

What is Hazard Perception?

Worksheet

Hazard perception is the ability to recognize and assess risks early by reading road signs, weather, vehicle behavior, and pedestrian movement. Early detection allows time to plan and execute a safe response.

Questions

1. A child's toy appears on the road ahead. What is your response?
A) Honk and maintain speed
B) Assume no child is present
C) Slow down and be ready to stop
D) Speed up to pass quickly
2. You see brake lights flickering in the traffic ahead. What does this indicate?
A) Smooth stop ahead
B) Traffic jam or hazard ahead
C) Driver testing brakes
D) Safe to maintain speed
3. A parked car has its engine running and reverse lights are on. What do you predict?
A) It will stay parked
B) It is about to reverse
C) It is idling harmlessly
D) No action needed
4. Heavy rain reduces visibility. Other drivers have slowed. What is your best action?
A) Maintain normal speed
B) Reduce speed and increase following distance
C) Use high-beam headlights
D) Stay in the right lane only
5. You see a child's ball roll onto the road. You don't yet see the child. What hazard do you predict?
6. A parked car ahead has its engine running and exhaust visible. Brake lights have never come on. What do you expect?
7. Heavy rain begins. You notice other cars are slowing, some using hazard lights. What is your response?
8. Define: What is hazard perception?
9. Define: What are common clues to hazards?
10. Define: Why is early hazard detection important?

Answer Key

1. C) Slow down and be ready to stop — Toys on roads signal that children are nearby. Slow immediately and prepare to stop for an unexpected child.
2. B) Traffic jam or hazard ahead — Flickering brake lights signal congestion, obstacles, or hazards ahead. Reduce speed and prepare.
3. B) It is about to reverse — Running engine + reverse lights = the driver intends to reverse. Slow down and give space.
4. B) Reduce speed and increase following distance — Match the traffic's slower pace and increase following distance. Poor visibility is the clue; other drivers' slowing confirms it.
5. Predict: A child will follow the ball into the road. Threat level: HIGH — expect the child to cross suddenly. Action: Reduce speed immediately and steer away from the roadside. Key: Objects rolling onto roads signal that people are nearby.
6. Predict: The parked car may suddenly pull out without checking mirrors. Threat level: MEDIUM-HIGH. Action: Reduce speed, shift lane if safe, and prepare to brake. Key: An idling engine = driver is alert and ready to move.
7. Predict: Visibility and traction are severely reduced. More accidents are likely. Threat level: HIGH — conditions worsen rapidly in rain. Action: Slow down well below the legal speed, increase following distance to 6+ seconds, use headlights. Key: Other drivers' behavior is a clue to deteriorating road conditions.
8. The ability to spot clues on the road and predict dangers before they fully develop.
9. Brake lights, sudden lane changes, parked cars with running engines, pedestrians at roadsides, weather changes, unusual shadows.
10. It gives you time to plan and execute a safe response instead of reacting in panic.

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