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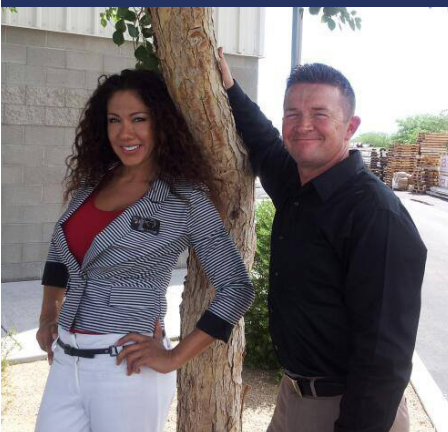
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Understanding the new intersections

Roundabouts (sometimes referred to as traffic circles) and diverging-diamond intersections are now appearing around the country. As they are both fairly recent interchange designs for this country, many drivers have never been formally trained on how to drive through them legally and safely.

Roundabouts

Roundabouts provide for better traffic flow through the intersection and eliminate one of the most-dangerous intersection accidents, the broadside or "T-bone." However, entering and exiting a roundabout requires a different skill set than navigating a standard intersection.

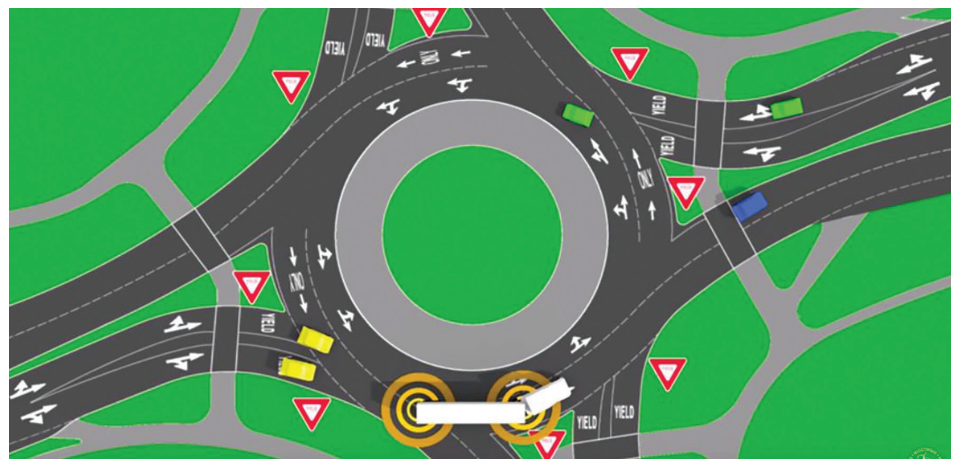
At a standard intersection, you need to:

- Get into the correct lane;
- Check the right-of-way status and stop if required; and

- Check traffic to the left and right to verify that it is safe to enter the intersection once you have the right-of-way.

At a roundabout, you must:

- Slow to a speed where stopping is possible while approaching the roundabout;
- Look to the left and yield to any traffic approaching from that direction;
- Proceed into the roundabout when there is an adequate gap in traffic;
- Use the "truck apron," if you are driving a large vehicle such as a tractor-trailer (this is an area on the inside of the roundabout for large vehicles to use to allow for off-tracking); and
- Use the right turn signal and exit the roundabout when you reach the desired exit point.



(continued on page 2)

Understanding the new intersections *(continued from page 1)*

With a large vehicle, it will also be necessary to check the right mirrors when exiting to make sure traffic has not invaded the space next to the vehicle and that the trailer tires do not strike a curb.

If you drive a large vehicle, you have a more complicated task in a multiple-lane roundabout. You will need to be in the proper lane when entering the roundabout and must watch the mirrors to verify that there is no traffic next to the vehicle.

Once in the roundabout, if using the inside lane, the instructions are the same as going through a one-lane roundabout (use the truck apron, check the right mirrors before and while maneuvering out of the roundabout, etc.).

If using the right lane, you will need to allow for the trailer to off-track, both when entering and when going around the roundabout. This may require using some of the left lane or allowing the trailer to run up onto the right truck apron (if the roundabout has one) when entering the roundabout. Once in the roundabout, the trailer may end up encroaching on the left lane. Due to the hazards involved, you will need to be continually checking the mirrors to verify vehicle position and the location of traffic.

