

Safe Driving Tips

Without traffic laws, rules, and controls, travel by a motor vehicle would be unsafe and impractical. However, we must remember to drive with courtesy and consideration for pedestrians and other motorists in order to keep our roads safe. Below you will find explanations of various safe driving tips and laws that are commonly confused by many motorists.

Who has the right-of-way?

According to the National Safety Council, approximately 14 percent of all fatal motor vehicle crashes involve a driver's failure to yield the right-of-way. Right-of-way refers to a motorist's right to cross an intersection ahead of another vehicle.

- ▶ At four-way, three-way, or two-way stops, the car reaching the intersection and stopping first goes first.
- ▶ When two cars reach an uncontrolled intersection at the same time, the car on the right should have the right-of-way.
- ▶ Drivers turning left must yield to oncoming vehicles that are going straight or turning right.
- ▶ Drivers entering a traffic circle or roundabout must yield to drivers already in the circle.
- ▶ Drivers on a minor road must yield to drivers on a main road.



Drivers must yield to pedestrians under the following conditions:

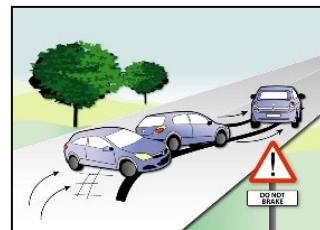
- ▶ When pedestrians are at a marked or unmarked crosswalk and there is no traffic light
- ▶ When turning a corner and pedestrians are crossing with the light
- ▶ In any situation that could threaten the pedestrian's safety

! In every situation, the right-of-way is something that is to be given, not taken. If another driver is not following the rules, be safe and let them have the right-of-way, even if it really belongs to you.

Kentucky law states a funeral procession has the right-of-way if led by a vehicle with flashing yellow, red or blue lights. You must not drive between the procession, turn on your headlights, or engage in any other act for the purpose of securing right-of-way. **Violation of this law could mean a \$250 fine or 90 days in jail.**

How to handle a skid

- ▶ Don't panic! Release the brake or accelerator.
- ▶ Start to gently apply steady pressure as you brake.
- ▶ If you begin to skid sideways, look and steer in the direction you want to go. This will allow the front of the vehicle to line up with the back.
- ▶ As soon as the vehicle begins to straighten, gently turn the wheel back to prevent skidding in the opposite direction. Continue to correct your steering until you recover. Be careful not to overcorrect which will cause you to lose control and possibly force the vehicle to slide sideways and roll over.





See and be seen

- ▶ **Look ahead.** Scan the road ahead and establish a “visual lead.”
- ▶ **Keep a “space cushion.”** Maintain a three-to-four second gap between your vehicle and the vehicle ahead. When a driver makes a mistake, you need time to react. The following distance should increase as your speed increases.
- ▶ **Signal your intentions.** When turning, signal at least 100 feet before the turn. When changing lanes, use your turn signal, glance over your shoulder to check the “blind spot,” then make sure the wheels of the vehicle behind you are clearly visible in the rear-view mirror before re-entering the lane.
- ▶ **Be aware.** Check the rearview and side mirrors regularly.
- ▶ **Use your headlights.** Driving with headlights on doubles the distance at which you can be seen.

Inclement weather

- ▶ **Clean your vehicle.** Remove snow, ice or frost from all headlights, taillights, mirrors and windows before you start to drive. If humidity is high, condensation may build inside on your windows. Turn on the defroster and open a window slightly. The air conditioner should be on to dry out the atmosphere.
- ▶ **Adjust your speed.** Slippery roads don’t provide the grip your tires need, so adjustments must be made by the driver. If the road is wet, reduce speed by five to ten miles an hour. If it’s snowing, reduce speed by half. If ice is on the road and you must drive, slow down to at least five to ten miles an hour. Avoid using cruise control in wet, snowy or icy conditions.
- ▶ **Increase your “space cushion.”** Keep at least a five second stopping distance, compared to a three-to-four second stopping distance when conditions are favorable.
- ▶ **Adjust to visibility restrictions.** In heavy rain, snow, or thick fog you may not see more than 100 feet ahead. Keep your speed less than 25 miles per hour and use low-beam headlights.



Did you know?



When vision is obscured by fog, high beams are not used because the particles of moisture in the fog act like a reflective sign. The more intense light is reflected at a higher angle, back into the driver’s eyes.

Adjust your mirrors

- ▶ **Driver side:** Tilt your head to the *left* until it rests against the window and adjust the mirror to barely see the side of the vehicle.
- ▶ **Passenger side:** Tilt your head to the *right* until it is under the rear view mirror and adjust the mirror to barely see the side of the vehicle.
- ▶ **Rear:** Frame rear window with rear view mirror

Adjust your seating position

- ▶ Shoulders should be even with the top of your steering wheel
- ▶ Chest should be no closer than 12 inches to the steering wheel airbag. (Airbags inflate at a speed of over 100 miles per hour.)
- ▶ The steering wheel airbag section should be pointed at your chest
- ▶ The top of the head restraint should be at least as high as the top of the head.

For Additional Information:

- **Kentucky Driver Testing Manual:** <http://kentuckystatepolice.org/driver-testing/>