



# Sharing the Road

# Importance of Communication

- Communication involves sending and receiving information.
- Effective communication with other road users is vital!
- As a sender, you must choose the best method and time to send a message.
- As a receiver, you must be able to receive and understand messages sent by others. Too many drivers assume that just because they see and signal another driver or pedestrian, they are seen and understood.

# Methods of Communicating

- Signaling devices (traffic lights, pedestrian signals)
- Electric signals (e.g. turn signals, brake lights)
- The horn sounds warnings (e.g. quick taps, lasting blast)
- Headlights (e.g. flashing on and off, low beam to high beam)
- Body actions (e.g. hand signals, nodding)
- Vehicle position (e.g. lane choice, positioning in the lane)

# Common Messages

## Intentions

- I plan to turn left/right.
- I'm slowing down.

## Warning

- I must stop suddenly.
- There is danger in your lane.

## Presence

- I'm over here.
- Do you see me?

## Feedback

- I see you.
- Go ahead.

# Anticipating Errors

## Vision Errors

- Driver fails to check mirrors/blind areas
- Diversion of vision due to distractions
- Vision is blocked
- Driver does not establish eye contact

## Failure to Yield Right-of-Way

- Driver does not obey stop/yield sign
- Driver runs a red light
- Driver does not yield vehicle on right

## Improper Speed Adjustment

- Brakes suddenly or steers too quickly
- Approaches turns too fast
- Drives through turns too fast
- Does not compensate for reduced visibility, space, or traction

# Anticipating Errors

## Poor judgment of distance or space requirements

- Tailgates others
- Swings wide or turns too sharply
- Passes or overtake improperly
- Selects improper lane or position for a turn

## Inadequate or Improper Vehicle Control

- Brakes suddenly to steers too quickly on slipper surfaces
- Recovers poorly from a turn
- Improper seating position

## Improper Signals

- Does not signal
- Improperly uses four-way flashers
- Gives a false signal

# Sharing the Road

## Five Common Traffic-Conflict Situations

- Oncoming vehicles
- Merging with existing vehicles
- Vehicles ahead of you
- Vehicles behind you
- Intersection vehicles and pedestrians



# Sharing the Road with Pedestrians: Key Points

## Drivers:

- Expect pedestrians.
- Pay attention! Don't text while driving!
- Obey the speed limit.

## Pedestrians:

- Use crosswalks.
- Obey signals.
- Look left, look right, look left again!
- Pay attention! Don't text while crossing.



# Pedestrians: Special Considerations

- Children are less visible to drivers.
- Older people may not hear or see well and may be unaware of possible conflicts.
- Pedestrians may be distracted (texting, listening to music) which means they may not be paying attention to where they are going.
- Always be cautious and expect the unexpected when coming out of alleys, driveways, driving in school zones, driving on busy city cross streets, near parks, or within residential neighborhoods.
- Parking lots present high-risk areas to hitting a pedestrian.

# Intersections Video



# Distractions Video



# Visibility Video



# See! Be Seen! Video Discussion

- What take away messages did you get from these videos?
- Will your driving behavior change as a result?

# Sharing the Road with Bicyclists: Key Points

## Drivers:

- Give bicyclists extra space whenever possible.
- Reduce speed when passing.
- Always expect the bicyclist to pull out in front of you. They may encounter vehicle doors opening, railroad tracks, storm drains, potholes, puddles, and other roadway hazards that cause them to swerve.
- When passing a bicyclist, pass on the left, providing them at least one-half lane between your vehicle and them.

# Sharing the Road with Bicyclists: Key Points

## Bicyclists:

Share the responsibility for avoiding conflicts with other roadway users and should:

- Wear a helmet for protection. Know and follow the laws regarding roadway riding, lane position, and sidewalk riding.
- Obey all signs, signals, and laws.
- Wear light-colored clothing and have lights and reflectors on bicycles when riding at night.
- Not wear earphones while riding.
- Keep bicycles in safe operating condition.



# Sharing the Road with Mopeds/Motor Scooters: Special Considerations

- Limitations in acceleration
- May not be able to keep up with traffic
- When approaching, take same precautions as would when approaching a bicycle





# Motorcycles: Key Points and Special Considerations

- NYS requires all motorcyclists should wear a helmet.
- A motorcyclist should wear eye protection, heavy shoes/boots, full length pants, leather jacket/heavy long sleeved shirt, and full fingered gloves.

