

Road Traffic Collisions

As a professional driver you could find yourself early at the scene of a road traffic collision – but would you know what to do?

First aid training is widely available, and well worth considering, but even without this, if you follow the right steps, you could help save someone's life. But **STOP**.

A road traffic collision (RTC) is a potentially chaotic and dangerous place to be. Before you attempt to provide assistance, remember, there is nothing more important to consider than your own safety. Act hastily and you may do no more than add yourself to the casualty list!

How you can help

Six steps that could save a life:

1. Park your vehicle safely, with hazard lights on, clearly visible to other road users and providing clear access to the emergency services.
2. Call 112/999. This must be your number one priority! The sooner the emergency services are made aware of the incident the sooner they will get there. Do nothing else until you know they are on their way.
3. Identify which casualties are in need of immediate help – but remember your own safety first! Remember, our aim is to keep casualties alive until the professionals arrive. Silent and unresponsive casualties should be your first priority – a distressed but conscious casualty is likely to survive the arrival of the ambulance service.
4. Switch off the engines of vehicles involved.
5. If you have the right first aid training, quickly help any unconscious casualty who has an obstructed airway, or is suffering from cardiac arrest. If you have no first aid training, you can still help. Try to provide a calming influence. Ask the patient's name and tell them yours. Reassure them everything is going to be ok and that help is on its way. Enlist the help of others and move anyone dazed or traumatised by the incident to a safe place.
6. When the professionals arrive, tell them everything you can about each of the casualties – in particular, any changes in their condition that you may have observed. This could be vital information and crucial to the subsequent care they receive once they arrive in A&E.

You have just made a major contribution in helping the emergency services to deal with this incident and get everyone back on the move – and quicker than might have been the case had you stood back not knowing what to do. Well done.

What the Emergency Services need to know

- ✚ The location of the incident – Give accurate information, referring to roadside markers if available and including direction of travel
- ✚ Basic information about the incident – How many vehicles involved and the number of casualties. Accuracy but not precision is required – “three cars, four persons, one trapped and seriously injured”
- ✚ Fire? Report this and unless it is minor and can be dealt with using a fire extinguisher, keep away and await the arrival of the Fire Service
- ✚ Obvious presence of chemicals? Keep yourself and everyone else well clear and upwind and await the arrival of the professionals

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This vital information will ensure the emergency services arrive quickly, to the right location and with the appropriate resources. If you do nothing other than call 999/112, you will have made a major contribution towards dealing with the incident effectively.

Facts and Myths

- 50% of deaths at RTCs occur before the emergency services arrive – FACT
- A blocked airway is a common cause of death in an RTC – and causes death within about 4 minutes – FACT
- The target response time for an ambulance is 8 minutes – FACT
- Smartphones do not automatically transmit accurate location information – MYTH
- If an incident is on the opposite carriageway you are not, technically, at the scene – MYTH Do not try to cross. Find a safe place to stop and call 112/999

Driver First Assist

This information has been prepared with the help of Driver First Assist. Whilst we hope you find this guide helpful it is not a substitute for training. Consider becoming a member of Driver First Assist and learn how to manage the scene and deliver life saving first aid at a road traffic collision.

For more information call 030 30 40 10 20 or visit www.driverfirstassist.org to book a course online.

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