

Location _____ Trainer _____ Date _____

SAFE PASSING

One of the most crucial maneuvers of highway driving is passing another vehicle. How many really know the recommended way to pass another vehicle? Do you sneak up behind the vehicle ahead, dart out into the passing lane, scramble to make the pass and crowd back into place - just missing the approaching traffic?

The professional driver does not wait until he has sneaked up behind a slow-moving vehicle to start his pass. A good driver starts preparing to pass as soon as he decides that overtaking another vehicle is necessary. First, check rear view mirrors to make sure another driver is not about to pass. Then, put on your turn signal and swing into the left side of the lane to get a clear view of oncoming traffic -- a view not obscured by the lead vehicle. We must remember that a pass will take about three quarters of a mile (if the lead vehicle is moving at normal speed).

If the way is clear, swing into the passing lane and step on the gas, continuing to accelerate until well past the other vehicle and can see all of it in the rear view mirror. When the time is right, switch on the right turn signal and swing easily back into the proper lane.

After passing, continue at a slightly higher speed, so as not to annoy the driver just passed. However, you should not exceed the posted speed limits nor the reasonable limit indicated by driving conditions.

Speaking of conditions, there are many situations when driving performance separates the pros from the boys. If the pavement is slippery from ice, snow or rain, the professional has already chosen his safe driving speed and may not wish to try his passing skill.

There are times, however, when a slow-moving vehicle may make it necessary for the driver to pass. In these cases, weigh the probability of poor traction against the need for passing and conduct the maneuver safely. During heavy rain, the rate of precipitation may be a factor in a driver's judgment of when and where to pass. Most drivers know that driving at high speeds in too deep water may cause hydroplaning of the vehicle tires. This condition would reduce the steering traction completely -- so it is best to wait for a spot where water in the passing lane has drained off or blown off more completely.

There are three circumstances when the pro drivers choose not to pass:

1. When the road has a high crown;
2. When the road's surface is bumpy;
3. When the driver can't see a clear road ahead for more than three-quarters of a mile.