



# #10762

## LIFE IN THE FAST LANE: BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF FREEWAY DRIVING

SAFETY INDUSTRIES, INC., 2002  
GRADE LEVEL: 9-13+  
15 MINUTES

### DESCRIPTION

Freeway driving is more than going fast with no traffic lights. Discusses entering and exiting a freeway, potential hazards, good driving habits, and staying alert while driving. Gives tips on how to drive in bad weather and with trucks and emergency vehicles, as well as how to keep a "cushion of space" around your car. Emphasizes that following these practical, common-sense tips can help keep everyone safe.

### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

#### Subject Area: Health

- Standard: Knows essential concepts and practices concerning injury prevention and safety.
  - Benchmark: Knows injury prevention strategies for community health (e.g., neighborhood safety, traffic safety, safe driving).

#### Subject Area: Working with Others

- Standard: Displays effective interpersonal communication skills.
  - Benchmark: Demonstrates appropriate behaviors for relating well with others (e.g., empathy, caring, respect, helping, friendliness, politeness).
  - Benchmark: Knows strategies to effectively communicate in a variety of settings (e.g., selects appropriate strategy for audience and situation).
  - Benchmark: Uses nonverbal communication such as eye contact, body position, and gestures effectively.

#### Subject Area: Self-Regulation

- Standard: Considers risks.
  - Benchmark: Knows potential safety hazards, and knows common strategies to avoid hazard or injury.
  - Benchmark: Knows emergency and safety procedures before undertaking hazardous procedures.
- Standard: Demonstrates perseverance.
  - Benchmark: Knows strategies to focus attention (e.g., sitting up straight, maintaining eye contact, breathing deeply).
  - Benchmark: Knows strategies to deal with distractions (e.g., stopping during task to identify current thinking, setting aside important thought until task completed).

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

1. To demonstrate the basic fundamentals of freeway driving.
2. To discuss entering and exiting freeways and the development of safe and respectful habits.

## BEFORE SHOWING

Freeways, interstates, expressways, and toll roads offer fast and efficient routes of travel. They're usually safer than other kinds of roads because they have one-way traffic, a limited number of entrances, and other special safety features. On the other hand, they can encourage boredom and fatigue that the driver must guard against. Where designated as permissible by federal law, vehicles may travel at speeds up to 75 mph on rural interstates (65 mph for heavy trucks), and up to 65 mph on urban interstate highways, unless otherwise posted. At these speeds, a single error can be disastrous.

You need to learn how to enter and exit a freeway. Also, you need to develop good habits such as checking the proper adjustment of outside mirrors, staying alert to changing road conditions, signaling before changing lanes, and merging into traffic, and keeping enough space between you and the car ahead.

## AFTER SHOWING

### Discussion Items and Questions

1. Discuss the basic fundamentals of freeway driving:
  - a. Entering and exiting; safe and respectful habits.
  - b. Requiring skills to drive on a freeway.
  - c. Driving defensively, and reacting appropriately to changes in the flow of traffic around you.
  - d. Thinking ahead once you're on a freeway.
  - e. Checking your side mirror.
  - f. Turning your head to check behind your left shoulder for entering.
  - g. Choosing a lane.
  - h. Staying alert at all times.
2. Discuss these ways of safely entering a freeway. Follow these procedures:
  - a. Before you enter the ramp, make sure it's the one you want. If you enter the wrong entrance by mistake, never try to back up or turn around through the median. Freeway median crossovers are for highway maintenance or emergency vehicle use only. It is illegal for any other vehicles to use them. If you need to get off the freeway or change directions, wait until the next exit to do so.
  - b. Once on the ramp, check traffic around you and on the freeway. Signal and begin looking over your left shoulder for a gap in the traffic large enough for your vehicle to fit into without crowding anyone.
  - c. As the ramp straightens, accelerate to the speed of the freeway traffic so you can blend in smoothly. Remember, you must yield to the traffic already on the highway.
  - d. Once you're traveling at the speed of traffic, you can make a simple lane change, merge with the flow of vehicles, and turn off your turn signal.
3. Discuss these ways of safely exiting a freeway. Follow these steps:
  - a. If you are not already in the correct lane, about a half mile before the exit, signal and move into the lane nearest the exit. Then move into the deceleration lane provided to let you slow down without interrupting the flow of traffic.
  - b. An exit speed may be posted. Adjust your speed accordingly as you drive through the ramp.
  - c. As you leave the ramp and enter another thoroughfare, you may be driving in more complicated, dangerous traffic than on the freeway. Be alert and adjust to the new conditions and slower speeds.

# C a p t i o n e d M e d i a P r o g r a m

## Applications and Activities

1. Create four posters that discuss the points in detail and put them on the walls in the driver's education classroom to remind everyone to be a safe driver on freeways.
  - a. The Super Obvious List 1
    - (1) Choose the correct ramp.
    - (2) Continue forward movement.
    - (3) Pick a lane.
  - b. The Super Obvious List 2
    - (1) Sudden lane changes without signaling is dangerous.
    - (2) Swerving or "zigzagging" between lanes is dangerous.
    - (3) Staying between vehicle "packs" is safest.
  - c. The Super Obvious List 3
    - (1) Pull over for an emergency.
    - (2) Follow police officer's instructions.
    - (3) Give motorcycles room.
    - (4) Slow down 5 to 10 mph on a wet road.
    - (5) Cut your speed in half when driving in snow.
    - (6) Slow down to a crawl when driving on ice.
  - d. The Super Obvious List 4
    - (1) Intoxicated?—Don't drive.
    - (2) Medicated?—Check the box for instructions.
    - (3) Upset?—Don't drive.
2. Have students research and report on how to make a vehicle freeway-ready (i.e., checking tire pressure, tire wear, wipers, oil levels, belts/coolant hoses, lights, windshield washer solvent, brake and power steering fluid, and battery).

## RELATED RESOURCES

### Captioned Media Program

- [\*Citizens' Guide To Safe Driving #7914\*](#)
- [\*Driver's Education: Part 1—Becoming a Safe, Skillful Driver #10445\*](#)
- [\*Driver's Education: Part 4—A System for Safe Driving Decisions #10453\*](#)
- [\*Driver's Education: Part 8—Sharing Our Highways and Byways #10457\*](#)

To view more titles in the *Driver's Education* series and other related media, please connect to our Web site at <http://www.cfv.org/browse/titles.asp?sn=98>.

### World Wide Web



The following Web sites complement the contents of this guide; they were selected by professionals who have experience in teaching deaf and hard of hearing students. Every effort was made to select accurate, educationally relevant, and "kid safe" sites. However, teachers should preview them before use. The U.S. Department of Education, the National Association of the Deaf, and the Captioned Media Program do not endorse the sites and are not responsible for their content.

- **DEFENSIVE DRIVING**

<http://www.nydmv.state.ny.us/dmanual/chapter08-manual.htm>

Provides a list of links--defensive driving rules. Also covers these important topics:

- Be prepared and look ahead.
- Aggressive drivers and road rage.
- Speed.
- Allowing yourself space.
- Seatbelts, child safety seats, and air bags.
- Driving safely in a work zone.
- Driving through a roundabout.
- Drowsy and fatigued driving.
- Using a cellular or mobile telephone.
- Vehicle condition.

- **TEEN ACADEMY AT FAST LANE RACING SCHOOL**

[http://cars.about.com/od/safetyfacts/fr/ag\\_teenacad.htm](http://cars.about.com/od/safetyfacts/fr/ag_teenacad.htm)

Three thousand six hundred (3,600) teens will die in car crashes this year--don't be one of them. Teaches skills necessary to avoid accidents.