



Roadside Emergency Safety Tips



Take action immediately:

If you notice car trouble, start moving over the right way. If you wait too long, your car may stop moving before you're able to get off of the road.

Don't exit your car until it's safe:

If you're having an emergency, you may feel panicked and want to investigate the situation immediately. But be careful about getting out of your car, especially if you're still near traffic. Get out of your car through the passenger side if there's traffic on the driver side. And of course, look for traffic before you open your door.

Warn others you're having trouble:

Turn on your hazard lights, and if you have safety cones, signs, flares, triangles, or a light, use those as well to increase your visibility. If you're stopped at night, be sure to leave your lights on. You can also pop your hood to show others you're having car trouble.

Remember you're in traffic:

If you're on the shoulder, keep in mind you and your car are not protected by the thin white line that separates you from the other cars speeding past on the freeway. All it takes is a distraction or wind to have a vehicle drift over into the shoulder, hitting your car. You should also take care to keep your distance from the flow of traffic. If you can't perform your own roadside repairs safely, it is best to remain in the vehicle with your seat belt on and doors locked. Don't stand behind or next to your vehicle.

Call for roadside assistance:

If you have roadside assistance through your insurance, cell phone carrier, or roadside club, give them a call immediately. They are typically available 24/7 with fast service that will take you to the nearest vehicle repair location. Remember to put their phone number in your cell phone so you'll always have it handy.

Be prepared with emergency supplies:

Keep a first aid kit, extra water and food, and emergency repair supplies including tools, a spare tire, duct tape, jack, jumper cables, heavy-duty rope, gloves, and tire inflator and sealant. You should also have flags, flares, or reflective triangles to warn other drivers that you're having trouble.

Know when to call a professional:

Some vehicle owners can handle quick roadside repairs without help, but even the savviest of DIYers can get in over their heads and end up in dangerous territory. Know when it's smart to call for help. While you might be able to handle a tire change in a parking lot, it's not a good idea to try to do the same while you're on a highway shoulder. Use your best judgment.

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