

MAFES Dawg Tracks

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MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
MS AGRICULTURAL AND
FORESTRY EXPERIMENT STATION

Blind Spots

Defensive driving is all about being aware of the other vehicles and objects on the road around you, giving you the opportunity to react appropriately to avoid an accident. But what if you can't see that other vehicle or they can't see you?

Newer vehicles today, with their aerodynamic designs and styling, seem to create a lot of blind spots for the driver. A car typically has blind areas at the sides near the rear of the vehicle. Other vehicles, such as tractor-trailer rigs, buses or campers, may be blind to anything that is directly behind. Vehicles in which the driver sits very high may have forward-quarter blind spots—they may not be able to see anything low to the ground in front or to the sides near the front.

The blind areas on most vehicles are large enough to hide other vehicles. Mirrors also will not reveal a vehicle that is changing lanes from two lanes away.

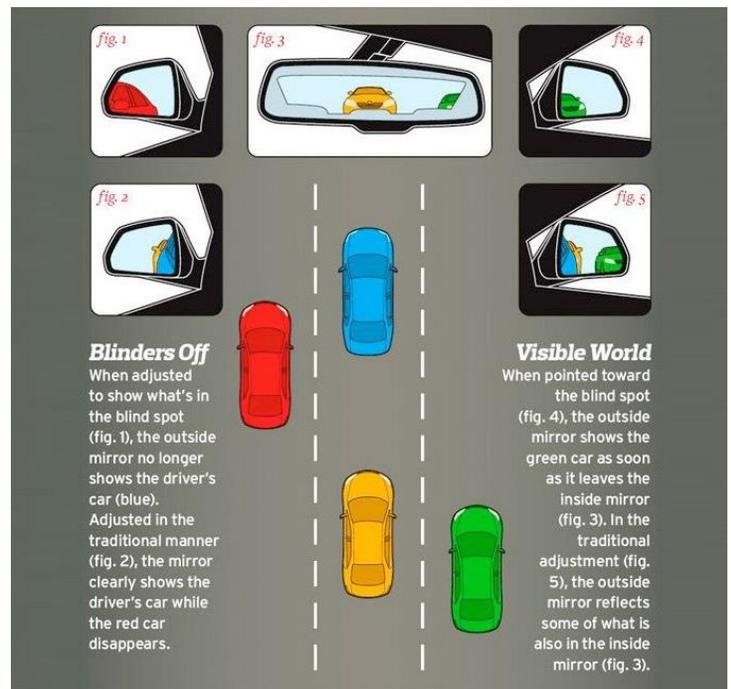
Example: You are driving in the right hand lane of a multi-lane roadway, and signal to change lanes to the left. Another vehicle in the third lane changes lanes to the right. Both of you may be trying to occupy the same place in the second lane. And it is always possible that a lane that was clear of other traffic just a second ago may quickly be occupied—traffic is often fast-moving and fluid—and empty spaces tend to fill up.

It is very important to turn your head and look before making a lane change.

When driving near large trucks, always try to make sure you are visible to the driver. **If you can see his face in his side-view mirrors, he can see you.**

To help avoid blind spots, your vehicle's mirrors must be set correctly. Mirrors are to be adjusted to see the surrounding vehicles, not the back and down the side of your own vehicle.

The cabin's rearview mirror is used to keep an eye on what is coming up from behind, while the outside mirrors reflect the area outside the view of the inside rearview mirror. **Adjust the side mirrors so far outward that the viewing angle of the side mirrors just overlaps that of the cabin's rearview mirror.** This may take a bit to get used to, but it will greatly help with reducing your blind spots. Cars behind you should appear to move cleanly from one mirror to the next. Cars will move seamlessly between rearview and side mirrors, then shift into your peripheral field of view.



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Sources:
<http://2passdd.com/Defensive-Driving/?p=562>
<https://www.caranddriver.com/features/how-to-adjust-your-mirrors-to-avoid-blind-spots>