



Speed Restrictions - Residential Areas

ROAD SAFETY FACT SHEET

For more information contact Council's Road Safety Officer on 8757 9000

50 kmph has been the urban speed limit in all built-up areas in NSW since November 2003.

Many drivers are doing the right thing and travelling at or below 50 kmph in residential streets. Unfortunately, Council tests show some drivers travel in excess of 60 kmph in many residential streets.

Why is 50 kmph the limit?

The faster you go, the longer it takes to stop and the more damage you do in a crash, particularly to children and the elderly.

Crash statistics show that when struck by a vehicle travelling at 60 kmph, only 15% of children survive. When struck by a vehicle travelling at 50 kmph, 55% of children survive.

So, the slower you go the less likely you are to kill a child if they run, walk or stumble in front of your vehicle. This is important for elderly pedestrians as well. They often need more time to cross the road, so travelling at or below 50 kmph allows enough time for them to cross the road safely.

In some residential streets it is better to travel at even less than the 50 kmph speed limit, because your vision of the footpath and driveways can often be hidden behind trees, garbage bins or other parked vehicles.

Speed = Distance = Time

The laws of physics prove that the faster you go, the further you travel while you decide what to do in an emergency. For example, when a pedestrian steps out from behind a shrub, garbage bin or parked car, from the time you see them, it will take you about a second to lift your foot off the accelerator.

In that one second, at 50 kmph, you'll have travelled 13.9 metres. At 60 kmph, you'll have travelled 16.7 metres - That's only if you are alert and concentrating on driving - at this point, you're still yet to stop!

At 50 kmph, at least another 11 metres will have passed before you've come to a stop. That's more than 25 metres to stop once you see the person. If you were travelling the extra 10 kmph, from the time you see the person it you'll have travelled at least 32 metres before stopping. These times and distances apply to all drivers and riders on normal roads.

The slower you go the more time you have to see the pedestrian and stop.

Pay attention to what pedestrians are doing on the footpath, especially children. If you are distracted by something in the car you may not even see a small child before you run over them.

To avoid or reduce the chances of hitting pedestrians:

- Be alert - scan your surroundings.
- Drive at or below the 50kmph limit in residential zones.
- Remain calm and don't skid.
- Ensure your tyres and brakes are in good working condition.
- Expect children and other vehicles to do the unexpected.

