

#6 IN A SERIES

SHARING THE ROAD

How to stay safe.



Count on Shell™



Today, there are more vehicles
on the road than ever.

That's why it's important to be aware of
vehicles around you as well as where
you're driving.

For example, police reports indicate that
68 percent of all fatal accidents between
cars and trucks begin with an error on the
part of the car driver.

Knowing how to safely share the road
with everything from motorcycles to trucks
could save your life.

Sharing The Road With Large Vehicles

Q. Where's the safest place to drive?

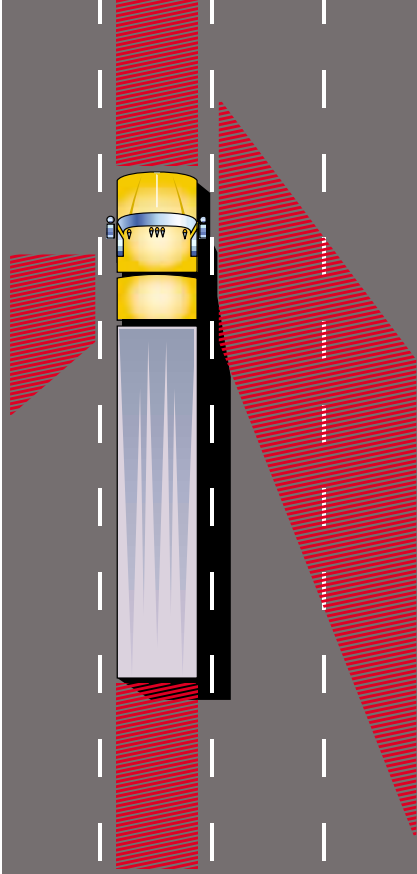
A. There are lots of things you can
do to stay safe around large vehicles
such as buses and 18-wheelers.

First, don't stay in their blind
spots or "No Zones." Because
trucks and buses are so much
bigger than cars, they have
bigger blind spots. A good
rule of thumb is that if you
can't see the truck driver's
face in the side mirrors, the
truck driver can't see you.

**Here are some other good
rules to follow:**

- Don't tailgate. Trucks
typically can't see anything less





than 30 feet behind the trailer. Stay 100 to 250 feet back or follow the four-second rule. If you pass the same fixed point as a truck before reaching the count of four, you're following too closely.

- Never pass on the right. Blind spots are even larger on that side.
- Don't cut in front of trucks. Keep four to five car lengths between you and the truck. Loaded trucks can weigh 80,000 lbs and require

the length of a football field to stop.

- If a truck is signaling to change lanes, give it room. The driver may be trying to avoid another vehicle.
- After passing, change lanes only when you can see both of the truck's headlights in your rearview mirror. (Typically, when a driver flashes the headlights, it signals there's enough room to pull over safely.)
- Never linger beside a truck.
- When a truck passes you, stay right and slow down slightly.
- If you are on a two-lane highway and a truck is coming toward you, stay to the right of your lane and slow down a little.
- Always give trucks access to weigh stations.
- When traveling in the right lane, safely move left to allow a truck to enter the highway.
- Give trucks and buses plenty of room at intersections. They both need extra space to maneuver when making turns.
- Be aware that you will feel increased wind turbulence when passing a truck or when a truck passes you.
- Leave plenty of room between you and a truck when coming to a stop on a hill. Trucks may roll back as the driver takes his or her foot off the brake to engage the clutch and accelerate.

Sharing The Road With Trains



Crossbuck Sign

Q. Can I cross railroad tracks if the train on them is stopped nearby?

A. No. Not only is it illegal, it's also dangerous. Many railroad crossings have multiple tracks and another train about to cross could be hidden by the stopped train.

Q. If I can make it across before the train gets there, why wait?

A. One of the most dangerous situations you'll find as a driver is a railroad crossing. You must always yield. Trains are large and heavy, and it can take more than a mile for a freight train to come to a complete stop.

Q. What's the difference between "active" and "passive" warnings?

A. At railroad crossings with heavy road and train traffic, you may see the crossbuck with flashing lights or a crossbuck with flashing lights and a gate. These are known as "active" warning devices and activate only when a train is approaching a crossing.



Flashing Red Light Signal

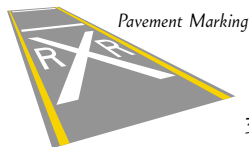
However, nearly two-thirds of all railroad crossings in the nation are "passive." These include advance warning signs, pavement markings and crossbucks. It's up to you to look both ways and make sure there is no train coming before crossing.



*Advance
Warning
Sign*

Here are some more tips:

- Never drive around lowered gates. If you suspect a signal is malfunctioning, call local law enforcement, the railroad, 911 or the 1-800 number posted on the warning device.
- If there is a line of traffic at a railroad crossing, be sure your automobile can fully clear the tracks — even if you don't see a train coming. Never stop on the tracks.
- Never race a train to a crossing.
- If your vehicle stalls or gets stuck on the tracks, get out and stay out. Then immediately call the railroad or 911. Don't ever try to stop a train by waving at it or by standing on the tracks. You could be killed.
- Expect a train at any time.
- A train's size and weight, combined with other factors, create an optical illusion making it impossible to judge its speed and distance. Don't try.



