

SAFETY FIRST

INFORMATION DEDICATED TO DRIVER SAFETY



AHEAD OF
THE CURVE



Safety Management
Services Company, 2016

An affiliate of
Cottingham & Butler

Be Safe Out There

Keep Your Eyes Scanning

“Keep your eyes moving and your head on a swivel” are vital words of wisdom often given to students in a high school driver’s education class. This same fundamental concept is also given to fighter pilots. Regardless of whether we are driving a sedan or tractor-trailer or flying fighter aircraft, the overall intent of keeping your eyes moving is to see, recognize, and avoid hazards.

“I never saw him!” is the most common excuse heard after a collision. Most crashes involve inattention on the part of one or both drivers. In addition to inattentive driving, fatigue, and distractions contributing to unsafe driving, our eyes can play “tricks” on us. Consider the following Blind Spot Test:

R

L

Close one eye and focus the other eye on the appropriate letter above (**R** for right or **L** for left). Place your eye a distance from the page approximately equal to $3 \times$ the distance between the **R** and the **L**. Move your eye towards or away from the page until you notice the other letter disappear. For example, close your right eye, look at the “L” with your left eye, and the “R” will disappear.

This blind spot is caused by the location of the optic nerve in our eyes. Our natural blind spots only strengthen the necessity of keeping our eyes moving so that we see all hazards on the roadway.

Keeping your eyes moving is an essential element of defensive driving. Fixating on an object or point for longer than a few seconds makes it more difficult to recognize and process multiple moving objects (like passing cars) at the same time. Scan the horizon, look far, look near, check your speedometer, check your mirrors, and make it safely to your destination.



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The
Smith5Keys™

Key 1. Aim High In Steering®

Key 2. Get The Big Picture®

Key 3. Keep Your Eyes Moving®

Key 4. Leave Yourself An Out®

Key 5. Make Sure They See You®

Avoid collisions by seeing, evaluating and acting upon distant information.

