

Sharing the road with heavy vehicles

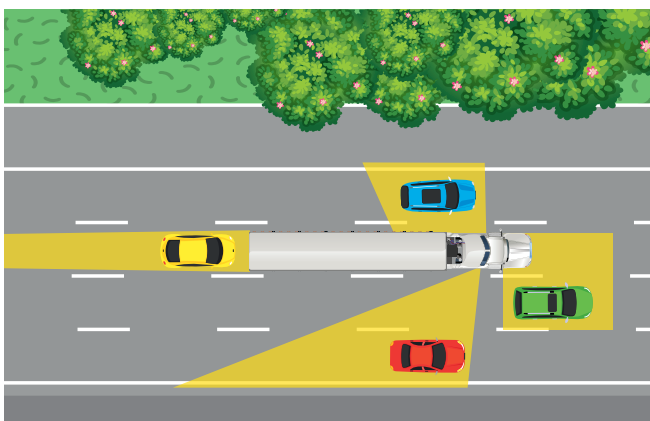
Between 2017 and 2021, heavy vehicles were involved in 16% of fatal road crashes. They present a major road safety issue because of their size, mass and inability to stop or change direction as quickly as smaller vehicles in an emergency.

Motorists need to be aware of the difficulties associated with driving a heavy vehicle, and to keep this in mind when sharing the road with a truck, road train or bus.

Avoid heavy vehicle blind spots

Heavy vehicles have four blind spots that motorists should avoid:

- beside the truck's left door
- by the truck's right door
- directly behind the truck
- immediately in front of the truck.



Travel at a safe following distance

Heavy vehicles take time to accelerate and slow down, so it's important to stay at a safe distance when following them.

- Following too closely will limit how far ahead of the vehicle you can see.
- If you can't see the vehicle's mirrors, then the driver can't see you.
- Allow enough time to stop safely, especially in wet weather.
- If the vehicle has a 'Do Not Overtake Turning Vehicle' sign, it's allowed to take up more than one lane when turning. Be aware of this when you're turning near a heavy vehicle.
- Don't stop too close behind a heavy vehicle on an uphill grade, as it may roll back slightly.

Stay at a safe distance when following heavy vehicles.



Overtaking heavy vehicles

A car travelling in a 110km/h speed limit zone will take about one kilometre to safely overtake a 23-metre long B-double truck, which is travelling at 100km/h on a road with an overtaking lane.

On a two-way road with a 110km/h speed limit, two kilometres of clear road ahead is needed to safely overtake a 23-metre long B-double truck that's travelling at 100km/h, in order to avoid oncoming vehicles travelling at 110km/h.

Motorists can receive a \$231 fine, a \$94 Victims of Crime Levy and incur two demerit points for unsafe overtaking. They can also be charged with dangerous driving.

Allow plenty of time and room for long, heavy vehicles to stop.

It's important to allow plenty of time when overtaking long vehicles.

- When preparing to overtake, stay well back from the rear of the vehicle and wait for a safe overtaking opportunity.
- Before overtaking, make sure there's enough room between you and any oncoming traffic.
- Make sure you're clear of the driver's blind spot before overtaking.
- When overtaking, indicate clearly, accelerate and overtake as quickly as possible, without exceeding the speed limit. It's illegal to exceed the speed limit even in an overtaking lane.
- Don't cut in front of the vehicle too closely when pulling back in, as this puts you at risk of being rear-ended if you have to stop suddenly.
- When travelling on a highway with overtaking lanes, try to wait for these lanes before overtaking.
- Never overtake a long vehicle that's approaching a cross road, a dip or a bend. There may be another vehicle, obscured from view, that could be turning onto your road.

We're here to help

Call our Road Safety team on 8202 4570 or email motoringroadrules@raa.com.au or raa.com.au/roadsafety