

## Avoid conflict on the road

Share the road safely. Give yourself time and space to react to others and their mistakes.

- Keep calm, show restraint. Every car journey brings a risk of frustration and conflict. Before you set off, be determined not to succumb to it, or to let "liberty-takers" get to you.
- They're not out to get you! Most aggravating moves by other drivers are unintentional. We all make mistakes. Don't show your frustration by making gestures: they may mean nothing to you but could be the last straw for others.
- Don't compete or retaliate. If someone's driving annoys you, don't try to "educate" them. Leave traffic policing to the police and driving instruction to professionals.
- Be patient in traffic. Don't push into traffic queues. If you wait and clearly signal what you want to do, other drivers will usually let you in: they don't like being forced to do so.
- Set an example to others. Give way at busy junctions or where traffic lanes merge: it won't delay your journey by much. Wherever there's merging traffic, follow the rule "Let one in and go".
- Say thanks. Courtesy encourages cooperative, safe use of the road.
- Say sorry. Apologising to the other driver when you make a mistake reduces confrontation and helps to defuse anger.

Violent motoring-related incidents so-called "road rage" are rare. But it is important to know what to do if you feel threatened by another driver:

- Try not to react. Avoid making eye contact, which may be seen as confrontational.
- Don't respond by accelerating, braking or swerving suddenly. The other driver may think that you are looking for an argument, and you could lose control of the car.
- If you think you are being followed, try to drive to a busy public place, or a police station, before you stop. If you're on a motorway, mingle with other vehicles. Don't leave the motorway for unfamiliar roads.
- It's a sensible precaution to keep the car doors and boot locked, and the windows and sunroof only partly open in urban areas.
- In the unlikely event of being physically threatened, stay in your car and lock the doors. If you have one, call for help on your mobile phone, and use the car's horn and lights to attract attention.
- Never carry any kind of defensive weapon it could simply provoke a potential assailant.