

Heavy Trucks



Highway safety is everyone's responsibility, whether they are driving a truck or a passenger vehicle. Motorists and truckers need to respect each other and remember to share the road.

As a motorist, there is very little room for error or ignorance around trucks. By reviewing a few simple facts, you can enhance your safety out on the highway.

Trucks Weigh More and Need More Time to Stop

A fully-loaded tractor trailer truck in Pennsylvania can weigh up to 40 tons, which is 38 tons more than your vehicle. This means a truck will take almost twice as long to stop as your car – and even longer on wet pavements. Stopping distance for a truck also increases as speed increases, with it taking almost 50 percent longer to stop when going 65 miles per hour, compared to 55 mph.

So when you're driving in front of a truck, don't slow down suddenly unless it is absolutely necessary. Be sure to signal a turn or lane change in plenty of time to allow the trucker to react. If you see that traffic in front of you has come to a standstill, immediately put on your emergency flashers to alert all other drivers behind you that something is wrong.

Trucks Coming From a Distance May Be Moving Faster Than You Think

Because of its large size, a truck driving toward you from a distance can appear to be moving a lot slower than it really is. Make sure to allow plenty of extra room if you pull out of an intersection or onto a highway in front of a truck.

Don't Hang Out in the No-Zone

If you can't see the truck driver or the truck's mirrors, then the driver can't see you. When you're following a truck, even in slow-moving traffic, be sure to stay far enough back, and even out a bit to the left, so that the driver can see you in the rearview mirror.

Because trucks are so long, they need to swing wide when making a tight right turn. Don't be fooled by thinking you can squeeze by on the right.

When passing a truck, don't linger since riding alongside the truck can put you in the driver's blind spot. Avoid passing on a crest of a hill or on a downgrade where a truck's momentum can cause it to go faster.

When you are far enough ahead of the truck that you can see the front tires in your rearview mirror, it is safe to pull in front of the truck. Remember, never pull in front of a truck and slow down since this eliminates the truck driver's cushion of safety.