

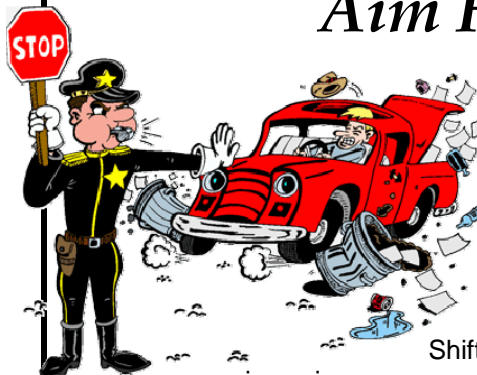
# Army *Safety* Gram

## Leading on the Edge for Safety *Excellence*

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### Aim High For Defensive Driving



Aim high! It's good advice for life in general, and it's good advice for driving. Aiming high when you are driving means looking far down the road for potential hazards and a safe route. Look at vehicles two or three places in front of you, watch for signals, brake lights and other clues.

You must continually look at the entire traffic picture. Movements of vehicles and pedestrians in all directions, as well as road conditions and other potential hazards give you an idea of how to maneuver safely down the road. Keep your eyes moving at all times. Don't just fix your stare at the vehicle in front of you.

Shift your gaze from far to near, to both sides of the road, to your rear view and side view mirrors so you can monitor traffic all around you.

By knowing where vehicles are beside you and behind you, you can slow or swerve to avoid an obstacle on the road ahead. Always leave yourself an out. Have an alternate route in mind if the lane ahead of you suddenly becomes blocked or you are forced to change lanes. Be ready to react at all times. Keep your hands on the wheel at the 10 o'clock and 2 o'clock positions. When driving through a hazardous or crowded area, "cover" your brake by keeping your braking foot right above it.

#### *Here are some other reminders about defensive driving:*

- ♦ **Make sure other drivers see you.** Lights, signals, horns and eye contact are all ways to communicate with other drivers so they know what you intend to do.
- ♦ **Keep track of the vehicles in the blind spots near your rear wheels by monitoring your mirrors.** If you know a vehicle has entered your blind spot, watch for the vehicle to move out into view again.
- ♦ **Know the road.** Arm yourself with all the information you can about your route and road conditions. This will alert you to hazards to watch out for, and will give you ideas about alternate routes to take if necessary. Some roads are poorly marked for night travel. Certain sections may be prone to developing black ice or fog.
- ♦ **Know your own abilities.** Your ability to react quickly to a situation can vary greatly. Fatigue from the late hour or a long shift of driving can greatly slow reaction time. Eating a heavy meal can make you sleepy. Alcohol and many kinds of drugs – even common cold remedies – can impair your ability to drive safely. Lack of experience in driving a certain kind of vehicle or in certain kind of terrain can make you vulnerable to accidents. You may have vision problems which worsen at night – a problem that increases with age. Problems with depth perception, peripheral vision as well as difficulties distinguishing shapes and colors can make it hard to drive safely.

***Keep your eyes moving at all times when driving. Look far down the road to anticipate potential traffic snarls and hazards. By aiming high you can reach your target of a perfect driving record!***

