



Rail Safety Tips for Professional Drivers

Whether you're driving an 18-wheel truck or a transit bus, getting from point A to point B safely is essential. And knowing your rail safety rules can help you get where you need to go without incident. Follow these tips to ensure that you, your cargo, and your passengers arrive safely—it could save lives.



BE PREPARED TO STOP AT ALL RAILWAY CROSSINGS

When approaching a railway crossing, slow down by shifting into a low gear. Test your brakes, turn on your four-way flashers and check the traffic behind you. Open your window and turn off all fans or audio equipment so you can better hear approaching trains. If a train is coming, stop behind any gates or stop lines, or no closer than 5 metres from the nearest rail. Put your vehicle in neutral and use your emergency or service brake, and wait for the train to pass.



HAVE A CLEAR VIEW OF THE TRACKS

Do not proceed through a railway crossing unless you have a clear view of the tracks and are certain no trains are approaching in either direction, on any track, especially at crossings with no flashing lights, bell or gates. Even if active warning devices are in place, look both ways and listen before crossing the tracks. Always cross tracks in low gear without shifting.



KNOW YOUR VEHICLE'S LENGTH

Make sure you know how long your vehicle is and be aware of the amount of space available on the other side of a railway crossing. Before proceeding through the crossing, be certain there is enough room for your entire vehicle to clear the tracks, including its overhang. Keep in mind that trains are wider than the tracks—the back of your vehicle must be at least 5 metres away from the nearest rail. If you can't fit, don't commit!



LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE IF IT STALLS OR GETS STUCK

If your vehicle stalls or gets stuck on railway tracks, get yourself and all passengers out immediately. Move at least 30 metres away from the track to avoid being struck by debris if your vehicle is hit by a train. Contact the railway and let them know there is a vehicle on the tracks (most companies post their emergency numbers at crossings, either behind the crossbuck or on the signal house), or call 911.



OBEY ALL POLICE OR FLAG PEOPLE

If a police officer or railway flag person is at the crossing, obey their directions. But remember, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure it's safe to cross the tracks by looking in both directions and listening for approaching trains.

REMEMBER:

- Provincial laws and regulations governing the actions of professional drivers at railway crossings may vary. Check your province's policies to ensure you are in compliance at all times.
- If railway crossing lights begin to flash, or the gates start to lower after you start crossing the tracks, don't stop! It's safer to keep going than to try to reverse.
- At a crossing with multiple tracks, only stop before the first set. Once you are certain no trains are approaching, proceed through the crossing and continue until you have completely cleared all tracks.
- Report any dangerous conditions at railway crossings directly to the railway company or by calling 911.