

+ SAFETY SOLUTIONS

# HOW TO CHANGE LANES AND MAKE RIGHT TURNS





# HOW TO CHANGE LANES

*Lane change/merging collisions are among the most common and severe types of losses that occur between commercial and passenger vehicles. The following is a list of techniques for drivers to check or do to help prevent this type of collision.*

- + Before beginning a trip, properly adjust the driver's seat and clean and adjust all mirrors in order to **minimize your blind spots** and improve visibility at night and during inclement weather.
- + While driving, **scan your mirrors** every three to five seconds so you know what is around your vehicle. Lean and look to check all blind spots.
- + **Manage your space** by making certain you have enough space to complete your maneuver before you make your move. Look for road hazards in the lane you are changing to.
- + **Communicate to others your intention** to change lanes or merge by turning on your turn signals **before** you begin your maneuver. A minimum of five seconds or five blinks of your signal is recommended. Monitor your mirror and blind spots to verify the space is clear.
- + After you pass, **make sure the vehicle you just passed has the proper following distance** behind you before you lane change in front of it. Double check your blind spots, and signal your intentions.
- + **Watch for vehicles** around your truck that may be moving into your blind spots.
- + **Determine the location of any vehicle that "disappears."** If you had sight of a vehicle and all of a sudden you do not see it, it is most likely in your blind spot. **DO NOT** change lanes until you see it again.
- + **Watch out for pedestrians** as well as vehicles.
- + **Be prepared to respond** to the changing movement of each vehicle near you, including them speeding up to prevent you from changing lanes.

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- + **Anticipate and prepare for unexpected actions** of other motorists. Always expect and plan for the unexpected.
- + **Be prepared to yield the right-of-way** to other motorists as necessary to accommodate the entry of other vehicles into the traffic flow. Professional drivers should ALWAYS give the right-of-way, regardless of whether the other driver is right or wrong.
- + **Practice patience** when other drivers cut in front of your vehicle or make other erratic moves. Slow down and re-create your safe following distance.
- + **Never respond to road rage.** Don't let other motorists' bad behavior influence your response or your safe driving behavior. Maintain your professionalism.
- + **Improper or erratic lane changes is a CDL serious traffic violation that could cause you to lose your license.**



## MAKING RIGHT TURNS

*The American Trucking Associations and the National Safety Council suggest truck drivers follow these safety tips to prevent right-turn collisions.*

- + **Know your route** and re-route, if necessary, to eliminate or reduce the need for right turns (i.e., make three left turns instead of one right turn).
- + **Anticipate the turn** and any problems.
- + **Get in the proper lane** as quickly and safely as you can before you turn.
- + **Signal well in advance for every turn.** Signal continuously. You need both hands on the wheel to turn safely.
- + **On the approach stay close to the curb to block other vehicles that might try to pass you on the right.** However this won't discourage some motorists from sneaking in, so always anticipate that someone may try to pass you on the right and be prepared to stop. These collisions are preventable on your part.

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- + **Look at the path you want to turn into.** Identify pedestrians, approaching vehicles and other obstacles that can challenge your turn.
- + **Slow down.** Turn slowly so you can stop and have time to properly maneuver in a short space if needed.
- + **Make the turn at no more than three miles per hour.**
- + **Check your mirrors frequently.** If you see a vehicle or person in the mirror—and then you don't—it means trouble, so stop!
- + Pull out into the intersecting street to turn and **give the trailer wheels room** as you keep the right side closed off.
- + **Make your turn without crossing the center line** of the street you are leaving and, if possible, not into the opposing traffic lanes of the road you are entering. If you must cross into oncoming traffic of the road on which you are turning, be aware of vehicles coming toward you. Give them room to go by or stop. Do not back up! You may hit someone behind you.
- + **Re-check for any motorists** cutting in on the right before completing the turn.
- + **Watch your trailer tracking** to make sure it does not ride up on the curb where it could strike someone or something.
- + **Be aware of rear trailer swing**, especially if your trailer tandems are slid forward.
- + Before making a right turn, especially after a stop, **look to the right again** to make sure a pedestrian or bicyclist is not trying to enter your path.

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