Parking Meters, Irregularly Spaced

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Regular or uniform spacing of single-head parking meters on the curb, for parallel parking, has certain disadvantages. The typical city ordinance covering regular spacing of meters reads, “A distance measuring seven feet perpendicular to the curb and 22 feet parallel with the curb shall constitute a parking stall.” This allows the driver to place his car at any point within this area, legally. In a group of three cars, if the outer ones are placed toward one another, the car in the middle has a minimum of maneuvering space, thereby causing difficulty in leaving, especially if the adjacent cars have their brakes set. Likewise more time is consumed and more damage to fenders results from the operations of entering and leaving such a space.

Interference with moving traffic in the second lane because of excessive time required to park is a very important factor affecting progressive movement and safety. To lessen the time required to enter or leave parallel parking spaces at the curb, “pair parking” is recommended.

With the use of the “twin-meter” this pair-parking plan becomes automatic and necessary. How to attain similar results when the single-type meter is used becomes the problem which is readily solved by irregular spacing of meters. Assuming the maximum car length, bumper to bumper, to be 18 feet, and assuming the minimum maneuvering space to be 8 feet, it follows that the meter spacing should be 18 feet and 26 feet alternately. This adds up to a space average of 22 feet per car, the popular presentday maximum value.

The maneuvering space can be reduced to five or six feet and still be operable for 18-foot cars with some inconvenience, but with ample clearance for shorter cars.

The next necessary step requires that the city ordinance be drawn so as to cause cars to be parked in a specific manner, such as with the front bumper within 12 inches of alignment with the meter post.
To inaugurate the pair-parking system with single-type meters it is essential that proper publicity accompany the installation and, after enforcement begins, the use of courtesy cards reading as follows should be placed on all improperly parked cars:

"Your car is not parked properly
Line up your front bumper with the meter as shown above,
Day and night."

A diagram on the card illustrates how the car should be parked. The issuance of these cards should continue for several months.

![Diagram of pair-parked cars in Gary, Indiana](image_url)

**Figure 1.** "Pair Parked" plan of parking cars in Gary, Indiana. Front bumper lined up with meter in each case.

The presentday need for a greater degree of order in parallel parking, and the popularity of current installations indicates that pair-parking will receive general acceptance.