



# “Safety & Compliance are Never a Compromise”

## Keep it moving!

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### Speed and space management: Maintaining a “safe space”

Proper speed management means operating at the appropriate speed for all road conditions. This includes taking into account the condition of the road, visibility, and traffic speed and flow.



Proper space management means maintaining enough space around the vehicle to operate safely. Maintaining a “safe space” or “safety cushion” around the vehicle is the goal of speed and space management.

#### Stopping distance

In order to manage speed, drivers need to understand the four factors involved in stopping a vehicle:

- Perception distance;
- Reaction distance;
- Brake lag distance; and
- Braking distance.

**Perception distance** is the distance a vehicle travels from the time the driver sees a hazard until his/her brain recognizes it. The perception time for an alert driver is approximately three-fourths of a second. At 55 mph, a vehicle travels about 60 feet in three-fourths of a second.

**Reaction distance** is the distance a vehicle travels from the time the driver’s brain tells his/her foot to move from the accelerator until his/her foot

hits the brake pedal. The average driver has a reaction time of three-fourths of a second. At 55 mph, that accounts for another three-fourths of a second and another 60 feet traveled.

**Brake lag distance** also needs to be taken into account. When operating a vehicle with air brakes, it takes about one-half second for the mechanical operation to take place.

**Braking distance** is the distance it takes a vehicle to stop once the brakes are applied. Braking distance is affected by the weight, length, and speed of the vehicle as well as road condition. A heavy vehicle’s components are designed to work best when a vehicle is fully loaded. At 55 mph on dry pavement with good brakes, a heavy vehicle travels about 170 feet and can take about five seconds to stop.

So, what is the total stopping distance? When adding together the four factors, at 55 mph, in ideal conditions, it will take between six and

*(continued on page 2)*

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## Speed and space management: Maintaining a “safe space” *(continued from page 1)*

seven seconds to stop, and the vehicle will travel about 290 feet (almost the length of one football field).

### Speed and road conditions

Traction is necessary for vehicle control. The less friction between a vehicle’s tires and the road, the less traction. Certain road conditions cause a reduction in traction, and lower vehicle speeds are necessary.

**Rain.** As rain begins to fall, it mixes with oils on the road. This causes the oils to rise to the road’s surface. Until additional rain breaks down and washes away these oils, there is a layer of slippery oil between the vehicle’s tires and the road surface. This condition can last from a few minutes to a few hours.

In rain, vehicle speeds should be reduced by at least one-third.

**Snow.** When light, powdery snow sticks to the road, it forms a smooth, slick surface. A heavy, slushy snow can affect vehicle control and if it becomes hard packed, it can cause an ice hazard. In snow, vehicle speeds should be reduced by at least one-half.

When determining vehicle speed in snowy conditions, the driver must be confident that he/she can safely stop and maneuver based on the road conditions.

**Ice.** An icy road can present more dangers than a snowy road. One way to check for ice formation is by feeling the front of the vehicle’s mirrors. If ice is forming there, it is also forming on the road. Also, be aware of spray off of other vehicles. In cold weather, if the spray stops, there is a good chance that the precipitation has frozen.

### Managing space

As well as maintaining a safe vehicle speed, management of the space ahead, behind, to the sides, above, and below the vehicle is important. There must be enough space to allow adjustments when traffic conditions change, for example, when a vehicle brakes suddenly or pulls into the driver’s lane of travel without warning.

**Ahead.** The space ahead of the vehicle is the most important, and one of the easiest to monitor and adjust as needed. The amount of space needed depends on vehicle speed and road conditions. One rule of thumb to follow (in good driving conditions) is to allow at least one second for each 10 feet of vehicle length at speeds below 40 mph. At greater speeds, add an additional second.

In poor driving conditions, such as rain, ice, snow, or fog, allow for a greater stopping distance.

**Behind.** It is impossible to keep other drivers from following too closely (tailgating), but there are some things



that can be done to make it safer. Stay to the right, slow down, and give the tailgater plenty of chances to pass. If being tailgated, the driver should increase following distance, avoid quick lane changes, and not speed up.

**Sides.** Commercial motor vehicles often take up most of a lane. There are several things that can be done to ensure that there is plenty of space.

- Don’t hug the center line. It becomes very easy to drift across the center line into oncoming traffic.
- Avoid hugging the right side of the road. A soft shoulder can cause control problems.
- Avoid traveling alongside other vehicles. Another driver may change lanes suddenly, turning into the vehicle, or the vehicle may be trapped, unable to change lanes. Also, try to avoid driving alongside others in strong winds, especially cross winds.

**Above.** Adequate space above is needed to clear bridges, overpasses, trees, and wires. Never assume the heights posted on bridges and overpasses are correct. Repaving or packed snow may reduce the clearances since the heights were posted.

The weight of a vehicle’s cargo can also change its height. An empty vehicle is higher than a loaded one. Be aware of how a road is graded. Road grade can cause a high vehicle to tilt, which can be a clearance problem. If a driver has doubts about whether there is enough overhead space to proceed, he/she should take another route.

