

Road Observation Checklist

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Keep Observers Involved

Observation time only counts as instruction if observer students are learning. Simply riding around in a truck will not produce learning. The purpose in having the observer students record and critique driver performance is to keep them involved in the learning process.

Actually, in early on-street lessons, most of the learning will occur while students are observers. Not having to cope with the task of maneuvering the vehicle, they are able to better observe, evaluate, and analyze the overall driving environment.

To make sure observers are paying attention and profiting from street lessons, you should call upon individual students to point out driver errors and to suggest what would have been appropriate responses. This will help keep nonparticipating students from hiding behind the observations of their fellow students.

Exploit Behavior of Other Drivers

The street environment offers an endless opportunity to witness more driver errors. Other drivers will generally exhibit a far wider range of mistakes than will the supervised student. Instructors can take advantage of these errors by having observers point them out when they occur and having students identify the effect that these errors could have upon other motorists, including themselves.

Road Student Observation Checklist

Place a tally mark in the check box if a driver makes a driving error in one of the categories below

Criteria	Driver	Driver	Driver	Criteria	Driver	Driver	Driver
Basic Control	1	2	3	Visual Search	1	2	3
Acceleration				Distance Scanning			
Braking				Turn Path Searching			
Stopping				Roadside Scanning			
Upshifting				Blind Intersection			
Downshifting				Mirror Usage, General			
Uphill Operation				Mirror Usage, Slowing			
Speed Adjustment/Curves				Mirror Usage, Lane			
Lane-Keeping/Straight				Mirror Usage, Merge			
Lane-Keeping/Turns				Positioning, Merge			
Lane-Keeping/ Curves							
Communication				Space Management			
Signaling Turns-None				Separation- Following Distance			
Signaling Turns-Late				Lateral Separation			
Signaling Turns-Early				Passing Distance			
Lane Changing-None				Overhead Clearance			
Lane Changing-Late				Lane Usage- Upgrade			
Lane Changing-Inappropriate Position				Mutli-Lane Roads			
Canceling-LateLate				Cross Streets			
Canceling-EarlyEarly				Right Turn			
Flashers				Left Turn			
Brake Lights				Multi-Lane Turns			
Use of Horn-Insufficient				Gap- Too Close			
Use of Horn-Improper				Gap- Too Far			
Interpreting Communications- Receiving				Merging-Barging			
Interpreting Communications- Misinterpreting				Merging-Stopping			
Night Operation				Merfing-Alignment			
Lights/High Beam				Traffic Adjustments- Compromising			
Lights/Dimming				Traffic Adjustments- Adjacent Operation			
Speed Adjustments							
Following Distance							
Gap Selection							
Total							

Road Observer's Checklist

Explanation of Driver's Space Management Checklist

Separation

Following Distance – not allowing the proper number of seconds in following distance for vehicle length and speed involved.

Lateral Separation – failure to maintain a center lane position when oncoming or overtaking vehicles.

Passing Distance – changing lanes (returning to the right lane) too quickly in front of a vehicle that has passed.

Overhead Clearance – having to be stopped by the instructor to prevent collision with an overhead object.

Lane Use

Upgrade – impeding other traffic by failure to enter the right-most lane on an upgrade.

Multi-lane Roads – failure to enter the lane most appropriate to the truck speed and intended maneuver.

Cross Streets – attempting to traverse or enter a cross street when there is insufficient space to accommodate the tractor-trailer.

Right Turn – swinging left too far or too early and failing to close off the right side to overtaking traffic.

Left Turn – swinging right before starting turn, (buttonhook where unnecessary) or cutting diagonally across the intersection

Multi-lane Turns – using inside lane where traffic turns in two lane

Gaps

Too close – attempting to cross or enter an insufficient gap.

Too far – passing up an acceptable opportunity to cross or enter traffic.

Merging

Barging – causing a vehicle to alter speed/direction in order to avoid an accident during a merge attempt.

Stopping – slowing or stopping when an earlier speed adjustment would have permitted a continuous merge.

Alignment – not aligning rig parallel to highway for options rear vision.

Traffic Adjustments

Compromising – passing two potential hazards simultaneously when a speed adjustment would have allowed them to be passed in sequence.

Adjustment Operation – unnecessarily prolonged operation alongside an adjacent vehicle or vehicles

Road Observer's Checklist

Explanation of Driver's Visual Search Errors Checklist

Distance scanning – Failure to respond to a visible requirement for a speed or direction, change, at least 12 seconds in advance. Situations would include the following:

Red light	Lane drop
Red flashing light	Barricade or other obstruction
Warning sign	Parked vehicle (in travel lane)

Turn Path Search -- Failure to search the path ahead in a right or left turn.