## Special Considerations:

Weather and roadway conditions present greater problems:

- Rain or hot weather can cause the pavement to be slippery.
- Road conditions like potholes can throw a motorcycle out of control.

# Motorcycles: Special Considerations

## Special Considerations:

- Motorcycle tires can get caught in railroad tracks.
- Motorcyclists carrying passengers need greater attention as the extra passenger affects acceleration, braking, and turning.
- They often travel in groups.
- Turn signals are often small and hard to see.
- Motorcyclists may use hand signals.
- The motorcyclist may drive right or left of center of the lane because of oil slickness.

# Discussion:

**What special considerations should you keep in mind when driving around large trucks?**



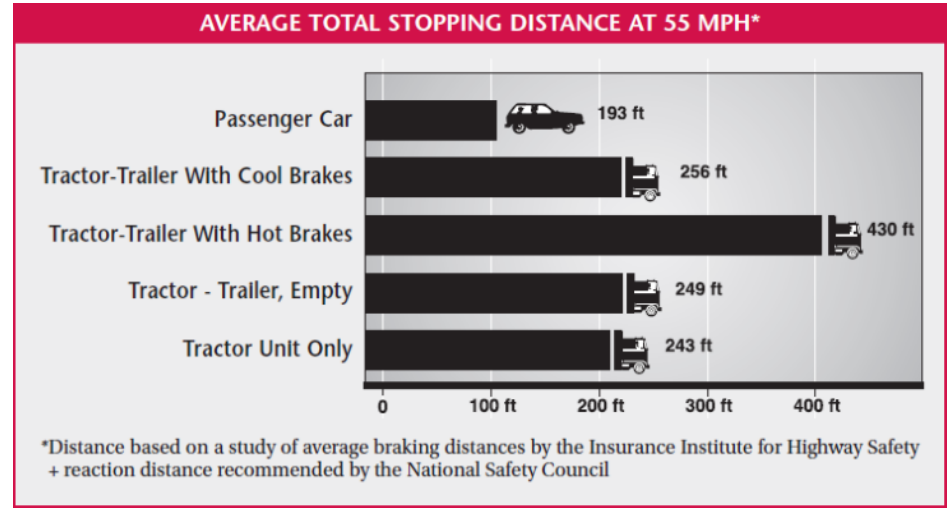
# Large Trucks: Special Considerations

- Trucks make wide-right turns.
- Distance to stop.
- Large trucks cause visibility problems for other drivers.
- There are large blind spots (No Zone) in front, to the sides, and to the rear of every large truck.
- Staying behind or to the left of truck that is making a right turn is advisable.



# Distance to Stop

- Large vehicles take much longer to stop than smaller vehicles moving at the same speed.
- Leave space between your vehicle and trucks.
- If you are in front of a truck, indicate your intention to turn or change lanes early; don't make sudden moves.



# Approaching Large Trucks

Don't underestimate the size and speed of approaching large vehicles.

- Larger size can cause vehicles to appear to be moving slower than they really are.
- Vehicles also may not appear as large as they really are from a distance.
- When driving on a two-way highway, move as far to the right as possible to ensure your vehicle will not be hit an approaching large truck.

# Passing Large Trucks

- Check front and rear zones, signal a lane change, and change lanes smoothly.
- Stay in lane position 2 during the passing maneuver, and complete your pass as quickly as possible.
- After you see both headlights in your rearview mirror, signal, check over your right shoulder, and return to the right lane.
- Do not slow down during or after completing the pass. Maintain your highway speed.
- Never pass close behind a large truck that is backing up. If you try to pass in this situation, you will likely enter one of the blind spots.

# Stopping Behind Large Trucks

Always leave space when you stop behind a truck or other large vehicle, especially when facing up a hill; these vehicles could move backward slightly when starting.





# Special Purpose Vehicles

## Buses

- Required to stop both ways if lights are on.

## Snowplows

- Will go slower than other traffic. If you are going to pass them, give them plenty of room.

## Farm machinery/Horse and Buggies

- Very slow moving, be patient!

## Other Special Purpose Vehicles

- Wide-Loads (transportation of mobile homes)

These vehicles deserve plenty of room, may be slow moving, often times will take curves and corners wide. May have a trail vehicle to protect the vehicle in traffic areas.

