

Inappropriate speed.

Driving at an inappropriate speed for the prevailing conditions doesn't just mean breaking the speed limit. It is one of key contributory factors to Hit Third Party in Rear accidents.

Driving at an inappropriate speed isn't just when a driver breaks the speed limit for a given stretch of road. It includes 'excessive speed' but also when driving too fast for the prevailing conditions (i.e. inclement weather, reduced visibility or high vulnerable road user activity).

Driving at inappropriate high speeds increases the risk of a crash and means that the crash is more likely to cause more serious injuries to all involved and a greater level of physical damage to the vehicle(s).

Other driver errors such as driving too close to the vehicle in front and driving when tired or distracted are also magnified by inappropriate speed. This is because drivers have less time to recognise and react to hazards developing around them.

Education and raising awareness is absolutely essential to reduce speed related accidents. Studies have shown that it is easier to encourage drivers to drive at safer speeds when they understand that excessive and inappropriate speed greatly increases the risk of being involved in a serious or fatal accident.

- > Pedestrians who are struck by the front of cars travelling at 30mph or above, are much more likely to sustain serious injuries or be killed¹
- > Research has shown that male drivers under 30 years old, and especially under 21 years old, were more likely to be in speed-related collisions²

- > Remember, it's a speed LIMIT, not a TARGET! You should check your speedometer regularly, particularly when leaving motorways.
- > Embrace in-vehicle technology (e.g. telematics) to monitor your speed and take responsibility for amending your driving style.
- > Research has shown that time-pressurised drivers are almost 8 times more likely to be impatient³. This may then lead on to speeding and greater risk-taking, so be aware and understand the pressures that your operation may be placing on you.
- > It is estimated that up to 95% of crashes are down to driver error⁴. It is therefore vital that you understand the importance of safety and how you can protect yourself and others.
- > If you recognise that you have a generally poor attitude towards driving, don't ignore it, otherwise you may be an accident waiting to happen.

References:

1. Inappropriate Speed, RoSPA, 2011.
2. "The Characteristics of Speed Related Collisions", Road safety Research Report 117, Department for Transport, Sept 2010.
3. QBE Motor Academy 2013 - Cranfield University.
4. Dimensions of aberrant driver behaviour, Uppsala University, Sweden, 1998 (cited in Brake: Essential guide to fleet safety, 2014).

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