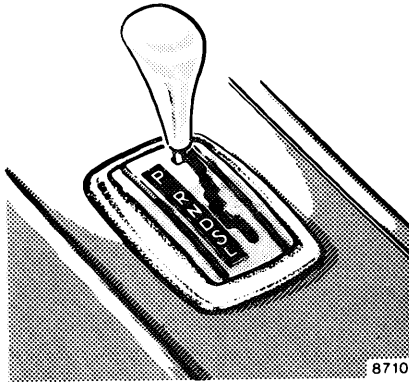


## Starting and Shifting Gears



Do not store any objects in the driver's footwell area because they could become lodged under the operator's pedals thus rendering these controls partially or totally inoperative.

Test the service brake shortly after driving off.

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

### Automatic Transmission

280 SE:  
Automatic four-speed torque converter transmission

450 SEL:  
Automatic three-speed torque converter transmission

The automatic transmission facilitates and simplifies the handling of the vehicle. The individual gears are shifted automatically dependent upon selector lever position, vehicle speed and accelerator position.

#### Hint

When parking the vehicle or if working on the vehicle with the engine running, depress parking brake pedal and move selector lever to position "P".

### Starting

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 before moving off. The vehicle may otherwise start creeping when the selector lever is in a driving position.

#### Accelerator position

Partial throttle = early upshifting = normal acceleration.

Full throttle = retarded upshifting = maximum acceleration.

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

Gearshifting is controlled by the vehicle speed.

### Selector Lever Positions

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

- “P” Parking lock. The parking lock is an additional safeguard when parking the vehicle. Engage only when the car is stationary.
- “R” Reverse gear. Shift reverse gear only with the vehicle at halt.
- “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, towed or towstarted). Do not engage “N” when driving except when the vehicle is in danger of skidding (e.g. on icy roads). See page 44.
- “D” Drive.  
280 SE:  
All gears are available. 1st gear can be engaged only by means of kickdown. Position “D” affords optimum driving characteristics under all normal operating conditions.

### 450 SEL:

All gears are available. The vehicle starts out in 1st gear. Position “D” affords optimum driving characteristics under all normal operating conditions.

- “S” Slope.  
280 SE:  
Upshifting to 3rd gear only. 1st gear can be engaged only by means of kickdown. Suitable for moderate ascents and descents. As the transmission shifts up to 3rd gear only, this position permits the utilization of the engine braking effect. With the selector lever in position “S” and the accelerator depressed to full throttle, 2nd gear covers a wider speed range than with the selector lever in position “D”.
- 450 SEL:  
Upshifting to 2nd gear only. The vehicle starts out in 1st gear. Suitable for moderate ascents and descents. As the transmission shifts up to 2nd gear only, this position permits the utilization of the engine braking effect.

With the selector lever in position “S” and the accelerator depressed to full throttle, 1st gear covers a wider speed range than with the selector lever in position “D”.

- “L” Low.  
280 SE:  
Upshifting to 2nd gear only. The vehicle starts out in 1st gear. For driving on steep mountain passes, for trailer operation in mountainous regions, for driving under severe operating conditions and as braking position on extremely steep declines. If the selector lever is briefly shifted to position “S” and then returned to position “L”, 2nd gear is shifted sooner at higher speed.

450 SEL:  
No upshift, transmission will remain in 1st gear. For driving on steep mountain passes, for trailer operation in mountainous regions, for driving under severe operating conditions and as a braking position on extremely steep declines.



## Starting and Shifting Gears

Do not exceed maximum speed in the individual selector lever positions. Selector lever position "S" corresponds to marking III (450 SEL — II) on the speedometer, selector lever position "L" to marking II (450 SEL — I).

### Maneuvering

To maneuver in restricted area, e.g. when pulling into a parking space, control the car speed by gradually releasing the service brake. Accelerate gently and do not pump the accelerator. To rock a car out of soft ground (mud or snow), alternately shift one forward gear range and the reverse gear at partial throttle.

### Trailer operation

Do not allow the engine speed to drop too low at uphill gradients to prevent the engine from laboring at low RPMs. Depending on the degree of the incline, shift selector lever to positions "S" or "L" early enough to maintain engine RPMs within best torque range.

### Stopping

For brief halts, e.g. at traffic lights, leave the selector lever in a driving position and control vehicle with the service brake.

For longer stops with the engine idling, shift selector lever to position "N".

When stopping the car on a slope, do not hold it by means of the accelerator but use the brake. This avoids unnecessary heat-up of the transmission.

## Safe Driving

Always drive according to the rule "Safety first". The comfortable ride of the vehicle may easily tempt you to underestimate the speed you are actually driving at. For this reason you should get used to keeping an eye on the speedometer needle because high speeds demand long stopping distances.

Do not attempt to move or roll the vehicle with the engine not in operation, as engine-driven accessories such as the power steering system or power brakes are not "powered", therefore, requiring substantially more effort for their operation even though they always remain mechanically operative.

Do not allow your tires to wear down too far. With less than appr.  $\frac{1}{8}$  in. (3 mm) of tread, the antiskid properties on a wet road fall off sharply.

Depending upon the weather and/or road pavement, the grip of the tires varies widely.

The retention of the specified tire pressure is essential. This applies particularly if the tires are subjected to high loads (e.g. high speeds, heavy loads, high ambient temperatures).