



Watch Out for Animals

The following are tips on how to avoid animal/vehicle collisions or reduce the severity if a collision occurs.



Drive at a safe and prudent speed, since excessive speed reduces the reaction time and increases braking distance.

Always wear your seat belt. Most people injured in animal/vehicle crashes were not wearing their seat belt.

Be extremely alert in early morning and evening hours, the most active time for deer and other animals.

Slow down and be careful when approaching a horsedrawn vehicle or someone riding an animal, since most animals are easily frightened by motor vehicles. Allow plenty of room for passing safely. Be prepared to stop if the animal you are attempting to pass appears frightened.

Be more observant and use special caution in areas marked with deer or other animal crossing signs.

During periods of darkness, use your bright lights when no traffic is approaching. High beams will illuminate the eyes of animals on or near the roadway much sooner, allowing a greater reaction time. Continually scan for animals and the reflection of light in their eyes. Also look for animals' silhouettes in back-lit conditions.

Slow down when approaching a deer or other animal standing near the roadside. The animal may "bolt" or instantly change direction onto the road.

Expect a second animal to follow when you see one near or crossing the road.

Focus your vision far down the road. If the headlights or taillights of other vehicles or roadway signs appear to flash, flicker or momentarily disappear, it might be an animal or pedestrian crossing the roadway.

Warn other drivers by turning on your 4-way flashers and flashing headlights when deer or other animals are on or near the road.

Remember where you have seen deer cross the road. They are creatures of habit and use the same paths.

Watch for evidence where animals were previously struck. This should be another warning sign that animals are in the area.

Use one long horn blast to frighten deer or other animals on the road. Flashing your lights may cause it to further fixate on your vehicle. Brake firmly in a controlled fashion and do not swerve. Attempt to steer around the animal only if your speed has been significantly reduced and you can do it safely and in a controlled manner while remaining on the roadway.

If a collision with an animal cannot be avoided, strike the animal using controlled braking and do not swerve. It is better to strike an animal than another vehicle or fixed object. Bring the vehicle to a complete stop off the side of the road and turn on the emergency flashers

Never touch a struck animal. In attempting to flee, the injured and frightened animal may hurt you. Protect the scene to prevent additional accidents and contact the nearest law enforcement agency.