



# Aggressive Driving

Aggressive driving is operating a motor vehicle in a selfish, pushy, or impatient manner often unsafely, that directly affects other drivers. Although it is difficult to define, aggressive driving is a factor in approximately one-third of Kentucky's collisions.

## 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
- **They drive at speeds far in excess of the norm which causes them to:**
  - ! Follow too closely
  - ! Change lanes frequently and abruptly without notice (signals)
  - ! Pass on the shoulder or unpaved portions of the roadway
  - ! Use verbal threats or gestures at motorists in front of them

## 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 seatbelt—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.

# Aggressive Driving *(continued)*

## Don't Be An Aggressive Driver!

- Don't drive while angry, upset, or overly tired.
- Relax! Take a deep breath and turn on calming music which may calm your nerves.
- Plan ahead and allow plenty of time.
- Drive the posted speed limit.
- Avoid traffic congestion by identifying alternate routes.
- 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. Basically, you must follow three basic steps:

- **SEE THE HAZARD:** When driving and 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. Review these situations in your mind so you can act quickly. 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.

### For More Information

- AAA Exchange: [www.aaapublicaffairs.com](http://www.aaapublicaffairs.com)
- AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety: [www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org)
- American Institute for Public Safety Aware Driver: [www.aipsnews.com/awaredriver.html](http://www.aipsnews.com/awaredriver.html)
- American Institute for Public Safety RoadRageous: [www.aipsnews.com/roadrageous.html](http://www.aipsnews.com/roadrageous.html)
- Drivers.com: <http://www.drivers.com/topic/3/>
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration: [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)
- National Safety Council: [www.nsc.org/library/facts/defdriv.htm](http://www.nsc.org/library/facts/defdriv.htm)
- The Partnership for Safe Driving: [www.crashprevention.org](http://www.crashprevention.org)

