



# BACKING SAFELY



Because you cannot see everything behind your vehicle, backing is always dangerous. The National Safety Council estimates that backing accidents account for 500 deaths and approximately 15,000 injuries per year, without mentioning the financial impact. Avoid backing whenever you can. When you park, try to park so you will be able to pull forward when you leave. If you have to back, follow these simple safety rules:

- Start in the proper position: it will depend on the type of backing to be done, however you should avoid backing on your blind side as much as possible.
- Before you start backing up: walk around your vehicle to get a clearer picture of all the obstacles around. It's important to get out and look for yourself. Many times there are cement obstacles that are impossible to see from the cabin. Never skip this rule if there are kids nearby.

- Use your mirrors: check the outside mirrors on both sides frequently, however you must make sure they're well-adjusted to avoid blind spots.
- Look at your path: check your overhead clearance and the path your vehicle will take. Look for wires, soft spots on the ground or nails that could cause damage to your tires.
- Back slowly: use the lowest reverse gear. It will allow you to make corrections as you go and if in doubt, get out of the cabin and look at your path again.
- Use a spotter: whenever possible use a helper, that person can see the blind spots you can't. The helper must stand near the back of your trailer where you can see him/her. It's important you both agree on what each signal means to avoid misunderstandings, specially which signal means stop.

We need to do a better job, it's up to you to turn the statistics around.

