

# Speeding Best Practice Guide

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## Speeding Puts Lives at Risk

Speeding remains a top cause of road deaths globally – not just because of its prevalence, but because of how easily it is dismissed.

Many drivers believe a few extra miles per hour will not matter, especially if other road users are driving above the speed limit, the road appears clear, or they “know the route.” But the consequences are stark. Higher speeds reduce the time you have to react, increase the force of impact in crashes, and raise the likelihood of losing control.

Modern vehicles are built with numerous safety features, but they are not designed to withstand high-speed collisions. Additionally, the human body simply cannot absorb the forces involved. Slower speeds give both the driver and other road users a better chance of survival.

Consider these facts:

- Crashing at 60 mph / 95 km/h is equivalent to falling from the top of an 11-story building.
- Crashing at 30 mph / 50 km/h is similar to dropping from a three-story building.
- Most crash tests, which determine vehicle safety ratings, are conducted at speeds up to 40 mph / 65 km/h. Even if your vehicle has a high safety rating, it may not protect you in a high-speed collision.

## Tips to Reduce Speed-Related Risk

- **Respect speed limits:** They are based on engineering assessments for safety – not personal judgment. Speed limits are also intended as the maximum speed in ideal conditions, so anything less than ideal means a lower speed should be adopted.
- **Drive defensively:** Expect the unexpected and prepare to stop at any moment.
- **Be aware of your mindset:** Feeling rushed, angry, or overconfident can lead to risky speed choices.
- **Do not normalize “mild” speeding:** A habit of going 5–10 mph / 10–15 km/h over the posted limit can still be deadly.

## Trip Planning to Avoid Speeding

### Time Pressure Is Not Worth the Risk

One of the most common reasons drivers speed is time pressure – running late, underestimating travel time, or trying to make up for delays. But the time saved by speeding is usually minimal.

On a typical 20-minute trip, speeding might shave off just 1–2 minutes while significantly increasing the likelihood of a serious collision. The faster you drive, the less time you have to respond to hazards, and the more severe any crash is likely to be.

Additionally, the stress of running late often leads to risky decisions, such as weaving through traffic or failing to yield. Over time, these patterns become habits – ones that expose drivers to ongoing risk.

The simplest and most effective solution is to start every journey with extra time built in. This one change can help reduce stress, prevent speeding, and make you a more focused and patient driver.



### Practical Trip Planning Tips

- **Assess before you leave:** Check your route for delays and inclement weather to help you prepare for the journey.
- **Build in buffer time:** Add at least 10–15 minutes to your expected travel time to accommodate traffic, detours, or last-minute delays.
- **Check real-time traffic updates:** Use GPS or traffic apps to help you navigate traffic congestion or road closures, but understand that it is your responsibility to drive safely on your route.
- **Prepare before you drive:** Finish tasks, such as eating, grooming, and texting, before you start the engine to avoid distractions.
- **Avoid setting unrealistic schedules:** Do not plan back-to-back appointments without travel buffers. Instead, give yourself enough time to reach stops without feeling rushed.
- **Treat time management as part of road safety:** Being punctual should not come at the cost of your safety – or someone else's – so plan your journeys with safety in mind.

## Protect Pedestrians and Cyclists

### Speed Increases Harm for the Most Vulnerable

Pedestrians, cyclists, and children are especially at risk in high-speed environments.

While vehicle occupants benefit from airbags and seat belts, vulnerable road users rely on your judgment and restraint. At higher speeds, your stopping distance grows and your field of vision narrows, making it harder to detect people near the road.

Children can be unpredictable near school zones, congested city roads may lead to pedestrians entering the roadway between parked vehicles or roadside objects, and elderly pedestrians may take longer to cross.

Speeding also has a serious effect on survival rates in the event of a pedestrian collision. The faster you drive, the greater the likelihood of fatally injuring someone, especially if they are a pedestrian.

While you may feel confident in avoiding such scenarios, a child unexpectedly running into the road can be nearly impossible to avoid at high speeds.

