

## Types of Collisions

Not only do we have to be aware of distractions within our vehicles, but we must also be aware of what is happening outside of the vehicle. Collisions can happen when drivers forget to take into account the particular traits of other road users. Read each of the following to learn what you can do to try to prevent collisions with your vehicle.

### Vehicle/Pedestrian - How Can you Avoid Collisions with Pedestrians?

#### Children

Children are completely unpredictable. Remember this and drive accordingly when in their vicinity. A friendly tap on the horn will get their attention. If you see a ball bounce on the road you can be sure a child is close behind.

#### Senior Citizens

Elderly people may have their physical abilities impaired by age. Give them the respect they deserve. Reduce your speed and be prepared to stop.

#### Impaired Persons

A large number of fatal pedestrian collisions occur when the driver strikes an impaired person. Be especially cautious if you suspect a pedestrian of being impaired.

#### Situations in which you might not see a pedestrian:

- **Night time** - It is very difficult to see pedestrians at night. Always encourage family and friends to wear bright retro-reflective material at night.
- **Buses and Street Cars** - Pedestrians may be running from any direction to board buses or street cars, or may alight from a transit vehicle and dart across the street in front of traffic.
- **Parked Vehicles** - Adults can be seen over the hood of a parked vehicle, but a child cannot. However, their legs and feet can be seen through the underside of parked vehicles. Be sure to look!

**Remember** - Right-of-way must be given to pedestrians at crosswalks and they must be allowed free and uninterrupted passage. It is unlawful to pass another vehicle within 30 m of a pedestrian crosswalk.

### Vehicle/Motorcycle - How Can you Avoid Collisions with Motorcycles?

In a collision, a motorcyclist is four times more likely to be injured and 14 times more likely to be killed than is the occupant of a vehicle.

To avoid a collision with a motorcycle:

- **Stay alert and use eye-lead time** - motorcycles are smaller than vehicles and most have only one headlight. Train yourself to look for them.

- **Check your blind spot** for motorcycles before changing lanes. Most motorcycle-vehicle collisions occur because the motorist simply does not see the motorcyclist.
- **Give motorcycles a wide berth** when you are passing so your wind stream does not make them lose control. A motorcyclist can lose control when sand, gravel, wet leaves or water is on the pavement. Always be aware of conditions that may cause a spill. Be especially cautious if a motorcyclist appears inexperienced.
- Treat motorcyclists with **caution** and **respect**.

### Vehicle/Train - How Can you Ensure your Safety When Approaching a Rail Crossing?

A motorist is 40 times more likely to die in a crash involving a train than in a collision involving another motor vehicle.

To ensure your safety when you approach a rail crossing, you must:

- **Approach with the vehicle under control – slow down.** Never shift gears on the crossing.
- **Look both ways and listen for approaching trains.** NEVER depend on mechanical devices. Sometimes they don't work!
- **ALWAYS stop for flashing lights and gates.** Do not proceed until you can do so safely and the warning signals have ceased to operate.
- If there is more than one track, **make sure all tracks are clear** before crossing. Watch out for a second train.
- **NEVER race a train.**
- Watch for vehicles such as **buses** and **trucks** that must stop at crossings.
- Train speed is difficult to estimate. When in doubt **STOP**.

### Vehicle/Bicycle -How Can you Avoid Collisions with Bicycles?

Bicycles, like motorcycles, are classified as vehicles and deserve to be treated as such - they are entitled to a share of the road and you must be sure it is safe to pass them before attempting to do so.

To avoid collisions with bicycles you should:

- **Be especially careful around children on bicycles.** Children are a special problem because they often don't know rules and regulations.
- Although bicyclists should have **lights** and **reflectors** at night, not all do – LOOK FOR THEM.
- Watch for cyclists slipping **between the vehicle and the curb** when you are making both left and right turns.

### Vehicle/Animal - How Can you Avoid Collisions with Animals?

Depending on the animal struck, damage to the vehicle and its occupants can be serious. The most dangerous animals are the deer, moose and bear. Animals that stand high on

their legs can roll onto the hood and into the windshield - they can come through the windshield and do serious, even fatal damage.

To avoid collisions with animals, you should:

- **Use eye-lead time** and be aware when you are in an area that has wildlife. Look for **signs** that indicating **animal crossings**.
- **Do not overdrive your headlights** – you must be able to see an animal and stop in time to avoid hitting it.
- When animals are observed ahead, **slow down** until safely past them.
- Search for a **second animal** after the first animal has been passed safely. There is often a second animal close behind.
- **Expect a surprise**. Animals are very unpredictable.