



The Art of Backing

What driving activity occupies less than one percent of a driver's time behind the wheel, but results in approximately 25 percent of all collisions?

Backing.

Do not become complacent! True, most backing collisions result in less injury or damage than most "going forward" injuries. Even so, careless backing causes serious injuries and fatalities every year. Don't let this happen to you.

When backing, remember that rear vision is restricted. You must take several precautions to improve vision and avoid collisions:

- √ Plan ahead and park so that backing is avoided, when possible .
- √ Back when you arrive, rather than when you are ready to leave, when possible.
- √ Always walk around the back of your vehicle before backing.
- √ Use a helper to assist backing. Coordinate hand signals so you know what the helper is telling you to do. If you lose sight of the helper, stop immediately.
- √ Have a traffic control flagger to assist when backing into roads, if necessary.
- √ Sound your horn as a warning when pedestrians are nearby.
- √ Constantly check mirrors as you proceed.

- √ Proceed very slowly, especially if you're backing with a trailer such as a chipper. Going slowly gives you more reaction time to correct your steering.
- √ If any doubt arises – get out and recheck.

Make this checklist part of your everyday driving procedure. Not only can it protect the safety of the general public, it will help you keep a clean driving record and avoid having to tell your supervisor you backed into a vehicle, the client's house, or a person.

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