

An answer to pretty much every /r/Sydney self-post

Contents

[Entertainment](#)

[Where can I meet you guys?](#)

[I want to visit sydney what can I do?](#)

[I have less than 12 hours in Sydney, what can i do?](#)

[Accommodation and Travel](#)

[I want to find a house/flatmate/hotel/hostel in sydney](#)

[I want to use public transport in Sydney](#)

[E-scooters E-skateboards - are they legal?](#)

[I want to avoid being fined by public transport officers. What can I do?](#)

[I'm a tourist. should I buy a ticket or opal card?](#)

[I want to drive in NSW.](#)

[Tips for driving and parking in Sydney](#)

[Major foreign road rule changes](#)

[Do you get a paper license if you apply for a driver's license?](#)

[I want to buy a car in Sydney, what insurance/inspection slips do i need?](#)

[Which mobile phone plan should I have?](#)

[Other useful Subreddits](#)

[Crime and Punishment](#)

[How do I avoid being stabbed, punched etc?](#)

[I want to smoke weed/buy drugs/do something else illegal](#)

[How do I avoid being searched by police when their sniffer dogs make a positive indication?](#)

[How do I avoid being arrested/beaten by police?](#)

[Example:](#)

[I'm a visitor, what type of "Police crackdowns" occur?](#)

[What type of "crimes" occur in Sydney?](#)

[Minimum Age and entry](#)

[Around Sydney](#)

[What's the logo/sticker I see everywhere?](#)

[What are all these markings on the footpath?](#)

[Where is a good place to get a good haircut?](#)

[Where is a good place to get something to eat?](#)

[I smell smoke, where is the fire?](#)

[Acceptable forms of ID](#)

[What is that reflective thing/floating balcony that sticks out of the building in Central Park?](#)

Cultural Issues

[Is Sydney/Australia racist?](#)

[In Australia, is everything out to kill you?](#)

Employment

[Can reddit give me a job?](#)

[I'm coming to Australia on a visa that requires me to harvest fruit or work in a regional/rural community](#)

Favours [of the non sexual variety]

[I want you to do something for me...](#)

[Can reddit take me around sydney?](#)

[I have a question that doesn't really deserve creating a post, what do I do?](#)

[Can reddit do something for me?](#)

[I need some advice](#)

[Other useful Subreddits](#)

Arriving in Sydney

[What's the cheapest way to get to/from the airport?](#)

[Should I expect issues with customs?](#)

[What can i bring into Australia?](#)

[Cheapest way to be picked up \(by a friend\) from the Airport?](#)

TLDR

Page created to support [/r/Sydney](#) and [/r/NSW](#)

[FAQ](#)

[Accommodation](#)

[Transportation](#)

[Daytrip Megathread](#)

[Cars Guide](#)

Questions in regards to this page - contact [Henry](#)

Questions for the community - post on [/r/Sydney](#)

If it's a basic question, please post in the Daily Discussion Thread stickied at the top of [/r/Sydney](#)

The owners accept no responsibility due to bad information and was provided on good faith. We want you to have a good time in Sydney, so please use this as a basis for your own research . I do not take a cut/commission/kickback from any links posted below

Entertainment

Where can I meet you guys?

Reddit meetups, trivia nights, and sydney meetups (check out the sidebar)

I want to visit sydney what can I do?

[DAYTRIP MEGATHREAD](#)

I have less than 12 hours in Sydney, what can i do?

If it's more than 12 hours, look at the [DAYTRIP MEGATHREAD](#). If it's less than 12 hours, take a train from the airport (return) to circular quay. Get off and walk towards the opera house (with views of the bridge). You'll likely have luggage so you won't be able to go far, however, if you're game, the day trips in the daytrip megathread will overlap. The cafes along circular quay will be really expensive. Anything on the south side of the Cahill Expressway (i.e. with no views) will be cheaper. If you're picky/budget there is a supermarket [here](#). It's closed on weekends though. The basement of [The Gateway](#) also has a rather large foodcourt. The other option is to take the ferry to Manly and back. At the very least you'll see Sydney by boat.

Accommodation and Travel

[Accommodation FAQ](#)

[Transportation Support](#)

I want to find a house/flatmate/hotel/hostel in sydney

See [Accommodation FAQ](#)

I want to use public transport in Sydney

See [Transportation](#)

E-scooters E-skateboards - are they legal?

