

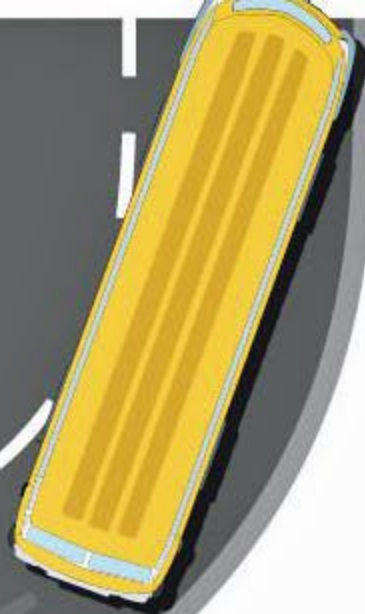
POSITION

SPEED

GEAR

ACCELERATION

INFORMATION



# IPSGA

TO COMPLETE OUR GUIDE TO EACH PHASE OF IPSGA, WE DEAL WITH THE LAST ELEMENT IN THE SYSTEM: ACCELERATION

Until now, the considerations looked at have all been about one thing: identifying and preparing for a hazard. We have seen it, sorted out the line we wish to follow through it, the speed that we believe correct for it and matched our gear to that speed. Now it is time to do something different – actually ride or drive through it.

There's an important thing to understand about acceleration. In this context, it means pressing the accelerator

or twisting the throttle. Acceleration doesn't necessarily mean going faster. It may mean that, but it may also mean applying power to maintain a constant speed (pressing the accelerator or twisting the throttle enough to prevent the car or bike from slowing down, but not enough to build up speed).

Those with long memories may recall that the old (pre-1992) versions of *Roadcraft* had two points on the diagram illustrating the system of

car or bike control of the vehicle turning to make this point – labelled A1 and A2. Point A1 was at the start of the vehicle's curved path; point A2 was where it had (just) properly straightened out again. This is an illustration of the point – the simple concept was that if the road is dry, acceleration can actually happen from point A1. However, at A1 it may be necessary to keep speed constant if the road is slippery, only actually going faster from point A2.

In the variety of circumstances that can be found on the roads, there is inevitably some variation in how acceleration is used. It could be that limited acceleration is appropriate, or acceleration in part but not all of the path. Probably the most common variation is that of accelerating as a limit point 'opens' – moves further away – allowing the throttle to be twisted gently or the accelerator squeezed similarly. Like position and speed, this phase is not about a point on the map, but about a path and how it is travelled.

Acceleration takes the vehicle out of the hazard and into the next piece of road. It concludes dealing with the particular hazard, and sends the driver or rider off to deal with the next one.

## BIKES, BUSES AND TRUCKS

As with all other phases of the system, information gathering and giving go on throughout.

There are some particular issues that affect vehicles other than cars

that deserve a mention – and deserve understanding by car drivers, too.

**Motorcycles:** The use of acceleration is effectively the same on a bike as in a car. Some of the dynamics are different, but the end result is that it works the same way for the rider as the driver.

**Buses, lorries, vans:** If you have got the rest right, this phase is the easy part. It is more often the case in a large vehicle that you delay the start of acceleration, the reason being perhaps most easily understood by picturing a city-centre bus full of standing passengers going round a corner. If the speed is right at entry into the curve, accelerating will mean that

standing people are destabilised as the bus speeds up – so waiting until the bus is straight and settled before accelerating is the obvious option.

**Judgement** of how much to press the pedal or twist the grip is very important, and combines with sensitive judgement of its timing.

Of course, as the driver or rider leaves one hazard safely, applying acceleration to do so, they will already be thinking about the next one, gathering information from this early stage, adding it to that already gained, and starting to plan how to deal with the new hazard using the same sequence.

**'Acceleration takes the vehicle out of the hazard and into the next piece of road. It concludes dealing with the particular hazard, and sends the driver or rider off to deal with the next one'**