

DEFENSIVE DRIVING BASICS WHAT IS A PREVENTABLE COLLISION?

A preventable collision, according to the National Safety Council, is “a collision in which the driver failed to do everything reasonable to avoid it”. The National Safety Council advises drivers to follow three simple rules for preventing collisions.

- **Recognize the hazard.** Scan the road head, to the next intersection in cities, or to the next hill or curve on the highway. Check the traffic to the side and behind by looking in the rearview and side mirrors every five seconds. Recognizing a hazard in advance gives you time to avoid it.
- **Understand the defense.** Once you recognize a possible hazard, use your knowledge of defensive driving principles to choose the best way to avoid a collision in each situation.
- **Act correctly and in time.** After you've chosen the best defense against the hazard, take correct action in time to avoid a collision. This is where your alertness and driving skill pay off.

You can see that the five characteristics of a defensive driver—knowledge, foresight, alertness, judgment and skill—all play a role in avoiding preventable collisions. Take some time to educate yourself on how to react to various hazardous situations. And always practice safe driving. By obeying speed limits, keeping a safe distance between you and the next driver, and using the proper signals, you are more likely to stay clear of hazardous conditions, and to make sure you don't become a hazard for someone else to avoid.