

Keep Your Space Cushion

In order to have an accident, involving you and another vehicle, the two vehicles need to come into contact. It makes sense then, to do whatever is reasonable to reduce the chances of this unfortunate contact. The most obvious way to do this is to keep away from other vehicles! The further away you are from other road users, the less chance that you will have a conflict. Keeping space between yourself and others on the road is called keeping a **SPACE CUSHION**.

The Question for this Meeting:

Q: Where are the places that vehicles get too close together and risk conflict?

Answers could be:



- At intersections where everyone is waiting for the light or for their turn at the stop sign;
- On the highway where tailgaters may follow too close;
- On multilane roadways where other vehicles (especially large ones) may drive right beside you;
- When merging and other vehicles may not allow enough space;
- Can you think of more?

The safest and most relaxing driving style is to try and drive all by yourself on the road, well away from other drivers. The benefits of this are many. This practice automatically reduces the chance of accidents simply because you are further away from other vehicles but there are many more!

More space gives you:

- More time to react and brake or steer if something unexpected happens;
- Better visibility around the vehicle ahead;
- More room to maneuver and lane change if there is a delay or obstruction in your lane;
- A smoother ride because you no longer need to brake abruptly;

Safety Brief

- Better fuel economy and reduced vehicle wear because you are now driving more smoothly.

It's easy to adjust your driving style to develop a space cushion, and it doesn't cost you anything...In fact, it may save you time because you can plan your moves further in advance to avoid hold-ups.

Tailgate Tips:



- On the highway, adjust your speed to minimize the time that you have other vehicles right next to you
- When all the traffic is moving at the same speed, and is grouped together, keep the same speed but run that speed outside of the pack so that you won't be part of it if there is a crash (ever hear of chain reaction crashes?);
- Keep a good following distance – at least 4 seconds but 5 or more is better;
- Stop at intersections so that you are far enough back to see the crosswalk if you are in car #1 in line, and far enough back so that you see the tires on the car in front of you where they touch the road if you are not the 1st car in line;
- Hesitate for just 1 second when you move off if you are in a line of cars. This gives you an immediate cushion in front;
- Signal early when lane changing or merging and wait for someone to give you the space rather than forcing the issue...someone almost always will. Next time, return the favor and let someone else in. That is just good defensive tactics, instead of challenging them to force their way in;
- If you are tailgated, add more following distance in front so that you will be able to brake gradually when necessary and reduce the chance of the tailgater running into your rear (sure it's his fault if he does, but do you really need the hassle?).

Safety Brief

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This form documents that the training specified above was presented to the listed participants. By signing below, each participant acknowledges receiving this training.

Organization: _____ Date: _____

Trainer: _____ Trainer's Signature: _____

Class Participants:

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