



Reserving your own off-street parking space

A do-it-yourself guide to creating a private parking area for your business premises.

A: 165 Sir Donald Bradman Drive, Hilton 5033
W: westtorrens.sa.gov.au
P: 8416 6333
E: csu@wtcc.sa.gov.au



Why bother?

Your off-street parking area is not just vacant land; it is extremely valuable real estate.

Every parking space you have available has a dollar value to your business. A customer who can't find a parking space may quickly become an ex-customer. Room for quick, convenient pick up or delivery of supplies is crucial for customers and staff. Extra staff time spent on loading or unloading is wasted time – money down the drain.

Unfortunately, street parking space is limited. Quite often there are competing demands for that on-street space. Clearways, bus zones and time limited parking are all necessary controls, imposed for a variety of reasons, but they may not be compatible with your staff or customer parking requirements.

Do commuters park at your place and bus into town? Having 'outsider' take up space on your property is bad news. Their all-day parking spot may be free to them, but it is costing you money.

So, how do you go about protecting and maximising your off-street parking spaces?

Create a private parking area

In 1986 the State Government introduced the *Private Parking Areas Act* to enable property owners to have additional and relatively simple legal control over parking on their own property.

Creating your own 'private' area is as simple as putting up a sign. Erecting the correct type of sign at the entrance/s to your property legally establishes that area as a private parking area (see page 4 for an example of an entry sign type).

That's all it takes to declare that your car park is private.

Is that all there is?

In creating a private parking area, you can also determine where and how you want cars parked or don't want them parked, how long they can stay there or you can set up areas like loading zones for your own convenience.

Just as Council creates parking controls on-street to suit safety, access or convenience, you can do the same within your own property.

Establishing these controls is also a simple matter of erecting the right signs where you need them. Most of the signs are the same as Council uses on-street so drivers are aware of what they mean. And because they are common and easily recognisable signs, you won't have to pay a small fortune to have something special made up. They are routinely stocked by many leading sign makers and because all councils use them, they are cost effective through volume sales (see page 5 for examples of internal zone sign types.)

Enquiries

If after reading this document you need some advice, contact our Traffic Team in City Assets on 8416 6333.

What, why and where?

The *Private Parking Areas Act* suits all sizes of properties, from small businesses to major shopping centres and for whatever size car park that you have available. If you admit the driving public to your property, you may need some control over where they park or for how long they park.

Keeping commuters out

A time limit for parking can ensure there is a regular turn-over of vehicles so there is always room for another customer. If your car park is full all day, customers can't obtain a park and can often become disillusioned and go elsewhere.

By setting a time limit that will give your customers a comfortable period for their business, you will dissuade unwanted long-term parking. However, don't set too short a time limit; this can give the appearance of being a little threatening to the people you do want to come in.

For many retail businesses, at least one hour parking should be allowed. For businesses where you want your customers to stay and enjoy (restaurants, gymnasiums, hotels etc.) a two or three hour limit would be better. These times are suggestions only; you know your business and customers, so set whatever limit suits you.

If a time limit for your entire car park is suitable, this can be displayed on the entrance sign(s).

This is cost effective as you only need one sign per entrance to cover everything.

For larger premises, you may need different time limits for different parts of your car park. If this is the case, you need individual signs to mark out the start and end of the each area and what the limit is in that particular area. Areas where you want cars in and out quickly, such as a parcel pick up zone, should be short term parking. eg. 15 minute limit.

Not there! That's the boss' spot!

If you need to reserve particular areas for a special purpose, this can also be done.

A permit zone can be set aside to reserve space for regular users. eg. 'Staff vehicles only'.

A loading zone will ensure your delivery vehicles have a designated space to load and unload.

And don't forget about your customers with disabilities. A clearly marked 'Disabled Persons Parking' zone, close to your entrance, will ensure all of your customers have a fair go at getting a parking space. Not everyone is able to walk the length of your car park or squeeze in or out of their vehicle between two closely parked cars.

There's a car parked where?

Of course, there are likely to be parts of your car park where you just don't want anyone to leave their vehicle.

A 'No Stopping' zone means a vehicle cannot remain stationary in that area – it would be dangerous and likely to cause a collision if they stop there or it would be very inconvenient; likely to block access to services (fire equipment, electrical switchboard etc) or prevent vehicles accessing or leaving locations.

Simple, international symbol type signs are used to designate these areas, coupled with a directional arrow, if necessary, to show in which direction the zone continues.

Entry sign format

This sign is an example of a 'Private Parking' zone sign that you could have. Please note that this is not to scale.



Optional - time limit to be specified

Location: At each entrance to a private parking area.

Colour: Black lettering on white background.

