

5 Seeing Habits

How do you do it?
What does it do for you?
Key Phrase – REMEMBER

RULE 1: “AIM HIGH IN STEERING.”

Imaginary target – baseball/dart board.
Centers car in traffic lane: Safe path on turns.
“FIND A SAFE PATH WELL AHEAD”.

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RULE 2: “GET THE BIG PICTURE.”

How wide and deep? What’s in it? Objects and ground.
Keeps you away from billboards. Smooth stops and turns. Buys time.
“STAY BACK AND SEE IT ALL.”

How do you do it?
What does it do for you?
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RULE 3: “KEEP YOUR EYES MOVING.”

Move eyes: Front – 2 seconds. Rear – 5 to 8 seconds. Keeps you alive at intersections. Keeps eyes ahead of car.
“SCAN – DON’T STARE.”

How do you do it?
What does it do for you?
Key Phrase – REMEMBER

RULE 4: “LEAVE YOURSELF AN OUT.”

Have escape route. Take path of least resistance.
Space on all four sides, but always in front.
“BE PREPARED. EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED”.

How do you do it?
What does it do for you?
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RULE 5: “MAKE SURE THEY SEE YOU.”

Communicate in traffic – horn, lights, signals.
Establishes eye-to-eye contact.
“DON’T GAMBLE. USE YOUR HORN, LIGHTS, AND SIGNALS.”

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10 Point Commentary

1. CLEARING INTERSECTIONS

Whether approaching, turning, going through, or starting up at intersections scan ahead, look left, right, then back to the left. Scan your driving scene getting the big picture and look left, right, first, looking for any pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles, and vehicles to ensure they are obeying their traffic sign or signal, and looking for any obstructions that may block your visibility. Look left the second time because that's the first lane of traffic I'm going to enter. Prior to entering the intersection, I check my traffic side mirror looking for traffic in the lane next to my vehicle that may turn in front of me. As I proceed through the intersection I check my opposite traffic side mirror to ensure I cleared the intersection of any hazards.

Why? Keeps you alive at intersections.

2. WHEN STOPPED IN TRAFFIC

When stopped in traffic, I leave enough space between the front bumper of my vehicle and the rear bumper of the vehicle in front of me. If that vehicle stalls or becomes disabled, I can maneuver around that vehicle without having to back up in traffic. The space I leave in front of my vehicle is proportionate to the size of my vehicle. The longer my vehicle, the more space required.

Why: Have escape route.

3. COUNT ONE-TWO-THREE AFTER VEHICLE AHEAD HAS STARTED TO MOVE

Count one, two, three after the vehicle ahead has started to move before placing my vehicle in motion. This will automatically establish a space cushion and allow me to bring my eyes up to the driving scene ahead.

Why? Keeps you away from billboards.

4. FOUR TO SIX SECONDS FOLLOWING TIME FOR SPEEDS UP TO 30 MPH, 6-8 SECONDS FOR SPEEDS OVER 30 MPH

To calculate following distance- When the vehicle ahead passes a stationary item, start counting 1/1000 one, 1/1000 two, 1/1000 three until the front bumper of my vehicle reaches that item. This is my following distance in seconds and gives me time to act to any changes in the traffic scene ahead.

Why? Buys time.

5. EIGHT TO TWELVE SECONDS EYE-LEAD TIME

Eight to twelve seconds of eye, lead-time is the depth of which my eyes should be most of the time while driving. To establish eye lead-time while driving, I pick a stationary item in front of my vehicle and start counting 1/1000 one, 1/1000 two, 1/1000 three until the front of my vehicle reaches that item. That is my eye lead-time in seconds. Remember that it is a maintained depth of vision.

Why? Centers car in traffic lane.

6. SCAN STEERING WHEELS

Always scan steering wheels of parked cars to see if the vehicle is occupied. An occupied vehicle presents two hazards; the person may either exit the vehicle, or pull away from the curb. Other ways to see if the vehicle is occupied is steering wheels turned out, tail or brake lights on, and exhaust coming from the tail pipe. If you can't determine if the vehicle is occupied, treat it as an occupied vehicle. A small tap or loud blast if necessary, close enough to be heard, yet far enough away to take evasive action.

Why: Take path of least resistance.

7. STALE GREEN LIGHTS

A stale green light is a light that I did not see change, and I'm not sure when it may turn to yellow or red. A point of decision must be established between the front bumper of my vehicle and the stop line. If the light would change before reaching my decision point I will be able to bring the vehicle to a safe stop behind the stop line. If I reach my decision point and the light would change, I will continue through the intersection without hesitation or acceleration. Things that affect my point of decision are road, load, weather and speed.

Why? Smooth stops and turns.

8. EYE CONTACT

Always establish eye-to-eye contact with pedestrians, bicycles, motorcycles, and vehicles to eliminate uncertainty. We use 3 tools to establish eye to eye contact, our horn, lights and signals. Our horn is the primary tool; usually a tap of the horn, sometimes a loud blast is necessary. Once I establish eye-to-eye contact, I can expect the other person to act in a reasonable and predictable manner.

Why? Establishes eye to eye contact.

9. PULLING FROM CURB

When pulling from a curb, I always indicate my intentions by turning on my traffic side turn signal. I check traffic by, looking at my traffic side flat and convex mirrors. I look over my traffic side shoulder to check my blind spot between the fuel tank and drive axle in the lane I'm about to occupy. When the lane is clear, I can proceed with pulling from curb. I do not deactivate my turn signal until all of my equipment is completely in the lane I am occupying.

Why? Communicate in traffic, horn, lights, signals.

10. USE OF MIRRORS AND GAUGES

I check a mirror every 5 to 8 seconds looking for lane position, traffic conditions and mechanical problems. I substitute a mirror check, when traffic allows, with one of my primary gauges, oil or water looking for normal readings.

When I check a mirror or gauge my next eye movement is back to the front.

Never go mirror-to-mirror, gauge-to-gauge, mirror-to-gauge, gauge-to-mirror.

Why? Keeps eyes ahead of car.