

Avoiding Road Rage: Ways You Can Escape Aggressive Driving

Use these tips to slow down, calm down, and stay safe even with aggressive drivers on the road

- Practice polite driving habits: Avoid tailgating, cutting off other vehicles, speeding, weaving, leaving high beam headlights on, and erratic braking. Don't drive in the left lane slower than the rest of traffic. Merge politely and always err on the side of being courteous. This is smart to do not just to avoid road rage, but to make driving easier and more pleasant for every motorist.
- Slow down: Let aggressive drivers go around you and typically, they will quickly be on their way.
- Get away from aggressive drivers: If you notice a driver with aggressive behavior, get some distance between you, whether you slow down and let them get ahead or change lanes so you're not right next to each other.
- Don't make rude gestures or yell at other drivers: Remember, you're not the police, and it's not your job to remind others how to drive, even if they're doing a terrible job. Avoid making eye contact with an aggressive driver who is trying to pick a fight.
- Use your horn sparingly: Horns should primarily be used in emergency situations. Tap your horn lightly if you need to get a driver's attention and give drivers ahead of you at lights a few extra seconds of grace before honking to remind them to move through the intersection.
- Avoid making driving a competitive sport: You're not a race car driver — you don't have to win on the road. In fact, winning as a regular driver is simply getting home safe. Getting worked up over a vehicle that's cut you off or gotten in your way somehow isn't worth it. Remember: getting home safely is more important than teaching another driver a lesson.
- Apologize if you've done something wrong: If you've accidentally cut off another driver, braked too fast, or made some other mistake that could be offensive, simply smile and wave as an apology. This will disarm and calm most drivers.
- Don't drive under distress: Avoid driving if you're angry, upset, or drowsy.
- Adjust your driving attitude: Give other drivers the benefit of the doubt. Many mistakes are unintentional and not meant as a personal offense. Consider whether responding aggressively is worth being injured or killed.
- Have reasonable expectations about your travel time: Know when you'll be driving in traffic, give yourself plenty of time, and don't set unreasonable expectations for how fast you'll get to your destination.
- Call 911 if you're under attack: If an aggressive driver attacks you, call 911 right away and stay on the phone with the dispatcher. Consider driving to the nearest police station, convenience store, or other public location with witnesses. Do not drive home.