Look Out For The Little Guy



All drivers need to watch out for small vehicles on the road – the compact car hiding in the truck driver's blind spot, the bicycle courier passing on the right side at an intersection and the oncoming motorcycle.

Here are some reminders for drivers of trucks and other large vehicles to look out for smaller vehicles:

- Don't follow too closely. A small car can stop more quickly than a large truck, which creates the risk of your truck hitting a smaller vehicle.
- Be aware of any vehicles beside or behind you. Make sure they are not in your blind spot as you change lanes. Check for small vehicles passing on the right, especially at or near intersections.
- Be careful about judging distances based on the space between headlights and tail lights on another vehicle. What appears to be a larger vehicle farther away could actually be a small vehicle quite close to you.
- Never assume a "one-eyed" vehicle is a motorcycle – it could be a car with a burned out headlight.
- Bicycles are difficult to see at night, and it's difficult to determine your distance from a bicycle based on the bike's reflectors or headlights. Assume a bike is closer than you think it is.
- Show the same respect for motorcycles and bicycles as you would show other vehicles on the road. They are subject to the same laws and have the same rights.
- Use extra caution around bikes of all kinds. They may be faster and more maneuverable than larger vehicles, but their riders are far more vulnerable to injuries.
- Bicyclists often fail to signal for turns because they need both hands to control the bicycle. So be prepared for unexpected turns. Also watch for bicyclists traveling against the traffic – it's illegal, but it happens.
- Do not crowd a bike. By keeping a safe following distance, you will help protect the rider if he has to stop or if he takes a fall.
- Two-wheeled vehicles can travel fast, so make sure you can safely pass a bike. Tap your horn lightly, but do not startle the rider. Allow plenty of space for the bike's wobbly course.
- Before you open a vehicle door, check rear and side mirrors for bikes as well as cars.

Watch out for all smaller vehicles, including motorcycles and bikes. They are undersized and often overlooked.