

# TOP 10

## Driving Pet Peeves

So, you're driving down the highway going 40 in a 35. One of your favorite songs starts playing on the radio.

"Aw yeah! Despacito! That's my jam!"

Suddenly, an old beat up truck pulls out in front of you, causing you to slam on your brakes. Your hot coffee splashes onto your lap. Your work papers fly into your floorboard. Your crotch is now on fire and it looks like you've soiled yourself.

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Below is a list of the top 10 gripes among American drivers according to Consumer Reports. Their nuisance level is on a scale of 1-10.



### 1. TEXTING WHILE DRIVING

(Nuisance level: 8.9)

This seemingly innocent act can have detrimental repercussions. If you text while driving, you're 6 times more likely to get in an accident than drunk driving. Taking your eyes off the road for just 3 seconds is like traveling the length of a football field with your eyes closed.

Aside from being incredibly dangerous, texting while driving is also illegal. Only 2 U.S. states don't have texting bans – Montana and Arizona. All other states will issue a citation if you're caught texting while driving.

Texting while *walking* is a growing concern, too.

### 2. ILLEGAL PARKING IN HANDICAPPED SPACES

(Nuisance level: 8.7)

Illegally parking in handicapped spaces can come with very serious consequences. Fines can range from **\$100 to \$1,000**. Repeat offenders could possibly have their license revoked – **permanently**.

If you are an able-bodied person that comes across a disabled parking spot, leave it open for someone who needs it.

### 3. TAILGATING

(Nuisance level: 8.4)

*Tailgating* is when you drive too close to the vehicle in front of you. It's perilous and illegal. If you're tailgating, you could cause a rear end collision with the car in front of you.

**TIP:** A simple way to prevent yourself from tailgating is to distance yourself away from the car in front of you **AT LEAST** one car length per every 10 mph you're driving. For example, if you're going 30 mph, you should drive at least 3 car lengths between your car and the one in front of you.

### 4. CUTTING PEOPLE OFF

(Nuisance level: 8.3)

Being *cut off* is when someone pulls out in front of you at a closer distance than you're comfortable with. This can cause you to brake in order to avoid a collision – especially if the person doesn't signal or warn you of their intentions.

Regardless, most rear-end collisions are the fault of the person doing the rear-ending; but, if a collision does occur, and you feel it was the fault of the person who pulled out in front of you, you can always sue and let the judge decide.

## 5. SPEEDING IN AND OUT OF TRAFFIC

(Nuisance level: 8.2)

Speeding kills about as many people each year as drunk driving. About **10,000** fatal crashes each year involve speeding.

Robert Sumwalt from the NTSB says, "In a crash that's speeding-related, you're more likely to be injured, your injuries are more likely to be severe, and you're more likely to die. And that's true whether you're the speeding driver, another driver, a passenger, a bicyclist or a pedestrian."



## 6. TAKING UP TWO PARKING SPACES

(Nuisance level: 7.7)

Taking up two parking spaces has been referred to as the "worst parking sin." As many as 3 to 5 percent of drivers take up more than one space by parking outside the lines.

This may be infuriating at times, but it's not necessarily illegal. For example, Grand Rapids, Michigan will issue a \$20 citation for the offense, while Prince George's County, Maryland has no law against "straddling a line on the pavement."

## 7. NOT ALLOWING TO MERGE

(Nuisance level: 7.6)

Failing to let someone merge is viewed as a slap in the face to some people. However, it's not illegal. If you're trying to merge onto a freeway, the drivers on the freeway have no obligation to make your life easier. The responsibility to safely merge into traffic from an on-ramp lies with the driver of the merging vehicle.

## 8. NOT DIMMING HIGH BEAMS

(Nuisance level: 7.6)

Traffic death rates are up to **3 times greater at night** than during the day. It is a good idea to use your high beams when driving in rural areas at night. However, you must dim your high beams at least 500 ft from any oncoming vehicle so you don't blind them.

## 9. NOT USING TURN SIGNALS

(Nuisance level: 7.5)

All cars are equipped with turn signals. They're not optional. Using a turn signal is required by law. If you're turning right or left or changing lanes, you should use your turn signal for at least 100 feet prior to turning or changing lanes.

When turning, **DO NOT** apply your brakes before signaling. Use your signal first, then brake.

## 10. DRIVING SLOW IN THE PASSING LANE

(Nuisance level: 7.3)

The left lane is reserved for passing. Driving slow in the left lane is **illegal**. If you're in the left lane and someone passes you on the right, you are in the wrong lane and need to move over.

**TIP:** If you're wanting to pass a slow motorist that's in the passing lane, one strategy is to signal a lane change toward the center median. Another strategy is to flash your headlights. Whatever you do, don't ride their bumper; it's dangerous and illegal (See #3: *Tailgating*).