



# Institute of Advanced Motorists

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## Fact Sheet 19/001

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### DRIVING ATTITUDES

One of the most dangerous things most of us do each day is driving a motor vehicle. It is something we all take for granted. Many drivers involved in a crash or so-called “accident” do not accept that they have contributed to it. If you think that you have nothing to learn from an accident or even a near miss that you were involved in, your style of driving will not change. The IAM recommends this checklist to help you approach driving with the right “attitude”.

- If another motorist “carves you up” in a line of traffic, do not retaliate or try to punish the other driver. This may escalate the situation or lead to an accident.
- To maintain the right attitude for good driving, try to improve your powers of observation. This demands considerable thought and practice but will usually keep you out of potentially dangerous situations. Observation skills give you an “early warning” of any situations developing which might require action from you.
- Try to accept that all road users are vulnerable. Be tolerant and considerate to all other road users, even if they have appeared to be aggressive towards you. A little courtesy can be catchy!
- The majority of road accidents are caused by human error. If we all treat the motor car as a convenient and enjoyable means of transport instead of an extension of our egos, we can reduce accidents on our roads. No journey is so urgent as to justify an accident.
- Develop a sensible driving plan and endeavour to avoid a very tight driving schedule, with business and domestic commitments. Try to avoid driving under pressure or stress. Do not take a chance at the red lights, exceed speed limits, or cut corners. Allow an extra five minutes for each journey.
- Tiredness plays a very important part in causing an aggressive attitude towards other road users and frustrations encountered by traffic hold-ups and road works. Take regular breaks to combat driver fatigue.
- Always expect slow reactions and poor observation from other road users. Often accidents can be avoided if one driver allows for another’s mistakes.
- A common “trigger” for aggression and frustration is driving too close to another vehicle. Keep your distance and use the two-second rule whenever possible.
- Remember there is no such thing as a perfect driver; we are only as good as our last journey.