



# Safety Talk

## Parked Cars

How many drivers need retraining on an obstacle course to keep from smashing fenders and scraping vehicles on posts, doorjambs, parked vehicles or any other fixed object?

Must you be in such a hurry that you can't slow down to make sure you're giving wide berth to anything that can't move out of the way?

Repairs to your vehicle are costly enough but when you damage a customer's property, the claims can run high, and the loss of goodwill is immeasurable.

The only way to be certain about clearing all fixed objects is to reduce speed and keep an eye on the clearance, whether on slippery or dry pavement.

Guard posts at driveway entrances usually are brightly painted to demand the attention of entering drivers, but numerous scars and scratches and streaks of paint collected from vehicles whose fenders and side panels came a bit too close indicate many drivers did not get the warning message.

The real pro drivers seldom scrape a fixed object because they have developed sound judgment about how their vehicles will roll. They know exactly how much swing is required of the front wheels to make the rear wheels track as desired. Above all, they always slow down for safe clearance.

They depend on their rear view mirrors to show them exactly how well they are clearing an obstacle. If the squeeze play gets too close for safe passage, they back up, straighten out and try again. The stationary object might be a post, a doorjamb or a parked car—it makes no difference—pass it without making contact.

You may find hot shot drivers who like to show off by breezing through a turn into a narrow driveway or alley, but not the good drivers. It is not uncommon to see these experts climb down from the driver's seat and walk around to determine what maneuver is required. And you'll see no evidence that they've let their fenders and side panels get smeared on some gatepost.

The expert drivers who always clear the fixed obstacles with such sure steering and braking were not born that way. They had to learn it by careful practice, coupled with an attitude that driving is a serious business, requiring their complete attention when they are at the wheel.

If you have problems getting paint scraped off in all kinds of places, perhaps a few practice sessions on an obstacle course might be in order.

Things that "go bump in the night" may be pure fantasy, but drivers who go bumping vehicles into real, material objects can cost money, and sometimes lives.



SOURCE: [safetyawakenings.com](http://safetyawakenings.com)



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