

superior driving techniques



safety hints



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The way you sit, the position of your hands and the condition of your tyres can greatly affect your safety in a vehicle.

Sitting in a vehicle

An important part of vehicle control and safety is positioning yourself correctly in the vehicle. When you first sit in the vehicle, ensure your seat is the right distance from the pedals. If you are driving a manual, your left leg should be almost straight when the clutch is fully depressed.

When driving an automatic vehicle, your left leg should be almost straight when your foot is on the footrest located next to the brake.

With your shoulders resting against the back of the seat, adjust your seat so that your wrists sit on top of the steering wheel when your arms are fully extended.

The headrest

The main aim of the headrest is to support and protect your head and neck in an emergency situation. To ensure it provides maximum protection, the top of the headrest should be level with the top of your head or, at a minimum, above eye level.

With the seat correctly in position and the headrest set as above, there should be very little space between the head and the headrest.

The seatbelt

Seatbelts are the primary and most effective means of injury prevention in a motor vehicle collision. The driver and passengers of a motor vehicle that is moving - or is stationary but not parked - must always wear a seatbelt.

If a passenger is too young to wear a seatbelt, they must be restrained in an approved child restraint. Ensure the seatbelt is properly adjusted and fastened before starting the motor vehicle.

The mirrors

Adjust your mirrors so that all areas surrounding the vehicle are easily observed by slight head and eye movement. To be certain of what is going on around the vehicle, a driver should glance in their mirror/s every five to 10 seconds.

The steering wheel

Wherever possible, the driver should keep both hands on the steering wheel. To find the correct position to hold the wheel, picture the steering wheel as a round clock. Place your left hand on the number "nine" and your right hand on the number "three". The palms of your hands should face inwards and your thumbs upwards.

You will keep your hands in this position for most driving conditions. However, do not cross your hands over each other. Instead, feed the steering wheel through one hand alternatively to the other.

After turning or completing a U-turn, never allow the steering wheel to straighten up by itself.

Airbags

Airbags are an excellent addition to seatbelts in saving lives and preventing serious injury.

However, when activated, an airbag will open at approximately 200km per hour. If your hands are incorrectly placed on the steering wheel, the force may throw your hands back causing serious facial damage.

To lessen the risk of injury, keep your hands at three o'clock and nine o'clock wherever possible.

The tyres

Before commencing a journey, ensure:

- all tyres (including the spare) are inflated to the correct air pressure
- the correct specification of tyre is fitted to the vehicle
- the tyre tread is within acceptable levels.

Lumley Insurance recommends the tyre pressure be four to six PSI above the manufacturer's recommendations.

It is estimated we would save five to 10 percent on our national fuel bill if everyone used higher tyre pressure.

A tyre pressure that is below recommendation will reduce tyre life and will greatly increase stopping distance.

We hope the above techniques will assist you in becoming a safer driver and ensure your vehicle is as safe to drive as possible.

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