

Stay Level Headed at Rail Crossings

Driving Tip No. 20

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It may be that we are all under time pressure. But drivers these days are more inclined than ever before to chance it at lights. And not just amber gamblers drivers can be ignoring red lights as well.

This is particularly dangerous at a level crossing.

So much so, a new advertising campaign has been launched, focussing on drivers who ignore red lights, and sometimes barriers, and take a chance at level crossings. It's aimed at commuters who drive to work and mothers on the school run. Apparently around four people a day gamble with their lives at level crossings showing a red signal, and one a month dies as a result. That is a considerable death toll for something that could only save seconds on a typical journey.

The problem has been portrayed as one of the biggest risks of catastrophe on the rail network. 13 people died at crossings last year.

Rail chiefs insist that level crossings are safe if used correctly even the unmanned, unbarriered ones. But if they are misused, the chances of surviving being hit by a train, no matter what vehicle you are in, are virtually zero.

If you are approaching a level crossing be prepared to stop if the signal goes to amber. Use your mirrors to see if there is somebody following you too closely and if so, gently brake in order that you can send them a cautionary message.

Once the trains have gone and the signal is off again, take a moment to glance both ways before you go across the line, just in case. In heavy traffic when the queue sometimes covers the railway line, never, ever be tempted to stop on the track or half way. Blocking a half-barrier crossing is extremely dangerous.

ENDS

295 words

For more information, please contact [Andrew Brooks](#).