

Passenger Vehicles Rules of Thumb

- Trucks can't stop as fast as cars. The average car traveling at 55 mph can stop in about 130-140 feet. A fully loaded truck traveling at the same speed can take up to 400 feet to come to a complete stop.
- Don't return to the driving lane until you can see the entire front of the truck in your rear view mirror.
- If you can't see the truck's side mirrors, he or she can't see you.
- If you can't see the driver in his or her side mirror, you are in his or her blind spot.
- Since it takes longer to pass a commercial vehicle, passenger vehicles should maintain consistent speed when passing. Be sure you can see the entire cab of the truck in the rear view mirror.
- If a truck is signaling its intention to change lanes, allow it space to do so.

Commercial Vehicles Rules of Thumb

- Anticipate the unexpected; look 1/4 mile ahead for a safe path, and leave yourself an out.
- Be especially cautious of vehicles when approaching highway entrance ramps. Although you may have the right of way, that often doesn't stop vehicles from attempting to squeeze onto the road in front of you.
- Allow for plenty of time to signal your intention to change lanes so other vehicles can compensate.
- Be especially aware of construction zones, making sure to give road workers enough room.
- Many states have laws which limit commercial vehicles to one or two lanes of the highway. Do you know the restrictions in the states you travel?

SOURCES

1. Network of Employers for Traffic Safety.
2. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
3. Federal Highway Administration. "Have you heard the Rumbling About Droway Drivers?" Federal Highway Administration Website. <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/traffic/for/engr/hwy/youheard.htm>



Balancing the Responsibility



“Safety is about fairness and cooperation among drivers.”

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor



Larry G. Trent
Director

It's not just the other guy's responsibility. . .

We all share the highway. While law enforcement does its job by communicating with us about safe use on the road, common sense sharing is up to you. The bottom line – safe sharing in many highway situations is simply fairness and cooperation among drivers.

Life in the Fast Lane

It seems like we are all in a hurry these days - a big hurry, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), speed is a factor in nearly one-third of all fatal crashes and costs society more than \$23 billion a year.

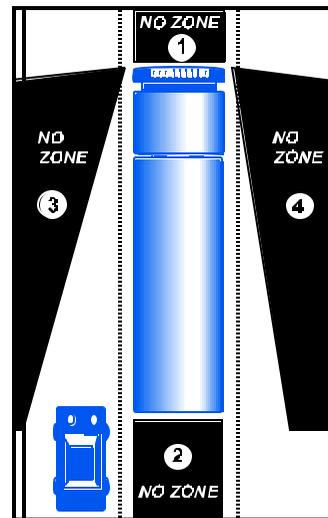
Next time you climb into a car or truck in a rush, think of this:

- The speed limit applies to all lanes, including the far left lane on a multi-lane highway.
- Your speed should not exceed the posted speed limit – even when passing. If you and the vehicle ahead of you are traveling at the posted speed limit, there is no need to pass.

Bad Driving Habits

More than 250,000 crashes involving cars and trucks happen every year.⁽¹⁾ Many could be avoided by keeping these important points in mind:

- Drivers should pass on the left as it is safer than passing on the right. Conducting a pass on the right is risky since it places you in the blind spot of the vehicle you are passing.
- Know the “No-Zone” – areas of roadway around large trucks that represent danger for passenger vehicles. According to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, No-Zone areas include blind spots



such as:

- 1 the area immediately in front of the large truck and within its same lane;
- 2 the area immediately behind the large truck and within its same lane;
- 3 the area to the left side of the large truck, adjacent to the cab and in the adjoining lane; or
- 4 the area to the right side of the large truck, behind the cab and in the adjoining lane.

Distracted/Drowsy Driving

Driving drowsy can be just as dangerous as driving intoxicated. About one million crashes annually – one-sixth of all crashes – are thought

to be produced by driver inattention/lapses.⁽²⁾ Sleep deprivation and fatigue make such lapses of attention more likely to occur. Driver fatigue is a safety issue of special concern to commercial motor vehicle transportation as drivers may drive up to 10 hours continuously before taking a break, often drive at night, and sometimes have irregular and unpredictable work schedules.

Likewise, other diversions – a passenger, the radio, pager, new electronic car gadgets, and even eating – can get in the way of concentration and lead to equally deadly consequences on the roadway. Here are some tips from the experts:⁽³⁾

- Start any trip with plenty of sleep.
- Schedule a break every two hours or every 100 miles.
- Stop if you show any sign of sleepiness; the body's need for sleep won't go away if you roll down the window or play loud music.
- Plan to drive during times of the day when you are normally awake and be willing to stay overnight rather than drive straight through.
- Make sure both people in the front of the car are awake. A passenger who needs rest should go to the back seat, buckle up, and sleep.
- Pull off the road to use your cell phone.