

5 key habits of Experienced drivers

1. Posture.

Having the correct posture in the vehicle is critical, both for safety and control. Position the seat so you can touch the firewall with your feet without over stretching. This has 3 benefits:-

- A. You will have maximum leverage over the brake pedal and you will be able to utilise the full travel of the pedal.
- B. If your vehicle is fitted with the left foot rest, you can use this in cornering to help lock your self into the seat.
- C. When braking hard in an accident your leg will be bent at the knee so if the worst should happen the leg will bend at the knee and not be forced back up into the hip causing it to break. This type of injury could cause death in a very short time due to loss of blood.

The back of the seat should be upright so you will have good clear vision of the road and it also supports your lower back preventing fatigue.

From this position you should be able to place your wrists on top of the steering wheel comfortably without you leaning forward, so when you hold the wheel in the 10-2 position your arms will have a bend of about 45°. From this position you will have total control of the vehicle.

2. Control

Both hands on the steering wheel. If you are not driving the car, then the car is driving you. Remain in control at all times.

If your foot is not pressing on the accelerator then it is over the brake, never rest the foot over the accelerator. This can cut your braking time in half. It is also important as 90% of braking errors occur when you move your foot from the accelerator to the brake in a hurry.

3. Vision.

Aim high through the steering wheel look as far down the road as possible. Scan the road 16 seconds ahead of your path of travel, rest your eyes regularly by changing your vision. Every 8-10 seconds check your speed and mirrors. Identify what is behind you and make a mental note of it try to remember what was there last time you looked and is it still there. If not where did it go? Check your blind spots, did it turn off or has it moved to where you can't see it? You must know what is around you at all times.

4. Patience

Never be in a rush when you drive. If you are going to be late then you are going to be late. The phrase better late than never is one you should consider when driving.

Maintain a 3 second following distance. The closer you are to the vehicle in front the higher the risk of having a collision with it.

Wait 3 seconds at the change of lights. Give the intersection a chance to clear before you enter it? Green does not mean go it means proceed with caution. If you think you will be stopped at traffic lights for longer than 5 seconds place the vehicle into neutral and apply the hand brake.

Plan your drive, know where you are going and how you are going to get there before you set off.

5. Courtesy

Courtesy on the road seems to be a dying act these days. Having the fortitude to give an inch can mean the difference between a safe driver and a reckless driver.

Leave a gap between you and the car in front at intersections. If the car in front moves forward don't follow them into the intersection until it's clear. They might have to reverse back and if you are there they can't.

Don't block intersections or drive ways.

If someone indicates to change lanes let them in. I promise it won't make you any later than you already are.

And above all never use your mobile phone while driving. "Good drivers just drive"

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