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THE RIGHT-OF-WAY

According to National Safety Council statistics, almost 14,000 of all fatal motor vehicle accidents involved a driver's failure to yield the right of way.

More than seven thousand people died because a driver failed to give another motorist the courtesy of the road. How many times do you find yourself in a me-first situation-too bullheaded to give up the road?

Right -of way is probably one of the most misunderstood of all driving rules. It simply refers to a motorist's right to cross an intersection ahead of another vehicle.

This rule was established to determine the order of preference of all vehicles traveling on our streets and highways. Without right of way rules, driving would be a mass of confusion, with drivers always trying to beat each other through an intersection. Right of way rules are designed for all of our safety.

What are some of the precautions you can take to prevent right of way accidents?

A relatively simple solution is to yield the right of way in every situation, whether or not it is required by law. To be more specific, if there is any doubt about there being enough room to pass on a narrow stretch of roadway, let the other vehicle go first.

When entering a freeway, yield the right of way to vehicles already traveling the freeway. Those vehicles should not have to alter their speed or swerve to make room for your approach.

Do not jump the gun at a four way stop. The first to come to a complete stop should be given the right of way.

Since failure to yield the right of way is the second most frequent violation involved in fatal accidents, a good driver should be thoroughly familiar with right of way rules.

Knowing when you do have the right of way is not as important as knowing when you do not.

By following the basic rule that it is the responsibility of every driver to do everything possible to protect other drivers and pedestrians, we will greatly reduce the possibility of an accident.

Remember, accidents do not just happen. Many are caused by drivers who violate the rules of the road. Obey these rules, drive safely and whenever in doubt, yield the right of way.