

As a driver, you are going to interact with many other types of roadway and off roadway users. You must be constantly assessing other vehicles and users to determine how to interact with them. Even though you may encounter the same type of vehicle or user many times, each time you must assess the situation and decide how best to deal with the user(s). We need to share the roadway with others. We are all on the roadway for a reason.

Other Types of Vehicles

Mopeds & Motorcycles – Motorcycle riders have the same rights and responsibilities as other roadway users. Because of their size and vulnerability in a crash, it is important to pay special attention to motorcycles.

Intersections - More than 50 percent of all motorcycle collisions occur at intersections. The most common situation occurs when an oncoming automobile makes a left turn in front of a motorcycle. Watch for motorcycles before turning and yield the right-of-way. Be particularly careful when making a left turn across lanes of oncoming traffic. Always use your signals and look in all directions before making the turn. Don't be misled by a flashing turn signal on a motorcycle — motorcycle signals usually are not selfcanceling and riders sometimes forget to turn them off. Wait to be sure the motorcycle is going to turn before you proceed.

Visibility - The failure of motorists to detect and recognize motorcycles in traffic is the most common cause of motorcycle collisions. Due to their small size, motorcycles may be difficult to see, and motorists tend to underestimate their speed. Expect to see motorcycles in traffic at any time, not just in the spring and summer. Drivers involved in collisions often report not seeing the motorcycle or seeing it too late to avoid a collision.

Lane Sharing - Traffic conditions and road surfaces will determine the area within the lane that the motorcyclist will use. Oil spills, potholes, gravel or debris may require the motorcyclist to adjust positions within the lane. Although there may be enough room in the traffic lane for an automobile and a motorcyclist, remember that the motorcyclist needs the room to maneuver safely and is entitled to the entire lane. Do not share the lane.

Passing - When your automobile is being passed by a motorcycle, you should maintain your lane position and speed. Allow the motorcycle to complete the maneuver and assume proper lane position as quickly as possible.

Following Distance - Allow at least three to four seconds following distance when behind a motorcycle so the motorcyclist has enough time to maneuver in an emergency. In dry conditions motorcycles can stop more quickly than a car. Dim your headlights when following all vehicles, including motorcycles.

Stopping Distance - Motorcycles can stop in a shorter distance than a car. A motorcyclist's ability to stop quickly also may depend on the rider's experience and training.

Road Conditions - Motorcycles react differently to traffic, weather and road conditions than cars. Thus, riders often respond in ways drivers do not expect. Wet or icy roads impair a motorcyclist's ability to brake and maneuver. Wind gusts, both natural and those created by large passing vehicles, can move a motorcycle across an entire lane if the rider is not prepared. Potholes or railroad tracks often require motorcyclists to change positions within their lane. Gravel roads decrease traction and may cause a rider to slow down or brake where a car would not.

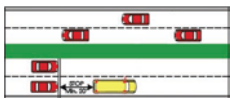
In Case of a Collision - Motorcyclists may only be protected by a helmet, eye protection, boots, gloves and durable clothing. In the event of a collision, use extreme caution and seek emergency medical assistance.

Snowmobiles/ATVs – Snowmobiles and ATVs (all-terrain vehicle) may suddenly cross your path with little or no warning from them. They themselves might not realize that they are crossing a roadway until they are on it. When you notice snowmobiles or ATV's in areas alongside the roadway, slow down and be prepared in case they enter the roadway.

Buses – School/Coach/Transit



School Buses – When a school bus is stopped or slowing, be alert for children. The children may be running so they do not miss the bus. Children don't always look for traffic before crossing the street. Be extra alert for buses before and after school times.



WI LAW – requires drivers to stop no closer than 20 feet from a stopped school bus when the red flashing stop lights are on. You must stop whether the school bus is on the opposite side of the roadway or is in your lane ahead of you on single and multi-lane roadways. You must remain stopped until the red lights on the bus are no longer flashing.

You are not required to stop for a school bus displaying flashing red lights when you are on the opposite side of a divided highway or roadway. You may continue to drive at a safe speed but be alert for problems.



