

SMART DRIVER[®]

February 2024

PROPER BACKING PROCEDURES

Backing up a semi truck and hitting a stationary object is one of the most frequent causes of a loss for a trucking company. Read the information below on how to properly back into a straight parking spot, and ask yourself how you can improve your driving style to avoid a backing crash.

SET UP THE MANEUVER

1. Drive parallel to the open dock, and find a point of reference to which you will align the left rear of the trailer. Some drivers drop an old glove on this spot as a point of reference to see better. (Figure 1)
2. Pull forward slowly a few feet, and then make a hard right turn to point the tractor in the 12 o'clock position. (Figure 2)
3. When the tractor is in the 12 o'clock position, make a hard left turn until the tractor is pointed in the nine o'clock position. At this point, the trailer should be at a 45-degree angle with the left rear of the trailer lined up with your point of reference/red glove. (Figure 2)

GET OUT AND LOOK (GOAL)

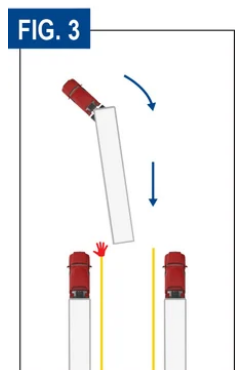
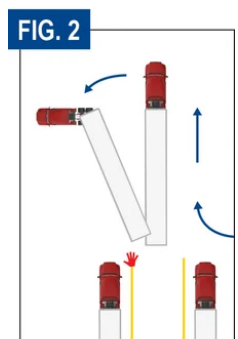
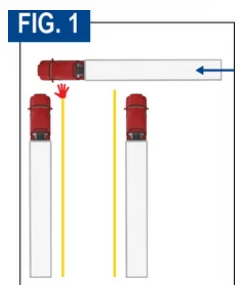
4. Turn on the four-way flashers. Walk around the tractor and trailer to ensure there are no objects around or behind the truck, like a vehicle, pallets, or people. If a reliable spotter is available, this is a good time to coordinate hand signals. (Figure 2)

BACK IN

5. Get back in the truck and roll down the windows. Turn off the radio and other noise distractions so you can hear your spotter. Honk the horn to alert others nearby that you will be moving. Use your mirrors, and begin backing slowly. Turn the steering wheel hard to the left and keep the left rear corner of the trailer lined up with your point of reference. Make steering corrections as needed. (Figure 3)
6. With the left rear corner of the trailer directly over your point of reference, the trailer should be straight or nearly straight enough to back directly into the parking spot. At this point, stop the truck, and do another walk around. Make sure the left rear corner of the trailer is directly over the point of reference. This action will help ensure you do not hit another trailer or object on either side of the trailer. If you need to reposition the truck, do so before backing in. (Figure 3)
7. Get back in the truck, honk the horn again, and start backing in slowly. Follow the parking space's white line (if available) as you back in. Use the trailer's tires as a reference on the lines, as well. Countersteer as needed. Before reaching the dock, stop the vehicle. Get out and look one more time behind the trailer, and retrieve your glove. If all is clear, get back in the truck, and slowly finish backing in until you bump the dock. (Figure 3)

Note: These lists are not intended to be all-inclusive.

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Knowledge Verification

Driver's Name: _____

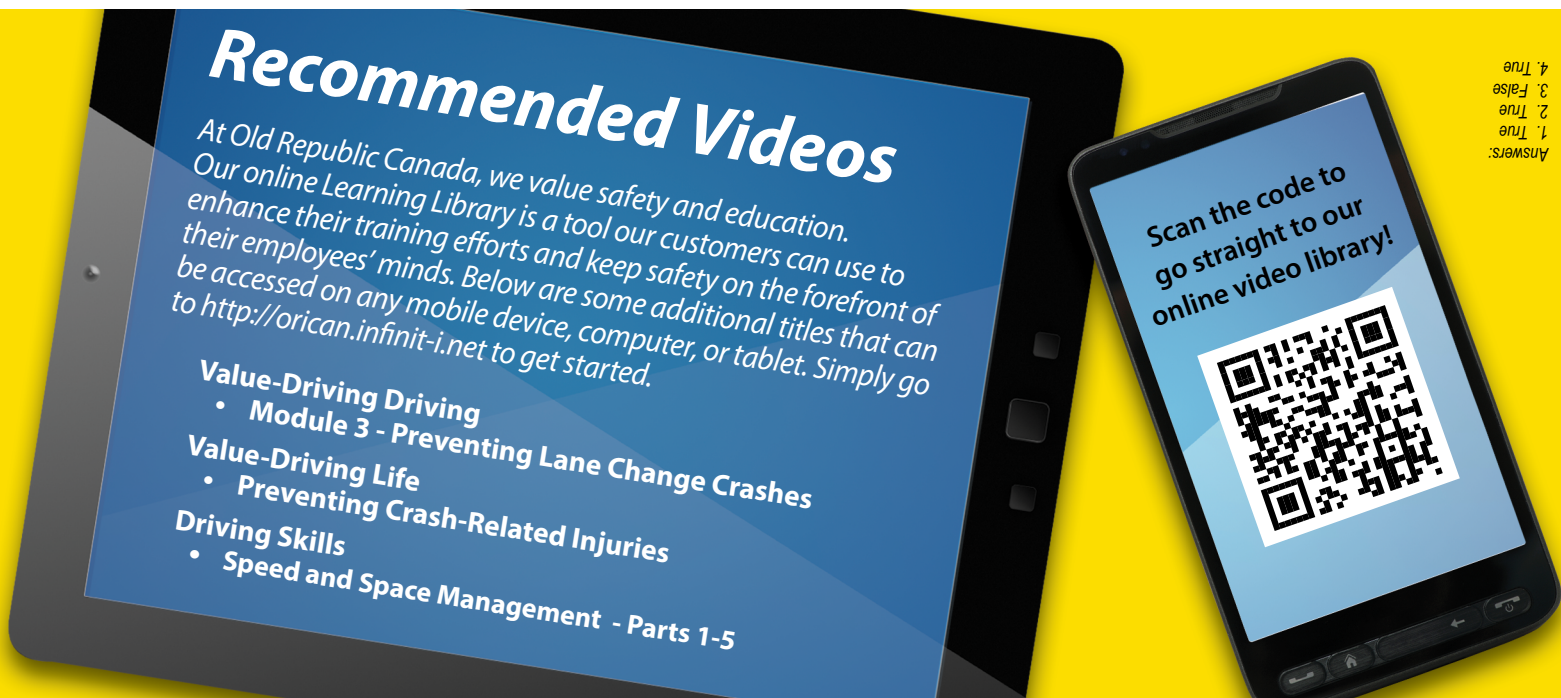
Driver's Signature: _____

Witness Name: _____

Date: _____

Please answer, and forward a completed copy to your Safety Department/Safety Representative.

- | | | |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. "GOAL" or "GET OUT AND LOOK" is an important practice before the backing maneuver. | True | False |
| 2. Prior to backing, you should roll down your windows, turn off the radio and avoid all distractions such as music, noise etc., so you can hear your spotter or any hazard. | True | False |
| 3. You should perform the practice of "GOAL" only once before backing? | True | False |
| 4. If you need to reposition your truck, do so before backing in. | True | False |



Answers:
1. True
2. True
3. False
4. True

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