



# The Driver: Situational Awareness While Driving

Situational awareness is recognizing where you are, where you are supposed to be, and whether anyone or anything around you is a threat to your safety. Situational awareness while driving is integral to ensuring that your actions and reactions can be completed in sufficient time to prevent an accident.

Consider these tips to improve your situational awareness while driving:

1

**Keep your eyes moving.**

Scan back and forth across your field of vision and scan your mirrors. Actively scan traffic and environmental conditions. When you allow your eyes to remain fixed on any one thing, your peripheral vision begins to narrow into tunnel vision, resulting in a decreased ability to detect movement.

2

**Identify risk areas.**

If you are approaching a busy intersection, study the vehicles turning and approaching from other streets. Search for moving and stationary objects as well as pedestrians who may be in or near the road.

3

**Watch for subtle changes in other vehicles.**

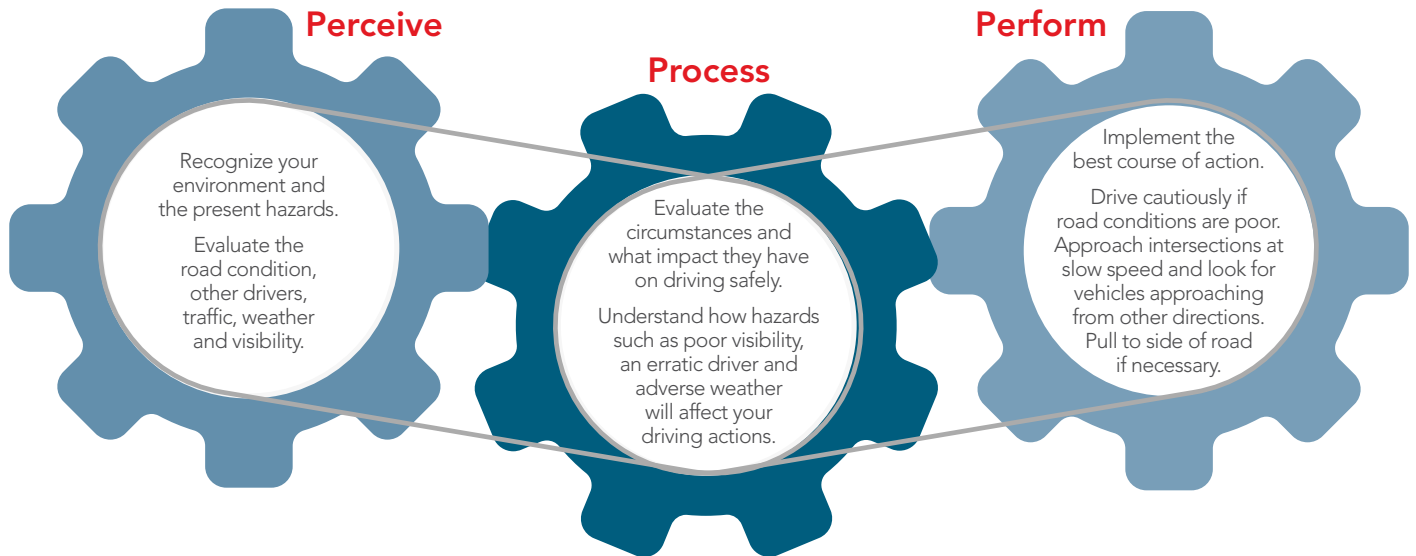
A drift in the lane or slight angling of the front wheels can indicate an impending lane change or that the driver is distracted. Be prepared to stop or navigate away from the distracted driver.

4

**Focus your thoughts.**

Mental and cognitive distractions prevent the full attention of your surroundings and environment. Limit mental distractions and focus on the task of driving.

Remember these Three P's to help ensure situational awareness.



<sup>1</sup> [Aeronautical Decision-Making: Federal Aviation Administration](#)

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