Reducing speed in residential areas and near schools is critical:

- If you hit a pedestrian at 20 mph / 30 km/h, they have a 90% chance of survival.
- At 30 mph / 50 km/h, their chance of survival drops to 50%.
- At 40 mph / 65 km/h, there is an 85% chance the pedestrian will not survive.



### Strategies for Protecting Vulnerable Road Users

- Reduce speed in neighborhoods and near schools.
- Watch for movement near parked vehicles, stationary buses, and intersections.
- Yield at crosswalks — every time.
- Avoid distractions that impair visual scanning or take your attention from the road.

## Save Fuel and Battery by Slowing Down

### Speed Wastes Energy – Gas or Electric

Driving faster does not just endanger lives – it drains fuel and EV battery life significantly.

Above 60 mph / 95 km/h, resistance from wind and tire friction increases sharply. Fuel efficiency drops dramatically, with vehicles using up to 25% more fuel at 70 mph / 115 km/h than at 60 mph / 95 km/h.

EVs experience similar losses in range, leading to not only reduced efficiency, but also “range anxiety”, a phenomenon in which drivers can become nervous about the vehicle’s ability to complete a route due to unexpected battery range loss.

Driving at energy-efficient speeds typically reduces the need for rapid acceleration or harsh braking, which both waste energy and add wear to your vehicle’s components.

### Smart Driving Tips for Fuel and Battery Efficiency

- **Stick to moderate, steady speeds.**
- **Avoid rapid starts or sudden stops.**
- **Use cruise control on highways when safe.**
- **Drive smoothly to conserve momentum.**



# Understand How Speed Affects Stopping Distance

## No One Can Outdrive Physics

Many drivers overestimate their ability to stop in time. But stopping distance is not just about braking — it is a combination of your reaction time and the time it takes the vehicle to come to a complete stop.

At 70 mph / 115 km/h, your stopping distance can exceed 300 ft / 90 m — nearly the length of a football field. That is far too long to respond to a sudden hazard ahead.

Additionally, the faster you drive, the longer the distance you will travel following your initial response to a hazard. It takes the average driver between 0.75 and 1.5 seconds to react after noticing danger. At 65 mph / 105 km/h, you would travel seven car lengths before even beginning to brake. Keeping this in mind can help you choose a safer driving speed.

Reducing speed is especially important when navigating curves. Failing to slow down in time can cause you to brake suddenly, potentially leading to a skid or even a rollover. Larger vehicles have a higher center of gravity, which increases their risk of rolling over due to sharp turns or abrupt maneuvers. Always approach corners at a controlled speed to maintain traction and stability, allowing you to react effectively to any unexpected obstacles or changes in road conditions.

## Stopping Distance Awareness Tips

- **Maintain a generous following distance.**
- **Factor in speed, road conditions, and your reaction time.**
- **Check your brakes regularly for effectiveness.**
- **Drive slower when visibility is reduced.**



## Adjust Speed for Weather Conditions

### Speed Limits Are Not Guarantees of Safety

Speed limits are set for ideal driving conditions — clear weather, dry pavement, and good visibility.

When it rains, snows, or visibility drops, so should your speed. Wet roads can double your stopping distance, and ice can multiply it tenfold. Driving at posted limits in bad weather is dangerous and can be considered negligent driving in many jurisdictions.

Remember, speed limits are not the speed you should aim for; they are the maximum speed for optimal conditions. When conditions are less than ideal, reduce your speed accordingly. Pay attention to speed limit signs, road conditions, and nearby pedestrians, particularly in residential areas and school zones, and take special care during adverse weather events.

### Weather-Smart Driving Tips

- **Slow down in rain, fog, snow, or low light.**
- **Turn on headlights and increase following distance.**
- **Avoid hard braking and quick lane changes.**
- **Plan routes that avoid known hazards or flooded roads.**



## Mindful Driving Prevents Speeding

### Emotions Influence How We Drive

Emotions are another important factor in speeding. Frustration, stress, impatience, or even boredom can lead to heavier pressure on the accelerator. NEVER drive to “blow off steam” or attempt to calm down. Doing so puts you and others at a higher risk of an incident. Additionally, drivers who feel tense or overwhelmed may speed without even noticing, using higher speeds as a way to “get through” a situation faster.

