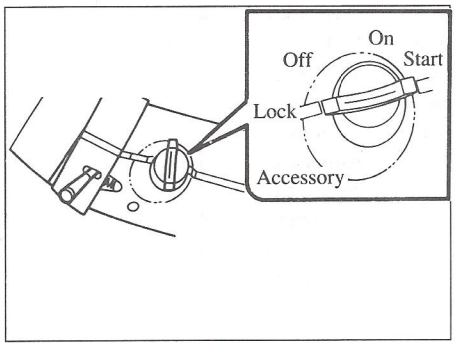
4 Driving Your Mazda

Operating your vehicle requires a good understanding of the many controls you must know and use. Section 4 describes all this in step-by-step information from use of the ignition switch to cruise control and braking.

Also highlighted are the gearshift and shifting modes, use of 4-wheel drive, power steering, instruments and gauges, warnings and indicators, windshield wipers, and interior features. You'll find complete details about the advanced audio system too.

Ignition Switch Positions



■ ON

This is the normal running position after the engine is started. The warning lights (except the brake warning light) can be inspected before the engine is started.

■ START

The engine is started in this position. It will crank until you release the key; then it returns to ON. The brake warning light can be checked in the START position.

■ ACC (Accessory)

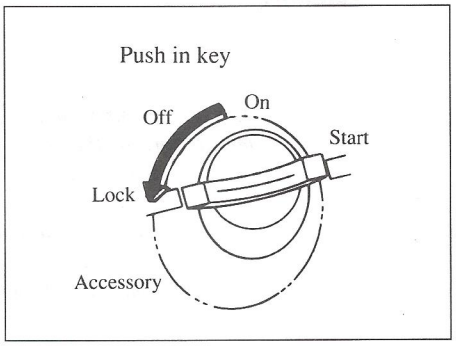
The steering wheel unlocks and some electrical accessories will operate.

■ LOCK

The steering wheel locks to protect against theft. Only in this position can the key be removed. If your key is stuck in the LOCK position, move your steering wheel left or right.

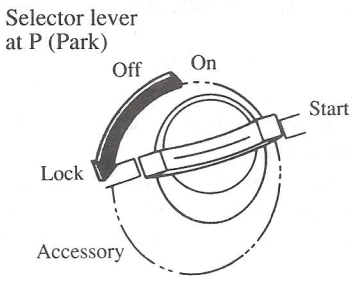
■ OFF

In the OFF position you can shut off the engine and all accessories without locking the steering wheel, or the automatic transmission selector lever.



▼ Manual transmission

When turning the ignition switch to the LOCK position, push the key in at ACC. In order to turn the key from ON or OFF to the ACCESSORY position, you must push the key release button since your vehicle's manual transmission selector lever is mounted on the floor.



▼ **Automatic transmission**

When turning the ignition switch to the LOCK position, keep the selector lever at P.

NOTE

If turning the key is difficult, jiggle the wheel from side to side.

⚠WARNING

Steering Lock:
Removing the key from the ignition switch locks the steering. If removed while driving, loss of steering control and very likely an accident will occur. Remove the key only when parked.

⚠WARNING

Parking Brake:
The antitheft steering column lock is not a substitute for the parking brake. Before leaving the driver's seat, always make sure the selector lever is at P with an automatic transmission or in First with a manual transmission; set the parking brake fully AND stop the engine. Unexpected and possibly sudden vehicle movement may occur if these precautions aren't taken.

⚠WARNING

Transfer Case in Neutral:
When the transfer case is in the N (Neutral) position, the engine and transmission are disconnected from the rest of the driveline. Therefore, the vehicle is free to roll even if the automatic transmission is in P (Park) or the manual transmission is in gear. Do not leave the vehicle unattended with the transfer case in the N (Neutral) position. Always set the parking brake fully and turn off the ignition when leaving the vehicle.

NOTE

If a door is open and the key is in the ignition switch when the engine is off, a warning sounds.

Starting the Engine

⚠WARNING

Exhaust Fumes:
Do not start your vehicle in a closed garage or other enclosed area. Exhaust fumes can be toxic. Always open the garage door before you start the engine.

1. Occupants should fasten their seat belts.
2. Make sure your headlamps and other accessories are turned off when starting.
3. Make sure the parking brake is on.
4. **Manual Transmission**—Depress the clutch pedal all the way and shift into neutral.

   Keep the pedal depressed while cranking the engine.

