEAR, CROSS QUICKLY

SHUT AND FASTEN THE GATES AFTER YOU – IT'S THE LAW!

REMEMBER
NEVER EVER STOP ON THE RAILWAY
AND ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN

- ALWAYS EXPECT A TRAIN
- CROSS SAFELY
- ALWAYS SHUT THE GATES AFTER YOU

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