New school busses will have yellow lights along with red lights. When the yellow lights are flashing on the front and back, the bus is preparing to stop to pick-up or drop off children. Drivers should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicle. The red lights are about to start flashing.



Coach Buses – are long and tall which requires them to make wide turns. They will also need more time to start and stop. They have larger blind spot areas along side and to the rear. If you can't see the driver in the bus mirrors, they can't see you either. On windy days expect the wind to push the bus from side to side so avoid driving next to them.



City Buses – will make frequent stops along the bus route. The bus may stop in the traffic lane to load and unload passengers. If an older or person with disabilities is loading or unloading, the bus may stay stopped for several minutes. Be patient.

Watch for pedestrians running to catch the bus. They may cross in mid-block or against the traffic light.

If a city bus is stopped close to an intersection, it is **illegal** to pass the bus on the left side and then make a right turn in front of the bus.

Emergency Vehicles – You must yield the right of way to police vehicles, fire engines, ambulances using a siren and red/white or red/blue flashing lights.



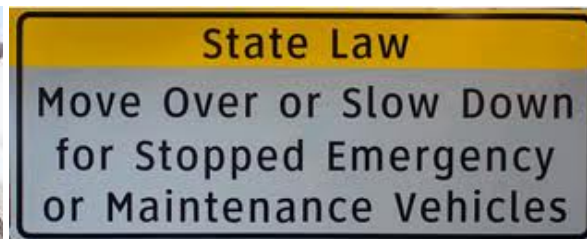
- Pull over to the right edge of the road when you see or hear an emergency vehicle approaching from any direction.
- Follow any instructions given over the emergency vehicle loud speaker.
- STOP and wait until the emergency vehicle has passed.
- If you are in an intersection, drive through the intersection before you pull over and stop.

When being followed or following emergency vehicles that do not have active emergency lights, leave more space between you and them. Be alert in case the emergency vehicle gets a call and has to activate their emergency lights and siren.



WI LAW – requires you to stop not less than 30 feet from the fire truck or rescue squad when they are or about to back the vehicle into the fire station and the vehicle warning lights are active.

Maintenance – There are several types of maintenance vehicles you will encounter while driving. How you deal with them will depend on where the vehicle is and what type of maintenance or work they may be doing. The main thing to remember is that you need to slow down and pass them with caution when they have their flashing amber/yellow lights on. Those flashing amber/yellow lights are there for a reason. That reason is to tell other vehicles that workers are close by and that you need to be on the lookout for them. The workers are there to get a job done, the quicker they finish the job, the quicker they can get out of the area.



WI LAW – requires drivers to move to the lane farthest from any emergency, maintenance, or tow vehicle that is stop on the side of the roadway with active flashing lights. If you are unable to move to another lane, you must than slow down and move to the farthest part of your lane away from the stopped emergency, maintenance, or tow vehicle.



Garbage & Recycling Trucks – will be starting and stopping often. They may be blocking part or all of the driving lane. Watch for debris that has fallen out of the truck. Also watch for people by the roadway getting their empty cans or bins. Don't make a right turn in front of them into a driveway. The driver may not see you.



Street Cleaners – will be going slowly along the right curb line. Watch for them having to move into the driving lane to get around parked vehicles. The drivers of these vehicles are normally on the right making a larger blind spot on their left side. These vehicles will often make U-turns at intersections to turn around and clean the other side of the roadway.



Roadway Maintenance Vehicles – come in all types and sizes. They are out there to make the roadway easier and safer for you to drive on. Slow down and give them space as you approach. Watch for workers on or near the roadway in the work zone.



Utility Vehicles – may be on or off the roadway. They may be working on telephone, cable, or power lines next to or above the roadway. Watch for sagging or falling wires. Workers may be moving ladders or other special equipment around.



Snow Removal Vehicles – are out there to clear the roadway for you. Give them plenty of space. Snow plows will often drive closer to the center of the roadway. Watch for them to move left to get around parked vehicles and other objects. Snow plows may stop and backup often. Don't drive close behind them.

Also be alert for flying snow and salt. Several communities in WI are now using a wet salt mixture that gets sprayed on the roadways. They will apply the mixture before it starts snowing or freezing.

