Automatic Transmission

The automatic transmission selects individual gears automatically, dependent upon selector lever position, vehicle speed and accelerator position.

Important!

When parking the vehicle and before working on the vehicle with the engine running, firmly set the parking brake and shift the selector lever to position "P".

Warning!

Keep driver's foot area clear at all times. Objects stored in this area may impair pedal movement.

Driving:

The selector lever is automatically locked while in position "P". To move the selector lever out of position "P", the service brake pedal must be firmly depressed before the shift lock will release.

Shift selector lever to the desired driving position only when the engine is idling and the service brake is applied. Do not release the brake until ready to drive. The vehicle may otherwise start creeping when the selector lever is in drive or reverse position.

Warning!

It is dangerous to shift the selector lever out of "P" or "N" if the engine speed is higher than idle speed. If your foot is not on the brake pedal, the car could accelerate quickly forward or in reverse. You could lose control of the car and hit someone or something. Only shift into gear when the engine is idling normally.

Test the brakes briefly after driving off. Perform this procedure only when the road is clear of other traffic.

Warm up the engine smoothly. Do not place full load on the engine until the operating temperature has been reached.

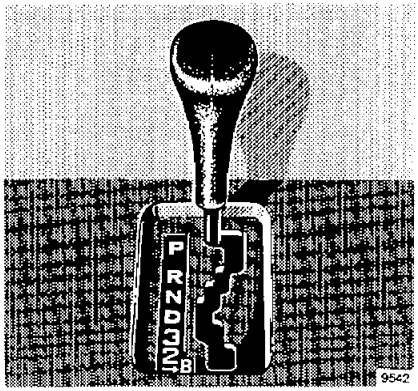
When starting off on a slippery surface, do not allow one driving wheel to spin for an extended period (420 SEL only).

Accelerator position

Partial throttle = early upshifting = normal acceleration.

Full throttle = later upshifting = rapid acceleration.

Depressing the accelerator beyond full throttle to kickdown position means downshifting to the next lower gear and thereby increasing acceleration. If you ease up on the accelerator after having attained the desired speed, the transmission will shift up again.



Selector lever positions

The automatic gear shifting process can be adapted to specific operating conditions using the selector lever.

P Parking lock.
The parking lock is an additional safeguard to the parking brake when parking the vehicle. Engage only with the car stopped.

Note:
The key can be removed from the steering lock only with the selector lever in position "P". The selector lever is locked in position "P" with the key removed.

R Reverse gear.
Shift to reverse gear only with the car stopped.

N Neutral.
No power is transmitted from the engine to the rear axle. When the brakes are released, the vehicle can be moved freely (pushed or towed). Do not engage "N" while driving except to coast when the vehicle is in danger of skidding (e.g. on icy roads, see page 19).

Important!
Coasting the vehicle for an extended period of time with selector lever in "N" can result in transmission damage. That is not covered by the MERCEDES-BENZ Limited Warranty.

D The transmission automatically upshifts to 4th gear. Position "D" provides optimum driving characteristics under all normal operating conditions.

3 Upshift to 3rd gear only. Suitable for medium range up or downgrades.

2 Upshift to 2nd gear only. For driving in mountainous regions. Since transmission will not shift up further, this gear selection will make use of the engine's braking power.

B In this position, the engine's braking effect is utilized by shifting into 1st gear. Use this position while descending very steep or lengthy downgrades and only at speeds below 60 km/h (40 mph).

Important!

Do not exceed the vehicle speed limits for individual gear selections, which are indicated by marks (I , II , III , etc.) on the circumference of the speedometer.

Do not downshift to a lower gear (for example from "D" to "3") unless the speedometer needle is below the speed limit mark of that particular gear range. Overrevving could result in serious damage to the engine.

Warning!

On slippery road surfaces, never downshift in order to obtain braking action. This could result in rear wheel slip and reduced vehicle control. Your vehicle's ABS will not prevent this type of loss of control. This applies particularly for position "B".

To prevent the engine from laboring at low RPMs, do not allow the engine speed to drop too low on uphill gradients.

Depending on the degree of the incline, shift selector lever to positions "3" or "2" early enough to maintain engine RPM within the best torque range.

Stopping

For brief stops, e.g. at traffic lights, leave the transmission in gear and control vehicle with the service brake.

For longer stops with the engine idling, shift into "N" or "P".

When stopping the car on an incline, do not hold it with the accelerator, use the brake. This avoids unnecessary transmission heat build up.

Warning!

Getting out of your car with the selector lever not fully engaged in position "P" is dangerous. When parked on a steep incline, position "P" alone may not prevent your vehicle from rolling, possibly hitting people or objects. Always set the parking brake in addition to shifting to position "P".

Maneuvering

To maneuver in tight areas, e.g. when pulling into a parking space, control the car speed by gradually releasing the brakes. Accelerate gently and never abruptly step on the accelerator.

To rock a car out of soft ground (mud or snow), alternately shift from forward to reverse, while applying partial throttle.

Rocking a car free in this manner may cause the ABS warning lamp to come on. Turn off and restart the engine to clear the malfunction indication.