

Safety Tip Drive Safe - Tailgating

AFRH

Safety Office reminds you that Summer road trips can be a lot of fun, but be prepared for traffic conditions & not practice tailgating, it's very dangerous.



What is Tailgating? It Is Not A Game.

Understanding this, tailgating transitions from a pesky nuisance to an incredibly **dangerous traffic hazard**. In short, it simply means driving dangerously close behind another vehicle. While it's tempting to do this if you're running late or the car in front of you is driving too slowly, **doing so could put more than your life at risk**.

Technically

It means to drive behind someone at such close proximity that, if the vehicle in front stopped suddenly, your vehicle **wouldn't have sufficient distance to stop** without causing a rear-end collision. In fact, this act alone is to blame for **around one-third** of all rear-end collisions in the United States. Here are some factors that help determine how much **"safe distance"** you should leave between yourself and the car in front of you. They include:

- Weather conditions
- Vehicle speed
- Visibility levels
- Degree of light
- Other road conditions

Sometimes, tailgating can be a simple act of negligence, performed by someone who considers themselves an otherwise safe driver. Other times, it can be the result of violent road rage incidents and vehicular intimidation. Every time, it's unsafe and poses a major risk to everyone involved.

The Dangers of Following Too Closely

We've discussed how tailgating can lead to a rear-end collision. However, this is far from the only damage it can cause or **trigger a domino effect** in which a chain reaction of rear-end collisions occurs behind you. Another risk is a "brake check" which can incite **road rage** in the offending driver and in response, the driver could retaliate by following even more closely. Or, they could pull into the adjacent lane and begin a violent cycle of ramming into your vehicle from the side.

How to Drive Defensively and Stay Safe

Don't suddenly speed up or slow down, but try to keep a consistent speed. Instead, **keep your distance**. Find a clearing in traffic and get out of their way as much as possible. In most cases, moving to the rightmost lane can help you **avoid aggressive drivers altogether**, as this is normally designated as the slower lane.

If you do find yourself in front of one, try to **stay calm**. Responding in kind could exacerbate his road rage and lead to dangerous consequences. If you're on a multi-lane road, simply **switch lanes** when it's safe to do so, and allow him to pass you.

If you're on a two-lane road, look for somewhere to **pull off** the road as soon as possible, even if that's a gas station or a parking lot.

