

FACILITATOR GUIDE

EVERY CROSSING, EVERY TIME.

FOR TRUCK DRIVERS



HELP STOP TRACK TRAGEDIES

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VIDEO 1: KNOW THE FACTS



GOAL: Identify key facts truckers need to know about trains to help understand the rail environment.

PROCEDURE:

1. Read Opening Statement.
2. Watch *KNOW THE FACTS* and review content.
3. Check for understanding by reviewing discussion questions.



OPENING STATEMENT: Imagine yourself doing an activity that you can complete in 3 hours. What are some things you could do in 3 hours? (After hearing a few): Every 3 hours in the United States, a person or vehicle is hit by a train.



WATCH *KNOW THE FACTS*. **REVIEW** the following fast facts from the video.

#1

Every 3 hours in the United States, a person or vehicle is hit by a train.



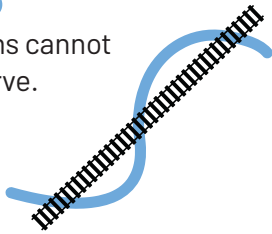
#2

Trains can't stop quickly. It can take a mile or more for a freight train to come to a complete stop. The distance of 18 football fields.



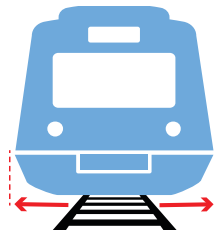
#3

Trains cannot swerve.



#4

Trains overhang tracks.



#5

More than 60% of incidents occur at crossings with lights and/or gates.



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

1. True or False: If you can see a train, the train may not be able to stop in time to avoid a collision. It can take a mile or more for a train to stop.

Answer: TRUE

2. Why do you think that more incidents occur at crossings with lights and gates?

Answer: These are WARNING devices, not protective devices. Drivers view lights and gates as safety devices when they are designed to warn drivers of an upcoming train.

VIDEO 2: KNOW THE SIGNS AND SIGNALS TO READ THE ROAD!



GOAL: Identify and define the types of signs truckers may encounter at the crossing.



OPENING STATEMENT: Never try to beat a train! The signs and signals you see will help you make a smart choice when deciding whether to go.

PROCEDURE:

1. Read Opening Statement.
2. Watch *KNOW THE SIGNS AND SIGNALS* and review content.
3. Check for understanding by reviewing discussion questions.



Watch *KNOW THE SIGNS AND SIGNALS*. **Review** the following:



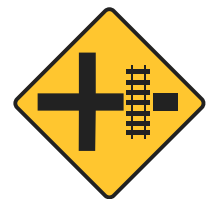
Advance Warning sign: You are approaching a railroad crossing.



Pavement Markings: A crossing is ahead. Stop no closer than 15 feet and no further back than 50 feet from the nearest rail.



Crossbuck sign: Yield to a train; trains always have the right-of-way.



Road Parallels Track sign: There is a crossing after a turn.



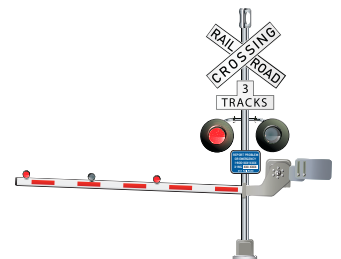
Multiple Tracks sign: There are more than one set of tracks at this crossing. The number on the sign tells you how many tracks are present at the crossing.



Low Ground Clearance sign: This marks a crossing where low clearance vehicles may get hung up.



Emergency Notification System sign: Use this blue and white sign to directly reach the railroad if you are stuck, stalled or see an emergency on the tracks.



Flashing Lights and Gates: Train is approaching. Trains always have the right-of-way. Never try to go around the gates.



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

1. **What should you do if the lights start flashing and the gate begins to lower after you have started to cross the tracks?**
Answer: KEEP GOING. Do not pass, shift or stop.
2. **When approaching a railroad crossing with a crossbuck, but with no gate or flashing lights, what should you do?**
Answer: Slow down and be prepared to stop. Remember trains always have the right-of-way.
3. **How do you use the sign that is a number below the crossbuck sign to decide whether to proceed?**
Answer: This is a MULTIPLE TRACK sign. Use this sign to determine whether you can fully clear all tracks. Remember that you should keep 15 feet between your truck and the nearest rail.

VIDEO 3: KNOW THE ENS SIGN; IT CAN SAVE A LIFE!



