

# Teens & Trucks – Tips for Sharing the Road

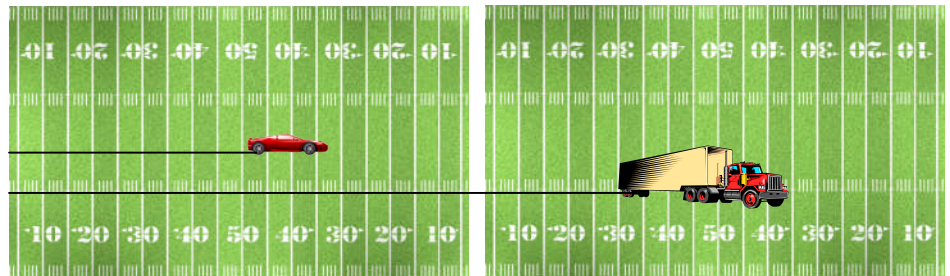
Tractor trailers and other large commercial motor vehicles are a vital, important part of our nation’s economy. These vehicles are the “wheels of commerce” for our nation. While truck drivers do contribute to some traffic crashes, research shows that too many drivers of passenger cars, especially young people ages 17 to 24 years old, unnecessarily endanger themselves by failing to recognize that trucks and cars differ in their handling characteristics. As a result, nearly 70% of traffic crashes involving large trucks and passenger cars are the fault of the car driver.

## Types of Vehicles on the Road

Besides passenger vehicles, there are many types of commercial motor vehicles. There are straight trucks, truck tractors, conventional tractors, cab-over tractors, tractor semi-trailers and specially constructed vehicles that haul over-dimensional loads. It is important to understand these vehicles and the difference in their handling characteristics compared to passenger cars.

## Factors that Determine Stopping Distance

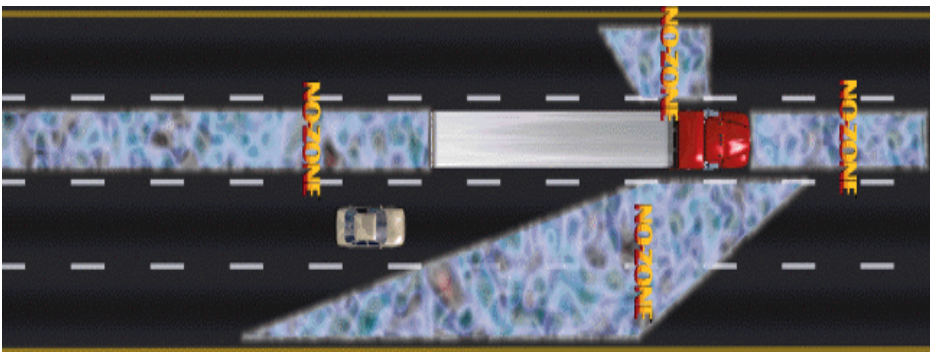
Total stopping distance is the distance your vehicle travels from the time you slow down or brake, until it stops. A fully loaded tractor trailer weighing 80,000 pounds traveling under ideal conditions at a speed of 55 miles per hour will take 430 feet to stop, or almost the length of two football fields. This is a 91% longer stopping distance than that of passenger vehicles.



## Don’t Cut Off Trucks

When passing a truck, don’t pull out if you’re being overtaken by traffic from behind. Once you have decided it is safe to pass, declare your intention to pass by using your turn signal. Pull out and complete your pass as quickly and safely as possible. After you pass, be sure to move back into your original lane only when you can see the front of the truck in your rearview mirror. After you

## Stay Out of the Truck’s Blind Spots/NO Zones



Trucks have very large blind spots. Do not stay in a truck’s blind spots.

The NO Zones diagram to the left clearly shows a truck’s blind spots, where the truck driver cannot see a passing car or a vehicle following too closely.

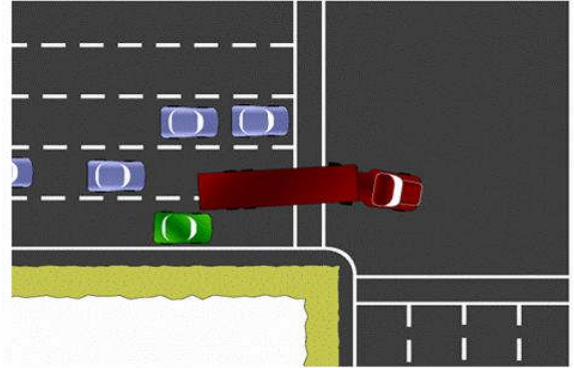
## Following Distances

While it is never safe to tailgate any vehicle on the highway, following too close is particularly dangerous around large trucks and buses because the size of these vehicles prevents you from seeing the road ahead and having sufficient time to react to slowing or stopped traffic or another obstacle. Maintain at least a 3-second following distance between you and the vehicle in front of you. Pick out an object near the road such as an overpass or road sign. When the vehicle in front of you passes that object start counting, “one-thousand-one, one-thousand-two, one-thousand-three”. If you are maintaining at least a 3-second following distance, you will not pass that same object until you say “one-thousand-three”. If you pass the object before “one-thousand-three”, slow down and adjust your speed accordingly.

## Trucks Make Wide Turns

A common cause of crashes between cars and trucks at intersections is the inability of motorists to accurately determine the speed of an approaching truck before turning into the intersection. When in doubt about the speed of an oncoming truck, do not turn left into its path or pull into its lane in an attempt to pass another vehicle. Even at legal speeds, the truck may be going faster than you think.

Because of their overall length, large trucks have a larger turning radius. Often large trucks will move into adjacent lanes prior to and after a turning movement to avoid driving over a curb or sidewalk. This can be dangerous for other drivers who are not aware of or don't expect these movements.



Because of their large size, remember that a truck making a right turn may first swing left to clear the corner. Conversely, a truck making a left turn may first swing right to clear vehicles and other objects on its left side. Expect this and be prepared!

## Moving Off the Road/Move-Over Law

Any time a mechanical or other problem forces you to exit the highway or road, move as far off the roadway to the right as possible. Please keep in mind that some of the most deadly traffic crashes occur when distracted, inattentive, or impaired drivers drift off the road to the right and strike stopped cars or trucks. Investigations into these accidents often show that the driver never applied his or her brakes. As a result, the impact force and the severity of these crashes are often much greater.

Many states have enacted “*move over*” laws that require motorists to move over or slow down when police officers and other emergency service personnel are present on the side of the road.

## Buckle Up!

Buckle Up! If you follow these “Share the road” tips and remember to always wear your seat belt, you'll be a safer driver!

## Teens & Trucks Share the Road Partners

AAA of Arizona  
AIT Schools  
American Trucking Associations  
Arizona Department of Public Safety  
Arizona Department of Transportation/Motor Vehicle Division  
Arizona Trucking Association  
Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA)  
DrivingMBA  
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration  
Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety  
National Safety Council - Arizona Chapter  
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