   Automatic Transmission—Place the selector lever in P. If you must restart the engine while the vehicle is moving, shift the lever to N.

NOTE

The starter will not operate . . .

- If the selector lever is **not** in P (automatic) or N, or
- If the clutch pedal is **not** pushed down all the way (manual).

⚠CAUTION

Don't try the starter for more than 15 seconds at a time (for a cold engine) and 5 seconds (for a warm engine). If the engine stalls or fails to start, wait 10 seconds before trying again. Otherwise, you may damage the starter and drain the battery.

■ Fuel Injected Engines

1. At temperatures 10°F (-12.2°C) and below, turn the ignition switch to START—up to 15 seconds at a time—until the engine starts.
   At temperatures above 10°F (-12.2°C), turn the ignition switch to START—up to 5 seconds at a time—until the engine starts.
2. After starting the engine, let it idle for a few seconds.

NOTE

Whether cold or warm, the engine should be started without use of the accelerator.

Using the Engine Block Heater*

> **⚠ WARNING**
>
> ***Engine Idling Speed:***
> ***If the engine idling speed does not slow down automatically, do not allow your vehicle to idle for more than ten minutes. Have the vehicle checked. Extended idling at high engine speeds can produce very high temperatures in the engine and exhaust system, creating the risk of fire or other damage to the vehicle and possibly resulting in personal injury.***

If the engine fails to start, it may be flooded (excessive fuel in the engine).

Follow this procedure:

(1) With the key in the OFF position, depress the accelerator all the way and hold it there. If you have the 2.3 liter engine it cannot be started with the accelerator fully depressed.

(2) Turn the key to START and hold it there until the engine starts. If it does, release the key and accelerator gradually because the engine will suddenly rev up.

(3) If the engine still fails to start, the fuel pump shut-off switch may have been triggered. See the Fuel Pump Shut-Off Switch later in this section for more information.

(4) If it still fails to start, go through steps (1), (2), and (3) again.

> **NOTE**
>
> Engine noise (from valve tappets) may occur if the engine has not been operated for an extended period.
>
> The noise should stop after the engine has reached normal operating temperature. If the noise does not stop, have the vehicle inspected by an Authorized Mazda Dealer.

Engine block heaters are strongly recommended if you live in a region where temperatures reach -20°F (-29°C) or below consistently during the winter months. An engine block heater warms the engine coolant, which improves starting, warms up the engine faster, and allows the heater-defrost system to respond quickly.

If you have this option, use it whenever the temperature is -10°F (-23°C) or below.

> **⚠ WARNING**
>
> ***Ungrounded Connections:***
> ***Do not use your heater with ungrounded electrical systems or two-pronged (cheater) adapters. You can be injured by an electrical shock if you use an ungrounded connection.***

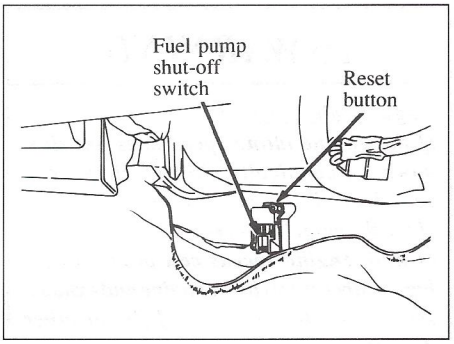
For best results, plug the heater in at least three hours before you start your vehicle. Using the heater for longer than three hours will not damage the engine, so you can plug it in at night to start your vehicle the following morning.

NOTE
Be sure to disconnect the engine block heater before driving your vehicle.

The Fuel Pump Shut-Off Switch

If the engine cranks but does not start or does not start after a collision, the fuel pump shut-off switch may have been triggered. The shut-off switch is a device intended to automatically stop the flow of fuel to the engine when your vehicle has been involved in a collision. The impact does not have to be great for the switch to be triggered. Minor parking lot bumping and severe road impacts (such as potholes) may trigger the switch even when there is no apparent body damage. In many instances, you may not even know that the switch has been triggered.

Once the shut-off switch is triggered, you must reset the switch by hand before you can start your vehicle.



The shut-off switch is located under the dashboard to the right of the transmission hump and under the carpet. You have to pull back the carpet in order to see the shut-off switch.

