

Tailgating: A Dangerous Behavior

There are many opinions on why drivers tailgate. Several experts reason that it becomes largely a driving habit rather than a reasoned behavior. Some also suggest that the lack of speed difference between vehicles makes drivers feel safe. It could be that you are in the passing lane and are passing but the driver behind you would like to pass faster and so they are impatient. It could be that you are in the middle lane of a multi-lane highway and there is space in the other lanes but the driver behind you is absent-mindedly tailgating. Some might have the mindset that because everyone is doing it then they will too. A driver may feel that since they have had rare crash events that he/she may become complacent about the danger. One of the most extreme is the drafting concept from NASCAR. A driver thinks it is worth it to save a little fuel and time. If you encounter a tailgater remain calm, if able, pull over and allow the vehicle behind you to pass, above all do not try to engage the other driver and do not slam on your brakes to teach them a lesson.

The average driver has a reaction time of $\frac{3}{4}$ second, this accounts for an additional 60 feet traveled at 55 MPH. Braking distance is the distance it takes to stop once the brakes are applied. At 55 MPH on dry pavement with good brakes, it can take a vehicle about 170 feet, about $4\frac{1}{2}$ seconds to stop.



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Reasons not to Tailgate:

- ▲ Tailgating does NOT save time.
- ▲ Tailgating does NOT save fuel.
- ▲ Tailgating makes your company and the entire trucking industry look bad.
- ▲ You can keep a good space in front of you, even in heavy traffic, by dropping off the pace one or two MPH.
- ▲ If you tailgate another truck, you cannot see important things in front of you.
- ▲ If it's a car you are tailgating and you both brake at the same time, you will still hit the car because he can stop in a much shorter distance.
- ▲ Tailgating is even more dangerous on slippery roads or in poor visibility.
- ▲ When you are tailgating it is harder for traffic to pass you.
- ▲ Tailgating can influence the behavior of the driver in front. He/she may become angry and brake to teach you a lesson.
- ▲ Tailgating makes driving more stressful and fatiguing.
- ▲ Tailgating removes your ability to control events around you. Instead of acting you are reacting.



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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