

Avoiding Rear-End Collisions

According to the **National Safety Council's** Injury Facts 2007 Edition, Rear Ending accidents account for a total of **3.3 million accidents** annually. 700,000 of those are result in non fatal injuries and account for **2,000 deaths**.

Rear-end collisions are among the **most common auto accidents** every year in the United States. By staying alert and anticipating problems, drivers can avoid hitting others—and help keep others from hitting them.

Avoid Getting Hit

- Know what's going on around the vehicle. Adjust both inside and outside mirrors before moving the vehicle and use them frequently.
- **Flash the vehicle's brake lights.** Tap the brakes when standing, moving slowly, or preparing to stop.
- Check brakes often to ensure that they are working properly. Keep brake lights clear of dirt and snow.
- Signal well before turning or changing lanes.
- Maintain speed limits and keep pace with traffic when road and weather conditions permit.
- **Get rid of tailgaters.** Slow down gradually by removing foot from the brake. If the tailgater doesn't move, change lanes safely. Use extra caution when slowing down or changing lanes. Don't be distracted by the tailgater.
- Stay clear of other driver's blind spots. A vehicle suddenly swerving into another vehicle's lane will cause the driver to brake hard, increasing the possibility of a rear-end collision.
- Raise the hood if the vehicle stalls and is unable to be removed from a traffic lane. Do everything possible to help others see the disabled vehicle. Use emergency flashers and, if available, flares and reflective markers. Stand away from traffic while awaiting help.



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Avoid Hitting Others

- **Apply brakes early.**
- Pay strict attention to traffic flow. At 40 mph, a vehicle travels 60 feet in one second, meaning even short distractions can make a difference.
- Practice good vision habits. Leave enough distance between cars to allow a good view of what is ahead.
- Look for situations which could cause the driver ahead to stop suddenly. Their problems affect everyone around them within a second or two.
- Even though ice may make it impossible to stop in time, a driver can often swerve to the right to avoid a vehicle ahead. Swerving to the left is an almost certain invitation for a head-on collision.
- Increase following distance to accommodate road and weather conditions.
- **Stay alert for dangerous signals** such as:
 - Brake lights on the vehicles ahead. Immediately release the gas pedal and be ready to brake.
 - Problems in adjacent lanes. Watch for brake lights and slowing traffic in nearby lanes. Expect other drivers to swerve quickly out of their lane.

Avoid Whiplash

Whatever vehicle is being driven, the maximum whiplash protection will come from a properly positioned head restraint. To work well, the top of the restraint should reach at least as high as the top of the driver's ears and be relatively close--3 inches or less--to the back of the driver's head.

