



## 5 Tips That Could Save Your Life On The Road

(NAPS)—The next time you're commuting to work, taking the family on a road trip, or even just learning to drive, chances are you'll be sharing the road with large trucks; fortunately, there are safe ways to do so.

Sharing the road means also sharing the responsibility to drive in a way that keeps everyone safe. Poor driving habits or driving while distracted puts everyday drivers, truckers and others such as highway maintenance workers at risk.

So how to coexist safely?

### Try These Tips

**Tip 1: If you can't see the truck driver, they can't see you.** Can't spot the truck driver in their side mirror? This means you're following too closely in the truck's blindspot and need much more space. Keep a safe distance (the length of half a football field) between your car and a truck.

**Tip 2: Be patient.** Many trucks have a speed limiter that prevents them from traveling more than 65 miles per hour. Tailgating won't make a truck driver go any faster and instead puts you both in dangerous positions.

This tip also applies to trucks making turns or backing up. Many cars try to squeeze past or around a truck when the truck driver needs only a few seconds to complete a maneuver. The truck isn't leaving a lane or space open for other drivers—it's leaving room for the back trailer to follow. Why risk injury or damage to your vehicle when it only takes a few seconds for a truck to clear the intersection or enter a loading dock?

"I've had incidents where I was backing into a loading dock and a car drove down into the dock and out again just to get around me," says Tom Blad, hardware technician at Trimble and former truck driver. "Simply because I was going to block their path for three or four seconds."

**Tip 3: Spend as little time driving beside a truck as possible.** Traveling alongside or pacing a truck can be very dangerous due to the risk of a tire blowout—either the truck's tire or your own. In fact, the NHTSA tracked more than 550 fatalities in 2022 from tire-related accidents. A single semi-truck tire weighs 500 pounds—certainly not an object you'd want hitting your car. If your own tire blows out, your vehicle may end up under the truck next to you.

"Lingering next to a truck creates a dangerous situation where you may be



**Remembering five tips can help prevent accidents and keep everyone safe on the road.**

sideswiped by the truck if it swerves or attempts to change lanes," explains Gary Falldin, senior director of industry solutions at Trimble and the Minnesota Trucking Association's 2016 Safety Professional of the Year. "Move at a safe and steady speed until you're far enough past the truck to change lanes."

**Tip 4: Stay out of the "no zones."** Due to their large size and height, trucks have four significant blind spots around the truck: in front, behind, and along both sides.

When passing a truck, don't immediately return into the lane in front of a truck. Make sure you can see the full truck—from its tires on the road to the tip of its roof—in your rear-view mirror first.

Many drivers don't know that the right side of a truck is more dangerous than the left. With the steering wheel positioned on the left, the truck driver has less visibility over the hood and into the right lane. Remember to always pass trucks on the left (as long as it's safe to do so).

**Tip 5: Avoid the back of trucks.** One of a truck's most perilous "no zones" is located behind the trailer. While it's not smart to tailgate or zip into gaps behind trucks on the go, this rule also applies when a truck is reversing on or off the road. Keep this in mind when driving and walking through parking lots or other roads.

"I can't tell you how many times cars have tried to zip around behind me—it's extremely dangerous," says Matt Carter, Certified Transportation Professional, a Trimble sales engineering manager who also works as a hazardous material driver on weekends. "Just try to avoid the rear of a semi-truck altogether."

### Learn More

For additional tips, check out the Sharing the Road Program from Virginia Tech Transportation Institute. For information on Trimble, visit <https://transportation.trimble.com>.