

Driving Overnight? Use These 8 Tips to Arrive Safely.

With fewer vehicles on the roads, truck driving at night offers the promise of less hassle. But it also brings unique risks, including drowsy drivers and unseen dangers. National Safety Council research shows that the risk of a fatal crash is three times greater at night.

Stay safe with these eight tips:

- 1. Start with your truck's headlights.** Make sure they're clean, and that they're adjusted based on the truck manufacturer's instructions. Use your high beams when it's safe to do so (anytime you're more than 500 feet away from an oncoming vehicle).
- 2. Next, check your dash.** Some drivers turn the brightness up on their dash so they can see the instrument panel better at night. That's a bad move, because bright interior lights make your eyes more tired. They also may increase distraction. Instead, keep all interior lights, GPS systems and other electronic devices dim to reduce eye fatigue.
- 3. Clean all glass surfaces.** Remove any streaks, dirt, bug stains or dust from your windshield and all mirrors. Make sure your wipers aren't worn or torn.
- 4. Look away from oncoming lights.** Looking directly at bright headlights for too long may damage your eye's retina. So, move your eyes around. Scan the road for potential hazards (potholes or animals) and use the white line on the side of the road as your guide.
- 5. Reduce glare.** Some drivers find eye relief with nighttime driving glasses or clip-ons. Look for ones that are polarized, which means they are designed to cut down on glare.
- 6. Reduce your speed.** You may be tempted to drive faster when there is less traffic on the road, but at night, slower is better. Your truck's headlights only offer between 150 and 500 feet of visibility, even at their brightest.



- 7. Know when you're getting drowsy.** Yawning, frequent blinking, drifting and rubbing your eyes are all signs that you need a break. Stretch, open a window and walk around your truck to regain some energy. Take a nap if needed, or call it a night if your schedule permits.
- 8. Get your sleep.** Whether you drive in the daylight or at night, you need seven to eight hours of solid sleep. If you sleep during the day, use earplugs, a white noise machine or an eye mask to simulate darkness and reset your body's natural sleep rhythm.