Roundabout myths

There are several myths when it comes to roundabouts. First, no one in the roundabout has to yield to traffic wanting to enter the roundabout or provide waiting traffic an opening to enter. Traffic entering the roundabout is responsible for doing so safely when there is a gap in traffic.

Second, there are rules in most states that require small vehicles to yield to large vehicles inside the roundabout. This means that small vehicles are not to pass or drive next to large vehicles inside the roundabout. However, this does not give large vehicle drivers blanket authority to do whatever they want inside the traffic circle. They are still required to approach in the correct lane, yield to traffic approaching from the left, maintain the correct lane throughout the roundabout, use only the minimum additional space necessary, and exit the roundabout safely.

Diverging diamond interchanges

Diverging diamond interchanges, also known as double crossover diamond interchanges, prevent traffic entering and exiting a limited-access highway from crossing other traffic. This helps speed traffic flow through the interchange and reduces the odds of broadside collisions occurring.

The keys to remember when navigating a diverging diamond interchange — for drivers exiting the main highway — is that the exit ramp will split into left and right ramps. The left ramp will merge drivers into the traffic leaving the interchange going to the left. This means you will be making the same type of turn as when you turn left onto a one-way street.

You then need to go through the crossover intersection when leaving the interchange area. If you are going to the right, the turn and entrance onto the road will be the same as exiting and going right at any interchange. Whether going left or right, you are to obey whatever traffic control device is present at the end of the ramp and on the road.

For traffic entering the limited access highway, the key is being in the correct lane. If you want to turn right onto the highway, you will need to be in the right lane when approaching the diamond. You then leave the road and enter the highway by turning right before the first crossover intersection.

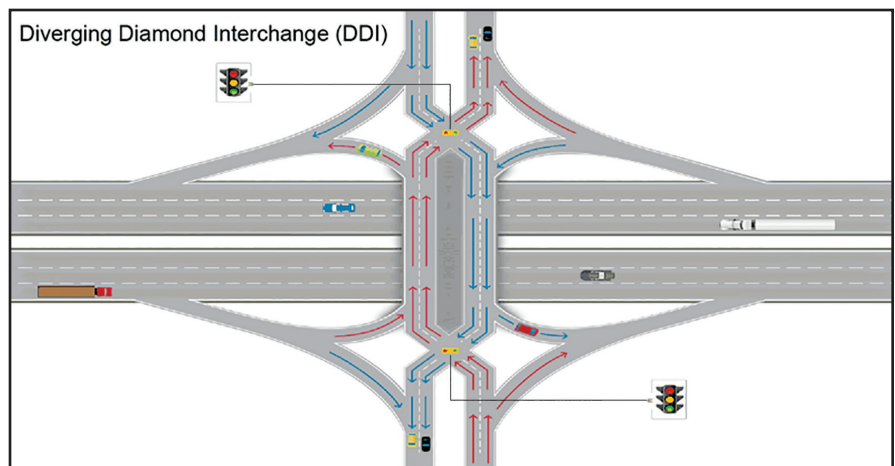
If you want to go left, you need to be in the left lane approaching the interchange and take the left turn after the first crossover intersection. Once in the diamond, you must obey the traffic control device for the direction you want to go.

Diverging diamond myths

The main myth when it comes to diverging diamond interchanges is that traffic entering or exiting the highway does not have to stop. As discussed earlier, as the driver goes through the interchange, the driver must obey any traffic control devices that impact his or her lane.

General intersection safety

Since all intersections have very real dangers, you should approach all intersections at a safe speed, cover the brake, read all signs, use the proper lane, check traffic and mirrors, and be willing to stop to prevent an accident.



Safety focus: Driver shortage

The driver shortage remains the top issue for the trucking industry for the third consecutive year in the United States, according to a recent survey. In a white paper released by the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), it is pointed out that the demographics of the transportation industry are contributing to the driver shortage. If the trend in the driver shortage continues, the United States could be short more than 160,000 drivers by 2028, according to a recent report by the American Trucking Associations.

The driver shortage

According to the researchers, there are three driving factors in the driver shortage. They include:

- Competition within the industry
- Driver qualifications/requirements
- Workforce demographics

Competition

Competition within the industry has led carriers to work very hard to keep costs low, so they remain competitive. However, this has had a chilling effect on drivers' wages, leading to some drivers exiting the industry. This has also led to the industry not being as attractive of an employment option to the general public as it once was.