[Powered foot scooters and skateboards cannot be registered and can only be used on private land](#)

But are cops just turning a blind eye? No

Be aware there are significant fines if caught. It's essentially an unregistered motor vehicle, you're driving without a licence, on the footpath. etc etc

I want to avoid being fined by public transport officers. What can I do?

Step 1: Have a valid ticket. If you don't know what a valid ticket is, then have a look on the [transport nsw website](#).

- If you're an adult, then buy a glorious [Opal card](#). It should work pretty much everywhere, with the exception of a few buses in very regional areas.
- If you're a child (4-15), then you can have a child Opal card.
- If you're >15 then your school will issue you (you may need to apply) with a [student opal card](#).
- If you're a student (Uni/Tafe etc) then you [either need to apply for a Opal concession card. OR buy a concession ticket with proof of entitlement](#).

Step 2: If you don't have a valid [NSW concession card on you](#) (i.e. physically in your hands on the bus), then you can **NOT** use a concession ticket to travel. You need to buy an adult ticket. Yes you may have a concession card, you may even be entitled to one, you might even have one at home. You need to buy an ADULT ticket.

I'm a tourist, should I buy a ticket or opal card?

The airport line is semi-private and attracts a \$14 gate fee if you travel to domestic or international airport stations. This is in ADDITION to the train fee. So you're already past the minimum cost of the card (\$10).

Given the costs associated with leaving the airport (especially as a family), you should weigh up the costs.

[What's the cheapest way to get to/from the airport?](#)

The NSW government has made it [quite difficult to get a refund](#) on your Opal card (unlike London Oyster where you can get a cash refund at the airport). They have changed the minimum Top Up amounts to \$10, so that's one saving grace.

From 2019 you can no longer get through the airport gates with a negative balance. **To buy an Opal card (at the airport) you need to top up \$35 (per card).**

I want to drive in NSW.

See the RMS website (previously known as the RTA/RMS), particularly the licensing section.

If you reside in NSW, you need a NSW license, and a NSW registered vehicle. Different states have different laws, registration and licensing schemes. See the RMS website.

Note: front end payments and queries are handled by [Service NSW](#)

Tips for driving and parking in Sydney

- Road users [handbook](#) (previously known as the learner handbook) details pretty much every road rule and is available in [multiple languages](#).
- The "[Practice](#)" [Driver Knowledge Test](#) is exactly the same as the real test (without the fees), and you can do it as many times as you like.
- For drivers who are required to do the Hazard Perception Test, the [South Australian Practice Test](#) uses the exact same footage for much [not all] of the "practical" part of the test. The questions about the road rules are covered in the HPT handbook, and the Road users handbook (linked above)

Major foreign road rule changes

- Always keep left. Over 80km/hr (and when signposted) it's an offence not to keep left - except when overtaking*.
- As a general guideline, the speed limit is 50km/hr in residential areas - **unless signposted.**
- During school zone time periods, the speed limit is 40km/hr - this is strictly enforced. Note: school zone times and dates are set by the government, irrespective of if the kids are at school.



- (UK) You need to park facing the direction of travel. I.e. if you want to park on the right hand side of the road (on a 2 way street) - you must do a U-turn and park facing the correct direction
- (USA) You cannot turn on Red (unless it's specifically signposted)
- (USA) When driving, we do not have "probable cause". Police are allowed to [legally] pull vehicles over, license check, breathalyse, and check the vehicle for roadworthiness for **any reason**. It is common (particularly on Saturday nights for the police to pull over a line of 10 cars and breathalyse all drivers) - what the locals call a "booze bus".
- We have a lot of roundabouts in Australia. It's worth [reading this page](#)
- Indicating is required by law, but doesn't give you right of way to merge.
- Our drink drink driving limit is 0.05 BAC for a fully licensed driver (i.e. you need to be under). However, **you should check the requirements for an interstate/overseas driver** as this limit may be less (or zero) - Don't assume.
- Fines are significant here, particularly for speeding or running red lights. If you're caught too far above the speed limit, you car can be confiscated/impounded and/or your license immediately revoked

Do you get a paper license if you apply for a driver's license?

Licenses are printed in one central place and posted out. Saves them money, and reduces fraud. The piece of paper is valid for a few weeks until your license arrives in the post. It does not have a photo printed on the paper license.

