

Respect the Rig: Safe Driving around Trucks and Buses

Driving around large trucks and buses is just one risk young drivers face. Large trucks and buses have large blind spots, long stopping distances and limited maneuverability that make it vital for all drivers to focus on safety around these roadway giants. A few simple actions can help make the road safer for all of us.

Use this quiz as a fun, informative way to share information with your students. And, for more information, visit our website at www.t-driver.com.

Car crashes kill more young people than any other cause, accounting for nearly half of all teen deaths in America each year. About 2,700 U.S. teens die each year in car crashes; that's the equivalent of a school bus loaded with teenagers crashing once every week for an entire year. For every American teen killed in a car crash, about 100 more are injured. Besides the human tragedy of teen deaths, the societal cost of these crashes amount to \$30 billion per year for the United States.

Started in 2002, Teens in the Driver Seat® is the first peer-to-peer program for teens that focuses solely on traffic safety and addresses all major risks for this age group.

It is our hope that you will use this resource to share life-saving information with your students and challenge them to share this safe-driving message with their peers.



Teacher/Sponsor Resource - Respect the Rig Trivia

1. Large trucks and buses have huge blind spots known as "No Zones". Where are they located around the truck/bus?
 - a. Front
 - b. Back
 - c. Sides
 - d. All of the above

D – ALL OF THE ABOVE: Large trucks and buses have huge blind spots - or No Zones - around the front, back, and sides of the vehicle. Stay out of blind spots when a truck or bus is turning, backing up or changing lanes.

2. Blind spots are moments when the driver of a large truck/bus can't see you in their side mirror. It's safe to drive, ride, or walk in a blind spot because a driver will assume you are there.

TRUE OR FALSE

FALSE: If you can't see the driver in the side mirror of the truck or bus, assume that the driver can't see you. Don't drive, ride, or walk in a blind spot - slow down or move to stay visible. Be careful near a truck or bus and assume the driver cannot see you – there is a good chance you could be in their blind spot.

3. To pass a truck or bus safely, which lane should you be in?
 - a. Left lane
 - b. Right lane
 - c. Both lanes are safe

A – LEFT LANE: Make sure you can see the driver in the mirror before moving to the left lane to pass. Signal clearly then move into the left lane and accelerate so that you can get past the truck or bus safely and promptly.

Don't linger in the blind spot. Never pass from the right lane, as that blind spot is even larger, and left lanes are for passing.

4. Cutting in too close in front of another vehicle is always dangerous, but it's especially dangerous to "cut off" a commercial bus or truck. How much longer does it take a bus to stop versus a vehicle?
- a. 33%
 - b. 40%
 - c. 50%
 - d. 75%

B – 40%: Buses take 40% longer to stop. If you move in quickly from either side, you're likely to be in a blind spot so the driver may not see you in time. Even if you're visible, the vehicle may not be able to slow quickly enough to avoid a crash because of the amount of time it takes to stop.

5. Buses and trucks require extra turning room. What should a driver NOT do when near a large truck/bus trying to turn?
- a. "Block the box" – also known as stop inside the intersection
 - b. Stop in front of the line
 - c. Get between the truck and the curb
 - d. All of the above

D – ALL OF THE ABOVE: Trucks and buses can't make sharp turns or maneuver as easily as cars. They require extra turning room – they swing wide or may even initiate a turn from a middle lane (rather than far right). If a truck or bus has its turn signal on, never try to squeeze by it or get between the vehicle and the curb. When you stop at an intersection, never "block the box" or stop in front of the line as buses and trucks require that space to complete turns safely. Be extra careful when trucks or buses are dealing with tight spaces such as in work zones, truck stops, parking lots and service stations.

6. Traveling at 65 MPH, it can take a fully loaded truck an average of _____ feet to come to a complete stop.
- a. 300
 - b. 450
 - c. 760
 - d. 600

C – 760 FT: The stopping time and distance for a truck or bus is much greater than that of smaller vehicles. Stopping distance increases with a heavy load or in road conditions such as snow, ice or rain. A fully loaded truck traveling in good road conditions at highway speeds may need a distance of more than two football fields to stop. Never suddenly cut in front of a truck as it reduces the truck's allowable safe stopping distance.

7. Use caution when driving around large trucks. Due to their size, large trucks are at risk for:
- Roll-overs
 - Tire blowouts
 - Hitting curbs
 - All of the above

D – ALL OF THE ABOVE: Big rigs are at greater risk for rolling over because of their size and weight. They can roll over from being too top heavy, in high winds, or when taking a curve too quickly. Tire blowouts leave behind shredded tires on the roadway that you won't see coming if you travel too close behind other vehicles. Trucks also make wider turns to avoid hitting the curb, light poles, or anything else by the road. To do this, they usually leave a wide space to the left/right of the truck...always watch for trucks with their blinkers on and give them space.

