

snap and become seriously dangerous. Do not, under any circumstances, pull off to the side of the road and confront the other driver.

Avoid Eye Contact: Looking or staring at another driver can turn an impersonal situation between two drivers into a personal duel.



Get Help: If you believe another driver is following you or is trying to start a fight, get help. Use your cellular phone to call the police or drive to a place where there are people around, such as a police station or convenience store. Whatever you do, do not get out of your vehicle and do not drive home.

3 Adjust Your Attitude

Sometimes driving safely means that you need to adjust your own way of thinking and reacting. If you can calm down and drive courteously, then others may end up doing the same.

Forget Winning: Don't try to beat the clock. Allow more time for your trip, and you'll be amazed at how much more relaxed you feel when you have a few extra minutes. Instead of trying to "make good time," try to "make time good."

Put Yourself in the Other Driver's Shoes: Maybe they are speeding because they have an emergency at home. Whatever the person is doing has nothing to do with you. Stay cool and don't take the actions of others personally.

Courtesy Counts!

When you are a courteous driver, it can make your drive more enjoyable, you will arrive at your destination safely, *plus your courtesy could be contagious!*



For further information,
visit AAA.com/trafficsafety.



AAA FOUNDATION FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY

1440 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 201, Washington, DC 20005
202-638-5944 • 800-993-7222 • www.aaafoundation.org

COURTESY COUNTS!

Combat Aggressive Driving
& Road Rage
with Courteous Driving





We've all been there.

It's bumper to bumper. The rain won't stop.

And you're three lanes from your exit.

Suddenly, there's a glimmer of sunshine—someone gives you a break.

Whether you're the person sitting in rush-hour traffic or the one who is desperately trying to merge into traffic, before you lose your cool, remember that you can brighten your day—and possibly someone else's—if you extend a little courtesy on the road.



What can I do to avoid becoming a victim of aggressive driving or road rage?

While there is no way of knowing exactly what could trigger a driver to become emotional or to overreact on the road, these three basic principles can help:

1 Don't Offend

Minor driving errors might cause some drivers to get offended and, in some cases, react in a hostile or aggressive

way. So, you need to be aware of these common errors and try to avoid them as much as possible. Sometimes changing your driving habits can be the safest way to avoid complications on the road.

Cutting Others Off: When you merge, make sure that you have plenty of room to do so safely. Use your turn signal to show your intention before making your move. If you make a mistake and accidentally cut someone off, try to apologize to the other driver with an appropriate gesture. If someone cuts you off, slow down and give them enough room to merge into your lane.

Tailgating: Some drivers get irritated when they are followed too closely. Allow at least a three- to four-second following space between you and the vehicle in front of you. Keep in mind that this following space may need to be increased to five or more seconds depending on weather conditions or if you are following a large vehicle.



Driving Slowly in the Left Lane: If you are in the left lane and someone is trying to pass you, put on your turn signal and move into the right lane as soon as it is safe to do so.

Even if you are traveling the posted speed limit, you may be putting yourself in danger by making the driver behind you angry. Keep in mind that in many states and provinces, the law requires you to travel in the right lane and use the left only for passing.



Gestures: Almost nothing makes another driver angrier than an obscene gesture. Keep your hands on the wheel and avoid making any gestures that might upset another driver. Even "harmless" expressions, such as shaking your head in irritation, can enrage another driver. Be courteous and signal every time you change lanes and whenever you turn. Try to use your horn rarely. And, if you see another driver trying to merge in front of you, let them merge.

2 Don't Engage

One angry driver can't start a fight unless another driver is willing to join in. A person who is upset can make irrational decisions that they may later regret. If you are tempted to retaliate against another driver, think about what kind of reaction your hostile behavior could cause. Take a few deep breaths to cool down and try to think about how unimportant that incident is in the grand scheme of things.

Steer Clear: Try to give angry drivers a lot of room. If another driver seems upset and is trying to pick a fight, put as much distance as possible between your vehicle and the other driver's. A driver that you may have offended could