

Decision Driving[®] Overview

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Most drivers make between 50 and 100 decisions per mile
- The five principles of Decision Driving
- Decision Driving complements the driving knowledge and skills you already have

When you drive, are you aware of all that's going on around you? Do you anticipate what the driver in front, to the side or behind you might do? Do you see potential hazards and plan how you will react to them? Are you always prepared, or like most of us, only sometimes?

You are probably a good driver, but how many times have you:

- Had to complete a panic stop in order to avoid another car?
- Had a near miss at an intersection?
- Run a red light or a stop sign?
- Almost sideswiped another vehicle while making a lane change?

The five principles of Decision Driving can help you avoid these all-too-common emergencies. Crash-free driving isn't just a matter of luck or physical skill. In large part, it depends on the decisions you make and the actions you take based on those decisions. Driving skill is important, but it doesn't make other drivers more attentive. It doesn't make ice less slippery or improve visibility in fog. Decision Driving complements the driving skills and knowledge you already have. It improves your ability to see hazards before they become dangerous and to decide on the best course of action to avoid them.

Research has shown that drivers make between 50 to 100 decisions per mile. Most are simple, like deciding to slow down or signal a lane change. Others are critical, such as deciding where and when you should swerve to avoid an oncoming car. Most of our decisions are based on what we see. Decision Driving lets you see more of what's out there so you can make fully informed decisions to help keep you and your passengers safe.

The logo for Decision Driving features the words "Decision" and "Driving" stacked vertically in a bold, sans-serif font. A thick, yellow diagonal line crosses through the text from the bottom left to the top right. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the upper right of the word "Driving".

Five Principles of Decision Driving

1. Expand your look-ahead capacity.
 - Check what's happening down the road ahead of you, where you will be in a few seconds.
 - Don't just focus immediately in front of your vehicle. Potential problems begin to develop well ahead of you.

2. Size up the whole scene.
 - Know what's going on all around your vehicle. Scan the scene for developing traffic situations such as construction zones, congested intersections, erratic drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, changing road conditions and so on.
 - Don't stare at anything for longer than 2 seconds.
 - Make it a habit to check your mirrors every 5 to 10 seconds.
3. Signal your intentions early.
 - Let other drivers know in advance what you intend to do. This will give them time to make correct driving decisions of their own.
 - Your horn, lights, turn signals, road position and speed can all help tell other drivers what you are planning. Driving is not the time for surprises.
4. Plan an escape route.
 - Think ahead. You will need to react quickly if the unexpected happens. Time your passing moves carefully.
 - Plan a way out that allows you enough time, space and visibility to stop or maneuver smoothly. Stay out of tailgating traps.
 - Be prepared to yield—the other driver might not!
5. Take decisive action.
 - If you've followed the first four principles you will know what to do and have the time and space to do it safely.
 - Make the decision and do it!

With practice, Decision Drivers can automatically compensate for other drivers' errors, adapt to changes in road, weather or traffic conditions, and safely avoid sudden obstacles. Decision Driving, added to the driving knowledge and skills you already have, can help you accomplish safe, crash-free driving.

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