GOAL: Identify the blue and white ENS sign. Differentiate the parts of the ENS sign and know how to use the phone number and crossing identification number to report an emergency.

PROCEDURE:

1. Read Opening Statement.
2. Watch *KNOW THE ENS SIGN; IT CAN SAVE A LIFE!* and review content.
3. Check for understanding by reviewing discussion questions.

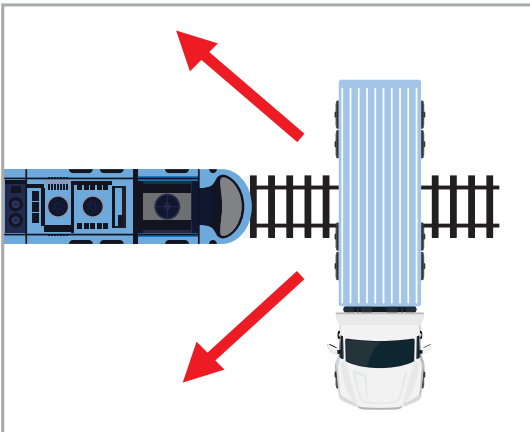


OPENING STATEMENT: What would you do if your truck gets stalled on the tracks? (After hearing a few ideas:) Let's talk about the procedure if this happens to you! Being prepared can help keep you safe!



WATCH *KNOW THE ENS SIGN; IT CAN SAVE A LIFE!* Then **REVIEW** the following:

1. Get out and get away!
2. From a safe distance, find the blue and white **Emergency Notification System (ENS) sign**.
3. Each sign has a unique emergency phone number and crossing ID.
4. Call the emergency phone number and give the crossing ID number.
5. No sign? **Call 911**.



IF A TRAIN IS COMING:

Get yourself and any passengers OUT of the vehicle. **Run toward the train and away from the track at a 45-degree angle to avoid debris.**



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

1. **True or False:** If your trucks stalls on the tracks, stay in the cab and keep trying to move your truck.
Answer: FALSE! Evacuation is the priority.
2. **You're stuck at a railroad crossing. You see the train coming and get out of your vehicle. Why is it best to move in the direction of the train (if you see it), but at a 45-degree angle away from the tracks?**
Answer: When the train makes impact with whatever is on the tracks, it will scatter debris. By running toward the train but away from the track, you are avoiding being hit with impact debris.

VIDEO 4: KNOW YOUR RIG!



GOAL: Identify characteristics of your vehicle and the operating procedures to know how to adapt when driving near tracks.

PROCEDURE:

1. Read Opening Statement.
2. Watch *KNOW YOUR RIG!* and review content.
3. Check for understanding by reviewing discussion questions.

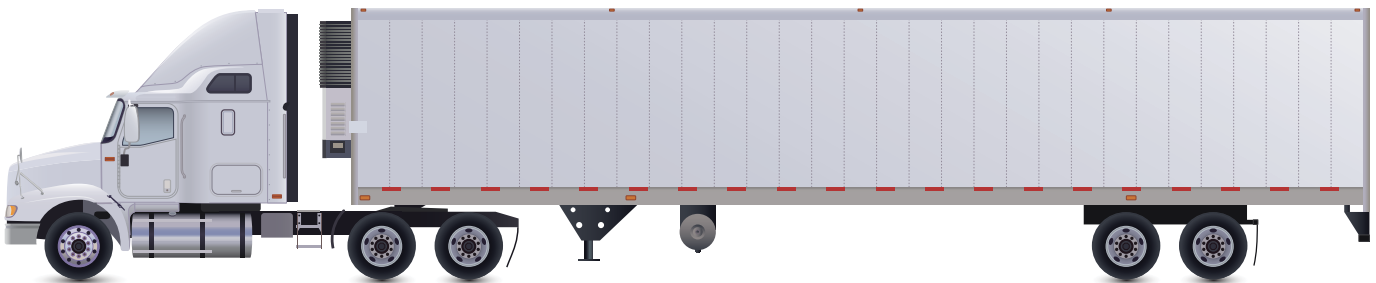


OPENING STATEMENT: In perfect conditions, what is the approximate amount of time it takes for your rig to come to a stop? List for me a few things that impact your stopping time. (Group discussion, examples include load distribution, road gradient, individual driver reaction time). Let's look at some things we should know before approaching a railroad crossing.