8. A commercial truck can weigh up to 80,000 pounds.

TRUE OR FALSE

TRUE: Commercial trucks can weigh up to 80,000 pounds. That's as much as six elephants. Respect the size and weight of large trucks by not cutting them off. Give truck drivers room to stop - the heavier they are, the longer their stopping distance.

9. A driver may leave their bright headlights on when driving by a large truck or bus.

TRUE OR FALSE

FALSE: Lower your bright lights near large trucks. A truck's large side mirrors reflect bright lights from other vehicles into other drivers' eyes.

10. As a pedestrian, which precaution should you take around trucks and buses?

- Never stand in the street while waiting to cross.
- Watch for turning trucks and buses.
- Be extra alert in parking lots, gas stations, and rest stops.
- All of the above.

D – ALL OF THE ABOVE: Always keep a safe distance from trucks and buses, minding their blind spots and turning radius. Watch for turning signals and reverse lights so you can stay out of their pathways. Make sure you make eye contact with the driver and they see you before crossing in front of them.

ADDITIONAL SHARABLE RESOURCES

- WIDE TURN SAFETY: <https://youtu.be/yhp84Sq6Ypk>
- PASSING TRUCKS SAFELY: <https://youtu.be/dmLyTi8gRAU>
- KNOW THE NO ZONES: <https://youtu.be/dl-7gXqUu84>

GIVE THEM ROOM

HEAVY LONG STOPPING DISTANCE

PASS ON THE LEFT

Stay to the far left and pass quickly and safely. Make sure you have plenty of passing room and never cut off a large truck.

KNOW THE NO ZONES

LARGE BLIND SPOTS

WATCH WIDE TURNS

CAUTION WIDE TURNS

Trucks and buses need more room to turn. Give them room and time to maneuver.

DON'T SNEAK BY OR YOU COULD GET CRUSHED

RURAL ROAD DANGER

MOST CRASHES OCCUR HERE.

Remember these safety tips and don't rush on rural roads.

RESPECT THE RIG.

TEENS IN THE DRIVER SEAT
t-driver.com

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

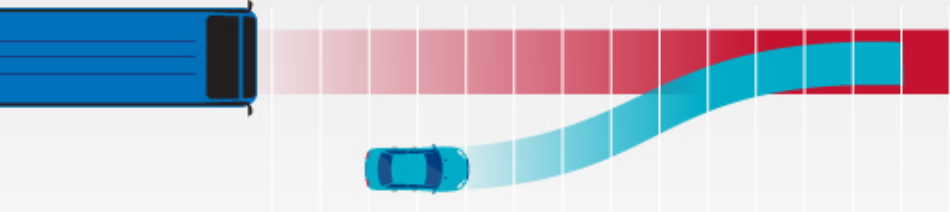
@teensdriverseat



The diagram shows a yellow truck in the center of a road. Red shaded areas represent blind spots: a 20 ft area behind the truck, a 30 ft area in front, a 1-lane area to the left, and a 2-lane area to the right. Four blue cars are positioned in the 'OK' zones: one behind, one in front, one in the left lane, and one in the right lane. A yellow truck is shown in profile at the bottom right.


STAY OUT OF BLIND SPOTS

DON'T CUT IN



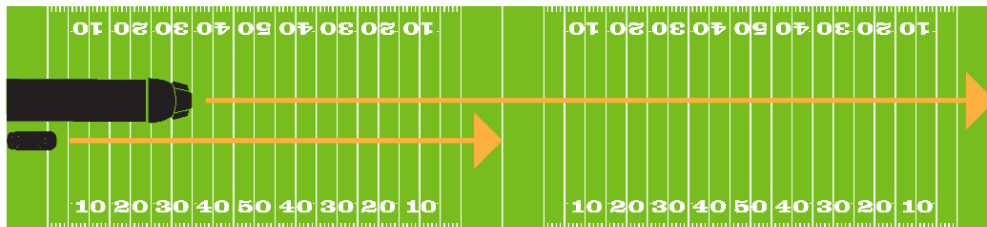
The diagram shows a blue bus on the left with a long red shaded area extending to the right, representing its stopping distance. A blue car is shown below, with a shorter blue shaded area representing its stopping distance.

BUSES TAKE **40%** LONGER TO STOP





IT CAN TAKE A FULLY LOADED TRUCK AN AVERAGE OF **760ft** TO COME TO A COMPLETE STOP.



THAT'S THE LENGTH OF A TWO FOOTBALL FIELDS!

