



Backing Up

JUNE 2026

LENGTH 2–5 minutes

TO PREPARE Read the background information.
Bring the company's policy on backing up.

BACKGROUND

- Backing up is the leading cause of workplace and job-related deaths for workers in work zones.
- Backing collisions account for 25% of all collisions and cause 500 deaths and 15,000 injuries per year. These are huge numbers, when you consider the fact that 99% of the time drivers are behind the wheel, they are moving forward.
- The use of safe backing vehicle tips by employers and employees can help prevent crashes while on the job.

DISCUSSION

- You have probably seen the driver in the grocery store parking lot—you know the one—who's driving around, waiting for the perfect parking spot. Most of the time, that same driver is looking for the closest spot to the front door, but the closest spot might not be the safest spot.
- Don't be afraid to get your 10,000 steps needed per day! Take the safest parking spot and get a few more needed steps of activity while you're at it!



What tips can you think of that would help drivers back up safely?

- Choose easy-exit parking spaces that don't crowd neighboring vehicles and park the vehicle in the center of the parking space. Park away from entrances, exits and other cars whenever possible.
- Pull through or back in on arrival when parking in a parking lot or parking in an alley that doesn't permit driving all the way through.
- Do a walk-around. Walking around a vehicle gives a driver firsthand view of the backing area and any limitations. They can check for



TRAFFIC SAFETY Huddle

children, soft or muddy areas, potholes, tire hazards, and other dangers. Begin backing directly after your walk-around.

- Back up slowly and continually check the rear and sides.



How can you solve the problem with blind spots?

- Get to know your vehicle's blind spots. In a medium sized truck, blind spots can extend up to 16 feet in front and 160 feet behind the vehicle.
- Drivers need to remember that mirrors can never give the whole picture while backing.
- Get navigational help from a person outside the vehicle, if possible. Make sure your guide is reliable and that you plan how to use hand signals. (Spotters are discussed in the **Backing Over Safety Huddle**.)
- Remember G.O.A.L., which stands for **Get Out, And Look**. Don't assume you know what is around your vehicle.

OPTIONAL DISCUSSION

Backing Up Webinar

For a more thorough discussion on backing up, watch the 16-minute webinar available on YouTube, which shares many more how-to's on avoiding backing up collisions:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kj1b_v_17qM

SUMMARY

- No amount of forward-driving experience can help a driver with backing a truck or other vehicles. All drivers need practice, practice, and practice in safe surroundings until they become familiar with the way the vehicle backs up compared to the direction the steering wheel is turned.
- Every backing situation is new and different. Sometimes a driver visits the same location several times a day and should be watchful each visit for changes and any new obstacles.