

## Look and Check Before You Back

Although we spend much less time backing vehicles than driving forward, accidents related to backing still account for approximately 25% of all auto collisions.

Most backing collisions are less severe than most collisions driving forward; however, they can still cause severe injuries and impact on company operations. Factors involved with backing accidents include:

- Severe injuries or even fatalities to people struck by backing vehicles.
- Possible injury to the driver.
- Interruptions to customer service or delivery due to vehicle damage and delays. These losses are not insured and are directly covered by the company.
- Direct company losses to pay the policy deductibles.



One obvious problem is that vision while backing is more difficult and limited, especially for larger vehicles, trailers, or vans. All backing accidents are preventable, and the following practices reduce the risk for an accident while backing:

1. **Rule 1:** *Never* back while distracted by phones, passengers, or other tasks. It takes a minute or two to back out safely...everything else can wait.
2. If possible, plan how you park so that you can drive away and not back. This isn't always possible, but is the best first step.
3. Avoid backing from driveways and alleys into a road. If you must park in an alley or driveway, try to back in and drive out if possible. The best drivers never back around a corner without a spotter due to limited visibility.
4. Take in the whole picture before backing. Note tight corners, other vehicles, people, and fixed objects. This only takes a few seconds and is time well spent.
5. Unless something changes, start backing immediately after checking and then deciding to move. Delays increase the possibility for the situation to change which can include another vehicle or person moving behind your vehicle.
6. Back slowly and keep your eyes moving, using mirrors to check sides and the rear view for clearance and changing situations.

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