

How To Avoid Traffic Accidents

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How To Avoid Traffic Accidents

Speed is a major factor in many accidents. Driving too fast for condition of the road, weather, vehicle or driver increases your chances of having an accident. Reduce speed during adverse weather conditions. Rain, ice, sleet, snow and otherwise poor road surfaces can increase your stopping distance dramatically. Add worn tires or brakes to this and the distance increases further. Poor driving skills on top of these other factors can make the situation almost impossible. Keep your vehicle in good condition. Worn tires and brakes can decrease your ability to control the vehicle under emergency stopping and turning situations. Replace windshield wipers regularly and keep the windshield washer full and in operating condition. Dirty or muddy water splashed onto your window can cause a "blackout" for several seconds while you locate and activate the washer. Be familiar with its location and operation so that you may use it quickly and without taking your eyes off the road.

Wear your seatbelt. It will hold you in place during violent maneuvers. You might do an excellent job of recognizing a hazard suddenly appearing in front of you, realize there's no time to stop, make an abrupt turn to the left, and then find yourself thrown all the way to the passenger side of the vehicle. What do you do then? You brace yourself for the accident you're going to cause trying to avoid the first one! There are many other sudden happenings that can cause you to be thrown around inside of the vehicle, and once that happens you're no longer in control. You become just another passenger along for the ride. Speaking of passengers; buckle them down too. Flying passengers can injure or kill you as well as themselves. Get a physicist to compute for you the effective weight of your 175 pound passenger when he hits you in a 30 MPH crash! It'll scare you!

Stay away from other vehicles! That may sound silly, but most accidents involve two or more vehicles. Try not to be near those who are looking for a place to wreck! Don't tailgate and don't allow others to tailgate you. If traffic conditions are light (you L.A. folks won't understand this) try not to drive beside other vehicles. They'll always swerve right into you when they try to dodge that dog or cat in the road! If a vehicle next to you is struck by another vehicle, he could be pushed into you. If you're not in "downtown" traffic, and can do so, spread out. (I know you L.A. people are saying "what planet is this guy from?") Intersections are the favorite meeting places for cars and drivers looking for a place to crash. Always check cross traffic before starting out on a green light. Someone is

always trying to get the last part of that yellow light.

Stay away from 18-wheelers at all times. Always avoid being on the right side of one, especially near places where the truck driver might want to make a right turn. Large tractor-trailer rigs must, by the nature of their size, make wide right turns. That is, they cannot make a right turn from the right lane like smaller vehicles. This maneuver may give the appearance of an open lane available for use by an unsuspecting person not seeing the truck's turn signal. Many a car and driver has been crushed by the trailer and wheels of those large rigs. Another hazard of those big trucks is retread tires coming apart on the highway. Have you ever been beside one of those big rigs when an old retreaded tire decides to blow? It'll get your attention fast! It can cause some drivers to change lanes or slow abruptly. If you're on a motorcycle you could be seriously injured if you are close behind or beside one of these rigs when a tire blows. We've all seen those tire remnants scattered about the highway so be aware that it happens quite often.

All vehicles come from the factory with "blind spots" installed free of charge. Know where yours are and always check them before making a lane change. Remember; you can't check them with mirrors. That's why they're called blind spots. You'll have to turn around and actually look. Don't ride in the blind spots of other vehicle. You're just asking for trouble if you do. Parking lots are one of the best places to find a fender bender. They're a good place to have your head on a swivel. Vehicles seem to come out of nowhere in a mall parking lot and you'll have to be constantly looking left and right if you want to stay out of trouble.