

How to drive defensively



Section/# Defensive Driving The process of defensive driving evokes a lot of different thoughts in one's mind. Mostly, when we hear this phrase, our mind immediately envisions a situation in which a driver takes rapid and successive maneuvers to avoid a potentially hazardous situation. However, defensive driving is much more than the rapid actions that a driver might take to avoid a potential hazard. Rather, defensive driving is first and foremost a mindset that the driver must have in order to protect oneself from the dangers that the highway oftentimes holds.

I recall when learning to ride a motorcycle it was necessary for me to always remember that other people were unlikely to see me due to the fact that I took up such a small place on the road. With this in mind, I would oftentimes remind myself that I was in fact invisible once I was on the road. In this way, I was sure to be able to anticipate the actions and maneuvers of erratic drivers that necessarily existed on the roads (Gravelle 16). Furthermore, when I would transition to driving the car, I would oftentimes forget that I was not still on the motorcycle and was able to still keep the invisibility frame of mind open with respect to driving the car. Although it is somewhat silly, this frame of mind is an integral part of what defensive driving involves. As such, defensive driving involves the correct frame of mind, a cognizance that other drivers might do the unexpected, and a perpetual state of alertness.

With respect to the perpetual state of alertness, it is easy for one to become preoccupied by the many distractions that exist both on the road and inside the vehicle (Lithing 12). For instance, answering a cell phone, speaking with a friend in the passenger or back seat, straining to find an address or attempting to read a sign or billboard, changing a radio station or selecting a

particular song from a playlist, even flirting with the occupant of the car beside you in traffic are all prime examples of just a few of the many ways that a driver can be distracted. Similarly, this distraction does not only apply to the driver who is fighting to maintain a focus, but also to those drivers with whom the defensive driver is trying to avoid and/or anticipate.

This leads us to the last component of defensive driving – anticipation. As previously discussed, the tools that have been presented revolve around the driver keeping a correct frame of mind and avoiding distraction. As such, both of these skills rationally lead up to the concept of anticipation (Williams 4). Being able to react quickly is but a small percentage of what defensive driving involves; the larger parts hinge upon the level of alertness and the ability of the driver to anticipate the actions of others on the roads. In this way, these skills greatly enhance the ability of the driver to avoid harm in that he/she is able to buy invaluable time within any given situation by projecting the possible actions that other motorists might take before they even do them.

Works Cited

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