SERVICE AND EMERGENCY VEHICLES

• STATE & VOLUNTARY 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.
- Trains can be very silent and this is particularly the case on modern continuously welded rails. 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.
- Crossing the line with slow, heavy, low-slung or cumbersome vehicles, vehicles conveying dangerous substances and with herds of animals needs special protection.
- 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 tow bar 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.

- 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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DRIVING LORRIES ACROSS THE RAILWAY

- Make sure that the lorry, including 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 cab windows are 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.
- **Turn off** all radios, stereos and the like and remove personal stereo headphones. Noise may mask the sound of an approaching train. Mobile phones must not be used during the process of working the crossing.
- Ensure that no tow-hitch or other attachments will foul the railway line as you traverse the level crossing.
- Be aware of any dangers that the level 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. **Listen** for horns or the sound of 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.

- When crossing the railway with a light lorry you may ring Iarnród Éireann (see telephone number at crossing) to obtain information on train movements. Use the yellow telephone where provided.
- Permission to cross the line must be obtained from Iarnród Éireann for such movements across the railway (see telephone number at crossing).
- Should a lorry 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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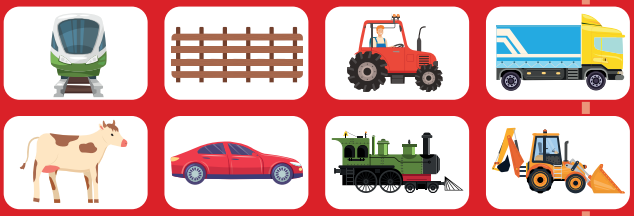
UNUSUAL MOVEMENTS ACROSS RAILWAY LEVEL CROSSINGS

Contact Iarnród Éireann beforehand if you are:

- Driving an awkward vehicle – for example, a long, low, wide, heavy or slow vehicle
- Moving vehicles with dangerous, unusual or very heavy loads

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.



DRIVING, SLOW, HEAVY, LOW-SLUNG AND CUMBERSOME VEHICLES ACROSS THE RAILWAY

- You must obtain permission to cross the railway line from Iarnród Éireann in advance and in good time. You should advise the type of vehicle you intend bringing across the line and you should also advise the likely duration of the movement as special arrangements may have to be made for the safe use of the level crossing. Always advise Iarnród Éireann when the level crossing has been safely traversed.
- **Never** attempt to cross the railway with a vehicle which may ground on the railway line. You could cause a **serious accident**. You may also cause delays to train services while the problem is being resolved.
- Safe passage with an unladen trailer does not guarantee that all will be well on the return journey, if the vehicle is laden.
- Make sure that the level crossing gates are sufficiently wide for the vehicle to pass without becoming jammed and without damaging either the gates or their supports.
- 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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SPECIAL TIPS FOR TRUCK DRIVERS

- Turn off the radio.
- Be aware that a train can't stop immediately.
- Be aware that a train weighs much more than a truck.
- Be aware that a train extends over the rails.
- Adapt your driving to weather conditions.
- Be aware of the length of your vehicle.
- Expect a train from either direction.

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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