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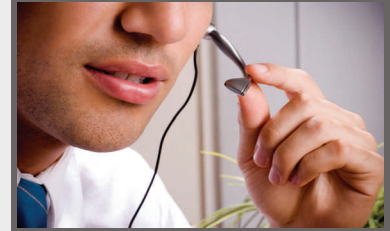
PROPER HEADLIGHT ANGLE

Have you ever been driving at night when a car or truck approaches from behind? Their headlights are shining directly into your rearview mirror blinding your vision to the point that you have to flip the mirror position. Or maybe a vehicle is coming toward you and the headlights are shining so brightly in your face that your vision is temporarily impaired? In many cases, the other driver may have the high beams on. However, in some cases it is due to the improper angle of the headlights. Many people will consistently perform car maintenance

such as checking tires for proper air pressure or checking the oil, but many don't give a thought about the angle of their headlights. They turn them on while they drive at night, and off they go! Proper angle of your headlights is not only a safety issue for you, but also for the driver you approach head on. Proper headlight angle allows you to see the area of road in front of your car. If they are shining toward one side or the other and not directly in front of you, it could cause you to miss an object in the road. Those instantaneous responses can cause a driver to swerve in the road, sometimes resulting in an out-of-control vehicle.

There are also the cars and trucks that have been mechanically raised as part of performance enhancements. Raising the height of a vehicle affects the headlight angle, sometimes profoundly. Now, when you approach a vehicle, your headlights are shining into the rear window of the car in front of you or, worse for oncoming traffic, blinding their vision of your car or truck. Temporarily blinding the driver's vision could cause them to drift on the road and potentially cross the center line. You may

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Upcoming Events

- February 14th—Valentine's Day
- February 15th—President's Day
- February 17th—Ash Wednesday

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SURVIVING CITY DRIVING

City driving is filled with hassles and delays, but these minor inconveniences aren't going to be avoided through reckless or rude behavior. The best advice is to maintain a calm and patient attitude. About 50 percent of all city driving collisions occur at intersections, usually because a driver failed to yield the right-of-way. A recent Insurance Institute for Hwy Safety study reports that red-light runners are responsible for an estimated 170,000 injuries every year, about 900 of which are fatal. Worse, the number of deaths related to red light running is rising! To keep intersections safe, remember these tips:

- The vehicle on the left always yields to the vehicle on the right when they arrive at a 4-way stop simultaneously.
- Rolling stops can be a dangerous habit. You can miss spotting a vehicle and cause a collision.
- As you approach a "stale green light," cover the brake with your foot, and be prepared to stop. Indications of a stale light include: traffic flowing smoothly, considerable cross-traffic, blinking pedestrian signals, and people standing on the corner.
- When a red light turns green, check to see that traffic has stopped on the intersecting street. Look left, then right, then

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ask yourself, 'How would I know if my headlights are at the proper angle?' Well, there are various methods of checking them yourself, or you could take your vehicle to your mechanic and ask them to check them for you. See the following for proper techniques to use:

<http://www.coolbulbs.com/HID-VISUAL-HEADLIGHT-AIMING-PROCEDURE.pdf>

http://www.automedia.com/Aiming_Headlights/ccr20010801ha/1

There is also growing concern regarding the high-intensity-discharge (HID) headlights. These lights illuminate many times brighter than conventional headlights. You may recognize them as you see the blue, purple and pink tinted light coming at you. Many people will argue these lights allow drivers to see more road surface, particularly in rural areas. Although this may be true, if not angled properly they could cause oncoming drivers to be temporarily blinded. Some complain these lights actually hurt their eyes and that it takes a few seconds after the car passes for their eyes to readjust. If this is a problem that you experience, be prepared to slow down to maintain better control of your vehicle.

<http://www.usatoday.com/money/autos/2001-06-07-xenon.htm>

Another safety hazard is caused by the failure to replace a headlight that has burned out. Headlights are required not only so you can see where you are *going* but also so that you can be seen! Motorists are accustomed to seeing two headlights coming in their direction. Drivers who see only one light may assume it's a motorcycle, and it could give them a false sense of where you are on the road. Replace faulty bulbs immediately.

Make 'checking your headlights' a regular part of your vehicle maintenance. Simply shining them on your garage door or other solid surface will alert you to when one has blown. Tail lights, brake lights and emergency flashers should be checked on a regular basis as well. Keep you and your family safe by performing these simple maintenance tips.



**Helping to keep
your family informed!**

**“The difference
between a successful
person and others is
not the lack of
strength, not the
lack of knowledge,
but rather a
lack in will.”**

-Vince Lombardi

*For more inspirational quotes,
go to: www.inspirational-quotes.com*

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scan left before you proceed. You invite disaster if you don't check for oncoming vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

- Turning right on a red light is allowed only when it is legal, your vehicle has come to a complete stop, traffic is clear, and pedestrians are clear of the crosswalk. Always take the few extra moments to look for a no-turn-on-red sign.
- When you encounter a yellow light, always stop if it is safe to do so. The purpose of a yellow light is to allow you time to clear an intersection you are entering or have already entered, not one you are approaching from a distance.
- A lack of consideration can cause trouble. Demanding the right of way can lead to a confrontation that benefits no one.
- Keep your eyes moving for potential problems such as children playing, cyclists, pets, and cars backing from driveways. Look into your rear view mirror often.
- Establish a high visual horizon. You should be able to see one block ahead of you.
- Blind spots are everywhere. If you can't see beyond an object, slow down or change lanes to improve your vision.

- Don't tailgate. Maintain a three second following distance.
- When waiting to make a left turn, point your wheels straight ahead. If you are hit from behind with your wheels turned to the left, you would be forced into traffic.
- Whenever possible, avoid getting boxed in. Speed up or slow down as required. Keep an escape route open.
- Don't fiddle with the radio or other nonessential equipment in heavy traffic.
- If a left turn is risky because of heavy traffic or poor vision, make a right turn, and use an alternate route.

Backing Up:

- Always check behind your car. Pedestrians, small children, and animals can be hidden from your view.
- Use your outside mirrors to help your vision.
- Do not back into busy streets, highways and pedestrian crosswalks.
- Keep your foot firmly on the brake before shifting into reverse. Back slowly. Glance over each shoulder out the windows.