Mindful driving helps interrupt this automatic behavior. When you are aware of your emotions and reactions, you are less likely to let them influence your driving decisions. Instead of reacting to stress by speeding, mindfulness encourages calm, conscious choices — such as slowing down, breathing deeply, or pulling over if needed.

Staying calm and present also improves your ability to notice hazards, maintain safe distances, and make smoother, safer decisions.



### Mindfulness Behind the Wheel Tips

- **Check in with yourself before driving:** As part of your pre-trip checklist, notice if you are angry, stressed, or distracted — and pause before starting the engine.
- **Use deep breathing or calming music:** These simple tools can shift your state of mind and promote focused, safe driving.
- **Recognize emotional triggers:** Heavy traffic, tailgaters, or time pressure may provoke you — recognizing this early helps you build habits to prevent speeding or aggressive responses.
- **Do not take traffic personally:** Remember that we are all a part of a larger driving community. Stay focused on your safety rather than reacting to others' behavior.
- **Set an intention for every trip:** Decide to be a calm, responsible driver before you start. Even saying it aloud can help reinforce the mindset.

## Daily Habits to Keep Speed in Check

### Developing Consistent Routines to Control Speed and Improve Safety

Speeding is often linked to impulsive behavior, stress, and poor planning rather than just carelessness. By building daily habits that promote calmness, patience, and awareness, drivers can better manage their speed and avoid rushing behind the wheel. These habits help reinforce the mindset that safe speeds save lives, fuel or battery charge, and money.

A routine that supports both physical and mental well-being reduces the likelihood of feeling pressured to speed, especially during busy or stressful days. When your body is rested, your mind is clear, and when you have planned your trips thoughtfully, you naturally drive at safer speeds.

### Essential Daily Habits to Reduce Speeding Risks

- **Plan Ahead and Allow Extra Time:** Rushing is a major contributor to speeding. Start your day by scheduling realistic travel times with buffer periods for traffic, delays, or breaks. Giving yourself enough time to reach your destination reduces the temptation to speed in a faulty attempt to “make up” lost time.
- **Manage Stress and Emotions Before Driving:** Stress, anger, or frustration can lead to aggressive driving and speeding. Take a few moments before you get behind the wheel to calm your mind — practice deep breathing, listen to soothing music, or briefly meditate. Arriving mentally calm helps you maintain a safe and controlled speed.



- **Focus on Mindfulness While Driving:** Stay aware of your speed relative to the conditions. Regularly check your speedometer and consciously adjust if you notice you are exceeding limits, especially in residential or high-risk areas. Mindfulness keeps you engaged and prevents unintentional speeding.
- **Maintain Physical Well-being to Support Patience:** Fatigue and discomfort reduce patience and increase risky behaviors, such as speeding. Ensure you are well-rested, hydrated, and physically comfortable to keep your patience and reaction time sharp during your drive.
- **Create a Comfortable Driving Environment:** Set your vehicle climate controls for comfort – not just temperature but ventilation and seating posture. Discomfort can distract or irritate you and could potentially cause you to speed in an effort to shorten your journey.
- **Use Technology Wisely:** Many vehicles and smartphones have speed alert systems or apps that notify you when you exceed speed limits. Using these tools daily reinforces safe speed habits and keeps you accountable.
- **Reflect on Your Driving Choices Daily:** After each trip, take a moment to reflect on your speed and driving style. Did you feel rushed? Were there moments you could have slowed down? Regular self-awareness builds better habits over time.
- **Adopt Fuel- and Battery-Saving Driving Habits:** Driving smoothly with steady acceleration and deceleration not only saves fuel or battery charge but naturally discourages speeding. Being mindful of your fuel or battery consumption aligns financial benefits with safety priorities.

By integrating these habits into your everyday life, you build a mindset that views speeding as a preventable risk rather than a shortcut. This not only helps protect your safety but also the well-being of all road users.

