

# Ecodriving: Look Up, Plan Ahead & Mind the Gap



## How you drive directly affects the amount of emissions produced by your vehicle.

Ecodriving is a smooth, flowing and anticipatory driving style which aims to reduce fuel consumption.

Effective ecodrivers scan the road and anticipate traffic movements, other road users' actions and hazards.

Acceleration uses more fuel than coasting. Braking doesn't directly consume fuel but, whenever you brake, you commit to future acceleration.

Ecodrivers brake and accelerate less frequently and less intensely than other drivers – saving fuel – because they look up, plan ahead and mind the gap.

### Look Up: Scan the Road

Scanning the road well ahead is critical to effective ecodriving.

The further ahead and more broadly you look, the more time you have to respond safely and efficiently.

## Plan Ahead: Anticipate Traffic

Anticipating changes in and around the road space is an important ecodriving skill, because it allows you to:

- Respond effectively to vehicle movements, hazards and the actions of other road users;
- Effectively tackle fixed interruptions to traffic flow such as traffic signals, intersections, lane merges and turns;
- Make adjustments to your speed and position on the road smoothly and within good time, such as lane changes, rather than relying on last-minute, harsh or severe acceleration or braking;
- Reduce your speed to arrive at a traffic signal after it turns green, rather than rushing to the red light; and
- Maintain a safe distance between your vehicle and the vehicle in front.

### Further information:

Email: [DPTI.LowEmissionVehicles@sa.gov.au](mailto:DPTI.LowEmissionVehicles@sa.gov.au)

Web: [www.lowemissionvehicles.sa.gov.au](http://www.lowemissionvehicles.sa.gov.au)



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## Mind the Gap: Smart and Safe Management of Your Following Distance

Managing the gap between your vehicle and the one in front is vital for effective ecodriving.

You need to maintain a minimum safe gap at all times. Remember, though, that this is a *minimum* gap – by allowing the gap to open wider at times, you give yourself greater control over your vehicle's speed.

If you maintain a fixed gap, you effectively allow the driver in front to set your speed, when you accelerate and when you brake – and they may not be an efficient driver!

By allowing the gap to expand occasionally, you put yourself in control of when you brake and when you accelerate, and permit much steadier speed. Done well, this translates to greater efficiency and, therefore, reduced fuel use.

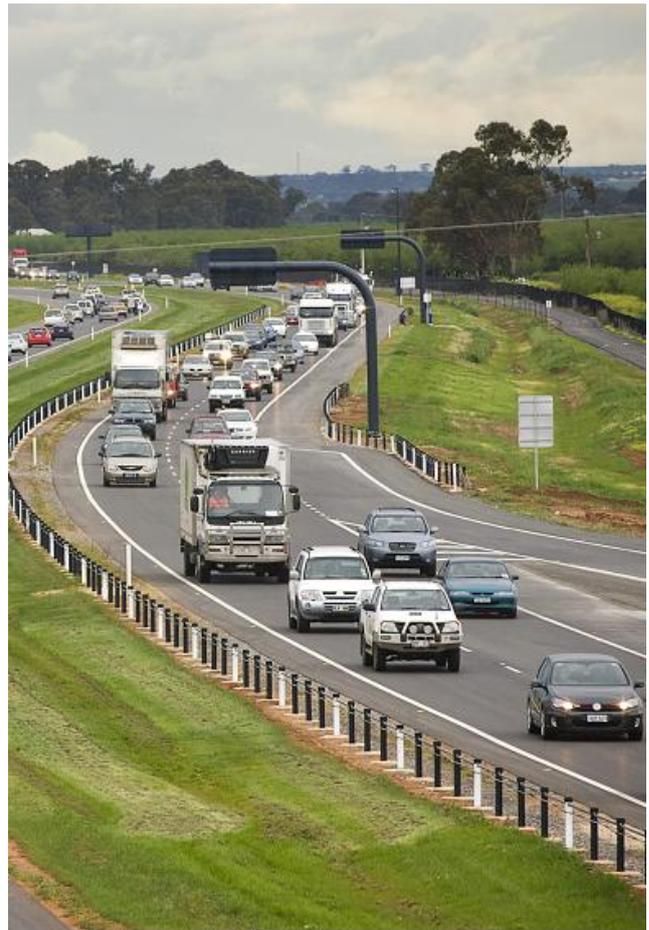
Remember, maintain a minimum gap that is safe for the conditions – aim for 3 seconds in good conditions and longer for more adverse conditions.

Some drivers may try to use a wide gap to cut into your lane. Be aware of this, and simply adjust your gap to accommodate them. Traffic conditions determine average travel times far more than 'lane-jumping'.

### When you look up, plan ahead and mind the gap, you're able to drive smoothly.

Details of other ecodriving techniques and complementary fuel saving actions are provided in separate fact sheets (see right).<sup>□</sup>

See our website for more media relating to ecodriving techniques.



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### See Also:

- [Ecodriving](#)
- [Ecodriving: Avoid Unnecessary Idling](#)
- [Ecodriving: Drive Smoothly](#)
- [Ecodriving: Smart Use of Air Conditioning](#)
- [Ecodriving: Use Your Gears Effectively](#)
- [Ecodriving: Pro Tips](#)
- [Reducing Emissions: Maintenance and Tyres](#)
- [Reducing Emissions: Aerodynamics and Loading](#)

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