Avoiding Collisions with Animals

Here are some simple tips about how to avoid hitting an animal when on the road:

- Avoid driving at dawn and dusk and a few hours after dark in areas populated by wildlife as this is when animals are more likely to be moving around and feeding.
- Keep alert in areas likely to be populated by wildlife. Be cautious, scanning both the road ahead and the roadsides. Get any passengers to help and pay attention to any warning signs (e.g., Kangaroos next 10km). Be aware of traffic behind you, as well as oncoming traffic.
Avoiding Collisions with Animals (cont)

- Driving slower when visibility is poor or where you expect there are animals gives you a greater reaction time and a better chance of avoiding a collision with an animal
- Throwing food scraps out of your car is illegal and it may also attract wildlife to feed on the sides of roads, increasing the risk of injury
- Some animals may act unpredictably, so where possible, give them plenty of time and room to move off the road when passing them. Brake safely and, if necessary, sound your horn in a series of short bursts, then drive slowly past the animal.
- Always maintain full control of your vehicle. Sometimes, it may be impossible to avoid a collision with an animal if avoiding it puts yourself and other motorists in danger
Driving in Wet Conditions

When it is raining, or the road is wet, most tyres have good traction up to about 60kph. However, as you move faster, your tyres will start to ride up on the water. This is called “aquaplaning.” In heavy rain, you tyres can lose all traction with the road at around 80kph. Bald or badly worn tyres will lose traction at a much lower speed. The best way to keep from aquaplaning is to drive slower in the rain, or when the road is wet.

If it feels like your tyres have lost traction with the surface of the road;
• Ease your foot off the accelerator pedal.
• Keep the steering wheel straight. Only try to turn if it’s an emergency. If you must turn, do it slowly, or you will cause your vehicle to skid.
• Don’t try and stop or turn until your tyres are gripping the road again.
Driving in Wet Conditions (cont)

Less than one inch of water can cause a driver to lose control of a car and most vehicles can float in two feet of water or less.

If you encounter a flooded road, don’t attempt to drive through it. Turn around and seek an alternative route or wait until the water subsides. Although it may look like just a few inches of water on the road, you have no idea if the road has washed away underneath providing a hazardous situation for drivers. It is also difficult to determine the depth of floodwaters.
If your vehicle stalls in rising flood water, and you can safely do so, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may engulf the vehicle and its occupants and sweep them away.

Once vehicles begin to float they move toward deep, faster-moving water where escape is even more dangerous and top-heavy vehicles may roll over. Deaths often occur because people mistakenly believe that vehicles provide protection from rising, swiftly moving waters.

However, if you find yourself in this situation you must make a judgment call about whether you can make it to higher ground or if you would be better off remaining with your vehicle. The only sure safety rule is to turn around and avoid flooded roadways in the first place.
Driving in Wet Conditions (cont)

- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.
- Avoid already flooded areas and areas subject to sudden flooding. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams or water flowing over the roadway.
- If you are driving and come upon rapidly rising waters, turn around and find another route.
- Move to higher ground away from streams, creeks and flood control channels.
- If your route is blocked by floodwaters or barricades, find another route. Barricades are put up by local officials to protect people from unsafe roads. Never drive around barricades. Driving around them can be a serious risk.
Driving Near Bushfires

If you are driving in a bushfire prone area, remember to stay alert at all times. Fires can start and become dangerous quickly. If you see smoke ahead, don’t delay – U-turn to safety.

• Monitor district Fire Danger Ratings and daily weather forecasts.
• Always carry maps of the area you’re entering, and note exit routes.
• Always keep a bag in your vehicle, with long sleeved clothing made from natural fibres (eg. Cotton), sturdy shoes, drinking water and any medications needed.
• Keep a woollen blanket in the car for added protection from radiant heat.
• Be prepared to change travel plans to avoid bushfire prone areas on hot, dry and windy days.
Driving during a bushfire is a last resort as road travel during bushfires could be fatal. Always avoid areas where fires are burning. If you find yourself in a vehicle during a bushfire;

- Always U-turn to safety if you can.
- If you can’t, stay in the car. It offers better protection from radiant heat than being outside. DO NOT get out and run.
- Park behind a solid structure to block as much heat as you can. Otherwise, pull into a clear area at the side of the road, if possible, away from debris and surrounding trees that may ignite.
- Turn off the ignition, wind up your car windows, close air vents, turn on headlights and hazard warning lights.
Driving Near Bushfires (cont)

- Cover exposed skin as much as possible with natural fibre clothing.
- Get down as low as possible below window level.
- Cover up with woollen or cotton blankets until the fire front passes. If you have water, drink it.
- Only get out of the car once the fire has gone.

Note: It is highly unlikely that a person will survive while sheltering in a vehicle during a bushfire but it will offer a slightly higher chance of survival than being caught in the open.

DON’T LEAVE IT TOO LATE AND GET CAUGHT OUT ON THE ROAD DURING A BUSHFIRE