



**JOB AID**

**Stops Signs and Signals – Large**  
**Vehicles**

# Stop Signs and Signals - Large Vehicles

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The time you save by rolling past a stop sign or blazing past a yellow or red light will never justify the potential harm you might do to yourself and to other motorists.

## Dangers of Missed Stop Signs and Signals

A recent study found that almost a quarter of all traffic fatalities occurred at intersections. Many of those fatalities involved the running of stop signs or red lights. Drivers often stop or slow down at a sign and then pull ahead without bothering to check the intersection for an oncoming car. They also frequently miscalculate an approaching vehicle's distance and speed.

There are valid reasons not to run stop signs and stop signals:

- You are much more likely to die or be seriously injured
- It is easy to misjudge an approaching vehicle's distance and speed
- You will not gain enough time to justify your risky driving behavior

## Proper Procedures

- **KNOW** the procedures for each intersection, whether there is a traffic light, stop sign, yield sign or traffic circle
  - When a light turns yellow, slow down and stop
  - Do not run a red light
  - Never assume you have the right-of-way
  - Always use caution
- **SHOW** other drivers what you are going to do (signal your intent)
- **SLOW** down as you approach an intersection (cover the brake) and stop completely
- **GO** through the intersection when it is safe, clear and legal
- Never attempt to pass or change lanes at an intersection

## Railroad Crossings

- Never drive around lowered gates. If you suspect a signal is malfunctioning, call your local law enforcement agency or the railroad, or dial 911
- Never race a train to the crossing
- Do not get trapped on a crossing. Only proceed through a crossing if you are sure you can cross all the track
- Get out of your vehicle if it stalls on a crossing and call your local law enforcement agency for assistance. Only attempt to restart if you can post lookouts to warn of approaching trains
- Watch out for a second train when crossing multiple tracks
- Expect a train on the track at any time. Trains do not follow set schedules
- Be aware that trains cannot stop quickly
- Do not misjudge the train's speed and distance. A train's large mass makes it impossible to accurately judge its speed and distance

## Strategies for Safe Driving

Adjust your driving and overcome your impulse to run stoplights and signals.

Follow the "**stop-plus-one rule**". Stop completely for anything red – stop signs, stoplights and flashing railroad crossings. When it is OK to move forward, count an additional second while you scan the area for potential hazards. Accelerate only after you hear that second tick off in your head.

Do your best to **manage your time** effectively so you are not running late. When delays beyond your control occur, make a phone call and adjust your next appointment. Notify your supervisor and explain that you can only get there as quickly as safe driving allows.

**Monitor your mood** while driving. Concentrate on relaxing your body when tense – take a few deep breaths and let go of your tension. Try to find a radio station that plays relaxing music.