

HIGHWAY DRIVING

1) Try to Stay in the Right Lane

There are many advantages to staying in the far right lane while traveling the highway. First of all it's where the slower traffic like your RV is expected to be, but it also allows you to see better behind you using the driver's side mirror and if you have an emergency and need to pull over the shoulder is right there.

The only time I leave the far right lane is when moving through larger cities that have many on and off freeway ramps with tons of merging traffic. Then I will pick one lane to the left to avoid having to merge constantly with these vehicles.



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2) Learn to Anticipate

Most of the other travelers, unless RV owners are unaware of our limitations and will perform the most stupid maneuvers with blissful ignorance. Our job as RV drivers is to be constantly anticipating the traffic all around us so we can take action as soon as possible. IE. Because I need extra room for braking I leave a fair distance in front of the rig but I'm always on the lookout for another driver who will use that space for a quick darting maneuver. Usually what happens is they want off the freeway at a certain exit and will come from several lanes over and cut in front and use that little gap I'm leaving to do a panic exit right in front of me.

One trick to anticipating the traffic slowing down is to keep an eye out far ahead and watch for brake lights. If you see a bunch light up expect to be needing to hit the brakes soon yourself.

3) Watch the Truckers

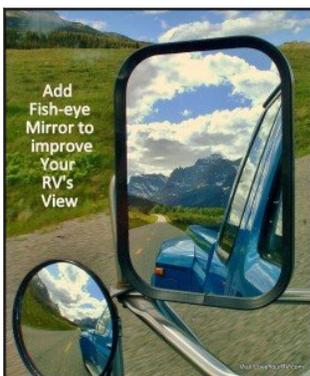
Truckers are generally the best and most experience Interstate drivers out there. It pays for us heavy RV operators to observe what they do and incorporate it into our driving habits. It is handy in large cities to notice which lanes the bulk of the truck traffic is taking when navigating their way through. Having driven through many times, they usually know what is the best lanes to be in to move through in the safest and most efficient manner.

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4) Pay Attention to Your Rear

Always take into account that there may be someone right behind you. With the length of our RVs, it means the blind spot behind us can be fairly large and it's easy for a car to hide back there. For some reason, there are drivers out there that like to tailgate large vehicles. Many new RV's are coming equipped with rear cameras which are great but for those of us without always remember at any time someone may dart out from behind you.



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5) Make Slow Deliberate Movements

While driving an RV on the Interstate highways it pays to make movements like lane changes in a slow deliberate manner.

Have your signal light on well in advance and move over slowly. This gives the other drivers a chance to correct themselves if they are darting out from behind you or coming up upon you at a high rate of speed. Also when you need to brake do it well in advance and slowly so that person that may be tailgating you has a chance to see you are slowing down.

6) Plot your Course

This especially applies when navigating through large metropolitan areas. Know what turns you need to make, what the exit numbers need to be taken and which lane is best to be in well before you arrive there. The worse thing to do is try and force yourself across several lanes of traffic to get to an exit.

One tip we use is to have a look at the roadway from a satellite view. We are able to use our Ipad to see a bird's eye view of the highway and know ahead of time what the road pattern is for exits and by that information know the best lane to be in. This comes in real handy when there is a left-hand lane exit versus the standard right-hand variety.

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7) Be Well Rested

Due to the volume of traffic the Interstates can be a very demanding environment to drive an RV in. You need to have all your wits about you and it takes sustained concentration to make your travels safe. It's just not worth saving time if you're starting to get tired. **Take a break!** It may save yours or another life. Bad things always seem to happen when your tired and not paying full attention. This is why they have those things called Rest Stops.



8) Watch for Debris

This is a biggy! Because the Interstates are so busy they tend to be full of debris. A common threat is pieces of tires from blowouts on the big rigs. Another is stuff fallen off vehicles like chairs and mattresses. This is another reason it pays to be always anticipating and scanning far ahead. It's also another good reason to travel in the right lane next to the shoulder as then you have somewhere to go if you quickly need to avoid an object.

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9) Avoid Bad Weather

If it's at all possible stay off the highways during poor weather. Traveling at this time increases your risks dramatically. Why push through during a driving rain storm when you can pull over and wait it out. If the weather forecast is for snow, ice, extreme rain or fog I just stay put and wait it out. When something goes wrong on an Interstate during poor weather it usually is bad. We have all seen the news report detailing the 100 or more vehicle pile ups and carnage involved.



10) DO NOT EXCEED 65 MPH ON HIGHWAY

This normally goes without saying, but I'll repeat it here because excessive speed on the Interstates has consequences that are magnified.