

DRIVING ADVISORY: COMMON CRASHES, AND HOW TO AVOID THEM



Rear-end collisions

One of the most frequent accidents on UK roads is the rear-end shunt. These typically occur when traffic slows down, or at junctions where a driver doesn't stop in time. Tailgating, distraction, misreading intention or sudden braking are usually to blame, and almost always the driver behind will be deemed at fault, no matter how the crash happened.

How to avoid it

- Keep a safe following distance of at least two seconds in dry conditions, doubled in the wet.
- Try to anticipate the traffic ahead, and avoid distractions like phones or in-car systems. A split second with your eyes off the road can prove decisive.
- If you're in front, braking early (even lightly coming on and off the brakes so your brake light flash) and smoothly reduces the risk of being hit from behind.

Side-impact crashes at junctions

Also known as 'T-bone' accidents, side-impact crashes often happen at junctions and roundabouts when drivers misjudge another vehicle's speed or ignore priority rules.

Because the sides of vehicles can provide less protection than the front or rear, these collisions may cause serious injuries.

How to avoid it

- Always approach junctions slowly, look both ways, and never assume other drivers will yield.
- At roundabouts, make eye contact where possible, signal clearly, and avoid rushing.
- Defensive driving, by expecting others to make mistakes, significantly lowers risk.



Pedestrian collisions

Urban areas, especially near schools, crossings, and busy high streets, see a high number of pedestrian-related accidents. These can occur when drivers fail to notice pedestrians crossing unexpectedly, or when visibility is poor. A pedestrian hit at 20mph is likely to survive. At 40mph, their chances are almost zero.

How to avoid it

- Reduce speed in pedestrian-heavy zones and be prepared to stop suddenly.
- Always give way at zebra crossings and junctions, and approach traffic lights with caution, even when green.
- Extra vigilance is required during school hours, in poor weather, and at night.
- Use OUTA (over, under, through and around) as a way of looking for pedestrians where there are lots of parked vehicle or obstacles.



Cyclist and motorbike collisions

Two-wheeled road users are especially vulnerable, and accidents often occur when cars fail to check blind spots, or misjudge overtaking distances or closing speeds. Junctions and busy city streets are especially high-risk areas.

How to avoid it

- Always check mirrors and blind spots before turning or changing lanes.
- Allow cyclists at least one-and-a-half metres when overtaking.
- Be cautious around motorbikes, which may appear suddenly due to their smaller profile.
- Patience and space save lives.



Parking and low-speed collisions

Though usually minor, bumps in car parks and while manoeuvring are among the most reported incidents in the UK. They often happen due to poor awareness of blind spots or rushing in tight spaces.

How to avoid it

- Take your time when reversing or parking, and use mirrors or cameras effectively. If unsure, stop and check before continuing.
- Allow extra room when opening doors in crowded car parks.

Single-vehicle incidents

These involve a driver losing control and colliding with stationary objects, such as trees, barriers, or lamp posts. Common causes include speeding, taking corners too quickly, poor road or vehicle condition, inattention and fatigue.

How to avoid it

- Drive at a speed appropriate for the conditions, not just the legal limit.
- Slow down on A and B roads where hazards may be hidden, and for bends, learn how to read what speed you can take them using the Limit Point Analysis technique
- Avoid driving when tired, and check the condition of brake and tyres regularly.



RED Advisories

RED has produced a series of advisory leaflets covering everything from towing to fatigue. To download a copy, click [here](#)



For more information visit:

www.redtraining.com

Or scan the QR code

Call us on: **01332 810007**