



Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving is operating a motor vehicle in a selfish, pushy, or impatient manner, often unsafely, that directly affects other drivers. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that aggressive drivers cause two-thirds of all fatal crashes and nearly 35% of all crashes.

Who Are Aggressive Drivers?

- These high-risk drivers climb into the anonymity of an automobile and take out their frustrations on anybody at any time.
- For them, frustration levels are high and the level for concern for fellow motorists is low.
- **Their driving habits are:**
 - ! Running stop signs and red lights
 - ! Speeding
 - ! Tailgating
 - ! Weaving in-and-out of traffic
 - ! Passing on the right
 - ! Making improper and unsafe lane changes
 - ! Making hand and facial gestures
 - ! Screaming, honking, and flashing their lights
 - ! Following too close
 - ! Changing lanes frequently and abruptly without notice (signals)
 - ! Passing on the shoulder or unpaved portions of the roadway
 - ! Using verbal threats or gestures at motorists in front of them



About half of the deaths in red light running crashes are pedestrians and occupants in other vehicles who are hit by the red light runners.

How To React To Aggressive Drivers:

- Make every attempt to get out of their way.
- Put your pride aside. Do not challenge them by speeding up or attempting to hold-your-own in your travel lane.
- Avoid eye contact.
- Ignore gestures and refuse to return them.
- Wear your seat belt—it's the law! It will hold you in your seat in case you must make an abrupt driving maneuver and it will protect you in a crash.
- If you want to take action, report aggressive drivers to the police. Provide a vehicle description, license number, location, and if possible, direction of travel.
- If an aggressive driver is involved in a crash, stop a safe distance from the crash scene, wait for the police to arrive, and report the driving behavior that you witnessed.
- If there is not crash, report aggressive drivers once your are safe to appropriate authorities. Provide a vehicle description, license number, location, and if possible, direction of travel.



If you are being followed by an aggressive driver, drive to a safe place such as the nearest police or fire station, gas station or other places where there are people. Call for help if you have a mobile phone. **DO NOT DRIVE HOME!**

What Is Road Rage?



Road rage is defined as “assault with a motor vehicle or other dangerous weapon by the operator or passenger(s) of another motor vehicle or an assault precipitated by an incident that occurred on a roadway. Road rage is a criminal offense.”

Don't Be An Aggressive Driver!

- Don't drive while angry, upset, or overly tired.
- Relax! Take a deep breath and turn on soft music which may calm your nerves.
- Plan ahead and allow plenty of time. Avoid traffic congestion by identifying alternate routes.
- Drive the posted speed limit.
- Use turn signals well in advance and follow at safe distances.
- Change lanes or pull out only when it won't force others to slow down or swerve.
- Utilize public transportation.
- Just be late!



Be A Defensive Driver!

Defensive driving means driving so as to prevent crashes, in spite of the actions of others or the presence of adverse driving conditions. You may follow three basic steps:

- **SEE THE HAZARD:** When driving and you are about to encounter a hazardous situation, think about what might happen as far ahead as possible. Never assume a condition will have passed before you get there.
- **UNDERSTAND THE DEFENSE:** There are specific ways to handle most situations. You may need to slow down, change lanes, or pull over.
- **ACT IN TIME:** Once you see the hazard and decide upon a defense, act immediately. The sooner you act, the more time you have to avoid a crash.



It is always a good idea to stay in the right lane, except to pass. The right lane is for slower traffic. This helps with traffic congestion and hopefully reduces the amount of aggressive drivers.

Drive Carefully—It's The Law! **KRS 189.290 states:**



(1) The operator of any vehicle upon a highway shall operate the vehicle in a careful manner, with regard for the safety and convenience of pedestrians and other vehicles upon the highway.

(2) No person shall willfully operate any vehicle on any highway in such a manner as to injure the highway.

For Additional Information

- **AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety:** www.aaafoundation.org
- **American Institute for Public Safety:** www.aipsnews.com
- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:** www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- **National Safety Council:** www.nsc.org
- **The USAA Educational Foundation:** www.usaaedfoundation.org