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Tips for Bicyclists and Pedestrians

Bicyclists and pedestrians present even more safety challenges on the road for all drivers: they lack protection in a crash, are slower than motor vehicles, and hard for drivers to see – particularly truck and bus drivers.

It's vital for bicyclists and pedestrians to understand large trucks and buses and be proactive in staying safe.

1. Stay out of Blind Spots ("No Zones")

Never walk or ride too close to a large truck or bus. Large vehicles have huge blind spots around all four sides, making it difficult for drivers to see pedestrians and bicyclists.

If you can't see the driver in the vehicle mirrors, the driver can't see you. Always assume the driver does not see you and take extra care.

Never walk or ride behind a truck or bus that is backing up; drivers often cannot see directly behind their vehicle.

? Be Aware of Blind Spots - [Download Infographic](#)

2. Prepare for Wide Turns

If a large vehicle is stopped at an intersection or about to turn right, never walk or ride between the vehicle and the curb. Commercial vehicles make wide turns and could easily hit you as they complete the turn.

? Give Trucks Extra Space - [Download Infographic](#)

3. Respect Long Stopping Distances

Big blind spots and long stopping distances can be a deadly combination. Never cross in front of a moving truck or cut in too close after passing a truck or bus on a

bike.

? Be Aware of Long Stopping Distances - [Download Infographic](#)

4. Make Yourself Visible

Bright clothing is easier to see in the daytime. At night or during bad weather, wear reflective clothing, use reflectors and lights on your bike, and carry a flashlight and/or wear a headlight while walking.

5. Obey Traffic Laws, Signals and Signs

Bicyclists must stop at red lights and stop signs and should ride with the flow of traffic. Pedestrians should obey signals and cross at intersections and crosswalks.

Never assume that because you have the right of way, drivers (particularly truck and bus drivers) will see you and yield for you.

6. Stay Alert and Undistracted

Listening to music leaves a rider or pedestrian unable to hear sirens, horns, and other warnings. Earbuds plus cellphones can lead pedestrians to walk into other people – or traffic – putting themselves and others at risk. Stop walking while using your device, then put it away and pay attention to safety while in motion.

7. Don't Ride or Walk Impaired

Alcohol decreases motor skills and judgment whether you're driving, on a bike or walking. If you've been drinking, get a safe ride or take public transportation.

Alcohol use is a major factor in pedestrian fatalities. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) found that in 2013, 34% of all pedestrians killed in vehicle crashes had a blood alcohol content of .08 or higher (as opposed to 15% of the drivers involved in pedestrian fatalities).

More Safety Tips for Bicyclists

1. Wear Your Helmet

Always wear a well-fitting, properly adjusted helmet when riding – riding into a truck

or bus is equivalent to hitting a steel wall.

2. Stay Aware of Traffic

Always be aware of the traffic around you, especially when riding near large trucks and buses. Watch for brake lights and signals. Signal well in advance, but never assume that drivers see your hand signals. Always ride defensively.

3. Check Your Brakes

Always check your brakes before riding. You must be ready to stop quickly – never assume a truck or bus will be able to stop fast enough.

More Safety Tips for Pedestrians

1. Watch Your Walkways

Walk on sidewalks and in crosswalks whenever possible. Pay attention to walk signals. Never stand in the street while waiting to cross. Keep a safe distance back on corners as turning trucks and buses occasionally run up onto sidewalk corners.

2. Be Extra Alert in Parking Lots, Filling Stations and Rest Stops

Locations where trucks must back up and navigate tight spaces can be particularly dangerous. Stay out of the way (and out of blind spots).

3. Take Extra Care at Bus Stops

Before crossing in front of a stopped bus, make sure the bus is not about to proceed, and that the driver sees you.

4. Watch for Wide Loads

Trucks with wide loads have especially limited visibility and difficulty maneuvering. They make even wider right turns, require more space, and take even longer to stop. Keep your distance when walking around trucks carrying wide loads.

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