

Trains are exciting and fun for many reasons: The size, the speed, the sounds. But railroad tracks and train crossings can be dangerous as well. Here are some train and railroad safety tips to help keep your family safe near tracks and trains.

Railroad Safety Tips for Pedestrians

- Only cross railroad tracks at a designated crossing. Designated crossings are marked by a sign, lights or a gate.
- Look both ways before crossing railroad tracks. Remember, trains can come from either direction at any time.
- If lights are flashing or the gate is down at a railroad crossing, wait for the train to pass completely, the gates to lift and the lights to stop flashing before crossing. It is never okay to rush across and try to beat the train. Trains may be closer and faster than you think.
- After a train passes the crossing completely, wait for the gate to come back up and the lights to stop flashing. Then look both ways again before crossing to be sure a second train is not coming. A second train may be hidden behind the first one.



- If you are using a cell phone, headphones or playing a game on your mobile phone, remember: Heads Up, Devices Down when you cross the tracks. Once a train starts to brake, it can take a mile for the train to stop. So, when you see a train, it's already too late for it to stop for you. Headphones should be removed, so you can hear an approaching train.
- Don't be tempted to walk along the railroad track. It might be a shortcut, but it is dangerous and not worth the risk. It is also against the law to walk on the track and the land around it because it is private property.

Railroad Safety Tips for Drivers

- Be alert near railroad crossings and stop for approaching trains. If the lights are flashing or the gate is down, wait for the train to pass completely before crossing. It is never okay to rush across and try to beat the train. Trains may be closer and faster than you think.
- Allow enough space for your vehicle to completely clear the entire railroad crossing, not just the tracks, before you attempt to cross. Remember, trains are at least three feet wider than the tracks on either side, so even though you clear the tracks, you may still get hit by the train.
- After a train passes the crossing completely, wait for the gate to come back up and the lights to stop flashing. Then look both ways again before you cross to be sure a second train is not coming in either direction. A second train may be hidden behind the first one.



Every 5 days in the United States, a child dies from a train collision. Sadly, North Dakota, Louisiana and Indiana were the states with the highest rates for all incidents combined (fatal and nonfatal railroad crossing and trespass injuries). North Dakota lead that with 1.25 injuries/deaths per 100,000 people ages 0—19 from the combined years of 2018-2019. (Neighboring MN was 0.39 injuries/deaths per 100,000.)

