

Guidelines for Professional Drivers

- Professional drivers should provide motorcyclists as much room as possible. By leaving a space cushion between the truck and the motorcycle, drivers can safely maneuver if necessary.
- It is important to keep track of motorcycles as they can easily disappear in a truck's blind spot.
- If there is more than one rider in the group, try to count the headlights and keep track of how many pass the truck.
- Be mindful of weather, especially if there is a cross wind present. Passing a large truck requires skill and attention for the motorcyclist. This is why it is so important to provide a space cushion for both vehicles to maneuver.
- At highway speeds, motorcycles receive a lot of turbulent air toward the front of a large truck when passing. It is always safest for the professional driver to back off the throttle to help the motorcycle rider get past as quickly as possible.
- Motorcyclists often slow by downshifting or rolling off the throttle, not always activating the brake light. Allow more following distance and realize the motorcyclist may slow without visual warning, especially at intersections or when turning.

For more tips on sharing the road with motorcycles, visit www.atastr.org.

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Commitment to Safety

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, motorcycles are the only major motor vehicle category in which highway death rates have risen during the last decade. In 2008, motorcycle deaths increased for the 11th straight year and now account for 14 percent of all highway fatalities. Clearly, this is a trend that needs to be reversed.

Share the Road, a national highway safety program that delivers lifesaving information to the driving public across America, is reaching out to the motorcycle community and professional truck drivers to offer advice on how these vehicles can safely share the road.

Professional truck drivers and motorcyclists face challenges when traveling on the highway in comparison to other motor vehicles. By educating the public about these issues, we can reduce fatalities and make our nation's highways safer.

Guidelines for Motorcycles

At 65 mph you're covering almost 100 feet per second. Space is time, and time saves lives.

When riding behind a truck, maintain at least a 4 second following distance. Stay far enough back so that you can see the driver in the mirrors; or any debris that may be in the road. Following too close obstructs your view of the road ahead and leaves you no time to react to emergencies.

Look for the driver in the mirror before you begin to pass. Then move quickly past the truck and only pull back in front once a safety cushion is established. Make sure you see both the truck's head lights and some pavement before pulling back in front.

When passing, never linger alongside a truck. Due to the size and speed of today's bikes, it's easy for riders to quickly move into blind spots and become invisible to the driver.

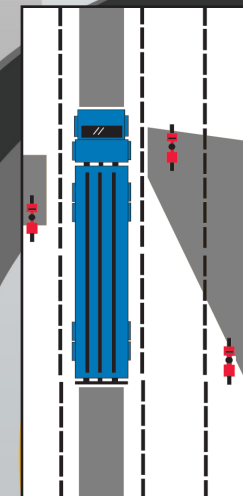
When riding as a group in a stagger pattern, it is safest to pass the truck in single file, staying to the far side of the lane.

Also when passing, be aware of strong crosswinds or air turbulence coming off the truck. These winds could be strong enough to push you out of your lane.

Riding Safely Around Trucks

- Never cut in front of a truck. Fully loaded trucks can weigh up to 80,000 pounds and take the length of a football field to stop.
- Don't linger alongside a truck. There are large blind spots on all four sides of a truck. Front, back and both sides, with the largest blind spot on the right.
- Where possible, avoid passing on the right side. The right blind spot runs the length of the truck and extends out three lanes.

ATA Blind Spot Illustration



Shaded areas represent "blind spots" or areas where vehicles can disappear from a truck driver's view.