

Avoid road rage at all costs

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3 Oct 2022

Steering clear of road rage could save your life.

“ Instigating or being at the receiving end of a road rage incident is never a good idea and should be avoided from both sides at all costs. ”



International studies reveal that incidences of aggressive driving and road rage that lead to fatal accidents have increased tremendously in the last 10 years. The study also reveals that road rage plays a role in at least half of all fatal motor vehicle accidents.

Road rage is not only confined to instances where drivers get out of their cars and become violent but also includes dangerous behaviour such as driving very close to the car in front of you, sideswiping, forcing other cars off the road or throwing objects at other cars.

South Africa has one of the worst reputations for road rage and the current economic climate is only going to make things worse. South Africans are highly stressed at the moment and for those with a short temper, relatively insignificant actions can cause them to react in a violent and unnecessary manner as they take out their general stress on other motorists.

Instigating or being at the receiving end of a road rage incident is never a good idea and should be avoided from both sides at all costs.

Avoid driving if you are very stressed. If you have just had a meeting that didn't go your way or a disagreement with a spouse or family member, rather take five minutes to calm down before getting behind the wheel. Destress by taking a short walk, having a coffee or talking to a friend on the phone before you continue with your onward journey. If you have no choice but to drive, listen to your [favourite music or an audio book](#) to help take your mind off the issues that are perpetuating stress.

Better time management is key to avoiding road rage, as running late is one of the leading causes of road rage. Smartphone navigation apps are a great tool for planning your daily travel but rather give yourself an extra fifteen minutes for any journey so that unexpected traffic or delays do not cause you to run late.

Being patient and treating other drivers with basic respect is key to not getting worked up. While everyone should obey the rules of the road, the circumstances might be beyond the drivers' control. If the car in front of you is driving slowly, it might be because they are lost or it could be an elderly driver behind the wheel. The car could have a [mechanical problem](#) and



and to pull to a safe location or fuel station before pulling over. In many cases, the speed of heavy vehicles is limited to 80 or 100km/h and it is not possible for them to drive faster than that, even on highways. Giving other drivers the benefit of the doubt will go a long way in keeping calm and avoiding a potentially unnecessary situation.

By being a safe, [courteous driver](#) who obeys the rules of the road, especially when it comes to actions like indicating or keeping left and passing right you can avoid being the source of irritation for other drivers and potentially causing them to react in an aggressive manner.

Force yourself to never respond or engage with aggressive drivers, as this will only aggravate the situation. If you were in the wrong, apologise immediately and in most cases this will defuse the situation. Actions like hooting, flashing your lights or gesturing will only make the situation worse.

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