

■ Changing Lanes/Sideswipes

Most car drivers don't realize that if the driver can't see the truck mirrors, the truck driver cannot see their vehicle.

Signaling your intentions by using your turn signal helps. Remember that drivers are in a hurry. When changing lanes, you risk hitting someone in your blind spot. Keep lane-changing to a minimum. Repeatedly check your mirrors every five to eight seconds.

■ Right Turn Squeeze

Large trucks take more room and time to turn than cars. When you pull left to make a right turn, most drivers are either fooled or don't pay attention to your actions and a collision could occur.

Signal your intentions. Don't turn until there is enough time for the rear of your vehicle to clear the intersection during a left turn, without forcing opposing drivers to slow down or swerve.



**OHIO DEPARTMENT
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One out of
eight traffic
fatalities
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involving a
large truck.

—National Highway Traffic
Safety Administration

No-Zones—Fatigued/Sleepy Drivers—Rear-Ending—Right Turn Squeeze—Changing Lanes/Sideswipes

TRUCKING SAFETY

■ Trucking Facts ■

Large trucks account for three percent of all registered vehicles, seven percent of total vehicle miles traveled, nine percent of all vehicles involved in fatal crashes and four percent of all vehicles involved in injury and property damage-only crashes.

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■ No-Zone ■

Thirty-five percent of all car and truck fatalities occur in the blind spots around trucks - and nearly 70 percent of these crashes are initiated by the driver of the car.

The No-Zone is the area around trucks where cars “disappear” into blind spots or are so close that they restrict the truck driver’s ability to stop or maneuver safely. Driving in the No-Zones greatly increase the potential for a crash.

Many crashes could be avoided if motorists knew about truck limitations and how to steer clear of unsafe situations involving trucks.

■ Backing Up

When a truck is backing up, it sometimes must temporarily block the street to maneuver its trailer accurately. Never pass close behind a truck that is preparing to back up or is in the process of backing up. Remember, most trailers are 8 1/2 feet wide and can completely hide objects that suddenly come between them and a loading area. If you try to pass behind the truck, you enter a (No-Zone) blind spot for you and the truck driver.

■ Rear Blind Spots

Unlike cars, trucks have deep blind spots directly behind them. If you tailgate, not only do you make it impossible for the truck driver to see you, but you also cut off your own view of traffic flow. Staying in the No-Zone is almost like inviting a collision.

■ Passing

Directly in front of trucks is another No-Zone. One of the biggest mistakes you can make is to cut in too soon and slow down after passing a large truck. Because of their size and weight, trucks need a much greater distance to stop than cars. If you don’t give them enough space, you run the risk of being hit from behind. Be sure to maintain a consistent speed when passing and don’t pull in front of the truck unless you can see the whole front of the truck in your rear-view mirror.

■ Wide Turns

Because of the vehicle size, truck drivers sometimes need to swing wide to manage their turns. When they do, they can’t see cars directly behind or beside them. Give them plenty of room and never try to squeeze around them.

■ Side Blind Spots

Trucks have much larger blind spots on both sides than cars do. When you travel in these blind spots for any length of time, you can’t be seen by the truck driver. If the truck driver needs to make an emergency maneuver or change lanes, he won’t be able to see you and a crash could result.



■ Fatigued/Sleepy Drivers

Being sleepy behind the wheel is dangerous. Sleepiness impairs your judgment, slows your reaction time and decreases your awareness. Most importantly, it can cause you to crash.

Get plenty of sleep at least one to two nights before your trip. Make frequent stops for activity, naps and caffeine. Have someone ride with you to keep you awake or let someone else who has slept and is alert do the driving. Recognize the signs of sleepiness.

■ Rear-Ending

A tractor-trailer, whether loaded or not, takes time to stop, especially on wet pavement. It takes a truck twice as long to stop as a car, and this distance increases as your speed increases.

Allow space to avoid trouble. If the pavement is wet with snow, slow down or stop until roads have been plowed or salted. Reduce speed in wet weather. Remember that drivers behind you may tailgate also, and their reaction time may not be as good as yours.