

WHAT TO DO IF ...

It's raining ... Turn on your headlights, and slow down, especially on curves. Brake and steer lightly to avoid skids. **If you skid:** Ease off the gas and carefully steer into the direction you want the front of the car to go. To avoid hydroplaning (losing contact with the road due to a thin layer of water under your tires), keep your tires properly inflated, replace worn tires and **slow down**.

IMPORTANT: Never drive your vehicle on a road that is underwater. Turn around and find another route, or go to higher ground and wait for the water to recede. Water over roadways may appear shallow, but it can hide swift currents, deep dips and washed-out roadway. Most vehicles float in less than 2 feet of water. Also, avoid sheltering your car in a low-lying underpass during a rainstorm.

It's snowing ... Slow down. Steer into skids. If you are trapped during a blizzard, stay in your vehicle. Hang a bright cloth on your antenna so passers-by know you're in trouble. Run the engine and heater for 10 minutes each hour to warm up (make sure you clear all snow from the exhaust pipe first, to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning). Keep a blanket in the car.

You have a blowout ... Don't hit the brakes. Let the car slow down gradually by taking your foot off the gas. If you are on the highway, work your way toward the emergency lane or an exit. Then brake slowly and cautiously, and turn on your emergency flashers.



MORE SAFE DRIVING TIPS

In **foggy conditions**, keep your headlights on low beam and, depending on visibility, drive at a cautiously sensible speed. Dense fog can reduce visibility so badly that you cannot see the cars a short distance in front of you.

When **driving at night**, turn on your headlights as soon as it's twilight. Keep your headlights on low beam, so you don't blind other drivers. Avoid glare from oncoming cars by focusing on the right edge of the road.



Watch for emergency vehicles.

Calmly steer clear of the lane closest to an emergency vehicle that is stopped on the shoulder. If you're in the path of an emergency vehicle, carefully yield and move out of the way. Avoid a sudden stop or turn.

Apply a minimum of the **2-second rule** to following distance. **How:** Watch the vehicle in front of you pass a stationary object such as a mile marker or sign, then count one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two. If you pass the same object before you finish saying two, then you are following too closely. Leave more space during bad weather and on slippery roads; when you're behind large vehicles that hinder your ability to see hazards farther ahead; and when you're driving behind motorcycles, which may be able to stop more quickly than you.

At **railroad crossings**, always look both ways before crossing. Never race a train to a crossing. Cars are no match for trains. **Never** cross around lowered railroad crossing gates.

Final thought: Staying focused on your driving at all times is one of the most important safe driving habits. A momentary lapse can lead to tragic consequences. Pay attention to your own driving as well as others on the road. A defensive (and safe) driver is always ready for the unexpected.

SAFE DRIVING

FOR EVERY SEASON



USE CAUTION, SAVE LIVES

You can save your own life as well as the lives of your passengers and fellow drivers by driving safely and defensively. Use these tips to get on the road to safe driving.



3 Rules of the Road You Should Never Break

1. DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE.

If you have been drinking, call a friend or a cab to drive you home. Or designate a driver early, so you know everyone will have a safe ride home.

2. DON'T DRIVE IF YOU'RE TIRED.

Drowsy driving has been compared to drinking and driving because the effect on driving ability and reaction time is similar.

Remember: Some prescription and nonprescription medications, especially antihistamines, pain relievers and sleep aids, can cause drowsiness. If you feel sleepy while driving, pull off and find a place to sleep for the night, or find a safe place to take a 15- to 20-minute nap.

3. MAINTAIN YOUR VEHICLE.

Regular maintenance on your automobile's engine, brakes and tires can prevent dangerous situations and aggravating car trouble. Headlights, taillights and turn signals should work properly.

Seat Belts and Air Bags Work Together

Air bags are designed to minimize head and chest injuries in a crash. However, air bags are meant to work with seat belts, not replace them. Buckle up using the lap-shoulder-belt combination properly on every trip.



6 Tips for Safe Driving

1. Drive the speed limit.

Freeways, neighborhood streets, school zones — speed limits are in place for good reasons.

2. Stay aware of the vehicles around you.

Large trucks, aggressive drivers, young drivers — the vehicles around you can be unpredictable. Keep enough distance between your vehicle and those around you to have room to stop suddenly or avoid collision from a careless lane changer, an erratic driver or an emergency.

3. Use caution at intersections.

Tap your brakes to alert the person behind you that you're stopping ... look both ways before crossing, even on a green light ... a yellow light means caution, not speed up to beat the red light.

4. Drive defensively.

Be on the lookout for turning or slowing vehicles. Yield to other vehicles whenever possible. Communicate through your brake lights and turn signals. Expect other drivers to make mistakes.

5. Keep 100% of your focus on driving at all times.

Distractions such as talking on the phone, eating, adjusting the radio, dealing with children and other activities put you at risk.

6. Keep children properly buckled up.

Height, age and weight all factor into child passenger safety. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration recommends that children who weigh more than 40 pounds should use booster seats until they are at least 8 years old or 4 feet 9 inches tall. Booster seats position a child so the seat belt, which is designed for adults, fits properly and prevents injury. Babies should be in forward- or rear-facing infant safety seats depending on weight and age. Keep children in the backseat.



Did You Know?

Antilock brakes, or ABS, prevent skidding and allow you to steer during an emergency braking situation. ABS can help improve vehicle stability (avoiding spin-outs), steering ability (directing the car where you want it to go) and stopping capability (distance needed to stop the vehicle).

Never pump antilock brakes or they will disengage. Just apply the brake pedal firmly, hold it and steer out of danger.



DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS

Chances are you have seen your share of rude and downright dangerous drivers. Aggressive drivers take out their frustrations on anyone, anytime. They run stop signs, speed, tailgate, weave in and out of traffic and make unsafe lane changes. They make hand and facial gestures ... they even scream, honk the horn and flash their lights at you.

Important: If you encounter an aggressive driver, try to get out of the way. Don't challenge him or her by speeding up or by trying to hold your position. Avoid eye contact and ignore gestures. Report the incident to police, along with a vehicle description and license plate number if possible.

