

SUGGESTIONS TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO DRIVE PERFECTLY

Both Hands Should Grasp the Steering Wheel About Half Way Up and Opposite—Eternal Vigilance Necessary—Side Slips and Skids.

No general rule can be laid down as to the manner in which the steering wheel should be held, as each driver will gradually discover that there is one certain way which seems best suited to him, according to B. M. Hart, who writes on the subject of driving for Motor Age. But at that, there are right and wrong ways of grasping the wheel, and even those who have graduated into the ranks of good drivers may find themselves not adhering to the accepted rules. For instance, when the car is going faster than twenty-five miles an hour both hands should be on the steering wheel, to be ready for any emergency such as a blowout, passing vehicle or the like. Many accidents are avoided by quick steering either when bringing the car to a stop or slowing down, and the man who has both hands on the wheel in this case is in a better position to warn his way out than if he had to bring the other hand to the wheel. The latter operation requires a second or so, and seconds are precious factors when avoiding collisions.

As a general thing, the wheel should be held so that one hand is about diametrically opposite the other. In this position the arms will act as levers, and while one hand pushes the rim the other pulls. On long drives and where the road surface permits, this position may be varied so that the driver becomes less fatigued. Some people drive by placing both hands close together at the bottom of the rim, so that the arms are straight back. This is bad, because it affords little leverage.

Then there are others who grasp the spokes of the wheel, and while this is permissible for resting the arms, it must be borne in mind that the closer the hands are placed to the centre of the wheel the less will the leverage be. The safest way is to place the hands at each side of the wheel, so you are ready for emergencies. There is no telling when a tire is apt to blow out, and if the car is travelling over thirty miles an hour the wheel may be jerked from the hands of the driver if he is unprepared. Most steering gears are irreversible, but at that a blowout at comparative high speeds will in most

cases force the front wheels to the side on which the blowout took place. It is also well to remember that when a tire blows out to jam on the brakes but rather the throttle should be closed and the car allowed to coast to a stop. By jamming on the brakes the car might skid and serious damage will result to the deflated tire.

Skidding and Slipping.
While on the subject of skidding, it is perhaps well to take up a discussion of the latter.

To begin with, the driver should learn to differentiate between the terms skidding and side-slipping, though, erroneously, frequently applied to side-slipping. The former simply means a continuous forward movement of the car. Fortunately side-slipping is usually confined to the rear wheels only, but in some instances this might be true of the front ones also. One reason for side-slipping is taking corner too fast. In this case the centrifugal force tends to slide the car broadside of the road.

The driver who experiences his first skid, or side slip, feels helpless but after one or two of them he will learn how to correct them. Nearly all side slips are toward the right, made so by the camber of the road or city street. Application of the brakes in such a case will only aggravate matters. The thing to do is to partially close the throttle, but not all the way, as this would be equivalent to putting on the brakes. Then gradually head the car for the centre of the road, at the same time opening the throttle. This might aggravate the skid somewhat, but it will be for a short time only, and all the while you are placing the front wheels in the centre of the road with the car pointing at an angle.

What to Remember.
In this manner the car can be brought to the crown of the road again and the right rear wheel, which is down in the ditch, will be pulled out by the momentum of the car. The important thing to remember about skidding is to leave the brake pedal alone. No great deal of trouble will be experienced on wet pavements if the brakes are applied only when the car is going in a straight line. But

by no means should the brakes be applied enough to lock the rear wheels. In turning to corner on a slippery pavement the clutch should not be taken out if there is a tendency for the car to slip. Turn corners slowly and cautiously.

There is another cause of side slip which might take place when the car is being driven in a straight line. If the brakes be applied hard on one or both of the wheels may become locked, and the car skid in a straight line. When this takes place very frequently one of the rear tires, especially if it has a plain tread, will lose its lateral grip on the road surface and begin to slip sideways, setting up a possibility of the car being swung up against the curb. Steer into, not out of a skid to stop it.

Never steer a car sharply from the curb to the crown of the road when the surface is slippery. This is also true when the car is started from the curb. The theory back of this is simple; the adhesion of the road wheels is insufficient to overcome the centrifugal effect and the result is that the rear of the car is forced into the gutter. Sometimes a sudden speeding up of the engine will effectively overcome the tendency to skid.

Driving a car in the city through traffic calls for quick manipulation of the steering wheel, brakes, gears, etc., much more so than when in the country. In the city the driver must be on the alert at all times owing to the increased number of vehicles, street cars, pedestrians, etc. One of the first things to learn in traffic driving is not to get up too close to the car or vehicle ahead of you, especially if it is horse drawn. Horses become restive at times, sometimes from their own caprice, at others because of an unskillful driver and have a way of backing up in stopped traffic. If a car is driven too close to the rear of a horse-drawn vehicle, or in some cases, even the radiator might suffer. The careful driver leaves plenty of space between his car and any vehicle in front, so that in case the latter starts to back up the reverse can be used and the car brought back to a point of safety. Always before backing the car in a city look to the rear to see if you are hemmed in by traffic.

Actions in Emergencies.
Traffic driving also demands that the motorist be not in too great a hurry to start forward after a truck or other form of commercial vehicle has passed for the latter may be carrying long pipes or rods, lumber, ladders, etc., any of which may result in damage to the front of the car, if not an accident all around. It is espec-

MOTOR ENGINES OFTEN USED TO SECURE POWER

Turin, Italy, March 22.—Cool savings in fuel, electricity is made use of on a much larger scale than is common in other European countries. Nature, fortunately, has lavishly bestowed the car of the northern portion of the peninsula with water power, which is used to generate electricity at low cost, and has thus made manufacturers almost entirely independent of coal. As an instance, the Fiat Motor Works, at Turin, use electricity exclusively for driving machinery, and are also equipped with electric furnaces of a most up-to-date type. The Fiat Company has its own generating stations in the Alps, and at normal times the supply of current is so great that in addition to meeting its own requirements, the company is able to supply electricity to other manufacturers and to the city of Turin.

The drought which affected the whole of Europe has been particularly severe in the Alpine regions. As a result, mountain passes which usually are snowed up early in November are likely to remain open all winter, mountain streams are dried up and lakes are very low. As a consequence of this, there is such a shortage of electric current that some factories on both the French and Italian sides of the Alps have had to close or reduce the working hours. At the Fiat Works this temporary difficulty has been met by the installation of 25-35 h.p. agricultural tractors for driving machinery. More than 150 of these tractors are at present being used, the power developed by them totaling more than 5,000 h.p.

The use of agricultural tractors for driving machinery is not new, but this appears to be the first time they have been employed on such an extensive scale. No special installation is necessary for the use of tractors, especially bad when a day has but one of the protruding articles, inasmuch as the latter will then be much harder to see.

Never attempt to pass a car or vehicle on the right when going in the same direction. The other fellow might take the notion to drive closer to the curb suddenly, to which he has a perfect right, and you find yourself in imminent danger of either hitting him or being forced on the sidewalk. It pays to play safe in a case like this, and even if the car in front leaves an inviting gap between it and the curb for you to dash into, better sound your horn and make him swing over so that you can pass him on the left side, as the rule of the road says.

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