

To keep our roads  
safe for everyone,  
truck and bus  
drivers must  
follow Australian  
Road Rule 108  
when descending  
on a steep road.

For further information:  
1300 872 677  
[mylicence.sa.gov.au/road-rules](http://mylicence.sa.gov.au/road-rules)  
MR915A 12/22

OFFICIAL

Truck is defined as a motor vehicle with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) over 4.5 tonnes, except a bus, tram or tractor.

Bus is defined as a motor vehicle built mainly to carry people that seats over 12 passengers (including the driver).



Government of South Australia  
Department for Infrastructure  
and Transport



# AVOID A DOWNHILL DISASTER

Trucks and buses **MUST** use a low gear –  
not the foot brake – to stay in control when  
driving down a steep road.



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## WHAT IS RULE 108?

This law means that when you are driving a truck or a bus on a road with the sign **trucks and buses must use low gear**, you must drive in a gear that is low enough to limit the speed of your vehicle without using the foot brake.

*Note: The intent of the low gear offence is not to completely prohibit the use of the primary brake, if considered necessary in the circumstances however, the law requires the driver to use a gear that is low enough to enable the vehicle to be driven safely without relying on the primary brake as the sole means to slow the speed of the vehicle on the descent.*



## LOOK OUT FOR THE SIGNS

By law, all truck and bus drivers driving on Australian roads marked with a **'trucks & buses must use low gear'** sign must obey this law.

Look out for the warning signs that alert you to steep descents such as on the South Eastern Freeway approaching Adelaide.

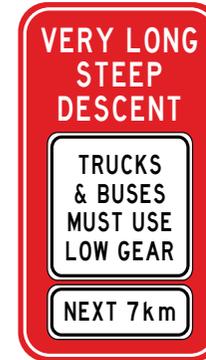


## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

If you lose control of your truck or bus on a steep road the result could be deadly, you could kill or cause serious injuries to yourself or others. Serious penalties can also apply. When descending on a steep road, trucks and buses need to travel at a safe speed the whole way down. Foot brakes can't do this alone. These brakes can easily overheat and lose their effect, and you could lose control of your vehicle.

If you use the foot brake or do not use a gear that's low enough to slow down the vehicle, the brake linings can lose their grip and you can lose control.

By making sure the vehicle is in a low gear before starting to drive down the hill, you will be able to stay in control and keep our roads safe for everyone.



## HOW TO DESCEND SAFELY

As soon as you see the **'trucks & buses must use low gear'** sign, you must start slowing down and switching to a low gear. This means you will be using the right gear before starting to descend, and will not need to use the foot brake when driving down the hill.

As you descend, you must use the engine or exhaust brake the whole way down the hill. This will give you good control and help to avoid danger.

Every vehicle is different. You should never operate a truck or bus without knowing how its braking systems work.



## DON'T RISK IT

Apart from risking the lives of yourself and others, if you fail to obey Rule 108 in South Australia you could also face an expiation fee and three demerit points or a maximum court imposed fine of up to \$2,500. You could also lose your licence or be imprisoned for careless or dangerous driving. Failing to use a low gear, where signs apply, on the South Eastern Freeway descent will result in even higher penalties.