



## Speed is safe on a clear road ...

Many inexperienced and experienced drivers alike fall into the trap of thinking that if the road looks clear ahead it will be safe to go of it faster and that the speed limit is perhaps unreasonable.



Sooner or later you will come across a speed limit that seems unreasonable, maybe it is, but 99% of the time the speed limits are correct and are based on the level of risk for the road. Just because you don't recognise the risk it doesn't mean it isn't there!

Many drivers (and their passengers) are killed in single car accidents on clear roads - especially late at night. By all means drive fast if that is what you want to do - but do it in an intelligent way. Any moron can end up in a field!

## I never drive fast in town ...

After an accident you often hear someone say "The car just came out of nowhere, there was nothing I could do". What they actually mean is "I was going to fast because I didn't recognise the risk".

So what does 'fast' mean? In some situations 5 mph is too fast. Did you know that if you hit a child at 20 mph there is a good chance that he'll get up and run away. If you hit a child at 30 mph the chances are 50-50. at 35 mph you will almost definitely end up with the death on your conscience. does that sound like fun?

We all think we're great drivers from the day we pass the test ... But the truth is, your driving test is only the beginning. To be a safe driver you need to get experience. So take it easy, you won't impress your friends by putting them in hospital ...



## Speed can get you out of trouble ...

Now maybe, if you're a bank robber speed will get you out of trouble ... but even that isn't always the case. Way back in the 1960s the biggest crime of the era was 'The Great Train Robbery'. What a lot of people don't know was that one of the getaway drivers was actually a budding racing driver with a promising career ahead of him ... He just got the fast track to prison!

You may be tempted, if you don't have a lot of driving experience, to speed up in certain situations. For example, you might want to get away from a driver who is following too close or you might feel that you're holding traffic up behind you.



There is a real risk in these situations that by speeding up to get out of trouble you might find yourself in even bigger trouble - if a truck pulls out, a child dashes across the road, another vehicle stops suddenly or any one of a number of potential things that can happen out there, you will have much less chance of avoiding an accident if you are going faster.

## I've got quick reactions ...

Yeah! Of course you have. You'd be perfectly happy to stand on a railway track in front of an express train, only jumping off the track when the train is about 10 metres away. I don't think so!



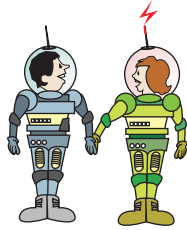
Give yourself time and space, that way you won't have to jump out of the way of anything. one of the ways that you can give yourself time and space is a method call the 'two second rule'. If you use the rule and follow the other tips on the next page you won't need quick reactions.

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# It's not just your speed ...

If you want to stay really safe you need to be able to match your speed with the space around your car - with a bit of practice you can learn to maintain this space and always drive in - a **safety bubble** ...

By maintaining a safe space around your car you will have room to react when things take you by surprise, at any speed. You can be 100% certain that things take even the best drivers by surprise from time-to-time!



Be a space-person!  
Keep a 'safety bubble'  
around you at all times

When passing parked vehicles leave a minimum of one car door's width. This will help to prevent an accident when someone suddenly opens a door or steps out from behind a parked car. Leave plenty of space when passing cyclists, pedestrians, or animals - these road users are very vulnerable.

You can control the safety space behind your vehicle by adjusting your speed. If the driver behind is following too closely, gently reduce speed and increase the gap between you and the car ahead to allow extra stopping distance. another method is to simply let the following driver overtake!

## The two second rule

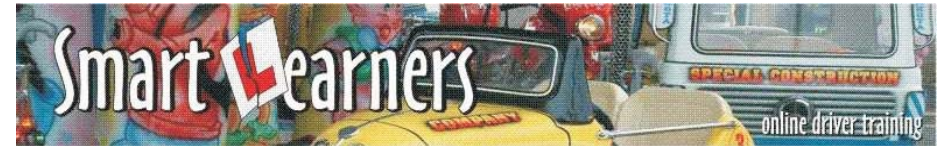
This rule will help you keep a safe space in front of your car. Using this rule is really easy ...

First, watch for the vehicle ahead pass a static marker point. A tree, a phone box, a lamp-post or any other fixed reference point. As you pass the fixed point, recite the following phrase at a normal speaking rate: "Only a fool breaks the two-second rule." This should take approximately two seconds to say. You should have finished the phrase as, or before, you reach the fixed reference point.



If you pass the point before you finish the phrase you are too close to the vehicle in front, ease back and try again. In poor weather double the gap to four seconds or more.

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# Speed traps ...

How many speed traps can you think of?

A policeman hiding with a hand held speed gun? A speed camera hidden around a bend? 'Average speed' checks where two cameras time you over a fixed distance?



These are certainly one sort of speed trap, but perhaps not the most dangerous ...

## Going fast will get you there quicker ... Not!

Graham Hooper, a driver training specialist from Kent proved on TV that with some training white van man can get there **quicker**, become **safer** and more **fuel efficient** - by driving a bit slower!

Over a route of 14.3 miles around Ashford the van driver had 128 gear changes and took 31 minutes using 2.38 litres of fuel. with a little coaching from Graham he repeated the same journey in the same traffic conditions with only 51 gear changes, in just 29 minutes using only 1.61 litres of fuel!

Driving quickly, especially around town just ends up in frustration for both you and those around you causing traffic bunching and jams.



By learning to read the road ahead and driving at a speed to fit the conditions you will be safer and at the same time save time and money. By doing this within the speed limit you'll avoid the more traditional speed traps. Now that's worth having!

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