- Recreational vehicles

Can range in size from being small (e.g. 4-wheeler) which is difficult to see – to large (e.g. RV Camper) causing visibility problems.

# Emergency Vehicles

## NY State Move Over Law

- As soon as you see lights, vests or reflectors, check traffic around you, SLOW DOWN and safely MOVE OVER.
- Drivers MUST use due care when approaching an emergency vehicle or hazard vehicle including police vehicles, fire trucks, ambulances, construction and maintenance vehicles and tow trucks.
- The Move Over Law applies to both sides of the roadway, not just the shoulder on the right.

# Emergency Vehicles



# Buses

Two most common types of buses:

1. Local buses
2. School buses



## Laws Governing School Buses

1. Traffic going in both directions on a two-way street needs to stop when a school bus stops to load or unload passengers.
2. Follow the school zone speed limit posted around schools.

# Farm Vehicles

- Are often going well below the speed limit
- Expect to see them a lot during the Spring (for planting) and the Fall (for harvesting) when driving on country roads
- When passing, make sure you have a clear line of sight---give them plenty of room!



# Animals - Horse Drawn Carriages

## Limitations:

- Sight
- Speed
- Erratic behavior when frightened



## Special Considerations:

- Horses and Horse-drawn carriages
  - Visibility issues
  - Easily scared
  - Don't beep at
  - Slow down
  - Give extra room when passing

# Animals- Wild and Domestic

## Characteristics:

- Vary in size
  - Small = Squirrel, cat, dog, raccoon, etc.
  - Large = Moose, horse, cow, etc.
- May be pets (duty to inform)
- Drivers swerve to miss





# Avoiding Collisions with Animals

- Vary in size
- Large animals are more active first thing in the morning, in the evening and at night
- Large animals are particularly active during rut – hunting season
- Do not swerve to avoid hitting a large animal

If you hit a dog, cat, horse, or an animal classified as cattle, you must inform the owner of the animal or a police officer. Give your name, address, proof of insurance, and license number.

# Railroad Crossings

- Trains can't change lanes and it takes them  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile to stop with an average load. Hence, on the road drivers must be vigilant and adhere to safety rules.
- Train intersections collisions occur each year because of drivers who are impatient and who try to beat the safety precautions set up to protect drivers.

What controls can be found at a train intersection?

# Rail Signs and Signals

- Active Signs: electronic devices that warn of the approach, or prescience, of rail traffic at grade crossings.
- Passive Signs: signs that alert motorists that they are approaching a highway-rail grade crossing.

# Signs: Before the Crossing

Watch for  
these signs:



# On the Road: Pavement Markings

Be alert for these  
pavement markings:



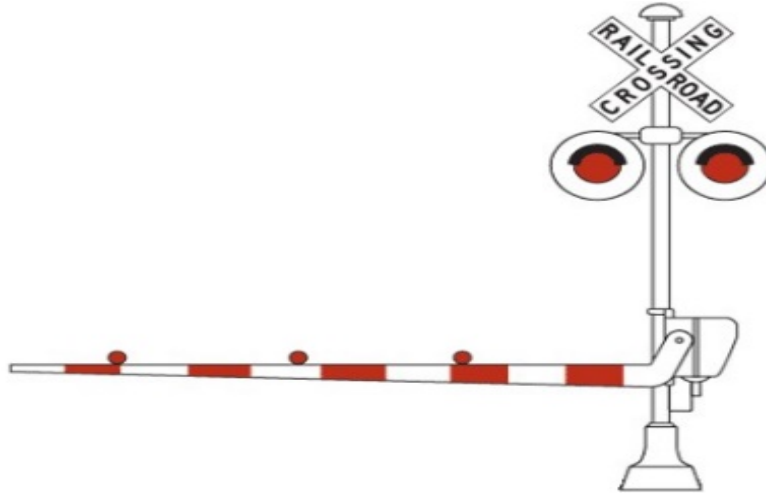
# Signs: At the Crossing

Watch for these signs:



# Devices: At the Crossing

Some crossings have active warning devices.



# References

1. New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. New York State Driver's Manual.  
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2. Governor's Traffic Safety Committee. Slow Down, Move Over Public Service Announcement.  
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3. New York Operation Lifesaver Inc.