

# PROFESSIONAL DRIVER EDUCATION



## City Driving

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As a professional driver you may need to safely drive in city traffic at some point of a trip.

City driving presents its own unique challenges as compared to highway driving. We will examine some of those differences and provide tips to help you drive in city traffic safely.

Low speed does NOT mean lower risk of crash. Lower speeds are good but with city driving those lower speeds mean congestion. Traffic can be bumper-to-bumper and move at a “stop-and-go” pace.

When bumper-to-bumper and stop-and-go traffic happen it is STRESSFUL.

The best overall tip for driving safely in city traffic is PATIENCE. Aggressive driving or getting angry will accomplish nothing but you being upset.

Expect cars and even other trucks to cut you off, stop suddenly, and not signal intentions. Pedestrians are another concern. Most people probably don't know what the term “jay walk” means and I doubt if enforcement would even write a ticket for it. This causes you as a professional driver to have to watch for people all along the route versus just at intersections.

Some other tips for success in city driving include:

- Plan the route and turns in advance to avoid looking away from the traffic scene in heavy traffic.
- Travel SLOWLY. In city traffic, slow and steady brings success.
- **Watch traffic and conditions one block ahead. This is the same theory as the 6 second rule, modified for city driving.**

- Avoid blocking intersections. If you cannot clear your entire unit on the other side of the intersection – DO NOT attempt to enter the intersection until it is clear, regardless of the traffic signal.
- A yellow light means SLOW down and prepare to stop – NOT go faster.
- Pick a lane and STAY in it unless you need to set up for a turn. Lane changes are difficult enough on the open road, but VERY dangerous in heavy traffic.
- Watch for rail lines, both freight and commuter trains. NEVER stop on any type of track. If you can't clear the complete unit on the other side of the tracks, DO NOT attempt to cross.
- Protect the curb during right hand turns. Right turn squeeze accidents are very common in city driving.

City driving is something nearly every driver will have to do at some point. We salute the local drivers that navigate our nation's city streets every day. It takes a strong safety culture and focus to do this day after day.

Please use the information and tips in this article to safely navigate city traffic as you deliver and pick-up customers' freight.



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