
ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *TEN ESSENTIAL QUALITIES OF A GOOD DRIVER (6-7)*

What is the mental and quality make-up of an effective and quality driver? The driver who never causes problems. Who never has an accident and does his job, day after day? Listed below are characteristics that these types of drivers have.

6. **Right attitude.** If you don't have the right attitude you won't be a good driver. You see your role as a partner, not in charge. Others are held in proper esteem.

By the same token, drivers who are overly fearful generally aren't good drivers. The key is to not panic in emergency situations, and have the presence of mind to decide and execute the best action for that moment. A good driver will also be self-aware of his/her bad habits and will constantly strive to overcome them.

Linked to this is the realization that there is always something to learn. Nobody is perfect, so learn from your own mistakes, and from the mistakes of others.

Being courteous to other road users is also very important. That means coexisting with all other road users, including motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Getting agitated, impatient, and angry can have disastrous consequences. Realize and accept that you share the road with others, and act and react accordingly. You will not only be a better driver, but also a safer driver.

7. **Knowledge.** Knowledge is defined as what is learned, understood, or what you are aware of. A good driver knows what leads to accidents (distracting activities, daydreaming, fatigue) and is therefore more aware of how to avoid or minimize these risks. A good driver also knows his or her limitations – physical, mental, and emotional – and knows how to overcome them.

By knowing your vehicle's abilities and shortcomings, you will be better equipped to respond to potentially dangerous situations. Does your vehicle have enough power to execute passing maneuvers safely and in good time? How hard do you have to step on the brakes to come to a complete stop? Is your vehicle equipped with ABS brakes or will you need to apply cadence braking? Are there any other driver aids, such as stability control and traction control, which need to be considered?

A good driver is not necessarily the person with split-second reflexes, the eyesight of a hawk, and the talent of a race car driver. A good driver is anyone who understands that all road users have a responsibility to each other to obey the law and the rules of the road. It is anyone who is unselfish and who respects the rights of others.

Good drivers do not just happen. They are built by practice, dedication, and work. The result saves lives. What kind of driver are you?

Provided by the ASA – Houston Chapter Safety & Health Committee and **ADAMS**
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