

Why Blind Spots Make Trucks Especially Dangerous for Passenger Cars

Our Indiana attorneys can help you fight back after a truck blind spot crash

It happens more often than most drivers realize. You're cruising down the highway, feeling confident that you're visible to everyone around you. Then, without warning, a massive tractor-trailer starts drifting into your lane. You slam on the horn, hoping the driver notices you in time. If this has ever happened to you, you were likely in one of the truck's blind spots. These areas are so large that even an attentive truck driver can't see smaller vehicles.

Blind spots aren't just inconvenient when it comes to commercial trucks. They're a major safety hazard that can turn a routine trip into a serious [truck accident](#). Understanding where these blind spots are and how they contribute to crashes can help drivers stay safer and know their rights if an accident happens.

What are truck blind spots and how are they different from car blind spots?

Every vehicle has blind spots, but in passenger cars they're usually limited to small patches on the sides near the rear doors. A quick glance over the shoulder or a check with blind spot monitoring technology is usually enough to keep things in check.

Trucks, on the other hand, are a completely different story. Because of their size and design, tractor-trailers have massive "no-zones" where smaller vehicles simply vanish from view. Truck drivers sit higher up, which makes it impossible to see directly in front of their cabs. They don't have rearview mirrors because trailers block the back window. Instead, they rely only on large side mirrors, and those leave major gaps.

The difference comes down to scale. While a car's blind spot might hide part of another vehicle, a truck's blind spot can hide an entire car, or in some cases, several cars at once.

Where are the largest blind spots on a truck?

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has mapped out the "[no-zones](#)" around big rigs, and they're far larger than many people think. A simple rule helps put it in perspective: if you can't see the truck driver's face in their side mirror, they can't see you.

These zones include:

- **Front blind spot:** Extends about 20 feet directly in front of the cab. If you're too close, the driver won't see you until you move farther ahead.
- **Right side:** The most dangerous blind spot, stretching across multiple lanes. A car lingering here is essentially invisible.

- **Left side:** Smaller than the right, but still big enough to completely hide a vehicle.
- **Rear blind spot:** Can extend up to 200 feet behind the trailer. If you're tailgating, you're invisible. You're also in danger if the truck brakes suddenly.

Why do truck blind spots create serious risks for passenger cars?

Passenger cars and SUVs are dwarfed by semi-trucks. That size difference means once a car slips into a blind spot, it may disappear entirely from the truck driver's vision. When the truck changes lanes, slows down, or makes a wide turn, the car in the blind spot is at risk of being sideswiped, rear-ended, or trapped.

When a car is hidden in a blind spot, the driver has no chance to react to the truck's movements. Due to the truck's size and weight, the results are often catastrophic.

Blind spots also combine with other characteristics of trucks that make them especially dangerous, including:

- **Stopping distance:** A fully loaded semi-truck can weigh 80,000 pounds and takes much longer to stop than a car. If a driver can't see you and needs to brake suddenly, the outcome can be devastating.
- **Wide turns:** Trucks swing wide, particularly when turning right, often cutting across lanes where cars may be sitting unseen.
- **Underride dangers:** If a car collides with a truck from the side or rear, it can slide under the trailer, creating one of the deadliest types of crashes.

What types of accidents are most often caused by blind spots?

Blind spots are a factor in many different crash scenarios. Each of these crash types carries a high likelihood of serious injuries because passenger vehicles simply can't withstand the force of impact from something that large. Some of the most common ones include:

- **Sideswipe collisions:** A truck begins changing lanes without realizing a car is riding alongside it.
- **Rear-end crashes:** Cars following too closely disappear in the truck's rear blind spot, leaving no warning when the truck brakes.
- **Underride accidents:** A car slides under the back or side of a trailer after being caught in a blind spot.
- **Right-turn collisions:** Cars waiting or moving along a truck's right side get squeezed or struck when the truck swings wide.

- **Multi-vehicle pileups:** One blind spot mistake can trigger a chain reaction, especially on busy highways.

What can passenger car drivers do to avoid truck blind spot accidents?

While drivers can't eliminate truck blind spots, they can take steps to protect themselves. A few key habits can help drivers avoid inconvenience and prevent potentially life-threatening truck accidents. Here's what drivers should do when they encounter truck blind spots:

- **Avoid the no-zones:** Don't linger beside, behind, or directly in front of a truck. Move through blind spots quickly.
- **Pass with purpose:** Accelerate steadily and pass on the left side when possible, since it has a smaller blind spot. Never hang out alongside a truck.
- **Keep your distance:** Leave at least four seconds of space behind trucks. If you can't see their mirrors, they can't see you.
- **Be visible when merging:** Always give trucks more room when merging in front of them. Cutting in too closely can leave you hidden and at risk if they can't slow down in time.
- **Plan for weather and traffic:** In rain, fog, or heavy traffic, be extra cautious since blind spots are even more dangerous when visibility is already limited.

What responsibilities do truck drivers and trucking companies have to prevent blind spot accidents?

Passenger car drivers can take precautions, but the responsibility doesn't fall on them alone. Truck drivers and the companies that employ them have legal and ethical duties to mitigate blind spot risks.

For drivers, that means:

- Using mirrors correctly and checking them often.
- Signaling early before lane changes or turns.
- Staying alert to surrounding traffic, especially in congested areas.

For trucking companies, responsibilities include:

- Training drivers on blind spot awareness and defensive driving techniques.
- Equipping trucks with safety technology such as blind spot sensors and side cameras.
- Maintaining trucks properly so mirrors and cameras work as intended.

- Ensuring schedules don't pressure drivers into unsafe lane changes or speeding.

The FMCSA has [clear safety standards](#) for commercial trucking, and both drivers and companies are expected to follow them. When they don't, they can be held accountable.

Why are blind spot truck accident cases so complicated?

After a crash involving a truck's blind spot, one of the biggest challenges is figuring out who is at fault. Did the truck driver fail to check their mirrors before changing lanes? Or was the car lingering in a no-zone too long? Sometimes responsibility is shared, but that doesn't make the injuries any less severe.

Evidence is key in these cases. Dashcam footage, traffic camera recordings, witness statements, and even electronic data from the truck can show what really happened. Accident reconstruction experts often play a role in piecing it together.

But even when the evidence seems clear, insurance companies often make the process harder. They may downplay the severity of injuries, argue over which driver was more at fault, or delay payments while they comb through technicalities. Their goal is usually to reduce or eliminate their financial obligation, even at the expense of crash victims.

Get an Indiana truck accident lawyer who will listen, fight, and stand by your side

If you were injured in a blind spot crash with a truck, you're probably feeling overwhelmed. You've got medical bills piling up, time off work, and the stress of not knowing what comes next. The Indiana truck accident lawyers at [Boughter Sinak, LLC](#) know how quickly trucking companies and their insurance providers move to protect themselves, and we know how to stand up for people like you.

Our job is to investigate what really happened, uncover the truth, and fight to make sure you're treated fairly. When you sit down with us for a free consultation, we'll take the time to listen to your story about your truck accident and how it affected your life. We'll also provide honest answers to any questions you have, so you know what to expect when pursuing compensation.

All you need to do is reach out. With offices in Fort Wayne and Warsaw, we serve clients across Indiana, and if you can't come to us, we'll come to you. [Contact us](#) for a free consultation today, and let us be the ones in your corner, making sure the trucking company doesn't get the last word.