

Commercial Vehicles

Trucks play an important part in our economy by transporting products that are critical to day-to-day life. For many motorists, sharing the road with trucks is difficult. However, research shows that **most fatal crashes involving large trucks are caused by the car, not the commercial vehicle.**

Tips for driving with commercial vehicles

• Pass safely

Don't cut in front too soon after passing. Commercial drivers need nearly twice the time and room to stop as cars. More than 60 percent of fatal truck crashes involve impacts with the front of the truck. To be safe, look for the whole front of the truck in your rear-view mirror before pulling in front, and then don't slow down.

• Watch for side blind spots

Because of the size, commercial vehicles have large blind spots on both sides. If you cannot see the driver's face in the truck's side-view mirror, the driver cannot see you. If a truck is passing you, stay to the right and don't speed up. Slow down slightly and let the truck pass. This will give the truck driver plenty of room to pass safely and get you out of the truck's blind spot faster.



• Avoid tailgating

Commercial vehicles have large blind spots directly behind them. Not only can the driver not see you, but you cannot see what's going on ahead. Driving too close prevents you from reacting to changing traffic conditions. If the truck brakes suddenly, you have no place to go. If you hit the rear of the truck you will quickly learn that trucks are unforgiving. There are no impact-absorbing bumpers and the metal bumpers trucks do have may not align with yours.

• Pay attention

Hundreds of motorists and pedestrians are killed or injured each year by ignoring trucks backing up. Truck drivers do not have a rear-view mirror and may not see your car cutting in behind.

• Watch for right turns

Commercial vehicles may need to swing wide to the left in order to safely make a right turn. These drivers cannot see cars attempting to squeeze in between them and the curb. Watch for their signals and give them room to turn.

• Wear your seat belt

Buckling up is the single most important thing you can do to save your life in a crash. A seat belt will keep you in your seat and help you maintain control of your vehicle.



Remember, these are professional drivers doing their job. Protect yourself, your passengers, and the commercial vehicles by driving safely.

Did you know?

- Commercial vehicles were involved in 10 percent of all traffic fatalities in Kentucky in 2014.
- Over half of fatal crashes involving large trucks are caused by the passenger vehicle.
- The top human contributing factors in collisions with commercial vehicles are:

Passenger Car Driver

- Failure to yield right-of-way
- Improper passing
- Weaving in traffic
- Misjudging clearance
- Following too close
- Not under proper control

Commercial Vehicle Driver

- Misjudging clearance
- Failure to yield right-of-way
- Weaving in traffic
- Not under proper control
- Following too close
- Too fast for conditions

Apply these tips when driving with busses

- Watch for children crossing the road.
- Pay attention to speed limits in school zones.
- By law you must STOP when approaching a bus loading or unloading passengers. Remain stopped until all people are clear of the roadway and the bus is in motion. (A stop is not required when approaching a bus from the opposite direction upon a highway of four or more lanes.)



Information for commercial vehicle drivers

For information on the CDL law, applying for a CDL, and transporting hazardous materials, contact:

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Division of Driver Licensing;
<http://transportation.ky.gov/Driver-Licensing/Pages/default.aspx>; 502-564-6800

For general information, contact:

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, Division of Motor Carriers; <http://dmc.kytc.ky.gov>; 502-564-4540

- **Apportioned Registration:** 502-564-4120
- **Overweight/Overdimensional:** 502-564-7150
- **U-Drive-It** (leased and rental vehicles): 564-6401
- **Qualifications/Permits:** 502-564-4127
- **Tax Branch:** 502-564-4150



Kentucky State Police Division of Commercial Vehicle Enforcement encourages and promotes a safe driving environment through education and safety awareness while enforcing laws and regulations, placing special emphasis on commercial vehicles. Learn more about trucking regulations, compliance reviews and filing a complaint against unsafe commercial motor carriers by calling 502.564.3276 or visiting <http://www.kentuckystatepolice.org/cve/index.htm>.

For additional information:

- **AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety:** www.aaafoundation.org
- **American Trucking Association "Share The Road":** www.atastr.org
- **Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance:** www.cvsa.org
- **Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration:** www.fmcsa.dot.gov
- **Highway Watch-Homeland Security:** www.highwaywatch.com
- **Kentucky Motor Transport Association:** www.kmta.net
- **North American Preclearance and Safety System (NORPASS):** www.norpass.net