RMS buildings are even harder to find. Postal licenses are the norm.

I want to buy a car in Sydney, what insurance/inspection slips do i need?

[Cars guide](#)

I have really tried my best to keep this accurate, but please do your research.

Which mobile phone plan should I have?

In Australia we use the "sim" card system. \$2 "Pre paid" cards are common for tourists as once the credit runs out, you do not incur a bill. [All our networks have a range of frequencies](#). It's worth checking willmyphonework.net or similar, and find out if any or all of the 3 networks below are compatible with your phone.

There are 3 main companies: Telstra (partially government owned), Optus, and Vodafone. Telstra has the best coverage, but is also the most expensive. The inverse for Vodafone.

There are a number of other companies that run on the above companies networks, these are 3rd party sellers. They may have their own deals, but ultimately, they operate on one of the above networks (hence coverage issues may apply).

Be mindful that resellers may not be entitled to all spectrums/bandwidth/prioritisation of the original network. I have noticed a difference in the coverage maps of a reseller (woolworths mobile) and telstra. This has also been noticed by other site members.

"Will i survive in Sydney with Vodafone?" - Yes. VF has generally put their towers where people are located (major cities/regional centres etc), they don't provide blanket coverage to every square meter of australia. You could probably drive for a few hours away from sydney before running into reception issues. If anything it would just be "spotty" coverage on the highway, and as soon as you enter a town, you'd get reception again. It's not for everyone, but it's not horrific like some people think.

How does a prepaid card work? - buy a sim card (generally \$2 from a supermarket). The sim card will generally be multi sized, and you just push out the edges for the correct size for your

phone. Then turn on the phone and go to the website listed on the sim card brochure. You can generally pay with credit card without requiring an alternative internet connection.

Main Companies	Most commonly known MVNOs (Resellers)
Telstra	Woolworths, Boost, Aldi
Optus	Amaysim, Vaya
Vodafone (aka '3')	TPG, Kogan, Lebara

(Subject to change - These are not the complete list of MVNOs, just some of the well known ones)

Other useful Subreddits

- [/r/SydneyTravel](https://www.reddit.com/r/SydneyTravel)

Crime and Punishment

How do I avoid being stabbed, punched etc?

It's a bit of a media beat-up at the moment. Sydney is a pretty safe place. Not loitering outside nightclubs drunk in early mornings seems to reduce the risk significantly. [discussion](#)

I want to smoke weed/buy drugs/do something else illegal

Try one of the other subreddits, your post gets removed.

How do I avoid being searched by police when their sniffer dogs make a positive indication?

Don't do illicit drugs with strong odors.

How do I avoid being arrested/beaten by police?

You have to work fairly hard to get arrested or physically restrained by the police. (see example)

1. [Obey the law](#) - *this includes having a valid rail ticket when on train property*
2. Don't act like a dick in public.
3. Understand the basic [police powers](#)
4. If you've broken the law, and the police have requested your details, telling them to fuck off is a good way to either get arrested, or an additional fine.
5. Don't use pseudo legal theories like "free land". Don't use american constitutional law as a basis for anything.

Example:

It's against the law in *many* built up areas to [drink in public](#). [Alcohol free areas are mostly signposted](#), but as a general rule, if you want to pre-drink on the way to an event, you're probably in an alcohol restricted area. If you're caught drinking, odds are you'll get told to pour it out and dispose of the bottles. If you drink from the bottle after being told to dispose of it, or you tell them to fuck off, you'll find yourself receiving a fine for drinking in a restricted area, or offensive language. If you refuse to give your information, then you may find yourself arrested until they can identify who you are, and additionally receive a penalty for failing to provide

details. The police *generally* don't want to arrest people as it takes up time/resources, but if you go out of your way to be a dick, you'll probably find yourself being treated like one.

Australia is a bureaucratic country, and therefore the police *generally* don't want to escalate a situation as it creates a mountain of paperwork (particularly if weapons are required). As you can see in the example above, they'll do almost anything to avoid "jailing" you. But, I wouldn't go out trying to test that theory.

I'm a visitor, what type of "Police crackdowns" occur?

Police regularly fine people for [Jaywalking](#) in the CBD. The second most common "crackdown" is drug dogs* around CBD stations and major connections like Strathfield.