⚠ *WARNING*

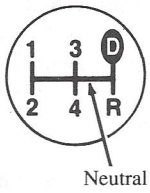
Fuel Pump Shut-Off Switch:
If you see or smell fuel, do not reset the switch or try to start your vehicle. You could injure yourself or others. Have all the passengers get out of the vehicle and call the local fire department or a towing service.

If your engine cranks but does not start after a collision:

1. Turn the key in the ignition to OFF.
2. Check under the vehicle for leaking fuel.
3. If you do not see or smell fuel, push the red reset button down. If the button is already set, you may have a different mechanical problem.
4. Turn the ignition key ON for a few seconds, then turn it OFF.
5. Check under the vehicle again for leaking fuel. If you see or smell fuel, do not start your vehicle again. If you do not see or smell fuel, you can try to start your vehicle again.
6. Check all vehicle warning lights before driving your vehicle.

Manual Transmission Operation

5-speed overdrive manual transmission shift pattern



■ Manual Transmission Shift Pattern

The shift pattern of the transmission is conventional, as shown.

Press the clutch pedal all the way down while shifting; then release it slowly.

A safety feature prevents accidental shifting from Ⓓ to R. Put the selector lever in Neutral and wait at least 3 seconds before shifting into R (Reverse) to prevent a "grinding" noise. Do not release the clutch.

NOTE

Make sure the vehicle is stopped before shifting to R (Reverse).

⚠CAUTION

Keep your foot off the clutch pedal except when shifting gears. Also, don't use the clutch to hold the vehicle on an upgrade. This will avoid needless clutch wear and damage.

⚠WARNING

Do Not Abuse the Clutch:
Do not abuse the clutch. Continued use of a damaged or worn clutch, prolonged clutch slippage or downshifting at excessive speeds can result in an explosion of the engine or clutch components, resulting in potential serious personal injury.

■ Recommendations for Shifting

▼ Upshifting

For normal acceleration, we recommend these shift points.

Upshifts: Normal Accelerating (Recommended for Best Fuel Economy)

Upshift from:	Transfer Case Position	
	2H or 4H*	4L
First to Second	10 mph (16 km/h)	4 mph (6 km/h)
Second to Third	22 mph (35 km/h)	9 mph (14 km/h)
Third to Fourth	33 mph (53 km/h)	13 mph (21 km/h)
Fourth to Overdrive	41 mph (66 km/h)	17 mph (27 km/h)

Upshifts: Cruising Conditions (Recommended for Best Fuel Economy)

Upshift from:	Transfer Case Position:	
	2H or 4H*	4L
First to Second	10 mph (16 km/h)	4 mph (6 km/h)
Second to Third	18 mph (30 km/h)	8 mph (13 km/h)
Third to Fourth	29 mph (46 km/h)	12 mph (19 km/h)
Fourth to Overdrive	40 mph (64 km/h)	16 mph (26 km/h)

*Use the following for 4x2 Applications.

▼ Downshifting

When you must slow down in heavy traffic or on a steep **upgrade**, downshift before the engine starts to overwork. This reduces the chance of stalling and gives better acceleration when you need more speed.

On a steep **downgrade**, downshifting helps maintain safe speed and prolongs brake life. When you come to a stop, do not downshift through each gear. Disengage the clutch and use as necessary. Downshifting through the gears decreases fuel economy.

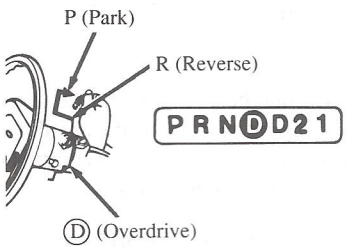
Maximum Downshift Speeds (For Overdrive)*

Shift from:	Transfer Case Position:	
	2H or 4H**	4L
Overdrive to Fourth	55 mph (88 km/h)	22 mph (35 km/h)
Fourth to Third	45 mph (72 km/h)	18 mph (29 km/h)
Third to Second	35 mph (56 km/h)	14 mph (22 km/h)
Second to First	20 mph (32 km/h)	8 mph (13 km/h)

* Downshift at lower speeds when driving on slippery surfaces.
** Use the following for 4x2 Applications.

Automatic Transmission

■ Automatic Transmission Controls



■ Transmission Ranges

The selector lever must be at P or N to operate the starter.

▼ P (Park)

P locks the transmission and prevents the rear wheels from rotating.

⚠WARNING

Moving Selector Lever:
Hold the brake pedal down while you move the selector lever from position to position. If you do not hold the brake pedal down, your vehicle may move unexpectedly and injure someone.

