

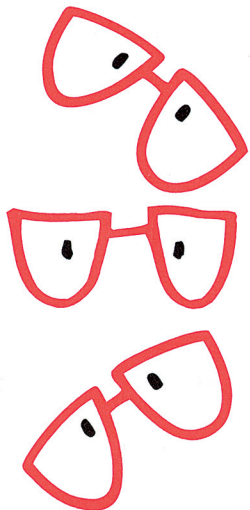
SAFETY ON THE MOVE

A driver safety bulletin from Western Experts in Transportation

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Western Experts
in Transportation



With “**active seeing**,” you keep your eyes moving — on the alert for potential hazards in your driving environment.

Visually search well ahead of your vehicle — a quarter-mile on the highway, about one block in city traffic.

Keeping an Eye Out: How “Active Seeing” Helps You Avoid Trouble on the Road

“I looked ... but I just didn’t see that car coming.”

This common explanation by motorists, trying to account for their involvement in traffic accidents, captures the essence of one of your strongest defenses against trouble on the road: “active seeing.”

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Driver who actively see their traffic environments — as opposed to those who passively *look* at them — view their surroundings with a conscious purpose and plan. They know where they’re focusing, what they’re focusing on, and why.

They use visual search techniques that keep their eyes in almost constant motion — on the lookout for potential hazards. While they are ready to respond to anything in their field of view, their main purpose is to seek out and identify possibly dangerous conditions around them.

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Active-seeing drivers shift their focus in a consistent pattern — smoothly scanning forward, side-to-side, and behind their vehicles.

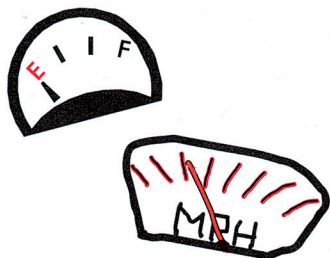
As they sharpen their habit, they eventually reach the point where they’re performing a complete visual-search sweep as often as 12 to 15 times per minute — that is, every 4 to 5 seconds.

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In a typical active-seeing setting, you could follow this sequence of views:

- Road ahead. You should scan close-up and as far forward as practical — about a quarter-mile on the open road, and a block or so in city traffic. You’re trying to identify impending perils — lane

(Continued overleaf)



Don't forget the instrument panel. Your scan should include critical gauges and the speedometer.

Active seeing can benefit you with improved safety, increased alertness, and reduced eye strain.

changers, intersections, vehicles you're overtaking, pedestrians, merging vehicles, road-surface problems.

- Left-side mirror. You're keeping track of what's going on beside and behind you. Watch especially for vehicles that are overtaking you or that may be entering your "blind spot."
- Road ahead — as before.
- Right-side/rear-view mirrors — similar to the left-side mirror search.
- Road ahead — as before.
- Instrument panel. Monitoring your instruments can help you spot a problem before it becomes a breakdown. Check critical gauges — fuel, oil, temperature — plus your speedometer.

Start over. Repeat the visual scan continuously, providing yourself with a constant flow of up-to-date information.

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Experts say active seeing contributes to safety in several important ways:

- It promotes early detection of traffic hazards so you can respond to them sooner and more effectively.
- It helps avoid the dangerous practice of "fixating" — staring at the vehicle or pavement immediately in front of you.
- It increases alertness and staves off boredom.
- It reduces eye strain and combats fatigue.

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If you're not already an active-seeing driver, give it a try. With some practice, it'll soon become second nature to you — a habit for safe-keeping. □

Questions or comments?
Call Western Experts
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800-843-2430