WI LAW – requires drivers to stay at least 200 feet behind a snow plow operating on roadways with a speed limit of 35 mph or higher and have active amber/yellow flashing lights.



Watch for pickup trucks and large equipment with plows working in parking lots and driveways. Don't sneak up behind them. They will backup up often.



Recreational Vehicles (RV) – You do not need a special license to operate this type of vehicle. They will make slow, wide turns and take longer to start and stop. Give them plenty of space. Expect and be ready for wind gusts when they pass you on the highway. Like other large vehicles, RVs will have bigger blind spot areas along side and behind them, so avoid driving next to them. Some RVs may even be towing a vehicle behind them.



Delivery/Cargo Trucks – even though it is illegal these vehicles may stop in the traffic lane to make a delivery. They may be going slow down the roadway looking for an address. Watch for the driver jumping out and crossing the street. Also watch for the back cargo area doors opening and swinging into the traffic lane.

Semi-Trucks – We rely on semi-trucks or tractor trailers to keep the goods we want stocked on the store shelves. Semi-trucks play a major role in keeping our economy moving. Millions of tons of goods are transported by this type of vehicle every day.



Semi-trucks need lots of room to make turns. Don't try to squeeze in the opening next to large trucks. Trucks make wide right turns and need more space.

The truck needs to swing to the left so that the trailer does not hit the right side curb or sidewalk area.

Semi-trucks also have large blind spots called "No Zones". The front "No Zone" can be up to 20 feet long with the rear being up to 200 feet. Stay out of the "No Zones".



Don't drive so close behind semi-trucks that you are unable to see what is happening in front of the truck. Stay back. Also remember that trucks need more time to start from a stop.

When stopped behind large trucks, keep extra space in case the truck starts to roll back.



When approaching oncoming semi-trucks, grip the steering wheel and be ready for the gust of wind as the truck passes you. Don't look at the truck. Look where you want your vehicle to go. If it is raining, expect water spray from the truck tires as you pass it. Be ready to get your windshield wipers on.



Watch for oversize and specialty trucks like gasoline tankers. Gasoline tankers may stop or slow down at railroad crossings to check for trains.



Farm Equipment – is slow and large. Some farm equipment may take up the lane it is in and part of the oncoming traffic lane. Watch for farm equipment turning into or from farms and the fields. If you cannot see the operator of the equipment, do not pass until you know for sure it is safe.

Animal Drawn Vehicles – need to be approached with caution. They will usually be going much slower than the posted speed limit. Most animal drawn vehicles will be displaying the red/orange slow moving vehicle sign. You will normally find animal drawn vehicle on rural roadways, but may also encounter them in the city. Slow down and give the animal drawn vehicle plenty of room. As you approach and pass the animal drawn vehicle:



Never sound your horn.

Never yell out the window at the people using the vehicle or at the animal pulling the vehicle.

Never throw things at the animal drawn vehicle or the animal pulling the vehicle.

Doing any of those things could spook the animal and cause the operator of the vehicle to lose control of the animal which could cause the vehicle to crash. Remember that passengers in/or on animal drawn vehicles normally do not wear seatbelts. They also do not have the protection around them like passengers in cars.

WI LAW – requires vehicles to stop or do what is necessary to avoid injury or a crash if the operator of an animal drawn vehicle gives a signal of distress.

Other Roadway Users

Animals on or near the road – At times you will encounter some type of animal on or near the roadway.

When you see a small animal like a bird or squirrel on the roadway, don't panic and swerve to avoid it, just simply slow down and stop if you have to until they move off the roadway. Larger animals like skunk, raccoon, and turkeys may take their time crossing. Do everything reasonable and safe to avoid hitting them.

Avoid running over dead animals on the roadway. Hitting them could result in damage to your vehicle. You would be surprised how much damage a raccoon or turkey can do to your vehicle.



Over 1 million collisions each year in the U.S. are with deer. With the average damage amount being \$3000 per crash.

Motor vehicle-deer crashes continue to be cause for concern in highway safety. Deer are the third most commonly struck object in Wisconsin (behind striking another vehicle or a fixed object).

