

# Read this to learn how to navigate roundabouts properly

**W**hoa! Uh oh, uh oh, almost, almost, whew! – missed that one – oh no, here we go again, left, left, LEFT!

Lines from an action movie? Something overheard while the grandkids play their favorite Xbox or PlayStation game? Well, not exactly. Think more along the lines of driving down Buena Vista Boulevard or Morse Boulevard and attempting to successfully navigate around the traffic roundabouts.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to “in season!”

We are known for being Florida’s Friendliest Hometown, and I have to say that “friendliest” here also includes the virtue of patience. Now is a great time for everyone, returning or permanent residents and guests, to revisit – drum roll please – **ROUNDAABOUTS!!!**

## **The basics:**

When approaching roundabouts:

- Reduce your speed and prepare to yield to all traffic in the roundabout.
- Guide signs provide guidance for approach street locations, not lane use orientation.

## **Choosing your lane:**

When approaching a two-lane roundabout, make a lane choice according to the following rules:

- If you intend to exit the roundabout ...

More than halfway around, use the left-hand lane.

Less than halfway around, use the right-hand lane.

If you intend to continue straight through, use either lane unless signs or markings indicate otherwise.

## **Navigating roundabouts**

Move up to the entrance line and wait for a gap in traffic.



**DEBORAH FRANKLIN**  
COLUMNIST

**DO NOT ENTER** next to a vehicle in the roundabout, as that vehicle may be exiting at the next exit.

Within the roundabout, do not stop except to avoid a collision; you have the right-of-way over entering traffic. Keep moving in a counterclockwise direction.

Do not change lanes in a roundabout.

Watch for a striped channelization island that is present in several roundabouts. These reduce the circulatory roadway to one lane approaching a single-lane exit (like the one at the Buena Vista/Old Mill Run intersection).

Now that we have the basics, let’s look at options – turning right, going straight, turning left and making U-turns. Like a playbook for football, there are three simple things to remember – approaching, circulating and exiting. Ready?

### **Turning right**

**Approaching:** Be in the right-hand lane unless otherwise marked on the roadway, and use a right-turn signal.

**Circulating:** Keep to the right-hand (outside) lane of the roundabout and continue to use your right-turn signal through your exit. Do not change lanes.

**Exiting:** Stay in the right-hand lane as you exit the roundabout.

### **Turning left/making a U-turn**

**Approaching:** Be in the left-hand lane unless otherwise marked on the roadway, and use

a left-turn signal.

**Circulating:** Stay in the left-hand lane of the circulatory roadway until you are ready to exit. When you have passed the last exit before the one you want, use your right-turn signal and continue to use it through your exit. Do not change lanes.

**Exiting:** As you exit the roundabout, be aware of vehicles traveling on the outside of the circulatory roadway that may continue to circulate around the roundabout.

### **Going straight ahead**

**Approaching:** You can be in either lane, unless otherwise marked on roadway or posted.

**Circulating:** Stay to the inside of the circulatory roadway if you entered from the left-hand approach lane, or stay to the outside if you entered from the right-hand approach lane. Do not change lanes.

When you have passed the last exit before the one you want, use your right-turn signal and continue to use it through your exit.

**Exiting:** As you exit the roundabout, be aware of vehicles traveling on the outside of the circulatory roadway that may continue to circulate around the roundabout.

Easy peasy, yes?

“Best practices” are those things that each of our departments put into place so they can work more efficiently and effectively. Here are a few “best practices” for navigating our roundabouts:

- Do not change lanes within the roundabout or as you exit the roundabout.

- Do not overtake other vehicles, bicyclists or motorcyclists within the roundabout.

While you are taking the time to read this information, others traversing our roads may not have – they may decide to change lanes, not use their turn signal or go straight when you assumed that they were turning left. By not overtaking them in the circle, you keep yourself, your car and them safe.

• Be aware of other vehicles in the roundabout. We Villagers love to carpool and usually are chatting happily about where we are going, or where we just came from, while doing so. For those designated drivers, remember to keep aware – use your side mirrors, and even your back seat

passengers – to be added “eyes” to help ensure you are aware of all vehicles, bicyclists and motorcyclists around you.

• **YIELD TO EMERGENCY VEHICLES.** While this may seem common sense to you, our first responders – law enforcement or fire/rescue – not only have to navigate our roads safely but do so around vehicles that just do not move over. This not only inhibits their response time to a critical need, but it also jeopardizes their personal safety.

Please remember – if you were the person in need, you would want everyone to move quickly and safely out of the way so they could get to you, quickly and safely.

And while you are moving out of the way, a quick prayer and/or good thoughts for those

responding and those to whom they are responding is always extra help.

• Give oversized vehicles extra room because they may need both lanes to maneuver. This includes moving vans, furniture delivery trucks, landscaping trucks, etc. We see them all, daily and frequently. Be aware and allow them the room that they need.

The person driving that vehicle may not be a frequent traveler through the circles, and may not realize that they are going over a line, so it is up to us to think proactively to ensure, again, our own safety and theirs.

• Finally, indicate your exit using your turn signals. This one, I admit, is a pet peeve of mine. As far as I am aware, and for my entire lifetime of driving

– 40-plus years – I never have known turn signals, aka directionals, to be an added option to consider when buying a car.

They are there for a reason and a very good one. No one can read our minds. Please use them. I would much prefer you meeting our fire-rescue teams when you need a smoke alarm changed versus a need for medical assistance.

Looking for a brochure on navigating roundabouts? We have that! The Sumter County Board of County Commissioners in cooperation with the Sumter County Sheriff's Office developed exactly that, and at the request of Sumter County officials, the District is able to provide this brochure for your information.

Simply go to [districtgov.org](http://districtgov.org) (very bottom of our home page under News & Information), or visit Customer Service at our District offices at 984 Old Mill Run.

We have covered a lot, and I hope you find it useful.

Many of us will be traveling somewhere in The Villages for Super Bowl parties this weekend, so remember, “It’s not whether you win or lose, it’s how you play the game” – or apparently how much air is in the football – Oh no! Did I just say that?

Please travel safely and responsibly. Wishing you a great week until next time at Our Place.

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