



## Get the Facts: Take the Scary Out of Fall Driving

### In a Nutshell

Autumn means turning leaves and changing driving conditions. Shorter and darker days, wide-ranging weather, school in session and special occasions like Halloween make it a risky time for drivers and pedestrians.

### What do I need to know about autumn driving?

Three words – pay extra attention. Conditions change frequently during autumn and that requires staying on top of our safety games.

### Top tips to tackle top autumn driving safety risks

1. Remember the "three-second rule" when following other drivers. Increase your follow distance in severe weather. If you are being tailgated, let the other driver pass.
2. Watch for ice. At freezing or near-freezing temperatures, wet bridges and overpasses will become icy much more quickly than the roadways that approach them.
3. Watch for school buses! If you see an extended school bus stop sign and flashing red lights, you must wait at least 20 feet from the bus until the warnings end, regardless of your travel direction.
4. Prepare your eyes for night driving. When you step outside from bright light, it can take up to five minutes to adjust. Give your eyes extra time.
5. If you're an older driver, pay special attention at night when reduced light affects vision, including side (peripheral) vision, and ability to judge distance and see colors clearly.
6. Turn on the lights! Make sure your headlights, taillights and turn signals all work properly. Always use low beams when traveling in foggy conditions. And check your headlights' aim.
7. Stick to the basics. Wear a seat belt, drive alert and sober, and drive at safe and legal speed.

*Autumn driving is all about taking time to:*

- *Make sure you have enough distance to stop safely for conditions*
- *Adjust to shorter days as well as blinding early morning sun through your windshield*
- *Watch out for kids heading to school, playing or out for trick-or-treat*

### Halloween requires extra attention

- Slow down in residential neighborhoods and obey all traffic signs and signals.





- Remember that Minnesota law requires drivers to come to a complete stop for pedestrians in a marked crosswalk. Watch for children walking in the street, on medians and curbs, and enter/exit driveways and alleyways carefully.
- Kids should cross streets only at intersections and crosswalks. Look left-right-left again before crossing. Don't cross if a car is coming.
- Teach children to get in and out of the car on the curb side, away from the traffic. Keep kids visible by attaching retro-reflective tape, fabric, or decorative patches to costumes.
- Give trick-or-treaters flashlights to help them see and be seen by drivers.
- Walk, don't run, while trick-or-treating.
- Always walk on sidewalks or paths, when available. Stop at all corners.

**Sources:** National Safety Council  
Minnesota Department of Public Safety  
SafeKids Worldwide