In 2012, 14 people died in 14 fatal motor vehicle-deer crashes. In addition, 81 people suffered serious injuries; minor injuries totaled 210; and 140 people were possibly injured.

You have the greatest chance of hitting a deer in the months of October and November. With 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. to 11 p.m. being the time of day when most crashes with deer occur. You are three times more likely to hit a deer during those months than any other. Your chances then peak again during May – June.

Deer may blend in with the surroundings making it difficult for you to see them.

Tips from the Insurance Information Institute on how to reduce your odds of a deer-vehicle collision:

- Keep in mind that deer generally travel in herds — if you see one, there is a strong possibility others are nearby.
- Be aware of posted deer crossing signs. These are placed in active deer crossing areas.
- Remember deer are most active between 6 and 9 p.m.
- Use high beam headlamps as much as possible at night to illuminate the areas from which deer will enter roadways.
- If a deer collision seems inevitable, attempting to swerve out of the way could cause you to lose control of your vehicle or place you in the path of an oncoming vehicle.

Railroad & Light Rail – When approaching a railroad or light rail crossing you must stop if there is a posted stop sign, the electric signal is flashing or the crossing gate is lowered. You also must stop if a flagperson issues a signal to stop or a train is approaching and/or gives a warning. If a railroad grade crossing has no warning devices or only a crossbuck sign, slow down and look and listen for a train before proceeding. You must yield the right-of-way to any approaching train or railroad equipment.

A driver may not enter a highway railroad crossing unless there is sufficient space on the other side of the crossing to accommodate the vehicle without obstructing passage of a train or other railroad equipment using the rails.

NEVER STOP ON THE TRACKS. NEVER TRY TO BEAT THE TRAIN.

If there are more than one set of tracks at a crossing, be sure to wait and look both ways for any additional trains or railroad maintenance equipment proceeding on any other tracks.



You are approaching a railroad crossing. Slow down and prepare to stop if there is a train.



You are at the railroad crossing. Slow down and check for trains before crossing.



School, Transit, Coach buses and trucks carrying hazardous materials are not required to stop if there is no train. These vehicles may slow down as they approach the crossing to check for trains.



Crossing gates and lights will activate as a train approaches the crossing. Never drive around the lowered gates unless a police officer or railroad employee is directing you to do so.



Local rules do not permit the train to sound its horn at this crossing due to the loud noise.



There is a railroad crossing at the crossroad to your left. If turning left at this road, slow and check for trains.



Center track lane is used by light rail vehicles. Do not drive on the tracks. Do not pull in front of light rail vehicles, like larger trains, they are unable to stop quickly.



Flashing lights indicates a train is approaching or crossing. You must come to a complete stop if the lights are flashing. If no train is in sight you may proceed with caution after you have stopped completely and checked for trains.

WI LAW – requires motor buses transporting passengers and vehicles transporting hazardous materials to stop within 50 feet, but not less than 15 feet from the nearest rail of all railroad crossings not marked with an exempt or abandoned sign and check for trains and railroad maintenance equipment.



Trains have a long stopping distance. Did you know that on average, a commuter train takes a minimum of 600 feet to stop (that's the length of two football fields)? Freight trains are much heavier than commuter trains and can average 5,280 feet to stop. That's 1 mile! (The equivalent to 18 football fields.) Trains travel, on average, 15-60 miles per hour.

Watercraft (boats/ships) – At times you will cross paths with waterways. Before crossing the bridge, look for watercraft approaching the bridge. Ships and barges have already collided with bridge supports causing the bridge to collapse.



When approaching draw/lift bridges be alert for signs that the bridge is going to open or lift. If the lights and gates indicate the bridge is going to become active, STOP before entering the lift area. Don't try to rush across. Never go around lowered stop gates.

The vehicle in the picture to the left got caught on the Sturgeon Bay draw bridge.



Leave more space when following boats being transported on the roadway. Watch for things flying or bouncing out of them. Some boats may be larger than the vehicle towing it making it difficult to see around. Also be alert for wind gusts pushing the boat trailer from side to side.

