



INTERSECTIONS

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LENGTH 2–5 minutes

TO PREPARE Read the background information.

BACKGROUND

- When you talk to your employees and drivers about intersections, make sure they understand that failure to yield to vehicles that have the right-of-way causes almost every intersection collision.
- Nationally, one study from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration concluded that collisions at intersections are more frequent than collisions on highways, but account for about 50% of economic costs.
- Intersections come in a wide variety, each with their own challenges and learning curves. But in every situation involving an intersection, it's important to remember right-of-way is something given, not taken.

DISCUSSION

- Have you ever tried to shuffle a deck of cards, only to have the cards jam up, get stuck, or go flying across the table? Sometimes those playing cards don't take turns being shuffled together, one at a time.
- When driving involves intersections, it's not always simple to know whose turn it is, and what the other driver is thinking. Think about it—what driving does *not* include an intersection?



What should you do, as a driver sharing the road with others, to avoid a collision at an intersection or stoplight?

- Use directional signals at least 100 feet before turning or merging.
- When the light has been **green** for a while, slow down as you approach and get ready to stop in case the light changes.
- When the light is **yellow**, you need to clear the intersection if you're driving through it. Avoid using the yellow light as a time to accelerate to get through the light before it turns red.
- When the light is **red** and you are stopped and it turns green, check to see that all traffic has stopped before proceeding. Look left, then right, then left again before proceeding.



What conditions allow for turning right on red?

- When there is not a sign that says “no turn on red.”
- Your vehicle has come to a complete stop, and you are in the extreme right lane.
- Traffic is clear, and there are no pedestrians in the crosswalk.



How can you drive safely through various types of intersections?

- **2-way Intersection**—Check both ways when you get into the intersection. Look for pedestrians, emergency vehicles, drivers not paying attention, and impaired drivers who may be driving the wrong way!
- **T Intersection**—The major road, of the top of the “T” of the intersection has the right-of-way, but watch for any vehicles as you enter traffic.
- **Y Intersection**—When you have three roads meet, you may have a lot of traffic crossing lanes and merging. Slow down, scan and give right-of-way to those drivers who are not crossing lanes of traffic.
- **4-Way intersection**—Four lanes of traffic meet. The first driver to stop gets to go first. If you tie with someone, it is safest to yield to the driver on your right. Be careful though, as not everyone follows these guidelines.

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

And Around We Go

Roundabouts are common in other countries, and are starting to pop up more here in the U.S. They occur when multiple streets come meet, and have been designed as a circular lane of traffic so that the streets don't have to cross over each other. What should you be careful to do when you are driving through a roundabout?

- Slow down as you approach the roundabout
- Prepare to and do yield to those vehicles already in the roundabout
- Do not stop or pass other vehicles. Take your turn
- If you miss your turn-off, go around the circle and try again

SUMMARY

- Like a deck of cards, each vehicle driver must take his or her turn when sharing the road, and intersections are an important place to take turns.
- Right of way is something offered, not taken.
- Being courteous and paying attention while driving through intersections is key in avoiding crashes.