

## Driving Safety Tips to Avoid Accidents

When you're behind the wheel of a car – whether alone or with passengers – driving safely should always be your top concern. We're more distracted than ever, so it's crucial to know the basics of safe driving and practice them every time you're on the road. Here are some safe driving tips:

### Focus on driving

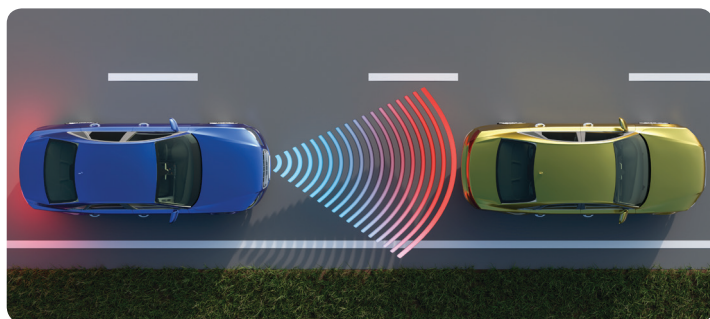
- Keep 100% of your attention on driving at all times – no multi-tasking.
- Don't use your phone or any other electronic device while driving.
- Slow down. Speeding gives you less time to react and increases the severity of an accident.

### Drive “defensively”

- Be aware of what other drivers around you are doing, and expect the unexpected.
- Assume other motorists will do something crazy, and always be prepared to avoid it.
- Keep a 2-second cushion between you and the car in front of you. Make that 4 seconds if the weather is bad.

### Practice safety

- Secure cargo that may move around while the vehicle is in motion.
- Don't attempt to retrieve items that fall to the floor.
- Have items needed within easy reach – such as toll fees, toll cards and garage passes.
- Always wear your seat belt and drive sober and drug-free.



**One of the most devastating collisions can be a simple hit from behind.** Here are some ways to help prevent being rear-ended in traffic:

Look farther up the road to spot traffic stopping long before the vehicle in front of you slams on its brakes.

Check your mirrors more often. Drivers should be checking their mirrors every five to eight seconds and then again when slowing or stopping. When coming to a stop at a traffic light or stop sign, always look in the rearview mirror to be sure vehicles behind you are also stopping.



As you slow to a stop, identify an escape route. Think of the shoulder, sidewalk, curb lane, left turn lane or any other safe route where you can get out of the way of a charging vehicle.

When you stop, leave two or three vehicle lengths between you and the vehicle in front of you. If you pull up tight behind the vehicle in front, you have locked yourself into a potential danger zone, eliminating any options of escape.

While stopped, visualize what you can do should the vehicle behind you not show signs of stopping in time. Go over in your mind that you need to get off the brake and steer where you want to go. Most drivers will simply push on their brake harder when being struck from behind in an instinctual reaction to a crash. It is unfortunately the wrong response. Be prepared to accelerate and steer to where you want to go.

Since you can't predict what other drivers will do, using these tips to keep a “space cushion” around your vehicle will give you more time and more options to react to unexpected situations.

