

TONY BARDEN SCHOOL OF MOTORING

OBSERVATION

Observation is one of the **most important** elements in your driving. You *must* be able to observe the various different hazards on the road, and deal with them safely. Practice reading the road.....you don't even have to be driving to do this! If you are a passenger in a car, you can do it. (*Lack of proper observation is one of the most common causes of failing the driving test.*)

Look out for;

OTHER VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS

SIGNALS GIVEN BY OTHER DRIVERS

ROAD SIGNS AND ROAD MARKINGS

THE TYPE AND CONDITION OF THE ROAD SURFACE

MOVEMENTS OF VEHICLES WELL AHEAD OF YOU AS WELL AS THE ONE JUST IN FRONT

SIDE ROADS TO THE LEFT AND RIGHT AHEAD SHOULD BE CHECKED BEFORE YOU ARRIVE AT THEM. WATCH FOR DRIVERS LOOKING THE OTHER WAY AND SLOW DOWN IN CASE THEY EMERGE

BUSES SIGNALLING TO MOVE OUT FROM BUS STOPS

Keep your eyes moving all the time from one area to another, including **frequent mirror checks**. When turning to the left at a cross junction, look to the right briefly in case there is something coming (even at traffic lights....you never know until you look!). Look to the left briefly when turning right . If you are going straight through a cross junction, look both ways before proceeding.....don't forget it is just as important at traffic lights! A green light does *not* mean go, it means go *if* the way ahead is clear. So get into the habit of checking all *roads, house entrances, garage entrances, shop entrances* left and right **well before** you get to them. This way you will have more time to act if there is an emergency, and remember, one of the most common comments you will hear after an accident is “ *He seemed to come out of nowhere* ” or “ *I didn't have time to stop, he just pulled out in front of me* ”

What does this suggest? If you are honest with yourself , it suggests that the driver was not looking for potential danger , and therefore had **no time to react** when he saw it. This is proven to be the case in the vast majority of accidents. Often just one or two seconds extra can mean the difference between a crash and avoiding the other driver. How do you gain that extra second or two?.....

.....**Look further ahead**, and be aware of what's happening at all side roads etc. Ask yourself this question....When was the last time I had to brake firmly to avoid danger? Be honest with the answer. If you had to apply the brakes harder than normal, it means you have probably not seen something early enough. So practice looking further ahead and anticipating what another driver or road user might do, and react earlier than you would normally do. For the next week , put yourself to the test. See how many times you had to brake harshly and then try to improve on that. See if you can eliminate it completely from your normal driving...if you can, you are beginning to become a safer, more observant driver.

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