

Driving Home for Christmas

The gift of safety isn't found under a tree, wrapped in pretty paper or tied up in a nice bow. But for you and your loved ones — and all the other road or path users anywhere you roam — it can be the most important gift of all.

Make driving the most important thing you do. Get off the phone, don't send a text, stop doing your make-up and save breakfast for the table. When you're driving your vehicle, make that the only activity you're engaged in.

Obey the rules — and make sure you know them, too. There are plenty of laws about how you have to interact with cyclists and pedestrians — and they exist for a reason. Know them and follow them.

Check and Check Again – when turning left, always use the **MSM/PSL** routine at junctions

The Mirrors – Signal – Manoeuvre (MSM)

Mirrors: check in your mirrors to work out the speed and position of vehicles behind

Signal: signal clearly and in good time.

Manoeuvre: using the **PSL** routine.

Position your vehicle correctly and in good time.

Speed: adjust it as necessary.

Look for other road users and before you turn check on the inside again **A Life Saver!**

Be the better person. Don't drive like you have to get there first, drive so everyone can get there safely. Yield, even if you don't have to. Stop, if someone else doesn't. Slow down, when conditions are uncertain or crowded. Move over, and give other users their space. And, most of all, leave the rage and revenge back in the garage.

Remember you're the biggest thing on the road. Your 2 tons (or more) of steel can do much more damage to other users such as walkers or cyclists. Your mass makes it tougher to stop. Your bulk makes it harder to turn. And your speed simply multiplies all these assets (or, more correctly, liabilities). So don't drive like you own the road (you don't) – drive like you share the road.

Cyclists

Wear a helmet, wear a helmet, wear a helmet.- There's simply nothing else you can do that will do more to protect you than this. Why? Bones heal, brains don't.

Act like a vehicle. - Meaning ride with traffic when on the road (and even when not), because that's what drivers are looking for. Obey the traffic rules, particularly when

there are other vehicles around. Be consistent and predictable in traffic, so they know what to expect of you.

See and be seen - Wear bright colours that help you stand out from the scenery. Put lights front and back if you're out early or late — or just to be a little more obvious to others. Signal your intentions when possible. And ride defensively ... when you're the smallest thing on the road, watch out for what those who are bigger, heavier and faster than you.

Use your advantages - but don't make them disadvantages. On a bike, you can turn quicker and stop faster than a motor vehicle, which allows you to avoid problems by being nimble and quick. But remember those vehicles around you may not be so agile, so gauge your moves accordingly so you don't get caught by someone else's mistake.

Walkers & runners:

Stop and talk - Pay attention, distracted walking is a serious problem, and when you're too engrossed in a phone call or unable to hear what's going on around you because your earphones block all noise, you could walk or run right in to a bad situation.

Be one step ahead - Anticipate problems. While bikers and other vehicles should give you the right-of-way, don't count on it — but do walk or run as if you are the most vulnerable thing on the road... because you are. And if you're having to use the road because there's no sidewalk, do so facing traffic so you can see what's coming at you and be able to react before things go from bad to worse.

Share the road or path – or get out of the way if necessary. If you have to walk on a bike lane, there's room for both you and the bikes – but you may not be able to walk side by side all the time. If you're walking your dog, keep them on a short leash around other walkers, runners and cyclists – so your dog understands to stay near and the other path users understand you have things under control.

Be Safe Be Seen - . As with cyclists, wear bright colours and lights when it's early or late make other road users more aware of your presence — always a good thing.

**Merry
Christmas**

