

# 32. Out of town

**Stay on the road!** Out-of-town roads and country lanes have fewer junctions per mile than roads in town. This means there is less likelihood of conflict with other traffic.

However, single-car accidents are more likely on these roads if you don't concentrate fully. This is due to higher speeds, road surface condition, sharper bends, mud and grit on the road and a whole host of other reasons.

The key to staying on the road is good observation and anticipation. This will have been emphasised again and again by your instructor, simply because it is so important. The principle is the same in the countryside as in the town, but because your speed will probably be higher on country roads, you will need to look further ahead. The hazards you might encounter will be quite different as well. When did you last see a sheep in your local town centre?

**Drive defensively.** When driving on rural roads you need to think carefully about every bit of information you receive. You will see several official road signs - bend ahead, cattle crossing, etcetera. However, the unofficial signs can give just as much information, sometimes more, and can help you to drive defensively if you use a bit of detective work ...

The sign shown here is for bed and breakfast, but to a 'driving detective' it means a lot more. A truly experienced driver will see this sign and consider the fact that there's a farm ahead, which means that there could be animals on the road, children playing, farm vehicles turning and so on.

Care will be needed if overtaking near the farm in case something pulls out of the driveway. There may be mud on the road or (depending upon the time of year and the location) water spraying from an irrigation system. Last but not least, there may be a few newly qualified drivers! How do they drive?

Driving in the countryside, like driving in town, requires concentration and anticipation, it's just that the hazards you meet will be different. Thinking about the B&B sign, play the 'guess what's ahead' game to help maintain your concentration every time you drive in the countryside.

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## Lesson Notes:

