

# Preventing Left-Turn Collisions



Left-turn accidents are frequently severe as they often result in near head-on or T-Bone-type collisions at high speeds.

## No Distractions. Always use your turn signal!

### Most Left-Turn Crashes

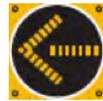
occur at the end of a green light when the light changes to yellow and drivers turn, assuming oncoming traffic will stop.<sup>1</sup> Know your arrows - some are confusing.



**Green arrow:** It is safest to turn at intersections with green arrows. Oncoming traffic has a red light.



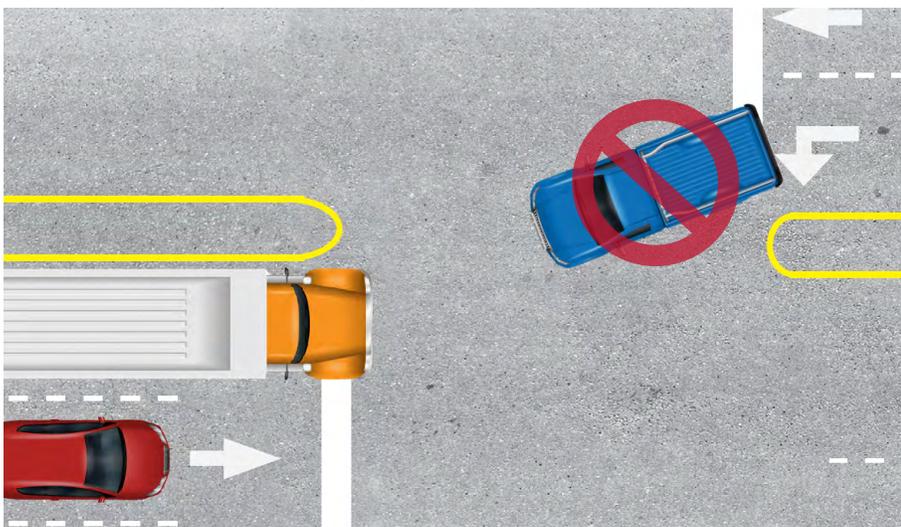
**Steady yellow arrow:** Light is about to turn red. Only finish a turn you have already started if there is an adequate gap in traffic.



**Flashing yellow arrow:** Use extreme caution as oncoming traffic has a green light and full right-of-way.

**Stay Focused and Drive Defensively:** Even though you may have the right-of-way you must drive defensively and prepare for others running a light or stop sign. Before proceeding after your light changes ensure all cross traffic has stopped and pedestrians have made it through the intersection.

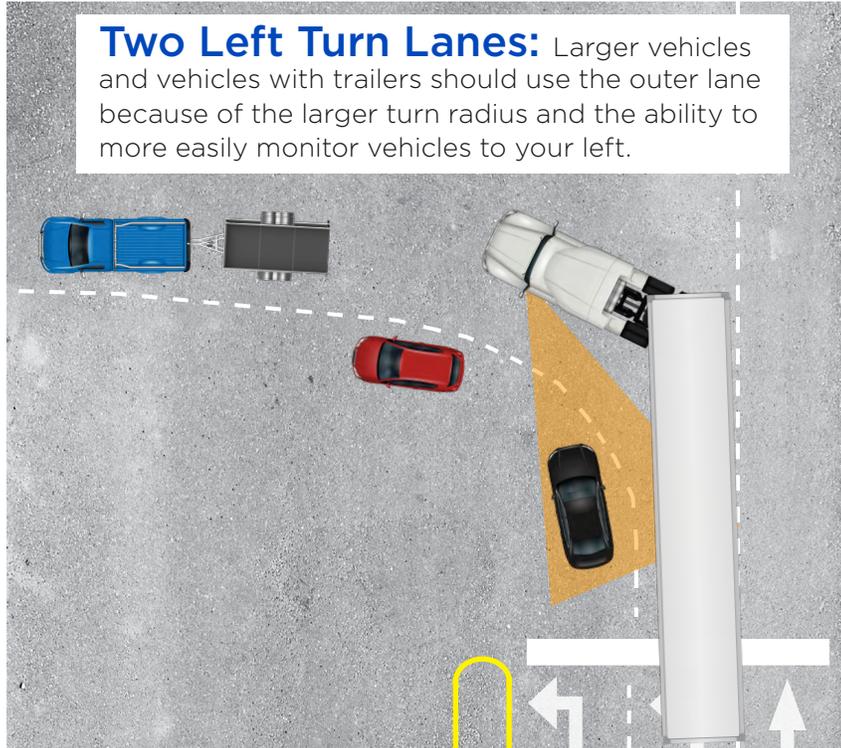
**Drive Defensively - Protect Yourself from the Mistakes of Others.**



### Waiting to Turn:

Do not pull midway into an intersection, hoping you can make the light. This can result in having to back up or dart in front of oncoming or cross traffic, both *dangerous* maneuvers.

<sup>1</sup> WYDOT Quick Facts: Traffic Signals, WYDOT's Public Affairs Office, March 2012



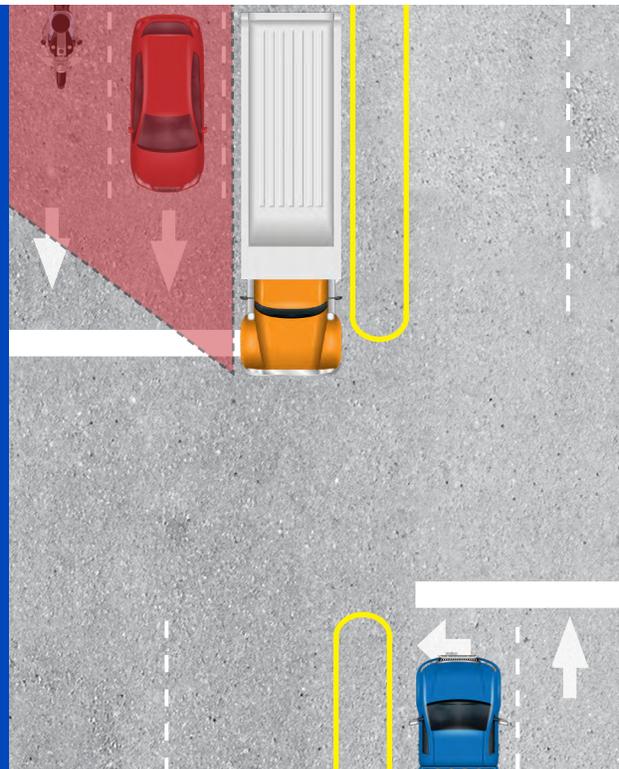
### Practice Situational Awareness:

Perceive what is happening around you and react appropriately:

- “That car may pull out in front of me. I should cover my brake.”
- “That jogger may try to cross against the light. I need to wait before proceeding.”
- “That truck is going too fast to stop. I better brake now.”

### Left Turns:

- Turn at intersections with green arrows when possible
- Scan for hidden and quickly approaching vehicles
- It is difficult to determine the speed of oncoming vehicles. Ensure you have an adequate gap
- Use extreme caution when your view is obstructed. If you do not have a green arrow, wait for the obstructing vehicles to move
- In 2019, 41% of motorcycle fatalities involving another vehicle occurred when the other vehicle turned left into the motorcycle<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Traffic Safety Facts, 2019, Motorcycles DOT HS 813 112, National Highway Transportation Administration, September 2021