

What to Do If Stopped at a Roadblock

DISCLAIMER:

This guide is for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. Roadblock procedures and enforcement powers may vary depending on circumstances and applicable South African law. Always comply with lawful instructions from authorised officers. Bilnor Staffing Solutions accepts no liability for decisions made based on this guide.

Roadblocks are legally conducted by South African law enforcement to improve road safety, reduce crime, and check compliance with traffic and vehicle regulations. Knowing your rights and responsibilities helps ensure the interaction is **calm, lawful, and efficient**.

Step 1: Slow Down and Stop Safely

- Obey all instructions from traffic officers
- Indicate and pull over safely when directed
- Switch off your engine and keep your hands visible

Do not attempt to avoid or bypass a roadblock.

Step 2: Remain Calm and Respectful

- Stay seated in your vehicle unless instructed otherwise
- Be polite and cooperative
- Avoid arguments or confrontational behaviour

A calm approach often leads to a quicker stop.

Step 3: Present Required Documents

You may be asked to provide:

- A valid South African driver's licence
- Vehicle licence disc (must be visible and valid)

You are **not required** to hand over your ID unless requested for a lawful reason.

Step 4: Understand What Officers May Lawfully Do

At a roadblock, officers may:

- Verify your driver's licence
- Check your vehicle licence disc
- Conduct alcohol breathalyser tests
- Inspect your vehicle for roadworthiness
- Ask basic questions related to the stop

Officers must identify themselves if requested.

Step 5: Know Your Rights

You have the right to:

- Ask why you are being stopped
- Request an officer's name or badge number
- Receive a written fine (AARTO notice) if an offence is alleged
- Decline to pay fines **in cash** at the roadside

Roadside cash payments are not legally required.

Step 6: What to Do If You Are Fined

- Accept the fine politely without arguing
- Ensure the details on the notice are correct
- Do not admit guilt on the roadside
- Follow the payment or dispute process as stated on the notice

You may dispute fines through the proper legal channels.

Step 7: If Your Vehicle Is Inspected

If officers inspect your vehicle:

- Cooperate with lawful instructions
- Ensure compulsory items are present (where applicable)
- Address any defects noted to avoid future penalties

Step 8: If You Feel Unfairly Treated

- Remain calm and compliant
- Record the officer's details if possible
- Note the location, time, and circumstances
- Lodge a formal complaint after the incident

Never argue aggressively or attempt to leave without permission.

What You Should Never Do

- Offer or agree to a bribe
- Argue aggressively or insult officers
- Drive off without permission
- Refuse lawful instructions

These actions can escalate the situation and lead to arrest.

Final Tips for SA Drivers

- Keep your documents valid and accessible
- Ensure your vehicle is roadworthy

- Know your rights, but exercise them respectfully

Prepared drivers experience fewer problems at roadblocks.