ROLLOVERS

CAUSED BY HEAVY WINDS, TAKING CURVES QUICKLY,
AND BEING TOP HEAVY

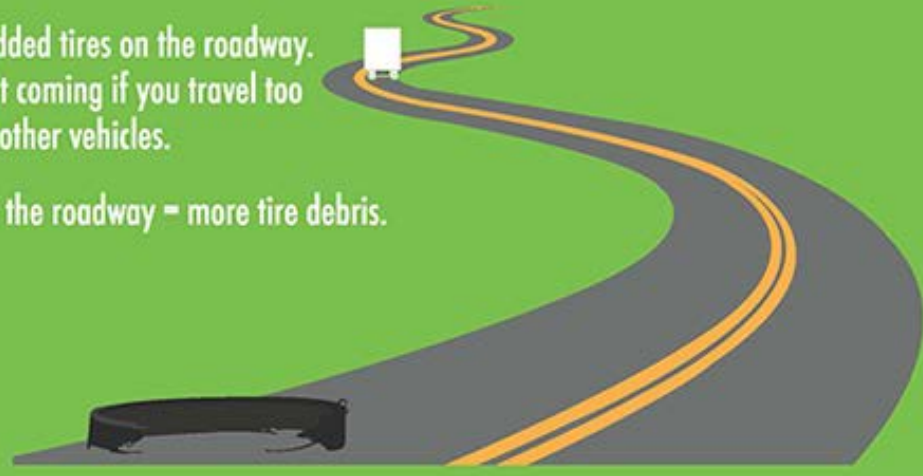


Large trucks and buses are at greater risk for rolling over because of their size and weight. Take caution at wide turns by slowing down and letting the truck make its move.

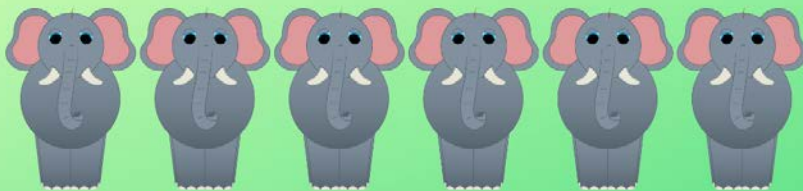
BLOWOUTS

Watch for shredded tires on the roadway. You won't see it coming if you travel too closely behind other vehicles.

More trucks on the roadway = more tire debris.



COMMERCIAL TRUCKS CAN WEIGH UP TO 80K LBS



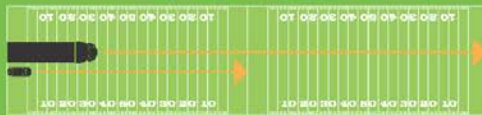
THAT'S AS MUCH AS SIX ELEPHANTS!



RESPECT THE RIG

BY THE #S

It can take a fully loaded truck an average of **760ft** to come to a complete stop.



That's the length of two football fields!

Commercial trucks can weigh up to **80K POUNDS**. That's as much as six elephants!



FMCSA cites approximately **450,000** vehicle crashes involving large trucks or buses.

<https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa-dot.gov/files/2016/08/160746311/crashes-467-2017.xlsx>

FMCSA cites, there are over **3 billion** vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by all motor vehicles (trucks and buses)



RULES OF THE ROAD

From expert truck drivers, here are the top rules of the road to keep everyone safe.

1. STAY OUT OF THE NO ZONES
2. PASS SAFELY ON THE LEFT
3. DON'T CUT IT CLOSE
4. STAY BACK
5. ANTICIPATE WIDE TURNS

RISKS

ROLL-OVERS

Rigs are at greater risk for rolling over because of their size and weight. Rigs could roll over for being too top heavy, high winds, or taking a curve too quickly.



WIDE TURNS

Trucks make wider turns to avoid hitting the curb, light poles, or anything else by the road. In order to do this, they usually leave a wide space to the left/right of the truck. Do not pull into this space or you could end up wedged between the two with a crushed car.



NO ZONES

Every car has blindspots, but semi-trucks have even bigger ones! Be aware of the No Zones. If driving around a truck or bus, pass quickly on the left. Be careful not to walk or ride your bikes in these NO ZONES, even if the truck or bus is parked.

Cutting in front of a truck puts you in a dangerous NO ZONE.

Move ahead or behind this NO ZONE so the driver will see you.

You have limited vision in this NO ZONE, and may need to stop suddenly to avoid debris in the road.

If you can't see the driver in the truck's mirrors, the driver can't see you. The right side is the most dangerous NO ZONE.

HAZARDS

Trucks often transport dangerous materials on our roadways. Watch for warning placards on trucks and always be patient and give them extra room.

