



How to Drive HOT Lanes

Washington State Department of Transportation will test the first-ever high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes during the SR 167 HOT Lanes Pilot Project. Scheduled to open in spring 2008, this four-year pilot will test how HOT lanes can be used to improve traffic flow.

The current HOV lanes will be converted to a single HOT lane in each direction for the nine miles between Renton and Auburn, allowing solo drivers to use the carpool lanes for a fee. To use the lanes solo drivers need to set up a *Good To Go!* account and install an electronic transponder on their windshield.

Here is how you would drive the new HOT lanes—

As you get on SR 167 you see traffic backing up. You are in a hurry to meet up with friends to watch the game. You see a sign notifying you that the HOT lane entrance is just ahead.



You check the sign to see the current toll rate, which adjusts as traffic levels change. The current toll is \$3.25. You decide to take the HOT lane.



At the entrance to the HOT lane, there is a dashed white line that you can cross at any time to enter the HOT lane. After you get in the HOT lane, you notice that the striping changes to solid double white lines.



It's illegal to cross the solid lines that separate the HOT lane from the regular lanes. Even HOV drivers must follow the no double-crossing rule and enter or exit only at the designated access points.



As you drive under the transponder reader, a white light flashes overhead and a sensor scans your transponder and debits your account \$3.25. Quick and easy – no toll booths, no digging for change, and most important – no congestion.

Driving in the HOT lane, you pass through access points where other cars enter or exit the HOT lane, so you watch for merging cars. At each access point a sign displays the correct toll amount, which can change at any time, but you pay only the amount displayed when you entered. The sign now says \$4. Cars entering at this point will pay \$4, but you have already paid – your account is charged only once (you paid \$3.25).

You notice how the striping changes to a dashed line at each access point. You have passed a lot of traffic and you are nearing the access point closest to your exit. You now move out of the HOT lane to take your exit. You know you have a choice to use the lanes and that HOT lanes can provide another option when you need it most.

HOT lanes are designed to keep traffic flowing—when traffic slows, the toll price increases. The higher the toll, the more solo drivers choose not to use the lanes, keeping the lanes free flowing even as demand rises. When traffic speed slows too much, the HOT lane may be designated HOV-only, assuring that transit stays on schedule.

So that's how the HOT lanes should work for you on SR 167. We appreciate your patience as we move forward with this innovative test project in spring 2008.

How SR 167 HOT lanes will look