WATCH *KNOW YOUR RIG!* REVIEW the following 5 tips:

1. **Be aware of your speed in inclement weather.** It will take longer to stop.
2. **Don't forget to make sure your landing gear is fully retracted.** If you cross tracks empty and come back full, be mindful that your truck trailer will sit lower.
3. **Scan for traffic ahead of you beyond the track;** check to see that you can fully clear all tracks before making the decision to go.
4. **Know your overhang.** A typical semi-truck is 80-feet long, and depending on the load, can be longer. No part of your load should overhang the track.
5. **Know your distractions.** Ensure distractions are silenced so you can use all your senses.



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

1. You're coming up to a crossing and notice the Low Ground Clearance sign. You don't think that you will be able to clear the tracks. What should you do?

Answer: Find a safe place to stop. Turn on your flashers while setting the brakes, and follow DOT regulations for triangle placement. TRAINER should add agency requirements. (Example: Call relevant agencies; call local police if directed.)

2. When you come up to a railroad crossing, how can you tell if you have enough room to safely clear the crossing?

Answer: Know the length of your truck trailer. Then remember that you should add 15 feet between your rear bumper and the farthest rail.

VIDEO 5: LOOK AND LISTEN



GOAL: Explore the steps to prepare to cross, from the Advance Warning to fully clearing the tracks.

PROCEDURE:

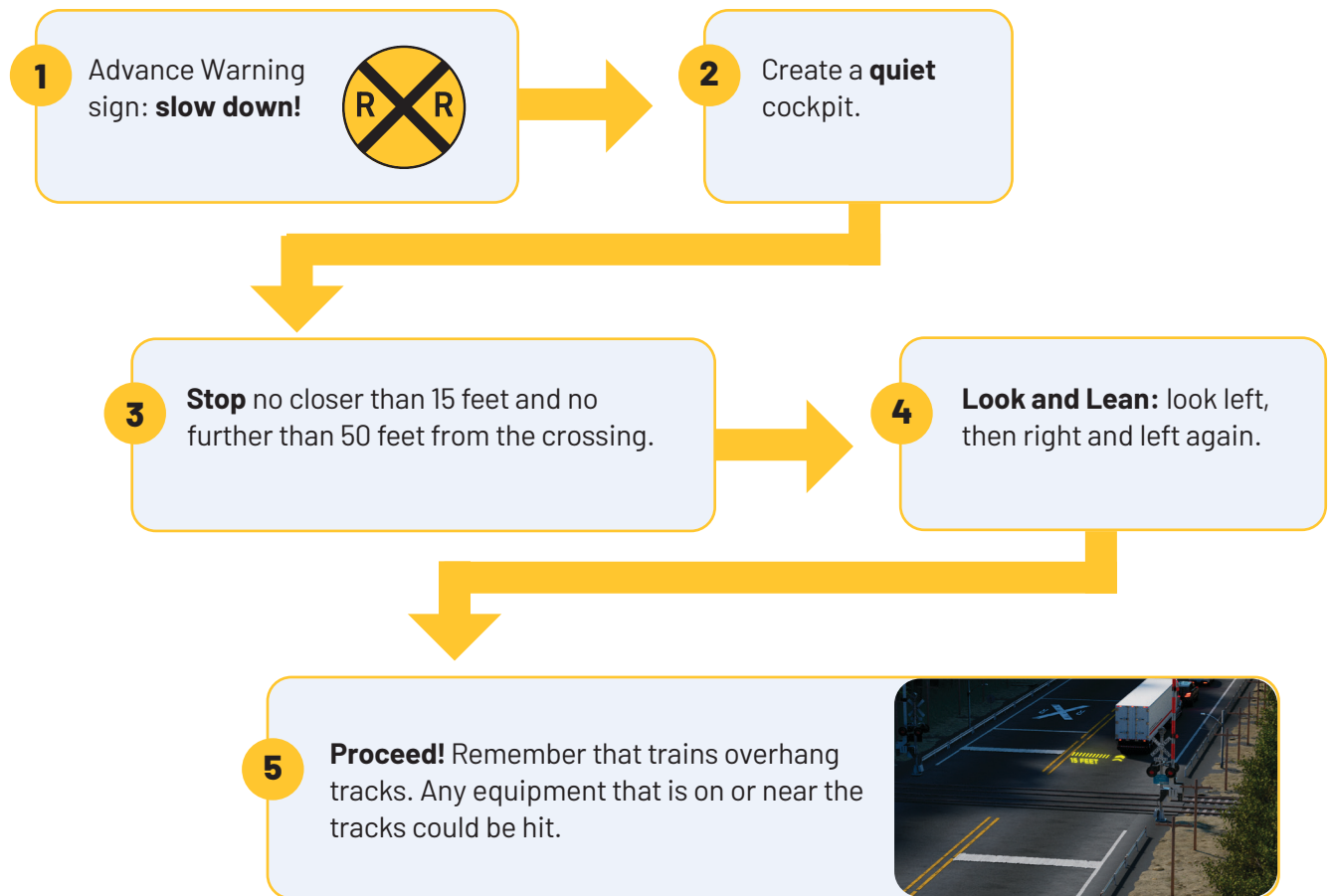
1. Read Opening Statement.
2. Watch *LOOK AND LISTEN* and review content.
3. Check for understanding by reviewing discussion questions.



