# Motorists warned against using hazard lights to say thank you



Motorists in the UK often demonstrate their gratitude to fellow drivers through gestures such as flashing hazard lights, particularly after being allowed to enter a busy junction. However, this common practice is in direct contravention of the Highway Code, which outlines proper vehicle signalling to prevent confusion on the roads.

According to the rules established in the Highway Code, the use of hazard lights is strictly reserved for scenarios that involve significant risks, such as alerting other drivers to a breakdown or an imminent obstruction on the road. The standard procedure requires motorists to limit the use of hazard lights while driving, as excess use can mislead other road users into thinking there is an emergency. A spokesperson from Compare the Market remarked that while the intent behind such gestures is often well-meaning, they can lead to potential penalties, including fines or points on a driver's licence for breaching these regulations.

Julie Daniels from Compare the Market emphasised the importance of courteous driving, stating, "Being a courteous driver is about showing consideration and patience to others on the road." She added that small acts of kindness contribute to a safer and more enjoyable driving experience for everyone involved.

Tim Alcock from Lease Van weighed in on the issue, shedding light on the possible repercussions of using hazard lights as a form of thanks. He noted, "It’s common practise to say thank you to other drivers by flashing your lights but it’s in fact a serious breach of the Highway Code." Alcock pointed out that such actions can confuse other drivers, leading them to react inappropriately, such as suddenly braking, which may inadvertently create further hazards on the road.

Despite the well-intentioned nature of these gestures, the Highway Code's guidelines are clear, and road users are advised to adhere strictly to the regulations to ensure a safer driving environment for all.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.mrtyre.com/help-and-advice/using-hazard-warning-lights/> - This source explains when hazard lights should and shouldn't be used, emphasizing their misuse as a form of gratitude could result in fines or penalties. It supports the claim that using hazard lights while driving, except in specific emergency situations, is against the Highway Code.
* <https://www.startrescue.co.uk/breakdown-cover/motoring-advice/safety-and-security/when-you-should-and-shouldnt-use-hazard-warning-lights> - This URL provides detailed guidance on when to use hazard lights, highlighting that they are intended for indicating obstructions or hazards, not for expressing gratitude. It supports the notion that misuse can confuse other drivers and lead to dangerous situations.
* <https://www.highwaycodeuk.co.uk/lighting-requirements.html> - This source outlines the Highway Code's lighting requirements, specifically stating that hazard warning lights must not be used while driving, except on motorways or dual carriageways to alert drivers to hazards ahead. It reinforces the proper scenarios for hazard light usage.
* <https://www.gov.uk/highway-code/using-your-vehicle-159-to-169> - This UK government publication provides the official Highway Code guidance, including rules on using hazard warning lights, which should only be used to signal genuine hazards or obstructions and not for other purposes like gratitude.
* <https://www.gov.uk/highway-code/road-signs-103-to-158> - While not directly focused on hazard lights, this source offers broader guidance on Highway Code compliance, emphasizing the importance of following established rules for safe road practices. It supports the broader context of adhering to the Highway Code.