

Sharing the Road with Other Users

PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLES AND MOTORCYCLES

If all you had to watch out for on the highway were cars and other commercial vehicles, your job would be relatively simple. But you share the road with many users, and not all are as easy to see as an automobile.

Pedestrians

No one is more vulnerable in traffic than the pedestrian. Remember that very often the pedestrian is you. When you cross the street, you know how little change you have of coming out even in a showdown with any motor vehicle, large or small.

Remember this when you get behind the wheel. Give the pedestrian a break, even if he's in the wrong, because he, not you, will get hurt if you hit him. More than 100,000 pedestrians are struck by vehicles every year and 9,000 of them die. Crossing the streets is a risky business.

Healthy adults, of course, know the risks and



can take care of themselves. If they get hurt, it may be through their own carelessness. But some pedestrians need all the help they can get. Children, in particular, pose a danger at all times. They can jump out in front of your vehicle when you least expect it.

Know when you're in the vicinity of schools and playgrounds, and be especially cautious for youngsters at play. If you see a ball flying out into the roadway, assume a child is right behind it.

Likewise, older people need your help. They may not see or hear well, and may walk so slowly that they can't cross an intersection before the light changes. You may have to stop and block traffic for a few seconds to assure that an elderly walker gets to the curb safely. Now and then, you may have to get

out of your cab and lend her a hand.

Bicycles

Bicycling is a popular sport. Men and women of all ages have taken to the highways on bicycles which take up little space and aren't always easy to see. Worse yet, some cyclists hunch way down over their low-slung handlebars and may not see you, either.

Watch out for a bike that makes a sudden swerve. It may mean the rider has hit a rough patch of road and has lost control for a few seconds. Give bicycles a wide berth--at least three feet--when you pass them. Your wind stream can literally blow them off the highway if you come too close.

It's courteous to warn them of your presence with a quick tap, but not a loud blast, on the horn. Then watch in your mirror to be sure you give them adequate room as you go by.

Motorcycles

Motorcycles have some advantages over bicycles. They can move a lot faster and will roar around you along with cars. But, in the final analysis, they're just as vulnerable. You seldom see a mere fender bender between a motorcycle and a car or truck. The motorcycle is usually damaged badly and its rider is often hurt. Thousands of motorcyclists die on the highways every year.

It's hard to judge the speed or distance of a motorcycle when you see it from ahead or behind. In fact, it's hard to see it at all because so little surface is visible. Allow extra room to compensate for this when you pass a motorcycle.

The Riskiest Times

When you make a turn, or when you're driving at night, the risks of hitting pedestrians, bikes, and motorcycles are even greater. Watch your blind spots on right-hand turns, and realize that a two-wheeler or pedestrian can be nearly invisible at night. They may do foolish or careless things. Drive with awareness and caution and you'll avoid hitting them.