"If you aren't aware enough to see the police standing in uniform at each side of the crossing, you aren't paying enough attention to your environment and probably shouldn't be crossing the road against the lights" [source](#)

A [drug dog indication](#) can be enough "reasonable suspicion" to be searched. This is controversial, but is still law at this time.

What type of "crimes" occur in Sydney?

Sydney is a safe place. With "strict" gun control, strong weapon laws and established social security, there is a reasonably low amount of crime. Having said that, it doesn't hurt to be risk averse.

The basics like leaving your doors unlocked [or open] or wallets out in the open in public areas is asking for opportunist people to take your shit. As with any overseas travel, don't [put all your eggs in one basket](#). It's easier to be a bit cautious, than having to visit your embassy and get an emergency passport...money etc

(sorted highest to lowest likelihood)

- [Drunken Fights](#) - Not loitering around the CBD when drunk is the easiest way to avoid fights.
- Theft - Don't leave items lying around, or in plain view. If you're going to take photos, don't leave your camera on the bench out of view. Common sense goes a long way and prevents opportunist thieves.
 - Don't leave expensive equipment in cars (generally this is an exclusion in your travel insurance). Make sure it's not visible through the windows.
 - Beach thefts: Don't take all your stuff to the beach and leave it in the sand. There are organised groups of people who take everything. If you don't want to

- fork out an extortionate amount for a locker, then only go to the beach with your opal and credit card. For the love of god, don't bring your passport to the beach
- If you have a several thousand dollar bike, don't leave it outside, even "just for a minute". Consider keeping it locked in your garage too.
 - Sales scams that generally involve the sale of second hand goods. FB marketplace, gumtree, sometimes ebay etc are the popular places to sell/buy. Only ever deal with cash in hand, never paypal and physically pick up goods. (this applies to all of Aus)
 - General Issues with nutters. Occasionally you'll run into people who want to have an argument (which widely get published on youtube/news websites), particularly on public transport. Just don't engage and move away if you feel unsafe. "Triggers" generally surround topics such as politics, aboriginals or welfare (centrelink). If a random tries to discuss these topics with you, just don't engage.
 - Things like muggings or pickpockets are very **very unlikely**. Pickpockets can happen in crowded areas. Muggings generally happen in secluded areas late at night. From what I understand, small international students are generally targeted.
 - There is a *stereotype* that asians carry lots of cash. Whether or not this is true, there isn't really a reason to be carrying a heap of money around. Almost every single store takes card, even some restaurants take wepay. If you are in a popular area, there will be an ATM a very short distance away.
 - I encourage people to carry say \$15-20 in their wallet. If you lose it, someone can use that money to buy an express post envelope and post it all back (i've done this at least twice). But \$15-20 is not a "win" to a mugger.
 - I encourage everyone to generally be risk averse, and carry as little as possible. Not just because of theft, but in case you lose your wallet. I once *lost* my wallet and although there was little cash, I carried every card I had, and had to replace every single one. I did not require 17 membership cards, and most businesses have your card linked to your name/number.
 - Same with computers and phones, just sync with the cloud. You leave it somewhere, it gets dropped, it's stolen, it bursts into flames... you still have your thesis.

Issues like street scammers and pickpockets (like you would find in Europe) are a very rare occurrence. As a general rule, *if it's too good to be true, it probably is*.

My Experience: I do not know anyone who has ever been "pickpocketed" or "mugged" in Sydney. Most low level petty crime is generally opportunist (i.e. you leave your wallet on the sand while you go swimming, or go to the bathroom leaving your x thousand dollar laptop on the bench outside). Thieves generally go for "low hanging fruit" such as visible bags left in vehicles, unlocked doors, and unsecured items left out in the open. Home burglaries exist, usually involve making contact with a cover story to see if anyone are home. When home invasions are announced on the news, I get a whiff of gangs/drugs/organised crime.

Buying/Shopping - on the most part, Australia is very forward on its consumer rights. Subsequently pricing is *generally* clear and concise. Scams involving 100 euro drinks, massive taxi bills are unheard of here. You should generally ask the cost prior of using most services if you are unsure of the costs. Bartering/negotiations are somewhat rare.... particularly at stores where the price is clearly indicated. If you're buying electronics and you want to barter, you'll speak to a salesperson prior to going to the till to pay for it.

