



According to The National Safety Council one in every four vehicle accidents can be attributed to poor backing techniques. This statistic is even worse when the backing is done from the blind side. Blind side backing is backing toward the right side of the vehicle where a driver has limited visibility and can only see where they are going in the truck's rearview mirrors. Blind side backing is more involved than sight side backing because it requires more patience and time to set up.

Drivers should try to avoid backing situations altogether. Many non-dock deliveries can be made by planning your approach once you have full view of your surroundings. This is especially true if you are unfamiliar with the place of delivery. If that is not possible try to change your approach and set up to where you can back from the left side (sight side), allowing you to view the left side of the trailer and the targeted spot the whole time. If none of these are available options you will have to back from the blind side. This should be your last resort.

Before beginning to back drivers should survey the area and remove all distractions. Get out of the truck and inspect not only areas to the sides of your vehicle but also above and below for things like overhead wires or depressions in the road surface. Eliminate any noise in the cab and roll down the window so you can listen for warning sounds.

Follow these steps for successful Blind Side Backing:

- Using the beginning of the space you need to back into, determine where the tractor tandems need to be in relation to that spot to start your turn (jacking the tractor to the right).
- Pick a spot to drive toward which will bring the rear of the trailer in alignment with the target space.
- Get Out And Look at the trailer rear to determine how much room there is for you to back in relation to the amount of room in front of the tractor to pull up. Get Out And Look as often as needed to safely back.
- Back and pull up frequently until you slowly work the trailer into the targeted slot and gradually decrease the right side angle of the cab, straightening as much as possible.
- If possible use of a spotter. Be sure to agree on hand signals and spotter placement prior to starting. Remember that you are still responsible for the control of your vehicle even when using a spotter.
- If you have power mirrors, adjust them throughout the backing maneuver to maximize your vision.

Blind Side Backing can be done safely and successfully by any driver. It just takes more time to set up and more patience to complete. Don't be in a hurry!

For more information or questions please email us at: FleetRiskServices@ryder.com