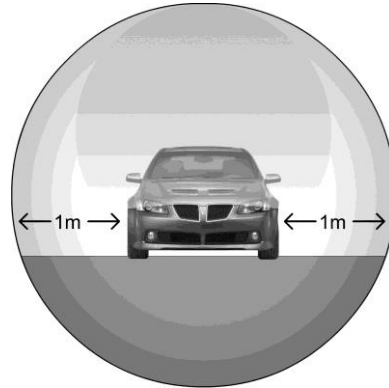


Allowing clearance

✓ One of the number one rules in driving is 'Keep Space Around You'. By keeping plenty of space around your car, you will have time to react if the unexpected happens. Remember it's very difficult to hit something if you aren't near it!

✓ **The safety bubble**
When passing parked cars and other obstacles, leave at least a metre of space to the sides. That's about the width of a car door. If there's not enough space to do this, slow right down or give way. Leave more room for horses, cyclists or pedestrians.



✓ **The two second rule**
It's vital that you can always stop in the distance you can see to be clear ahead of you. If the car in front braked heavily, you would need to be at least two seconds behind it to stop in time. On a wet road, you would need to be four seconds behind and in icy conditions, ten seconds. To check, watch the car in front pass a fixed object such as a lamppost, count slowly to two and make sure you don't reach the same lamppost before you've finished counting.



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Tailgaiting

A tailgaiter is someone who drives too close to the vehicle in front. Sometimes motorists do this aggressively to urge other drivers to speed up and sometimes simply because they're not paying attention. On busy roads and motorways vehicles often put themselves in danger for no benefit by travelling in tight bunches of traffic. If you're stuck behind another car you will be making the same progress whether you are 2m or 20m away from it, so you may as well hang back and keep safe. A third of all accidents in the UK are rear end shunts.

Should I speed up?

Not if you're already driving at a safe speed. The tailgaiter would probably stay close behind and the situation would be less safe because you'd be going faster.



Should I show my brake lights?

Sometimes drivers who are being tailgaited touch their brake gently to make their brake lights come on, in an attempt to scare the vehicle behind into backing off. However, the driver behind is likely to over-react because he is so close and he may brake heavily himself, causing an accident behind you.

Should I pull over?

If the driver behind is behaving very aggressively that might be the safest thing to do. However, in a busy town centre situation you may find that one tailgaiter is quickly replaced by another.

What should I do then?

Avoid sudden actions. Signal early and brake gently, otherwise the tailgaiter may not react quickly enough and hit you. If there is a car in front of you, drop back if necessary, to allow enough room to be able to lose speed over a longer distance.