

# Maintaining a Safe Driving Distance to Keep Your Windshield Protected

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**Do you know that maintaining a safe driving distance can help protect your windshield?**

**That's correct!** Car accidents are the biggest reason for windshield damage, which is a prevalent type of collision in the U.S.

There are about [1.7 million rear-end collisions on U.S. roads each year](#). Here's a brief guide to ensure safe distance and drive safely on the road to avoid becoming one of the stats.

## Maintaining a safe driving distance to keep your windshield protected

First, you need to learn about the basics of maintaining a safe driving distance. You need to make sure that there's enough distance to stop your vehicle in case of an emergency.

Two factors play a role in determining the [stopping distance](#), i.e., reaction distance and braking distance.



### Reaction distance

It refers to the time between something that happens on the road, and you press the brakes.

The reaction time can vary from 200 milliseconds to longer than a second, depending on your reaction time, driving skills, weather conditions, etc.

### Braking distance

Braking distance simply refers to how far your car takes to a complete stop once you've pressed the brakes.

Faster the speed, longer the braking distance, hence over speeding can lead you to trouble.

### An illustration

Imagine you're driving a car and the car in front of you brakes suddenly. If your reaction time is one second and you were driving at 40 mph, you traveled approximately 58 feet.

Moreover, if it takes your car 30 feet before coming to a total stop, the total stopping distance will be 88 feet, which is a safe stopping distance.

Now, it's not possible to perform such calculations while driving the vehicle, and there are lots of variables that come into play, so how can you determine the safe distance?

Well, it's recommended that you follow a three-second rule to avoid traffic collisions.



### The three-second rule

A three-second rule means that you should have at least a [3-second following distance from the vehicle in front of you.](#)

It will provide you more stopping distance and allow you to safely stop your car if the vehicle in front of you rashly slams on brakes or hit another vehicle.

[Determining a three-second distance is simple.](#) Choose a fixed spot, say a road sign, that's even with the vehicle in the front.

If you reach that point before you can count to three Mississippi's, it means that you're too close and need to maintain more distance.

The [National Safety Council](#) also [recommends a minimum three-second following distance](#) to ensure safety while driving on the road.

However, if you're driving in heavy traffic, night-time, or inclement weather with low visibility, you may leave extra distance in front of your vehicle.

Remember, a mere half a second can prove to be a difference between pressing brakes on time and a collision.

### Final words

Maintaining a safe driving distance will ensure safe driving and help keep your windshield protected.

In addition to maintaining a safe distance, make sure you follow the best practices to keep your windshield safe from damage.

**READ:** [How to Prevent Damages to Your Windshield](#)

For example, replace old windshield wipers, park your car in a garage or a safe place, and don't use harsh chemicals.

If your windshield has a chip and crack, it's essential to get it to repair immediately, or it can grow, cause further damage, and require a complete replacement.

**ALSO READ:** [Don't Let It Grow! 5 Tips to Prevent the Windshield Crack from Spreading](#)

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