**Below.** It’s very easy to forget the space under a vehicle. That space can be very small when the vehicle is heavily loaded. Driveways, railroad tracks, dirt roads, and unpaved lots can be a challenge. Slow and steady is the rule in these cases. This is also one of the reasons why landing gear should always be cranked up all the way.

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# Safety focus: Storms

As a professional driver, you should always be ready for extreme weather. Being prepared for what Mother Nature throws at you can make the difference when it comes to safe travel.

## Rain

Driving in the rain can be dangerous as this adverse weather condition causes both vehicle control and driver visibility issues.

When traveling in rain:

- Reduce your vehicle's speed;
- Allow for more space behind other vehicles; and
- Allow for more time to stop.

A heavy rain that causes water to stand on the roadway can cause a vehicle to hydroplane. The faster a vehicle travels on standing water, the greater the chance of hydroplaning. This is because traction is only present when a vehicle's tires have contact with the road. If the tires are riding on a wall of water, they lose traction. This loss of traction causes you to lose steering control of your vehicle.



The best way to prevent hydroplaning is by slowing down. Visibility is also a concern when driving in the rain. Make sure your vehicle's windshield wipers and defroster are working properly.

Excess rain can also lead to flash flooding. Avoid driving in flooded conditions, but if you must, remember these points:

- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including SUVs and pick-ups.
- Be wary of unknown road conditions and do not attempt to drive on a flooded road. The depth of water is not always obvious and the road bed may be washed out under the water.
- Do not drive around a barricade. Turn around and find another way.

## Fog

Poor visibility is the challenge for drivers when driving in foggy conditions.

Reducing vehicle speed and maintaining a safe following distance are key when traveling in fog.

So how fast should you be traveling in foggy conditions? It depends on visibility.



If you can see six vehicle lengths ahead, 20 mph to 30 mph may be a safe maximum speed.

If you can see only two to three vehicle lengths ahead, 10 mph to 15 mph may be a safe maximum speed.

If visibility is extremely poor, find a safe place to pull over until visibility improves.

Use common sense and your professional judgment when it comes to how fast you should travel, or if you should be driving at all. Always use low beam headlights when traveling through fog. As well as helping you see the roadway, low beams help others see your vehicle.

Never use high beam headlights. When high beam headlights are used in foggy conditions, the water particles that make up fog tend to reflect more light back at you than on the roadway. This actually reduces your ability to see the roadway.

Windshield wipers should also be used to clear the fine mist that accumulates on your windshield when traveling in fog.

## Wind

Windy conditions can be extremely challenging, especially for drivers of tractor-trailers and other high-profile vehicles. These challenges become even greater if you are hauling an empty trailer or are carrying a light or top-heavy load. When operating in windy conditions:

- Keep both hands on the steering wheel;
- Continually scan the road ahead and your vehicle's mirrors; and
- Reduce vehicle speed.

Be ready for the unexpected, including sudden wind gusts and debris that can blow onto the road. If you are having trouble controlling your vehicle, pull over and stop in a safe place until conditions improve.



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## Nutrition label gets a new look

*"It is easy to hate and it is difficult to love. This is how the whole scheme of things works. All good things are difficult to achieve; and bad things are very easy to get."*

~ Confucius



**Nutrition labels are getting a makeover.**

You may have already seen it on the packages on grocery store shelves — the Nutrition Facts label is getting a makeover.

The Food and Drug Administration announced the new label for packaged foods in 2016. Its goal is to make it easier for consumers to make informed choices about the food they're eating.

If you don't see the label on the products you buy, it will be there soon. Large manufacturers (with \$10 million or more in annual food sales) will be required to use it in 2020, and manufacturers with less than \$10 million in annual food sales need to use it starting in 2021. Here are some highlights:

**Serving size:** The number of servings per container and serving size are now bigger to make it clearer that the numbers relate to a portion of the package, not the whole thing. In addition, the serving size has been modified to reflect what people actually eat and drink today.

**Calories:** There's no missing this big, bold number. Calories provide energy, but consuming more than you burn leads to weight gain. Balance the number of calories consumed with the number burned to maintain a healthy weight. For general nutrition advice, 2,000 calories per day is used as a guide.

**Goodbye, Calories from Fat:** This was removed because the type of fat consumed is more important than the amount. Aim for no trans fat and little saturated fat in your diet.

**% Daily Value:** As on the previous label, this shows how much of a particular nutrient is in a serving as it relates to ideal daily intake.

**Hello, vitamin D and potassium:** These nutrients were added to the label because Americans do not always get the recommended amount.

**So long, vitamins A and C:** Most Americans get an adequate amount of these vitamins each day, so they are no longer required to be on the label.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
<b>Serving size</b>	<b>2/3 cup (55g)</b>
<b>Amount per serving</b>	<b>230</b>
<b>Calories</b>	
	<b>% Daily Value*</b>
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g	<b>10%</b>
Saturated Fat 1g	<b>5%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 160mg	<b>7%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 37g	<b>13%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>14%</b>
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	<b>20%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%

\* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.