

Living with Trucks

A guide for the motorist

Trucks perform a very important part in the community, they link our living standard. They deliver our goods, pick up our waste and provide the foods and services we need to live. There really is no alternative, especially in urban cities. We must all live with trucks and this is a guide to understanding them on our roads.

Stopping Distances

Trucks are bigger and heavier than cars so they take longer to stop safely. The figures show comparisons of stopping distances for cars and trucks when travelling to the same speeds: A car travelling at 60km/h takes 73 metres to stop, a truck requires 83 metres. A car travelling at 100km/h takes 157 metres to stop while a truck requires 185 metres. That's longer than the average semi trailer required to stop a truck.

Blind Spots

A blind spot is where you as a driver lose sight of the vehicles around you. A truck's blind spots are: beside the truck's left door; directly behind the truck for quite a distance and immediately in front of the truck.

If you cannot see the truck driver in the truck's mirror, then the truck driver cannot see you, get clear of a truck driver's blind spots as soon as you can and move to a position well in front of or behind the truck where the truck driver can see you.

Trucks can be Slow

We all know that trucks can be slow off the mark after a stop, or when merging into traffic (especially entering freeways), and when going uphill. Give a truck driver a break on up-hill runs and entering freeways where keeping up momentum is important. Never cut in front of a truck and force the driver to slow down. It can take time to regain the lost momentum, give the truck driver space to overtake you if it will help the truck maintain its speed and try to keep in the left or middle lanes if not overtaking. This will help all the roads users keep traffic moving.

Passing & Turning Trucks

Today's trucks can be as long as 26 metres. These vehicles will take longer to overtake and need more space to stop safely. Be sure you have plenty of space before overtaking, the front of the truck and space around it should be visible in your rear vision mirror before moving back into the lane in front of the truck. It takes about 25 seconds to overtake a large truck on the open road.

Trucks take up more space than cars when turning, keep a safe distance and give them room to move. Some trucks need extra space at corners, intersections and roundabouts, if they are over 7.5 metres long they have "DO NOT OVERTAKE TURNING VEHICLE" signs, they may need two lanes to make their turn.

Important Points

- **Allow plenty of room for a truck to stop**
- **Don't pull in front of a truck and brake**
- **If you can't see the truck's mirrors, the driver cannot see you**
- **A truck driver can't see you if you are beside the truck's left door**
- **Allow enough time to overtake a long truck - at least 25 seconds**
- **Do not overtake trucks turning a corner**

