

The Art Of Reverse Angle Parking

or why you want reverse angle parking but don't know it yet

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Very soon Hampden will be first in Baltimore yet again, we will be the first neighborhood to institute reverse angle parking. Initially there will be one test area located on the east side of Chestnut Avenue between 36th Street and 34th Street for 2 long continuous blocks of Reverse angle parking, (*it is really more like 4 blocks if you count the intersections on the west side of the street*) but hopefully in the next few months we will have reverse angle parking on some other appropriate blocks in the neighborhood as well.

At this point you may be wondering a couple of things. What exactly is reverse angle parking and why in the world would we want it here in Hampden?

To answer the first question, reverse angle parking is like regular diagonal parking except that you enter the space by backing into it instead of pulling forward into the space. Reverse angle parking, also known as Back-in angle parking, operates under the basic premise that it's always better to "Reverse into the known" (i.e., you are able to see the space before backing into it). With regular diagonal parking, as a driver, you are required to back out into the unknown due to obstruction of vision.

The answer to the Why would we want it here in Hampden question is two fold. First it will create more parking spaces, 25%–30% more. As more and more cars come to our neighborhood to compete for our already limited number of parking spaces, reconfiguring our existing on street parking is vital to sustaining the level of livability that we all expect and deserve. If reverse angle parking is put into place in the appropriate areas of Hampden we could gain as many as **100** new parking Spaces.

Second it's safer. A recent study in Pottstown, Pennsylvania found a 25% reduction in the number of accidents as a result of reverse angle parking. The study also found a 43% reduction in accidents involving injuries related to parking. When pulling out of a reverse angle diagonal space, the driver has a unobstructed view of oncoming traffic by simply looking left before pulling out.



This is a rendering of what a posted
Reverse angle parking sign may look like

Cyclists are also much more visible, which reducing the potential of car-bike accidents. There are also safety advantages when it comes to loading and unloading. When loading or unloading a small child for instance, reverse angle parking allows your car doors to open to the safety zone of the sidewalk, as opposed to opening towards the danger zone of the street. With the door as a barrier, children and pets are much more likely to take the path of least resistance to the sidewalk. Additionally, it is safer and more convenient, to load items into and out of the back of your vehicle.

Now finally we come to the reverse angle \$50,000 question. How exactly do I reverse angle park? I didn't need to do this when I took my driving test. Well relax It's easy and I am going to tell you how. In fact living in Hampden I will assume that you are already an old pro at parallel parking, so reverse angle parking is going to be a piece of cake. Here is how it's done.

- Put on your right turn signal as you approach the parking space.
- Don't make any turns away from or into the spot before reversing, just continue along your normal path of travel, just outside the parking spaces.
- Think of it like parallel parking – pull past the parking space until the rear tires of your vehicle are even with the end of the parking space and then just turn your steering wheel to the right while backing up just like parallel parking without the final step.
- Use your mirrors to see the parking stripes to center yourself in the space.
- Use the front of your vehicle as a reference for how far to pull back – if you drive a pickup truck or larger vehicle with a lot of overhang, be careful not to pull too far back and block the sidewalk.
- Practice – it only takes a few times to get the hang of it.

There are plenty of places around the country that have successfully implemented reverse angle parking including Brooklyn, New York, Portland, Pottstown, Salem, Salt Lake, Seattle, Tacoma, Tucson, Washington DC, Vancouver and Wilmington. What is found time and time again after reverse angle parking is implemented is that it is safe, convenient, and of course who in Hampden can argue with more parking spaces.

If you would like more information on Reverse Angle Parking please go to www.hampdehappenings.com/zoning