This competition also leads to considerable "churn," as drivers continually move from one carrier to another. Carriers need drivers and competitors' drivers are seen as the "ready supply" of new drivers.

To attract them, carriers try to make better offers than their competition. This, in turn, encourages churn and eventually driver frustration, which can also lead to drivers leaving the industry.

Qualifications

The basic qualification requirements to enter the industry may also be a problem. Simply securing a CDL (the most basic qualification requirement) involves multiple weeks of training with no paycheck. Also, the training itself can cost \$6,500 (or more), which is prohibitive to many people.

According to ATRI's research the requirements to remain employable within the industry also play into the shortage. Programs such as CSA and the Preemployment Screening Program discourage the hiring of certain drivers, in effect removing them from the pool of available drivers.

Demographics

This was the focus of the white paper, and the research pointed out some significant issues. These issues include:

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average age of a commercial truck driver is 55 years old. A huge percentage of these drivers will be retiring within the next decade.
- Women only account for 6% of commercial truck drivers, and while the stereotype is changing, many women still view trucking as a "man's job."
- Over the last 20 years, the number of drivers under 35 years old has dropped dramatically. If more young drivers aren't hired, the industry could be facing a serious dilemma.

To sum up the problem, post-Baby Boomer adults (particularly those now in their twenties and early thirties) are not in the industry in sufficient numbers. Thus, as the older generations retire, the driver shortage will worsen.

Potential reasons

The study pointed out several possible reasons that younger workers may not be coming into the transportation industry. These include:

- The difficulty in transitioning from high school to the industry. The age requirements in the regulations and placed on the industry by insurance companies all but guarantees that driving a commercial vehicle will not be a high school graduate's first job. It can be difficult to attract individuals after they are established in another occupation.
- The recession. Many younger drivers were displaced out of the industry during the recession, when demand for drivers was low. These individuals found gainful employment in other sectors (oil and gas, construction, etc.).
- The availability of a college education. While getting a college education does not rule out the person going into driving, it does greatly reduce the odds that the person will become a driver.

Potential solutions

The report does provide some potential solutions that the industry and companies should consider, including:

- The industry developing programs to target and attract younger workers;
- Having programs in place to retain the existing aging drivers; and
- Conducting research on the expectations and perspectives of the younger generations when it comes to the industry.





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Health goals: What do you want to achieve in the new year?

"Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man."

Benjamin Franklin



Set healthy goals for now and in the future today!

The beginning of a new decade is the perfect time to look at lifestyle changes that will help you have a healthier future.

Setting specific goals sets you on a path toward better health by turning "I should" into "I will" and "I am."

You might be thinking, "I should exercise more," or "I should lose weight." Establishing a goal of walking three mornings a week or eating two cups of vegetables each day holds you accountable for specific actions. Making those actions part of your lifestyle will help you reach those desired outcomes.

To create goals that will lead to healthy habits that last a lifetime:

1. **Make it personal:** Your goal shouldn't be something someone else thinks you should do. Think about what you want to achieve and how you'll benefit. For example, gradually building up your stamina for a long walk could help you enjoy a hiking trip to a national park.
2. **Think small:** A goal that's too broad can leave you wondering where to start. On the other hand, focusing on something specific can be less distressing, according to a study of college students. Rather than having a general goal, break a large goal (such as weight loss) into smaller steps. Aim to weave a specific healthy habit into your lifestyle, such as eating a certain number of servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

3. **Know yourself:** Fitness goals need to reflect both your personality and ability level. Don't set yourself up for failure by aiming for something that's unrealistic. Set a reasonable goal that you can accomplish. When you're ready to stretch yourself, adjust it. You might want to aim to walk for 30 minutes per day for three days a week, and then challenge yourself to walk for a longer period of time, a longer distance, or on more days of the week. Reaching goals and setting new ones lets you remain committed to improving your health.

Use the SMART acronym to set definitive goals that you can achieve:



Specific: In simple terms, describe what you want to accomplish.

Measurable: Make your goal something you can track so you can measure your progress.

Attainable: Make your goal one you can reach.

Relevant: Have your goal revolve around something that matters to you.

Time-bound: Attach a timeframe to your goal.