Witnessing Serious Crime

[Very rare - i don't know anyone personally who has witnessed serious crime]

If you see something serious, leave the area, and call 000 to report it immediately.

If the police are there, leave straight away. Don't stand around to watch. The police have bodycams, and every single business has cameras these days. Let someone else get the valuable youtube points.

There was an incident in 2016 where there was a crazy person with a knife, and people watched police subdue him. [3 bystanders were shot](#). This isnt a political argument about policing, it's simply to look after your own safety. Someone running around with a knife, and not concerned about being shot, is unpredictable - they will have no issue injuring you or your loved ones. Standing down-wind, and breathing OC spray is not a nice experience either.

Minimum Age and entry

Minimum age for all licensed premises is 18 years old. At 18 in Australia you're considered an adult and can drink, gamble and undertake in a variety of adult services. Age of consent for anyone <18 is detailed [here](#). Prostitution is legalised/licensed, but there are strict laws in regards to solicitation.

Other useful Subreddits

- [/r/Auslaw](#) - Note: They are unable to give [legal advice](#)

Around Sydney

What's the [logo/sticker](#) I see everywhere?



Defqon - a dance festival

What are all [these markings](#) on the footpath?



They indicate pipes, communications, electricity, water etc buried underneath the footpath/road.
[source](#)

Where is a good place to get a good haircut?

Try the countless [haircut threads](#)

Cheapest: Travel to parramatta/hurstville and find a small business there (<\$10). In the CBD, near central station, if you leave on the south side and take the long tunnel towards TAFE/ABC/UTS, there is a small barber shop that does \$10 haircuts.

My favourite: [this place](#) opposite world square on george st

More expensive: [Sterlings Barbers](#) in Surrey Hills is highly regarded (Tony is the man to see apparently - generally bookings required). [More](#) responses

Where is a good place to get something to eat?

[Grimlock](#) compiled a [great google maps document](#) of places redditors recommended.

[Discussion](#) & [Recommendations thread](#)

I smell smoke, where is the fire?

<http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me>

'[Back burning](#)' occurs quite a bit in Sydney, so expect some smoke in summer. Particularly to the North and South sides of Sydney outside the CBD

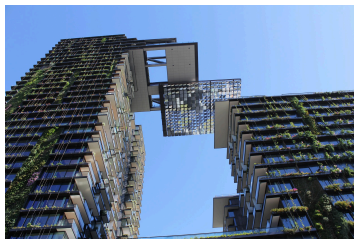
Acceptable forms of ID

Licensed venues will require you to have photo ID to get in. The only suitable forms of ID are:

- State Drivers License (from Australia)
- State Proof of Age card (from Australia)
- Passport (Australian, or International).

There are a number of products sold that (may or may not) claim to allow you to use them as IDs, these include [Australia Post Keypass](#), International "student identity cards". Licensed premises are under no obligation to accept these as valid IDs, and have been known to turn away people at their own discretion. Australian University student cards and international drivers licenses also fall into this category of "unlikely" to get in.

What is that [reflective thing/floating balcony](#) that sticks out of the building in Central Park?



It's an "architectural feature" that reflects sunlight for the area between the buildings.

Cultural Issues

Is Sydney/Australia racist?

[/u/dugongofjustice](#) summed it up well [here](#)

Basically there will always be assholes who give you shit for being Asian, just like how I get shit for being a woman, but generally speaking Australia is a progressive country which has, for the most part, accepted multiculturalism as one of its strengths (...).

Read more responses [here](#) , [here](#) , and [here](#)

In Australia, is everything out to kill you?

Contrary to popular [reddit] belief, **Australia is a pretty safe place**. Most/all "deadly" animals will only attack when threatened (cornered/startled etc). Snakes have very good hearing (via skin vibrations) and will generally hide before you even see them. As a precaution, don't go putting your hands into (or under) hard objects you can't see - logs, rocks, dumped sheet steel etc. If you're out camping, don't leave your boots outside, keep your sleeping bag rolled up during the day, and your tent zipper done up. All spiders are looking for a cool place to chill, and aren't interested in humans.