⚠WARNING

The Parking Brake vs. P:
Using P instead of the parking brake to hold the vehicle is unsafe. If P fails to hold, the vehicle will move freely and possibly cause an accident. Don't use P in place of the parking brake. Always use both P and the parking brake.

⚠CAUTION

Shifting into P or R while the vehicle is moving can damage your transmission.

▼ R (Reverse)

In the R position, the vehicle moves only backward. It must be stopped before you can shift to or from R, except as explained under Rocking the Vehicle (page 3-8).

▼ N (Neutral)

In N, the wheels and transmission are not locked. The vehicle will roll freely even on the slightest incline unless the parking brake or brakes are engaged.

⚠WARNING

Shifting From N or P:
It's dangerous to shift from N or P into a driving gear when the engine is running faster than idle. If this is done, the vehicle could move suddenly, causing an accident or serious injury. If the engine is running faster than idle, don't shift from N or P into a driving gear.

▼ Ⓓ (Overdrive)

Ⓓ is the normal driving position. From a stop, the transmission will automatically shift through a 4-gear sequence.

▼ D (Drive)

In this position the transmission operates the same as in Overdrive except it will not shift into Fourth gear. This position provides more engine braking.

▼ 2 (Second)

The 2 position is helpful when driving in heavy, slow-moving traffic and climbing hills; for braking assist when going down hills; or for starting on slick surfaces and other situations where gentle acceleration may be necessary. Do not exceed 55 mph (88 km/h) in the 2 position.

▼ 1 (Low)

Use the 1 position in hard-pulling situations, or for climbing and descending very steep grades.

Shift patterns with overdrive:
Ⓓ = 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th
D = 1st, 2nd, 3rd
2 = 2nd
1 = 1st

Shift patterns without overdrive:
D = 1st, 2nd, 3rd
2 = 2nd
1 = 1st

■ Driving Tips

▼ Passing

For extra power when passing another vehicle or climbing steep grades, depress the accelerator fully. The transmission will shift to the next lower gear.

▼ Climbing steep grades from a stop

To climb a steep grade from a stopped position:

1. Depress the brake pedal.
2. Shift to D or 1 depending on the load weight and grade steepness.
3. Release all brakes while gradually accelerating.

▼ Descending steep grades

When descending a steep grade, shift to 2 or 1, depending on load weight and grade steepness. Descend slowly, using the brakes only occasionally to prevent them from overheating.

■ Overdrive

▼ Overdrive operation

In Ⓓ, the transmission automatically shifts to Overdrive, which improves fuel economy and reduces noise.

But to increase engine braking, don't use Overdrive when going down a steep grade.

And for a smoother ride with less shifting, don't use it when:

- Going up a steep grade;
- Driving in stop-and-go traffic;
- Pulling heavy loads.

4-Wheel Drive Systems

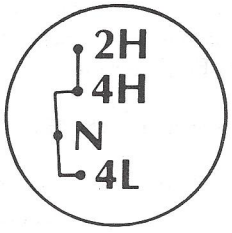
When you select the 4-wheel drive mode, your vehicle supplies power to all four wheels. This increases traction, enabling you to drive your 4x4 over terrain and road conditions 2-wheel drive vehicles can't.

Power is supplied to all four wheels through a transfer case that allows you to select 4-wheel drive when necessary. Methods for engaging and disengaging 4-wheel drive and low range will depend on which system your vehicle has.

■ 4x4 System — Lever Operated

The lever operated transfer case can be placed into four positions. The 2H position is the 2-wheel drive position in which power is delivered only to the rear axle. The 4H position provides 4-wheel drive with power delivered to the front and rear axles. The 4L position provides 4-wheel drive with power delivered to the front and rear axles at reduced speeds or when above average traction is required. In the N (Neutral) position, there is no power delivered to either axle.

Transfer case selections



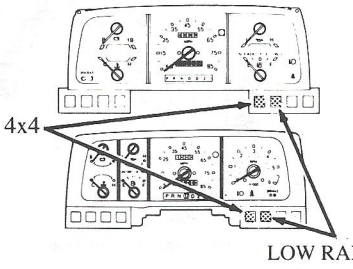
4-wheel drive operation (4H or 4L) on dry pavement is not recommended. Operating the vehicle in 4-wheel drive on dry pavement will increase tire wear, decrease fuel economy, and make 4-wheel drive disengagement difficult for the transfer case.

▼ 4x4 system indicator lights

A 4x4 light and a LOW RANGE light are located at the lower right of the instrument cluster.

- 2H position — Neither the 4x4 or the LOW RANGE lights are lit.
- 4H position — Only the 4x4 light is lit.
- N position — Neither the 4x4 or LOW RANGE lights are lit.
- 4L position — Both the 4x4 and the LOW RANGE lights are lit.

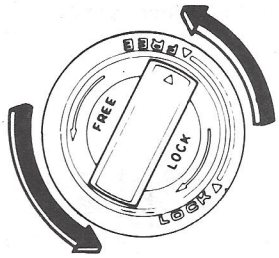
4x4 indicator lights



■ Lever Operated System With Manual Locking Hubs

To shift from 2H to 4H:

Stop the vehicle and engage the manual locking hubs by turning both hub lock selector knobs clockwise to the LOCK position. Move the transfer case shift lever straight back to the 4H position. After both hubs have been turned to the LOCK position, shifts between 2H and 4H (or 4H to 2H) may take place at any speed.



Free running position

Lock position

- Do not drive the vehicle in 4H or 4L with the manual locking hubs in the FREE position.
- Do not drive the vehicle with the left and right manual locking hubs set to different positions.

To shift from 4H to 2H:

Move the transfer case shift lever forward to the 2H position. This can be done at any speed. However, the front driveline will remain engaged to the front wheels until the manual locking hubs are disengaged. To disengage the manual locking hubs, stop the vehicle and rotate both hub lock selector knobs counterclockwise to the FREE position.

Operating in 2H with the hubs in the LOCK position increases fuel consumption, noise, vibration, and wear. For prolonged 2H operation on dry pavement, set the manual locking hubs to the FREE position.

To shift between 4H and 4L:

Stop the vehicle and place the automatic transmission into N (Neutral) or depress the clutch pedal fully on vehicles with a manual transmission. Pull the transfer case shift lever to the left and shift the transfer case to the desired 4H or 4L position. This shift should be with one continuous motion without pausing in the N (Neutral) position. Pausing in the Neutral position can result in gear clash and difficult shifting. If while shifting between 4H and 4L, the transfer case gets stuck in the N (Neutral) position or is difficult to shift into either 4H or 4L, it may be necessary to let the vehicle roll slightly and/or turn off the engine (particularly on vehicles equipped with automatic transmissions).

To shift to N (Neutral) from either 4H or 4L:

To shift to N (Neutral), stop the vehicle and engage the parking brake. Place the automatic transmission into (Neutral) or depress the clutch pedal fully on manual transmission vehicles. From either the 4H or 4L position, pull the transfer case shift lever to the left and move the transfer case shift lever to the N (Neutral) position. The N (Neutral) position should only be used for vehicle towing. See Towing in Section 5.

⚠ *WARNING*

Transfer Case in Neutral:
When the transfer case is in the N (Neutral) position, the engine and transmission are disconnected from the rest of the driveline. Therefore, the vehicle is free to roll even if the automatic transmission is in P (Park) or the manual transmission is in gear. Do not leave the vehicle unattended with the transfer case in the N (Neutral) position. Always set the parking brake fully and turn off the ignition when leaving the vehicle.

To shift from N (Neutral) to either 4H or 4L, stop the vehicle and engage the parking brake. Place the automatic transmission into N (Neutral) or depress the clutch pedal fully on manual transmission vehicles. Move the transfer case shift lever to the desired position. If it is difficult to shift into either 4H or 4L, it may be necessary to let the vehicle roll slightly and/or turn off the engine (particularly on vehicles equipped with automatic transmissions).

■ 4x4 System — Electronic Shift Control

The electronic shift control 4x4 system functions in three modes. In 2-wheel drive mode, power is delivered only to the rear axle at normal road speed. The 4x4 mode provides 4-wheel drive with power delivered to the front and rear axles at normal road speed. The 4x4 LOW RANGE mode provides 4-wheel drive with power delivered to the front and rear axles at reduced speeds.

4-wheel drive operation (4x4 or 4x4 LOW RANGE) on dry pavement is not recommended. Operating the vehicle in 4-wheel drive on dry pavement will increase tire wear, decrease fuel economy, and make 4-wheel drive disengagement difficult for the transfer case.

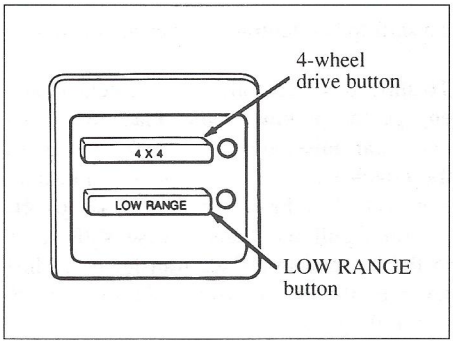
▼ Electronic shift control system indicator lights

A 4x4 indicator light and a LOW RANGE indicator light are located at the lower right of the instrument cluster. In addition, two small amber lights are located near the electronic shift control system buttons. The amber light to the right of the 4x4 button will light up at the same time as the 4x4 instrument panel light. The amber light to the right of the LOW RANGE light will light up at the same time as the instrument panel LOW RANGE light.

- 2-wheel drive mode — Neither the 4x4 nor the LOW RANGE lights are lit.
- 4x4 mode — Only the 4x4 light is lit.
- 4x4 LOW RANGE mode — Both the 4x4 and LOW RANGE lights are lit.

To shift from 2-wheel drive to 4x4:

To shift into 4x4, push the 4x4 button located on the instrument panel. This shift can be done at a stop or at speeds up to 55 mph (88 km/h). When the vehicle is driven, the automatic locking hubs will engage. If the vehicle is stopped while in 4x4 and the vehicle direction is reversed from the previous direction, the automatic locking hubs will momentarily disengage and reengage. The automatic locking hubs may click as they automatically engage in the new direction.



- At extremely low temperatures, it may be necessary to slow down or even stop to shift from 2-wheel drive to 4x4.
- The initial shift from 2-wheel drive to 4x4 when the vehicle is moving can cause some momentary clunk and ratcheting sounds. This is the front powertrain coming up to speed and the automatic locking hubs engaging and is not a cause for concern.
- Because of possible damage to powertrain components, never shift from 2-wheel drive to 4x4 with the rear wheels slipping.

To shift from 4x4 to 2-wheel drive:

Push the 4x4 button; the 4x4 lamp on the instrument cluster will go out indicating the vehicle is in 2-wheel drive. This can be done at any speed. To disengage the automatic locking hubs, operate the vehicle in 2-wheel drive in the opposite direction for approximately 10 feet (3 meters) in a straight line.

For example:

— If you were driving the vehicle forward in 4x4, the automatic locking hubs will disengage the next time the vehicle is driven in reverse in 2-wheel drive for approximately 10 feet (3 meters) in a straight line.

— If you were driving the vehicle in reverse in 4x4, the automatic locking hubs will disengage the next time the vehicle is driven forward in 2-wheel drive for approximately 10 feet (3 meters) in a straight line.

— Operating in 2-wheel drive mode with the hubs locked increases fuel consumption, noise, vibration, and wear. For prolonged 2-wheel drive operation on dry pavement, disengagement of the automatic locking hubs, which is not required for 2-wheel drive operation, stops all movement of front-wheel drive components while operating in 2-wheel drive.

During axle break-in or operation in extremely cold temperatures, the automatic locking hubs may not release completely. It may be necessary to drive the vehicle for 10 to 15 minutes before repeating the release procedure.

To shift to 4x4 LOW RANGE:

Stop the vehicle and place the automatic transmission in N (Neutral) or depress the clutch pedal fully on vehicles with a manual transmission. Push the LOW RANGE button on the instrument cluster to shift the transfer case from 4x4 to 4x4 LOW RANGE. Both the 4x4 and LOW RANGE lights are now lit.

NOTE

The vehicle must already be in 4x4 before pushing the LOW RANGE Button.

To shift from 4x4 LOW RANGE to 4x4:

Stop the vehicle and place the automatic transmission into Neutral or depress the clutch pedal fully on vehicles with a manual transmission. Push the LOW RANGE button on the instrument panel to shift the transfer case from 4x4 LOW RANGE to 4x4.

⚠CAUTION

- To prevent damage to the transfer case, stop the vehicle before shifting to and from 4H and 4L.
- Driving on dry, hard surfaces in 4H or 4L may cause unnecessary noise and tire wear. Drive in 2H under these conditions.

■ Off-Road Driving

You can drive your Mazda 4x4 on normal roads or off-road. But don't drive it in deep water or mud or on steep hills because it is designed mainly for leisure use and not as a conventional off-road vehicle.

