

50km/h speed limit

Local street  
speed limit  
in Queensland.

Where  
When How



Queensland  
Government  
Queensland Transport  
Main Roads

From 1 February 2003 all motorists in Queensland must drive no faster than **50km/h** on local streets. This includes regional Queensland. This lower speed limit will help reduce crashes and make the local streets in your community safer and more pleasant for everyone. This brochure will tell you everything you need to know about the speed limit... and why it's so important that we all stick to it.

## **Will 50km/h streets be signposted?**

**No.** The **50km/h** local street speed unsigned limit will apply in the same way as the current unsigned built-up area speed limit of 60km/h. Which means that from 1 February you must drive no faster than **50km/h**, unless you see a speed limit sign indicating otherwise.

**If you don't see a speed limit sign in a built-up area, don't drive faster than 50km/h.**

## **Which streets will have a 50km/h limit?**

The **50km/h** speed limit will only apply to local streets. A local street is one that is mainly used to provide direct access to homes and private properties. These are the streets where people live, children play, people walk their dogs and where parents walk children home from school. Industrial and commercial areas also have local streets.



**The 50km/h  
speed limit rule  
is simple.**

**In built-up  
areas drive  
no faster  
than 50km/h,  
unless you see  
a sign stating  
otherwise.**

## **How will the 50km/h local street speed limit be enforced?**

As with the current speed limit, the **50km/h** local street speed limit will be enforced by the Queensland Police Service by generally using traditional radar and hand-held laser devices.

In areas outside South East Queensland there will be a three month conditional amnesty period accompanying the introduction of the **50km/h** local street speed limit. This amnesty will last from 1 February 2003 until 30 April 2003 and will only apply to unsigned local streets. Drivers travelling in a dangerous manner or at high speeds will still be prosecuted during this amnesty period.

## **Why do local streets need a lower limit?**

To increase safety for all road users. We all know that the faster a vehicle travels, the longer it takes to stop in an emergency. Other factors such as road conditions, bad weather, poor visibility and other traffic can make it even more difficult to stop. A lower speed limit in local streets enables motorists to adjust their driving when unexpected things like a child running onto the road or a vehicle backing out of a driveway occur.

Additionally, a **50km/h** speed limit will help create a more comfortable and pleasant lifestyle in our local communities.

## Will reducing the speed limit by 10km/h really make that big a difference?

**Yes.** About one-third of all crashes resulting in injury occur on local streets. Every kilometre per hour over the limit not only affects whether a crash happens, but how severe it is. By the time a car travelling at **50km/h** has stopped under emergency braking, a car braking from 60km/h would still be travelling at about 40km/h. If hit at this speed, a pedestrian has an almost 60 per cent chance of being killed. A car travelling at **50km/h** can stop 12–16 metres sooner than one travelling at 60km/h.



*The difference in stopping distance between 60km/h and 50km/h is 12–16 metres.*

## How do we compare to overseas?

Research shows that a reduction in speed limits in overseas countries has played a major role in decreasing the number and severity of crashes on local streets.

Australia currently has a high General Urban Speed Limit (60km/h) compared to most other developed countries. New Zealand, Canada, Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom and France all have an urban speed limit of **50km/h**. Many states in the USA also have a local street speed limit of **50km/h** or less.

# 50km/h local street speed limit.

To help remind drivers to travel no faster than **50km/h**, signs will be placed on roads entering Queensland and at various strategic locations throughout Queensland. These signs don't look like normal speed signs and will not be on every **50km/h** street. They are purely a reminder to drivers that when they enter a built-up area they must travel no faster than **50km/h**, unless they see a sign indicating otherwise.

## How do I find out the speed limit on my street?

In built-up areas, unless you see a sign telling you otherwise, the speed limit on your street is most likely to be **50km/h**. However, if you are still unsure, many councils will be holding public displays showing maps indicating the new speed limits. Please contact your local council for further information.

## Will a lower limit increase travel time?

Reducing the speed limit to **50km/h** on local streets will have little, if any, effect on overall travel times. This is because only a small part of most trips involve travel on local streets.

## How are speed limits set?

Different roads have different traffic situations.

These depend on such things as:

- the number and configuration of traffic lanes
- density and type of development
- the amount of on-road parking
- access arrangements to properties
- the presence or otherwise of traffic signals
- the accident patterns that have occurred.

**A lower speed limit  
in local streets...**

**enables motorists  
to adjust their  
driving for the  
'unexpected'.**

Lowering the local street speed limit in Queensland is just one change that has occurred throughout the state after reviewing all these factors. Most of the road network has undergone – and will continue to undergo – speed limit reviews. Speed limits have been increased on some roads and decreased on others. These changes ensure speed limits are consistent and credible. It is only through these reviews and changes that we can be assured that we are constantly striving to improve safety and help reduce Queensland’s road toll.



## **Road safety is a big responsibility.**

As drivers, pedestrians and cyclists we all have a right to use the roads. But we also have a responsibility to use them safely and legally.

The effectiveness of the **50km/h** local street speed limit will ultimately rely on a commitment from all of us to slow down to help increase our safety and the safety of others.

**The 50km/h speed limit rule is simple –  
in built-up areas drive no faster than 50km/h,  
unless you see a sign stating otherwise.**

**For more information on speed limits applying to streets  
in your area please contact your local council.**

**For more general information call Queensland Transport on 13 23 80  
or visit the road safety website at [www.roadsafety.net](http://www.roadsafety.net)**

For assistance with English translations  
call TIS Translating and Interpreting Service on 13 14 50