Most larger animals will run away as soon as you get too close. But i'd strongly recommend keeping your distance, as they are wild animals (unpredictable), and they have the ability to injure you. A "selfie" with a kangaroo might be nice, but not so nice is a kick in the face. (*or the hassle of a rabies shot if you get scratched/bitten*)

Most Australian animals (i.e. the ones you want to touch/photograph) are protected by law. There are significant fines for trapping/killing/injuring them. Feeding wild animals is **strongly discouraged** (*unsure of the legality*). Animal cruelty can attract jail time, and you can be banned from Australia.

Inside the home - as mentioned above, spiders are looking for a cool place to chill. Their goal is to catch bugs, not be interrupted by humans, hence run away as soon as they're unsettled. You can relocate them by catching with a plastic container and a piece of cardboard. Removing them with a vacuum also works. Pests (cockroaches, mice etc) are attracted by food sources, so removing the food sources reduces the chance of getting them in the house.

Employment

Can reddit give me a job?

Maybe, but you need to at least tell people what you do normally, your skills, qualifications etc.

I'm coming to Australia on a visa that requires me to harvest fruit or work in a regional/rural community

Firstly, look up the details of your visa, you may be limited to work in regions based on their postcode. [Harvest trail](#) and [WWOOF](#) are good sites to research.

Favours [of the non sexual variety]

I want you to do something for me...

....deliver something for me or pose in front of something like a harbor bridge holding a sign to show how much I love my significant other

No we won't do it, especially for someone with only 1 karma point.

<https://www.airtasker.com/>

Or just learn to photoshop and add your writings to these images: [Bieber](#) , [Michelle Obama](#) , [Random Girl holding a picture frame](#) , [Sheldon Cooper](#)

Can reddit take me around sydney?

Probably not, especially for someone with only 1 karma point.

I have a question that doesn't really deserve creating a post, what do I do?

Check out the "</r/sydney> random discussion thread " stickied at the top of the page

Can reddit do something for me?

Probably not, especially for someone with only 1 karma point. Try airtasker.

I need some advice

That's cool, we will try and help if we can *HOWEVER* we need all the facts, otherwise we're just wasting our time. I'm referring to relevant facts, ones that are critical to the question, not what your name is.

[Perfect example](#) "I had my mail stolen" [by my roommate and I may owe them money]

Other useful Subreddits

- </r/4rSydney>

Arriving in Sydney

What's the cheapest way to get to/from the airport?

Cheapest to most expensive

- The 400 bus [timetable](#) & [map](#)
- Walk to mascot (for Domestic) or Wollie Creek (for international) and take the train
- Take the train from the airport (attracts a ~\$12 gate fee in addition to the train fare)
- Take a private coach or airport shuttle
- Walk off airport property and uber
- Take a taxi from the taxi rank

Should I expect issues with customs?

No, provided you read and fill out the customs declaration form properly.

[This](#) is the incoming passenger card (and in [multiple languages](#)), you'll be required to fill this in when you enter Australia.

- Fill it out honestly, and **if you're unsure tick yes.**
- Just because you tick yes, doesn't mean you'll have the item confiscated
- Ticking no and trying to sneak through may get you a fine, a court date, prison, or returned home/visa cancelled (depending on the severity)
- The passenger card is a **legal declaration.**

In 'general', if it's a food, plant or animal product it must be declared, even if you think it's disease/pest free.

What can i bring into Australia?

For a standard tourist, Duty free (i.e. not required to pay import tax + fees)

- 50 cigarettes or 50 grams of cigars or tobacco products [used to be 250]
- 2.25 litres of alcoholic beverages

You must be 18 years old or over. That is the legal drinking/smoking age in Australia.

[More info](#)

Weapons are difficult to bring in, so my advice is not to bring anything unless you've done proper research. Things confiscated by customs include knives, [replica] guns, pepper spray, taser like devices etc. Some of these are allowed as "controlled weapons", but you should do research by yourself. Previously mentioned "weapons" may be legal in your country, but not here.

Pretty much every weapon (including knives/sticks/baseball bats) are illegal to carry with you without a reasonable excuse. Personal protection is not a reasonable excuse, and the onus is on you to provide one. Pepper spray and tasers carry the same penalty as an unlicensed firearm (severe).

Cheapest way to be picked up (by a friend) from the Airport?

Wait until you've passed baggage then prank/call your friend waiting outside the airport area. There is a free [15 minute pickup and drop off area](#)

TLDR

TLDR: Keep to the left, don't be a dick.