



SPACE CUSHION

How far should you stay behind another vehicle in order to give yourself enough time to stop without running into the rear of that vehicle? If you are driving a car or van at 40 miles per hour, allow two seconds. (Heavier vehicles take longer). Over 40 miles an hour and up to the speed limit, allow another second.

To adjust for slippery conditions, add one more second to the time allowance. Do this when there is or has been rain, or there are leaves on the road, or other such conditions.

To figure out the number of seconds your vehicle is behind the vehicle ahead, watch for some stationary object beside the road, such as a sign or a light post, or a section of the broken line between lanes on the road. When the vehicle in front passes that point, start counting seconds and see how many it takes for you to begin to pass that spot. That is your "space cushion."

The way you count the seconds is to say to yourself "one thousand one, one thousand two," etc.

This should give you enough room to stop -- to see that you need to stop, to react, and then to bring your vehicle to a stop.