Roadside Scanning -- Failure to respond to signs over or alongside the road, including:

Posted speed limits

Lane control signs and signals

Warning signs

Blind Intersection, Privileged- Failure to slow and search for cross traffic when approaching a blind intersection as the privileged (having the right-of-way).

Mirror Usage, General Failure to observe right and left rearview mirror at least every 5-8 seconds.

Mirror Usage, Slowing -- Failure to check the right and left rearview mirrors before slowing where following drivers would not anticipate it (e.g., tight turn, parallel parking).

Mirror Lane Change -- Failure to use the rearview mirror in the direction the lane change is to be made before initiating the lane change.

Mirror, Merge -- Insufficient or excessive monitoring of rearview mirror prior to merging onto a highway from an access or acceleration lane.

Positioning, Merge -- Failure to align the tractor and trailer sufficiently parallel to the main highway to be able to observe through traffic on the main roadway prior to a verge.

Road Observer's Checklist

Explanation of Driver's Communication Errors Checklist

Signaling Turns Errors in signaling right and left turns at intersections

None -- Failure to activate the signal at any point in the turn.

Late -- Failure to activate the signal before reaching the intersection.

Early -- Misreading other road users by an early signal.

Canceling -- Failure to cancel a signal properly

Late -- Canceling more than 5 seconds after a turn is completed.

Early -- Canceling the signal while in a turn.

Lane Changing -- Errors in signaling lane changes

None -- Failure to activate the signal at any point in the lane change.

Late -- Failure to activate signal soon enough before starting lane change.

Inappropriate Signaling -- A lane change when there is no gap to move into and enough time to wait for a gap to appear.

Position -- Failure to use vehicle position to communicate intention to change lanes

Flashers -- Failure to activate emergency flashers when slowing or stopped as provided for by state law.

Brake Lights -- Failure to flash brake lights when slowing or stopping unexpectedly, including:

Stalled traffic ahead

Midblock (e.g., alley)

Prior to parallel parking

Use of Horn -- Errors in using electric or air horns

Insufficient -- Failure to use horn under appropriate circumstances

Improper -- Using the horn improperly or using the wrong horn

Interpreting Communication -- Errors involving recognition and interpretation of communication from others.

Receiving -- Failure to react and adjust to communications of others

Misinterpreting -- Misinterpreting communications from reacting accordingly,

Road Observer's Checklist

Explanation of Driver's Basic Control Errors

Acceleration -- Jerky and abrupt. from a standing start or when increasing speed.

Flaking -- Smooth controlled stop, no rebound of front end or sound of exhausting air.

Stop Line -- Stopping beyond stop line or other designated stopping point.

Upshifting -- includes the following errors:

- stalling
- operating out of the designated rpm range
- lugging
- delayed shift between gears (losing over 500 rpm)
- missed shift (having to drop back into another gears)
- gear clash

Downshifting -- includes the following errors:

- operating out of the designated rpm range
- gear/engine mismatch resulting in lurch as clutch is released
- delayed shift
- over or under revving between gears
- gear clash

Uphill Operation -- Includes the following errors:

- lugging (failure to shift soon enough)
- excessive loss of speed (having to reaccelerate on hill)
- roll-back when starting from a standing point

Downhill Operation - - Includes the following errors:

- starting down the hill in too high a gear
- falling to maintain steady brake pressure (e.g., fanning)

Speed Adjustment Curves -- Entering curve or turn too fast, indicated by:

- sharp lateral acceleration (passengers thrown sideways)
- braking while within the curve or turn

Lane-Keeping/Straight--Wandering back and forth between lines or touching, crossing lane marking on straightaway~

Lane-Keeping/Turns -- Operating outside of the designated lane in turns.

- Right Turn: right rear wheels cutting across curb or road edge
- Left Turn: beginning left turn too early (cutting across lanes approaching from the left)

Curves: Wheels not kept Nathan lane markings, fails to steer far left/right to compensate for the off-tracking of the trailer

Explanation of Driver Errors on the Night Operations Checklist

Light High Beams – Failure to return the lights to high beam after passing or overtaking another vehicle.

Lights Dimming – Failure to dim headlights according to law meeting or overtaking another road user.

Speed Adjustment – Failure to reduce speed at night where required because of lowered visibility.

Following Distance – Failure to increase following distance to compensate for reduced nighttime visibility.

Gap Selection – Acceptance of an insufficient gap when entering or crossing traffic where it can be attributed to reduced nighttime visibility.