Size: 900mm wide x 1200mm high. Sign to be located approximately 600mm from the ground.

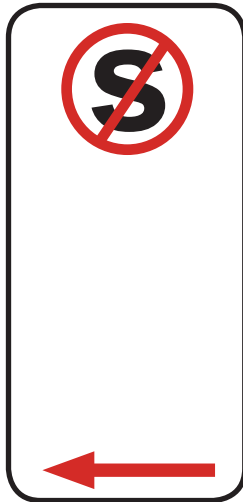
Corner radii and borders: Corner radii shall be 90mm with a margin of 10mm and a border of 20mm.

Type sizes: Heading NOTICE - 40mm high; PRIVATE PARKING AREA - 120mm high minimum; TIME LIMIT - 50mm high minimum; remaining lettering - 30mm high minimum.

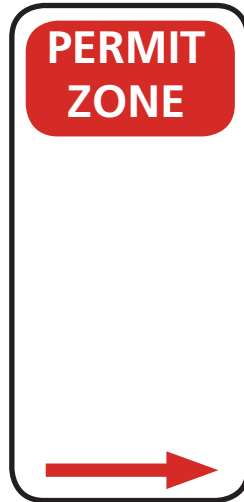
Note: this is for information only; commercial sign makers are aware of the required standards for these signs.

Zone sign formats

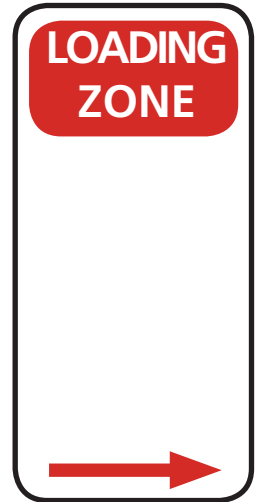
These signs are examples of parking signs which can be used within your car park. These are illustrative only - commercial sign makers are aware of the required standards for these signs.



No standing (stopping) sign



Permit zone sign



Loading zone sign



Disability only parking sign



Permissive parking sign



Motor bike parking only sign

Location: At the start and finish of the zone.

Colour: As shown on white background.

Size: 225mm wide x 300mm high.

Height: Approximately 2.2 metres from ground to bottom edge of notice (if pole mounted).

Can't read the signs??

Now that you have got the signs in place, everyone's parking where they should be - well almost everyone. There's always one individual thinker in any car park. Most drivers will park according to what the sign says, but what are your options for the ones that don't? How you 'police' your parking area depends on how much of a problem you have, how often those problems occur and what is the most practical way to do it.

Do it yourself

A firm, but polite, warning notice left on a vehicle will deter most drivers from parking incorrectly.

An example notice is below.

Date:/...../.....
To the driver
Your vehicle, registration number(1) has been left parked
.....(insert brief description of offence).....
contrary to the conditions of the Private Parking Area.
Fines of up to \$200 can be imposed for parking incorrectly.
Your future cooperation in parking correctly and abiding by information stated on parking signs would be appreciated.
Property Owner

- Keep a record of vehicles that warnings are issued to so you can check whether they are repeat offenders.
- Insert a brief description of how they parked; eg: exceeding the time limit etc.
- 'Property Owner' is better than your business name - the driver may be an otherwise good customer of your business.

As the property owner, you have the right to prosecute a driver for failing to park as you request. However, unless you have a large car park and major problems, this may not be a practical option for you. Your time and effort, or your solicitor's fees, may well exceed any fines and costs that are awarded to you in court. If court action becomes necessary, there is a 'time limit' of 6 months for taking legal action. By using this 'limitation', offences occurring over several months could be prosecuted together - (6 at once doesn't take much more effort than 1).

Can Council police my car park?

For shopping centres and large precincts, Council may be able to assist. By entering into a formal agreement with Council, we can police your parking area as we do with on-street parking. There may be some conditions attached to the type and level of policing the Council can or will provide. ie: only policed during certain times/days or only policed as part of routine patrols etc.

We may require you to pay the cost of drawing up and registering the agreement. If so, this cost may vary depending on how simple or how complex the agreement is. Where an agreement is in place, Council retains any income from fines issued.

Any agreement for policing a Private Parking Area may be terminated by either party on 3 months prior written notice.

Can Council police just the 'Disabled Parking' zone?

Yes. Under the Act, any Council may police **correctly marked zones** for Disabled Drivers Permit Holders whether there is an agreement with the car park owner in place or not. This is to ensure parking facilities for people with disabilities are not abused by other drivers, wherever the zones are.

And ...?

That's it. That's how you protect and maximise your off-street parking spaces. It's your car park. You decide how it is used - just by putting up a sign or two. And if you want to change something around, just shift the signs. Simple and effective protection of your property.