

Essay on Using the Roads Safely

The roads today are filled with cars, lorries, motorcycles and other types of vehicles. Everyday road accidents occur, causing injury and even death. In fact, thousands die on the roads of our country every year and more are injured or maimed, and there is no sign of the situation getting any better. Thus, it is up to us to use the roads safely and minimize the chances of getting involved in an accident.

There are many reasons why accidents occur. Faulty vehicles, brake failure, poor roads and ignorance of traffic rules all contribute to the accidents. However, the most obvious cause of accidents is the attitude of road users.

The attitude of many road users is that 'accidents only happen to other people, not me'. So, when a person is involved in an accident, he might ask "Why did this happen to me?" It is not a matter of why an accident occurs to anyone. The thing is that it can happen to anyone.

Pedestrians using the road have to take extra care not to get into the path of a passing vehicle. To cross a road, it is always safer to use an overhead bridge or pedestrian crossing, preferably one that is controlled by lights. Even then it is always advisable to make sure it is safe to cross even when the lights are green for pedestrians, for there are some drivers who will not stop even when the lights are red for them. If there are no pedestrian crossings, then utmost care must be taken to cross. Always make sure the coast is clear before crossing.

When walking by the side of the road, it is safer to walk facing oncoming traffic so that one can see the vehicles on the road. One can take evasive action when necessary. If one walks with the back against oncoming traffic, then one may not be aware of any danger

until it is too late.

Riding a bicycle is one of the riskiest things to do on the road. First of all, the bicycle is small and often drivers simply do not see it. Furthermore, some drivers, do not care about cyclists will never give way to them. A cyclist depends on his legs to move the bicycle and legs simply do not have the power of petrol-driven engines. So, in tight situations, cyclists are not able to get out as quickly as required and thus are at the mercy of other road users. We can see from this that few people use bicycles nowadays. It is just too dangerous.

The motorcycle offers a better alternative to the bicycle. it has the power and manoeuvrability to get out of tight situations. However, care must be taken when using the motorcycle. Like the cyclist, a motorcyclist is virtually unprotected and even a slight accident is likely to cause severe bodily injury. It is always safer to ride cautiously and follow traffic rules. There are of course many young dare-devils on motorcycles who ride carelessly and often end up as accident statistics.

Whatever we use on the roads, cars, motorcycles, bicycles or simply as pedestrians, it is always a good idea to be aware of what we are doing. We should know the traffic rules well. On top of that we should always be alert of the situations around us, and to take evasive action when necessary. Often, we have to use the roads defensively, that is, to not insist on our right of way even though an inconsiderate driver is breaking the rules. It is better to be safe than to get involved in an accident.

Lastly, it is never a good idea to show off on the road or to race with someone else. The roads are mean for transportation, not for showing off or racing. Irresponsible actions like these are bound to

bring unhappy or tragic results. Nobody likes accidents. So, use the road safely and keep accidents away.