Pavement Marking

Sharing The Road With Everyone

Q. When entering the highway, who has the right-of-way?

A. The vehicle already traveling on the highway has the right-of-way. (That's why there's usually a "yield" sign on on-ramps.) But to keep traffic moving steadily and safely, drivers should use common sense and courtesy. If possible, vehicles on the highway should safely merge left to help others enter easily. And if there's an off-ramp just after an on-ramp, the vehicle entering the highway should slow slightly to allow the vehicle exiting to safely do so.

Q. Can anyone stop in the center turn lane?

A. Yes. What people often refer to as the "center turn lane" is more formally known as the "two-way left turn lane" (see below). It's a place for vehicles turning left from the road and left onto the road to

wait for a gap in traffic. When using these lanes, be sure your vehicle is in the lane completely so you're not blocking moving traffic.

Here are some other helpful hints:

- Always use your blinker when changing lanes, exiting or entering the highway.
- When entering the highway, wait until you reach the dashed white lines before merging.
- If you're behind a truck, be patient. It takes trucks much longer to accelerate.
- To avoid stopping, adjust your speed in the acceleration lane until there is a safe area to merge.
- Anticipate traffic situations, and help create safe gaps to help vehicles enter and exit the highway.
- Make full use of deceleration lanes.
- When changing lanes, check all your mirrors and take a glance over your shoulder to make sure there are no vehicles in any of your blind spots.



Sharing The Road With Motorcycles

Q. As a motorcycle rider, how can I make people more aware of me?

A. One of the best things you can do is make sure other drivers see you. Stay out of blind spots — especially around trucks and other large vehicles. Just because you think other drivers see you doesn't mean they do. Wearing bright clothes during the day and

reflective material at night also helps. Have your headlights on.

Q. What can I do to be safer around motorcycles?

A. Not tailgating or riding too closely to motorcycles will help you share the road more safely. Motorcyclists don't ride in the middle of their lane. They ride a little to the side to avoid the slick oil that can accumulate in the middle of lanes.

Tips for safer motorcycling:

- Always wear a helmet and eye protection.
- Never stay behind a vehicle with a trailer. There is always the chance the trailer will come unattached or material will fly off it.
- Avoid riding behind trucks or other vehicles that have materials strapped to them that could blow off.
- Be aware of what other vehicle operators are doing or might do when you ride.
- Be aware of drivers waiting to turn left across your path at intersections.
- Don't weave in and out of traffic.
- Always be prepared to use avoidance measures in case other vehicles don't see you. Don't depend upon your horn.
- Never stop directly behind another vehicle. By leaving space, you'll be able to maneuver around the vehicle in front of you if a vehicle approaching from behind doesn't see you in time to stop.

Sharing The Road With Farm Equipment

Each year in the United States, about 30,000 accidents occur involving tractors and other farm machinery. Most accidents happen when an approaching motorist hits a farm vehicle from behind or when passing. And although only a small percentage of these accidents lead to a fatality, accidents involving a farm vehicle are about five times more likely to result in a fatality than other types. But there's a lot you can do to share the road safely.

Q. How can I recognize farm vehicles?

A. Lighting and reflector locations on tractors, combines and other farm equipment are different from regular motor vehicles. One such reflector is the slow-moving vehicle (SMV) reflector. In most states, this means there is a vehicle ahead traveling at 25 mph or less. There are also different state regulations regarding the size and location of the SMV reflector.

Q. How and when is it safe to pass farm equipment?

A. Just like any other vehicle on the road, it's only legal to pass when the road is clear and there is either a dotted yellow line on your side of the road or a dotted white line. And when passing, be extra

cautious. Tractors and other farm equipment carry wide loads and tend to weave.

Q. They're so big and slow, how could I possibly rear-end a farm vehicle?

A. Consider this: if a car traveling 55 mph approaches a tractor moving in the same direction at 15 mph, the distance between the car and tractor is reduced by the length of a football field in just five seconds.

You should always begin to slow as soon as you see a farm vehicle. Because farm vehicles travel so slowly, you approach them much more quickly than you do other vehicles. A car traveling at 55 mph requires about 224 feet of total stopping distance. If you have to stop suddenly, you might not have time.



Interesting Facts

- From 1988 to 1998, the fatal accident rate for large trucks fell 34 percent. Trucking mileage, during this same period, increased more than 42 percent.
- More than half of all motorcycle accidents are caused by another vehicle. These accidents typically occur because the driver did not see the motorcyclist.
- From 1987 to 1997, the number of miles of road in the United States increased one percent while the number of miles driven increased 35 percent.
- Almost 70 percent of urban freeways are clogged today at rush hour, as opposed to 55 percent in 1983.

A poll in August 1997 found that 74 percent of all Americans said they were driving more aggressively than they had been in the previous five years.

This booklet was written in cooperation with the American Trucking Associations, the Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Railroad Administration, Operation Lifesaver and the American Motorcyclist Association. It contains general recommendations that we believe may be helpful for motorists. Because every situation is different, the individual driver must decide what to do in each particular scenario. For further information on trucking safety, visit the American Trucking Associations' web site at www.trucking.org. For more information on highway safety, visit the Federal Highway Administration's web site at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov>. For railroad safety information, visit the Federal Railroad Administration's web site at www.fra.dot.gov or Operation Lifesaver's web site at www.oli.org. For more information on motorcycle safety, visit the American Motorcyclist Association's web site at www.ama-cycle.org.



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