OPENING STATEMENT: You see the Advance Warning sign and begin to slow down your truck. You see the stop line and come to a full and complete stop. The gate is up, and no lights are flashing. What else are you doing to prepare to cross the tracks?



WATCH *LOOK AND LISTEN*. **REVIEW** the process for crossing tracks.



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

1. What are some ways that you can create a quiet cockpit?
Answer: Turn off fans and radios. Don't talk to passengers.
2. What is the order of things to do if you have any emergency on the tracks?
Answer: Get out of the vehicle and away from the track. Look for the blue and white Emergency Notification System sign. Call the number for the railroad on the sign. Give the crossing ID number (this number is unique at every crossing).

VIDEO 6: SPECIAL PROCEDURES



GOAL: While you can't plan for everything, these are some things you may encounter while driving near tracks.

PROCEDURE:

1. Read Opening Statement.
2. Watch *SPECIAL PROCEDURES* and review content.
3. Check for understanding by reviewing discussion questions.



OPENING STATEMENT: You're driving a load of lumber. It's very long. You've done everything to ensure your rig can manage the size: raised your landing gear, secured your load. And now, you are at a traffic light backed up for what feels like miles. How do you decide when to go? (After hearing a few answers) When this happens near a railroad track, there are a few extra things you can do to help you make a safe choice when deciding to go!



WATCH Special Procedures. REVIEW the following relevant information for your state/local agency.

NOTE: if these do not apply to your state/local agency, please include information relevant to you.

1. If a uniformed **law enforcement officer or an official flagger** is present at a crossing directing traffic, be sure to follow their directions.
2. Planning: When planning your route, **select one that contains the fewest crossings**. Check with your company or supervisor to learn more about your options.
3. **Look and lean to get a full view down the tracks in both directions**. Look left, look right, then look left again.
4. Use the Federal Railroad Administration's **Rail Crossing Locator app** as a guide to see crossings along your route. Do this when planning and reviewing your route. Download from your phone's app store, or go to www.fra.dot.gov/railcrossinglocator
5. Trucks and trailers **hauling hazardous materials and even empty tankers used to haul hazardous materials are required to stop** at all railroad crossings.
6. Know the length of your vehicle. These signs (example at right) will indicate how many feet are present between train tracks and highways. **If you don't fit, don't commit.**

**XX FEET
BETWEEN
TRACKS &
HIGHWAY**



CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING:

1. What types of trucks are always required (unless otherwise noted) to stop at railroad crossings?

Answer: Trucks hauling hazardous materials. Sometimes, these are required to stop even when empty. Check with your agency for more information about requirements in your state.

2. **Consider this:** You pull up to a crossing and see that there is no flagger or uniformed officer present. You see that the lights are flashing, and the gate is down. You wait, but no train is approaching. You look left, then right and left again, but still see no train. **What should you do?**

Answer: Get out of your rig and locate the Blue and White ENS sign. After moving a safe distance from the tracks, call the number and give the crossing ID. Tell the operator that you believe the train signals may be malfunctioning.

3. Why is it hard to determine the speed of an approaching train?

Answer: An optical illusion makes the train seem farther away and moving slower than it actually is.

4. What are some ways you can mitigate approaching crossings while on your drive?

Answer: Work with your supervisor, agency or dispatch to plan your route ahead of time. Utilize the FRA's Rail Crossing Locator App to learn more about crossings along your route.

DRIVING AN OVERSIZED LOAD?

- » Be sure that **the extended length of your load will fully clear tracks** before deciding to go.
- » **Know the height of your vehicle** and pay attention to posted clearance signs as train tracks may be on the bridge above you.
- » **Make sure you can see fully down the track** before making the decision to go. Look and lean, using all your senses.



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