

- The driver tries to avoid obstacles in his path; for example, construction barrier, litters on the road; parked vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists.
- The driver is blinded by strong light.
- The driver loses control of the vehicle through inaccurate steering, or skid caused by emergency braking.
- The vehicle's speed is too fast for the curve.
- Faulty manoeuvre especially for large vehicles; they have to move towards the right before making a left turn.
- Right turning vehicle may position over the centre line before turning.

It is true that most of the head-on collisions take place at curves, but judging from the above reasons, head-on accidents can actually happen at any place; on a straight road, at a junction and on curves. Be on constant lookout for any tell-tale sign which may cause an oncoming vehicle to go across the centre line.

DEFENSIVE APPROACH TO ADOPT

THE TWELVE-SECOND RULE

246. A practical way of scanning for hazards ahead of us is by using the 12-second rule.

The 12-second rule helps us identify movement and positions of oncoming traffic and enables us to anticipate what problems the oncoming drivers are going to have that might cause them to invade our space. The 12-second rule also give us ample time to adjust our speed and positions.

Using the basic idea of the 2-second rule, you can extend the scanning to a point 12 seconds down the road. For example, an overhead pedestrian bridge or an overhead directional sign, and then count off, “one-thousand-and-one, one-thousand-and-two, one-thousand-and-three, one-thousand-and-four” and so on. If you reach the point before you reached “one-thousand-and-twelve”, then you need to choose another point further away than this one and try again until you can reach the spot after counting down.

Once you have mastered this exercise, you will have an idea of how far ahead the 12 second rule is in terms of actual distance.