

## QUIZ YOURSELF ON TRAFFIC SAFETY

Bad drivers are those knuckleheads who cut you off, ride your back bumper or creep along at 25 mph in the left lane of the interstate. They come in all shapes and sizes, but there is one quality they all share. They are always someone else.

For some reason, people are singularly confident about their driving. You may express doubts about your job, your appearance and your parenting abilities. But rarely, if ever, do you find yourself saying, "I'm a lousy driver".

Nevertheless, it's clear that some of us are less than perfect on the road. This quiz rates your behind the wheel performances. Questions may have more than one answer.

### 1. The best formula for determining a safe following distance on the highway is

- A. the equivalent of three seconds of travel time between cars.
- B. one car length for every 10 mph of speed.
- C. 40 feet for every 10 mph of speed.
- D. one car length for every 5 mph difference between the speed of your car and that of the leading car.

### 2. When driving onto an interstate via an entrance ramp, you should

- A. gradually accelerate to match traffic speed.
- B. show no fear, and aim for the most expensive car.
- C. slow down steadily as you approach the end of the ramp.
- D. leave your turn signal on for several miles after merging.

### 3. If your car has driver and passenger air bags, you should NOT

- A. use a rear-facing child safety seat in the front passenger seat.
- B. fasten your lap belt.
- C. nod vigorously in agreement the a passenger's opinion.
- D. none of the above.

### 4. A driver's "blind spot" is

- A. an illegal after-hours tavern.
- B. the areas to the rear and side of a vehicle that can't be seen by the driver of that car.
- C. the region beyond a curve that can't be seen by a driver.
- D. temporary blindness caused by the high beams of oncoming cars.
- E. when a driver refuses to acknowledge his or her lack of a particular driving skill.

### 5. When you come to an intersection without traffic lights or signs, yield the right of way to

- A. the car on the right.
- B. any car that reaches the intersection before you.
- C. any car that looks like it isn't going to stop.
- D. any car that has more dents than yours.

### 6. When your car skids, you should

- A. look and steer your front wheels in the direction you want to go.
- B. turn your front wheels in the direction opposite the skid.
- C. brake hard.
- D. relax and enjoy the ride.

**7. If you've had several alcoholic drinks, you should not drive until**

- A. you've waited at least one hour for each drink consumed.
- B. you feel confident of your driving skills.
- C. you've had a half-cup of coffee for each drink consumed.
- D. you've taken a cold shower or a brisk walk around the block.

**8. If you have to stop on snowy or icy pavement, you should pump the brakes rapidly to avoid locking the wheels. True or False?**

**9. If an oncoming vehicle enters your lane on a two-lane road**

- A. look for an escape route on the right side of the road.
- B. slam on your brakes as hard as you can.
- C. maintain your speed, put on that safety belt, and brace yourself.
- D. move into the lane vacated by the other driver; after all, the driver is not using it.
- E. reduce your speed.

**10. Child safety seats provide a simple, one-size-fits-all approach to protecting children. True or False?**

**11. Some of the most common driver errors are**

- A. speeding.
- B. returning home to see whether the stove was left on.
- C. following too closely.
- D. singing along with the radio.
- E. failing to yield a right-of-way.

**SCORING: how did you do?**

**11 correct:** Congratulations! The bad driver may actually be that other driver, not you.

**9-10 correct:** You're in the Passing Zone.

**6-8 correct:** You could use a little brushing up.

**3-5 correct:** Sign up for a defensive driving course.

**Fewer than 3 correct:** You might want to consider the health benefits of walking.

**EXTRA CREDIT: What does the acronym SIPDE stand for?**

- A. Search, Identify, Predict, Decide, and Execute.
- B. Stop, Inquire, Plan, Drive, and Execute.
- C. Sidewalks, Intersections, Pedestrians, Drivers, Everywhere.
- E. Someone Is Probably Driving Erratically.
- F. Should I Pick Up Dinner, Edna?

## Answer Sheet

1. Answer: **A.**

To use the three-second rule, pick a landmark alongside the road. As the back bumper of the car ahead of you passes it, count off the seconds. If you get to the landmark before you count to 3, you're too close. Increase your following distance to 4 or more seconds whenever your visibility or traction is limited.

2. Answer: **A.**

The goal is to find a slot in the traffic and blend in smoothly--without erratic moves, sudden stops or excessive slowness that will confuse or impede other drivers. **Don't forget to put on your turn signal!!**

3. Answer: **A.**

With a rear-facing infant seat, an inflating air bag can hit the back of the child safety seat and cause fatal injuries to the child. As for B, safety belts are still necessary, because air bags offer protection primarily in front and rear collisions, but they don't keep you from being thrown out of a vehicle.

4. Answer: **B.**

You need to be aware of two types of blind spots: yours and the other driver's. Keep track of traffic moving into the blind spots behind your vehicle, especially if you are going to change lanes. To determine whether you're in another driver's blind spot, look at that person's inside rear-view mirror. If you can't see it, the driver probably can't see you. Move forward or drop back to make yourself visible.

5. Answer: **A, B and C.**

For answer C, the other driver may not have the legal right-of-way, but you don't want to get in a collision to prove your point.

6. Answer: **A.**

The skid drill goes like this: Take your foot off the gas, then, look and turn the wheel in the direction you want to go. Then be prepared for a return skid in the other direction, keep looking and turning the wheel the way you want to go! Keep this up until you regain control—REMEMBER—DO NOT BRAKE!

7. Answer: **A.**

But there is no shortcut to getting sober; it simply takes time. A general rule is one and a half hours per drink consumed.

☆**IT IS BEST NOT TO DRIVE AT ALL AFTER DRINKING.**☆ Let a sober friend take you home.

8. Answer: **False**

Pumping the brakes used to be the method of choice, but today's disc brakes do not release as quickly as traditional drum brakes. As a result, pumping may actually cause wheels to lock up, making it impossible to steer. Experts now recommend controlled braking--squeeze the brake down steadily until you feel that the wheels are about to lock-up, ease off, push again, and so on until you stop. If you have antilock brakes, you can simply apply firm, steady pressure and the system's computers will control the braking for you. Never pump anti-lock brakes.

Expect the brake pedal to vibrate and make a "grinding noise", DON'T PANIC—THIS IS NORMAL.

9. Answer: **A and E.**

The object here is to avoid a serious head-on collision, where your chance of surviving is just 50/50. Slow down--but don't lock-up your wheels. Be prepared to head to the right--either onto the shoulder or, if necessary, off the road completely. If you must leave the road, drive--don't skid--because it's important to maintain control.

10. Answer: **False**

Some seats require modification and special clips to work effectively. Make sure you read the instructions that come with the seat. Check the instructions in your car owner's manual, or call us, Mr. Bud is a Certified Child Seat Technician.

11. Answer: **A, C and E.**

Very few collisions are unavoidable. More than **90 percent** result from driver error, according to the safety experts.

Extra Credit: **A.**

SIPDE is designed to help drivers be more aware of their environment and take a pro-active approach to preventing collisions. The SIPDE steps are:

**Search** 20-30 seconds ahead for dangers or obstructions in your intended path of travel.

**Identify** 12-15 seconds ahead anything that moves, such as pedestrians and other vehicles.

**Predict** the worse that may happen.

**Decide** 4-5 seconds ahead what options you have to keep the worst from happening.

**Execute**--that is, act on your best decision.