

Every year, millions of drivers are involved in car accidents that are caused by animals on the road. Auto accidents caused by animals are steadily increasing as humans populate and drive in more areas. Whether you encounter a squirrel or moose, knowing how to react when you see a pair of eyes ahead of you on the road will drastically reduce the chances of your involvement in a serious wreck. Review these tips before driving so that you will know what to do when you encounter an animal on the road.

10 Tips to Avoid Animals on the Road

1. **Do not panic.** Depending on the species of animal you see in the road, this could be quite a startling situation. Remember that being prepared and thinking ahead will reduce the chances of you or the animal you encounter being injured.
2. **Swerving is not the best option.** If you are travelling on an empty roadway at very slow speeds, swerving might be an effective way to prevent a collision with an animal. That being said, in almost every instance swerving to miss an animal on the road will cause more harm than good.
3. **Slow down as much as possible as soon as you see the animal.** Quickly check your rear view mirror to see if another vehicle is driving behind you. If there is no approaching vehicle, it may be possible for you to stop before you reach the animal. Do not apply your brakes so hard and so quickly that your car skids.
4. **If the animal is approaching from the right side of the road, steer your vehicle towards the right outer edge of the roadway.** This may encourage the animal to move across the road quicker. Although no one wants to kill or injure an animal, drivers must realize that their own life and safety is more valuable than that of an animal. If a collision is unavoidable, slow down as much as possible and brace yourself for the impact.
5. **If you feel that you may have hit someone's pet, you may feel compelled to stop to check on the animal.** Use caution when approaching any strange animal, especially one that maybe injured. You can contact a local police station or animal control office for assistance in getting the animal the necessary medical attention and contacting its owner.
6. **If the animal you are approaching on the road is a large animal such as a deer, moose, or elk, the impending impact may be more detrimental.** If you have time before the impact, lower down into your seat so that as much of your body as possible is shielded by the dash board. Large animals like these often bust a vehicle's windshield. The lower you are positioned into your vehicle, the less likely you are to suffer serious injuries.
7. **After an impact with a large animal, try to regain control of your vehicle and pull off of the road in the first safe space.** You and your vehicle may have suffered damage that requires assistance. You may need to call 911.
8. **After crashing into a large animal, stay inside your vehicle.** An injured deer, moose, or elk could be very dangerous. Turn on your emergency flashers to warn other drivers of your accident.
9. It's important to remember that only comprehensive insurance policy holders may file a claim and get compensation. Contact your automobile insurance agent as soon as possible to file a claim for any damage to your vehicle.



