

Watch Out When You Are Backing Up!

Many auto accidents occur when we back up. Since the risks are higher for accidents while backing, take special care to make sure you don't back-up without visually clearing the area behind you first. Regularly, people are struck by backing vehicles in driveways and parking lots; especially children, simply because drivers do not look behind before backing up.

More than 90% of backing accidents can be attributed to one of the following:

- Driver unaware of the obstacle
- Driver used improper backing techniques

Backing any vehicle is no easy task. Here are some tips you can take to greatly reduce the likelihood of having a backing accident:

- Know what's going on around you at all times and slowly perform all backing maneuvers.
- Never take any situation for granted. Even though you may have parked or backed into a location many times, evaluate the location to determine if clearances have changed or if new obstacles are present.
- It is a good idea to tap the horn a couple of times before backing.
- Check all your mirrors when backing. Know the mirror blind spots.
- Choose easy-exit parking spaces that don't crowd neighboring vehicles, and park your vehicle in the center of the parking space.
- Drive through parking spaces so that you're facing out. Therefore, you do not have to back out.
- When in doubt don't back up.
- Use a spotter when you can. You and the spotter should use hand signals instead of verbal ones and make sure you both understand each other's signals. Don't have the spotter walking backwards while giving instructions.
- Stay alert and concentrate 100% of the time while backing any vehicle.
- Always keep your mirrors, rear window and windshield clean for good visibility. Use both side mirrors when backing, glancing from one side to the other.

Never back up without thinking. Backing is a special skill and you must develop this skill by practicing safe driving habits. The rear view mirror is the most important aid in backing. Take note of the topics and recommendations discussed in this bulletin. We encourage you to put them into practice – doing so helps ensure your safety.