Aircraft – Always take notice if you are by an airport. Aircraft will be taking off or landing and will be low in the sky. If you are not expecting low flying aircraft, you might be surprised and lose control of the vehicle. If an aircraft has problems, they may need to land on the roadway. If you see aircraft attempting to land on the roadway, don't try to out run it, move as far off the roadway as safely possible.



Medical helicopters may need to land on the roadway at serious traffic crash scenes. If you are in an area where a helicopter is landing or taking off, keep your windows closed so flying debris does not enter your vehicle and cause injury to you or your passengers. Also watch for rescue personnel on or near the roadway. Keep your attention to your driving path and not the helicopter if your vehicle is still moving.

Pedestrian

Look for and yield to pedestrians wherever they may be...especially children.

You must yield where necessary to avoid striking pedestrians who are crossing the road. You must yield to pedestrians when you are entering or exiting a driveway, alley or parking lot. You must stop before crossing a sidewalk if you are entering or crossing a highway from a driveway, alley or parking lot. It is illegal to drive on a sidewalk except to cross it.

Roundabouts are becoming more common in Wisconsin, when driving in a roundabout you must remember to Yield to pedestrians and bicyclists when entering and leaving the roundabout.

Pedestrians using a dog guide or carrying a white cane have absolute right of way (even if not at an intersection.) Do not use your horn as it could startle the blind person. If you see anyone in the roadway with a dog guide or white cane, stop at least 10 feet away until the person is off the roadway.

Wait until pedestrians are safely off the roadway or out of the crosswalk on your side of the road before you proceed.

Whenever any vehicle is stopped at an intersection or crosswalk to permit a pedestrian, bicyclist, or rider of an electric personal assistive mobility device to cross the roadway, the operator of any other vehicle approaching from the rear shall not overtake and pass the stopped vehicle.

Scanning-to be a good driver, you must know what is happening around your vehicle. You must look ahead, to the sides and behind the vehicle. Scanning helps you see problems ahead. Remember that cars and trucks are not the

only “users” of the road. In many crashes with pedestrian and bicyclists, drivers say they looked but did not see them.

Be especially watchful of children. Because they are small, you are less likely to easily spot them. And, because they are not yet able to judge distance, speed and/or be mindful of danger, exercise extreme caution in areas where children are possibly present. Always be prepared to stop quickly, should a child dart out in front of your vehicle.

A few other areas to be aware of with pedestrians:

- Watch for pedestrians in all directions before turning.
- Yield to pedestrians at marked and unmarked crosswalks.
- Stop at the stop line at intersections.
- Look carefully behind your vehicle before backing up.
- Always be aware of the sudden movements of children.

Bicycles

Bicyclists are legal users of the road and are entitled to the full use of a travel lane if necessary, although a bicyclist may choose to use the shoulder or bike lane if present. When passing a bicycle give at least three feet of space. You may need to yield to the bicyclist until you are able to safely pass.

When passing a bicycle, allow a minimum of three feet of space between your vehicle and the bicycle.

Avoid turning across the path of a bicyclist. Most crashes involving a motor vehicle and a bicyclist happen when a motorist is turning left.

At intersections, before entering the intersection, look to both the left and right for approaching pedestrians and bicyclists.

Give extra space to bicyclists and pedestrians, especially children. They can move into your path quickly and without warning. Wait until it is safe to pass in the adjoining lane.

A few other areas to be aware of with Bicyclists:

- Motorists and bicyclists share all the same rights and responsibilities on the road.
- Bicyclists travel the same direction as other traffic, in the right lane, three feet from the parked cars or the side of the lane
- When turning right, always look, and yield to bicyclists. Let the bicyclists go through the intersection first. Check the sidewalk for bicyclists and pedestrians crossing the street, and then turn right.
- When turning left, wait for the bicyclists to pass through the intersection first. Look for pedestrians in the crosswalk, and then turn left.
- Before pulling over, turn on your turn signal and look over your shoulder for bicyclists. If you see a bicyclist, yield and let them pass before you pull over.
- Before exiting your vehicle, check over your shoulder for bicyclists.
- It is illegal to park or drive in a bike lane. When entering a bike lane to turn or parallel park always:
 - Yield to bicyclists
 - Turn on your turn signal
 - Pull all the way into the bike lane so bicyclists will pass on the left