

IDENTIFYING YOUR OWN ROAD RAGE CUES AND TRIGGERS

Many people experience anger and frustration when they are driving. Below are some of the triggers (e.g. situations and people) that may increase your level of anger on the roadways. Think about and rate the ones that are frustrating, upsetting, or irritating in the past (in the 12 months when you had the most anger in the car during your lifetime) or the present (the most recent 12 months) for yourself using the following scale (these can be added to your *Escalation Prevention Plan* if anger on the highways has been an issue for you).

1	2	3	4	5
not frustrating at all		somewhat frustrating		very frustrating

Past Present

- — Having to wait a long time at stop lights, stop signs, and highway entrance ramps or in order to fill your gas tank
- — Adverse weather conditions that slow the traffic flow (e.g. snowstorms, rain showers)
- — Road construction that interferes with and slows the traffic flow
- — Driving congestion (e.g. during rush hour or at other times) that slows traffic flow
- — Pedestrians who are moving very slowly through crosswalks
- — Pedestrians who are “jaywalking” and “illegally” crossing the street
- — Bicyclists who are riding on the roadways
- — Bicyclists who are riding the “wrong way” (i.e. against the automobile traffic) on the streets
- — Drivers who are blocking traffic when they pick someone up or drop someone off
- — Drivers who seem tentative, confused, or uncertain about where they are going or what they are doing in their car
- — Old drivers
- — Slow drivers
- — Fast drivers
- — Women drivers
- — Young drivers
- — Reckless or careless drivers
- — Drivers of a different race
- — Drivers who are combing their hair, looking in the mirror, putting on their makeup, or “primping” themselves behind the wheel
- — Drivers who are talking on their cell phones or texting while they are operating their vehicles
- — Drivers who are eating or drinking in their cars
- — Drivers who are reading, doing crossword puzzles, or surfing the internet in their cars
- — Drivers who seem to have difficulty staying in their own lane on the roadways

Past Present

- — Drivers who are talking to other passengers in their car and not paying any attention to the road and to what they are doing while they are driving
- — Drivers who are too “compulsive” or “overly careful” (e.g. signaling turns too early, leaving “too much space” between their car and the car ahead of them)
- — Drivers who own and drive “fancy” or expensive cars (e.g. BMW, Lexus, Mercedes Benz, Porsche)
- — Drivers who own and drive little “sporty” cars (e.g. Mazda Miata)
- — Drivers who own and drive large trucks or SUV’s (e.g. Ford 150, Dodge Ram, Ford Explorer)
- — Drivers whose cars are loud (i.e. with blaring/“thumping” stereo systems or sounding like their mufflers need repair work)
- — Drivers whose cars have dark tinted windows that can’t be seen through
- — Drivers who own old, rusty, or poorly-cared-for vehicles
- — Drivers who have “offensive” (to you) bumper stickers or personalized license plates
 - e.g. *“Tailgating puts your life in my hands,” “If you like my bumper, you’ll love my headlights,” “How’s my driving? Dial 1-800-EAT SHIT,” “Hang up and drive,” “2COOL4U”, “IMRICH,” “BLEWBYU”*
- — Drivers who wait to use their left turn signal at a stoplight until the light changes to green (or who don’t use their signal at all in that situation)
- — Drivers who don’t acknowledge or express “gratitude” for a driving “favor” that you’ve done for them (e.g. allowing them to enter a highway on-ramp in front of you or allowing them to pull into your lane)
- — Drivers who try to pull into or actually take a parking space that you have been waiting for
- — Drivers who don’t use their turn signal when they turn or when they are changing lanes
- — Drivers who have their turn signals on when they are not changing lanes or making a turn (i.e. they don’t turn the signal off when appropriate)
- — Drivers who are slow to actually move out from the intersection at a stop sign or when a stoplight turns green
- — Drivers who make right turns at stoplights when they are prohibited from doing this
 - Drivers who don’t make right turns at stoplights when they are allowed to do this
 - Drivers who don’t go through the intersection when the stoplight is still yellow
 - Drivers who enter intersections when the traffic light is yellow or red
 - Drivers who “roll through” stop signs or stop lights without really stopping at all
 - Drivers who “run” stop signs or red lights at stoplights
 - Drivers who drive fast and weave recklessly in and out of traffic
 - Drivers who drive through pedestrian crosswalks when people are trying to cross

Past Present

- — Drivers who don't turn their headlights on when it is dark
- — Drivers who drive too fast or recklessly in bad weather or when road conditions are poor
- — Drivers who flash you with their bright lights to indicate their displeasure with you
- — Drivers coming from the opposite direction who don't dim their bright headlights
- — Drivers who go through "on ramp" highway signals illegally
- — Drivers who pass other vehicles on the shoulder of the road
- — Drivers who speed up when you are trying to pass to keep you from passing them
- — Drivers or motorcyclists who are speeding
- — Drivers who tailgate you
- — Drivers who abruptly cross several lanes on a highway to get to an exit where they need to get off the highway
- — Drivers who tap or pump their brakes when you are behind them to try to slow you down or get you to "back off"
- — Drivers who honk their horn at you for something you have done that they don't seem to approve of
- — Drivers who stare, glare, or make facial expressions at you as they (or you) go by
- — Drivers who raise their hands to express disapproval or frustration, "flip you off," or make other obscene gestures directed at you
- — Drivers who "brake-check" you (i.e. slam on their brakes abruptly) because they think that you are coming up from behind them at a high rate of speed or believe that you are "tailgating" them
- — Drivers who attempt to stop you from merging in front of them when you are trying to enter a freeway
- — Drivers who "block" you or who don't go "fast enough" for you in the passing lane of a highway and won't move out of your way
- — Drivers who drive all the way to the front of a lane next to you when that lane is ending and they will need to merge into your lane to proceed
- — Drivers who yell, scream, or curse (e.g. "mouthing" insults) at you or as they go by
- — Drivers who try to get you to "pull over to talk" to them by the side of the road (e.g. by pointing or motioning in that direction)
- — Drivers who follow you to where you are going and attempt to interact with you there about something they didn't like that you did
- — Drivers who try to "talk to you" (or yell at you) about your "poor driving habits" if they have followed you or ended up at the same location
- — Drivers who move or swerve toward your car to try to threaten, intimidate, punish, or scare you
- — Drivers who throw something (e.g. rock, bottle, can) in your direction or at your car to try to "punish" you for what they perceive to be your "poor driving"