



GSLC Safety Moment – Passenger Van Safety

Passenger vans require special considerations because the weight distribution of passengers and the high center of gravity make them more difficult to control. When you're behind the wheel, keep the following safety tips in mind. The Boy Scouts of America expect you to follow all passenger van safety guidelines to ensure that you and your passengers arrive at your destination safely!



GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

- Be aware of how the van's height and width affects its stability.
- Load and unload passengers in a safe place. Check doors to ensure they are closed.
- Driver and passengers must always use seat belts.
- Before setting out -
 - Check the position of the mirrors to ensure they are adjusted properly.
 - Check the tires to ensure they are inflated properly.
- Use mirrors or spotters when merging or backing up to ensure adequate clearances.
- Allow longer stopping and following distances.
- Plan turns in advance to allow adequate space.
- Drive defensively and keep alert in order to respond quickly and safely to unexpected situations.
- Use extra caution when driving in bad weather conditions.
- Don't overload the van or use a roof rack for additional luggage. This also raises the center of gravity and decreases stability.

MANEUVERING TIPS

Making a lane change or merging into traffic can be challenging when driving any vehicle, but even more so with a passenger van.

- Create more space around the van by reducing or increasing speed.
- Signal intentions by engaging turn signals early.
- Use the merge lane as intended and designed.
- Use the mirrors as needed.
- Yield the right-of-way, when necessary.
- Ask for passenger assistance, if needed, to verify maneuvering for merging.

STOPPING & FOLLOWING DISTANCES

- A passenger van weighs more and takes longer to stop than a car, especially when loaded with passengers and/or equipment.
- Observe greater stopping distances when traveling in bad weather conditions.
- A three to four second following distance between the van and the vehicle in front of the van is a recommended minimum.

RECENT CHANGES - PLEASE NOTE:

- BSA requires any vehicle carrying 10 or more passengers to have an auto liability insurance limit of \$1,000,000.
- Effective September 1, 2015, the use of 15-passenger vans manufactured before 2005 will no longer be allowed in connection with Scouting programs and activities.