Follow these guidelines for safe operation.

- Drive carefully when off-road and avoid dangerous areas.
- Don't drive horizontally across steep slopes; drive over them either straight up or straight down. Any vehicle has a greater possibility of rolling over sideways than endways.
- Don't make quick turns. Because your vehicle is equipped with 4-wheel drive, it has a higher center of gravity than a normal 2-wheel drive vehicle and will thus roll over more easily.
- Carry nothing on the roof because this will only raise the center of gravity, making it even easier for the vehicle to roll over.
- Never use tires larger than what this manual specifies.
- Drive cautiously to avoid vehicle damage from concealed objects such as rocks and stumps. Know the terrain or examine maps of the area in question before driving.
- Be extremely careful when driving on pavement made slippery by loose sand, water, gravel, snow or ice.
- Never grip the inside of the steering wheel or its spokes when driving off-road. It could jerk and injure your hands. You could also easily lose control. Always drive off-road with your fingers and thumbs on the outside of the steering wheel.
- Before driving, make sure that everyone in the cabin is seated with seat belts fastened.
- Drive at lower speeds in strong crosswinds. Because of your vehicle's high center of gravity, its stability will be affected in crosswinds. Slower speeds ensure better control.
- Test your brake immediately after driving in mud or water. Do this by driving slowly and stepping on the brake pedal.

Brake System

- If you drive off-road through sand, mud, or water deep enough to nearly touch the wheel hub, you should make sure your vehicle gets maintenance more frequently than is normally required. See Scheduled Maintenance in Section 7.

- Tight turns in 4-wheel drive will result in the following:

  — A need for increased steering effort.

  — An increase of 10% in turning radius in comparison with 2-wheel drive.

  — Jerkiness, especially on a hard surface. Sometimes the tires will slip, and sometimes they'll stick.

  — You may think the brakes have been applied, even though they haven't.

- If you must drive through deep water, shift to 4L and drive no faster than 5 mph (8 km/h).

  But never drive through water higher than the center of your vehicle's wheels.

■ If Your Vehicle Goes Off the Edge of the Pavement

If your vehicle goes off the edge of the pavement, slow down **gradually** and then **ease** back onto the pavement.

A sudden attempt to return to the pavement could cause the vehicle to slide sideways out of control, or roll over.

Returning to the pavement after going off the edge may cause you to hit highway reflectors or other small objects and do minor damage to your vehicle.

However, your safety and the safety of others should be your primary concern.

■ Foot Brake

Your Mazda has power-assisted brakes that adjust automatically through normal use.

Should power assist fail, you can stop by applying greater force than normal to the brake pedal. But the distance required to stop will be greater than usual.

When the engine is off, the reserve brake power is less each time the brake pedal is applied. Don't pump the pedal when the power assist has been interrupted, except when necessary to maintain steering control when sliding on ice or other slippery surfaces.

If normal operation does not include much backing up, adjust the rear brakes when they seem "low" and do not grip well by using the following procedure.

Drive the vehicle in reverse at 5 mph (8 km/h) on level, dry pavement. Stop the vehicle by firmly applying the brakes. Repeat this procedure four or five times.

If the brakes seem low or do not grip well during normal operation, it may indicate the need for a brake system inspection and/or service. You should have your vehicle checked as soon as possible.

⚠WARNING

Riding the Brakes:
Driving with your foot on the brake pedal or continuously applying the brakes when going down a long or steep hill will cause high brake temperatures. Increased stopping distances or even total brake failure could result. Avoid continuous application of the brakes. Shift to a lower gear.

⚠WARNING

Wet Brakes:
Driving through water deep enough to wet the brakes may affect their performance. It could result in failure to slow down at the usual rate and in pulling to one side when the brakes are applied. Light braking will indicate whether they have been affected. To dry the brakes, apply them lightly while driving slowly until performance is normal.

■ Hydraulic Power Brakes

The hydraulic brake system is made up of two independent hydraulic circuits. One hydraulic circuit supplies fluid to the front disc brakes and the other hydraulic circuit supplies fluid to the rear drum brakes. These two circuits are supplied by a common hydraulic brake fluid reservoir, with a fluid level sensor.

The brake light in the instrument panel will light for low brake fluid in the common brake fluid reservoir.

⚠WARNING

Reduced Braking Capability:
A loss of pressure in one of the circuits, indicated by an increase in pedal travel, will result in reduced braking capability. The brake system should be checked immediately.