

Driver Safety

Preventing Backing Accidents

In the course of our daily driving experience, it is frequently necessary to back vehicles out of parking spots, from driveways or other congested areas. You should be aware that hitting an object while backing is a primary cause of property damage accidents. When the object is a co-worker, customer, child or any other person, a bad situation can become disastrous.

Professional drivers use the following techniques to minimize the potential for backing accidents. With some practice these techniques will become habits and greatly reduce your chances of having a serious accident.

- Plan ahead and avoid backing whenever possible. When practical, park vehicles so they will not have to be backed at a later time. If backing will be necessary, and it is practical, back the vehicle before leaving it.
- When approaching a vehicle that will have to be backed, check the rear of the vehicle and anticipate whether another vehicle or pedestrian could reach the rear of the vehicle while it is backing. The path the vehicle will take while backing must be “clear” of obstacles.
- Never back a vehicle when the rear window or mirrors are covered with frost or other substances that keep you from visually “clearing” the path the vehicle will take while backing.
- Once behind the wheel, with the engine running and the vehicle in reverse, check the rear again by turning and visually “clearing” the path that the vehicle will take. In larger vehicles use both side mirrors to check and visually “clear” the rear.
 - Blow the horn twice to warn everyone that you are going to back up.
 - Check mirrors or turn and “clear” the path while backing.

Good drivers develop habits that let them prevent backing accidents.