

4 Reasons Backing into Parking Spaces is Safer

Whether to back in or pull into a parking space isn't just a question for your next trip to the grocery store—it's surprisingly relevant for workplace safety. Roughly 1 in 7 vehicle accidents occur in parking lots, and they're a natural place to focus on to reduce on-site incidents. Also, how employees park when they arrive at work can also affect their safety behavior throughout the workday, how they respond to emergencies and more.



Contingency for human factors: Drivers have a smaller field of vision when reversing their vehicle. By the time you leave work you're likely to be under the spell of one or more human factors, including fatigue, frustration, and the urge to rush home.

Thinking about safety: Many companies hold tailgate meetings at the start of each shift so that safety is at the top of everyone's mind before they begin working. Backing into a parking space can function in the same way. It naturally triggers thoughts of why it's necessary—because it's safer—and anything that gets employees to think about safe behavior is a good thing. It's also a very visual and contagious habit. Once everyone is in the habit of backing in, visitors and new employees will also quickly take note that the company takes safety seriously.

Emergency preparedness: Emergencies almost always cause panic and rushing. That's why fire evacuation plans and other emergency preparations aim to keep people as calm and orderly as possible. If the need to evacuate is urgent, it's much quicker to get into your vehicle and drive straight out. There is also much less frustration in the parking lot at the end of a day, especially since workers are more likely to be tired and not paying attention.

Keystone safety habit: Habit experts have regularly noted the power of certain habits, called "keystone habits." There are certain small behavioral changes that can trigger seemingly unrelated benefits. Getting in the habit of making your bed in the morning has been shown to lead to better exercise habits, for example. This occurs because small habits are often the catalyst for larger change. Getting in the habit of backing into a parking space is often the first step of a bigger shift in safety culture. You can take it one step further and get people in the habit of backing in at home too since that's where far more unintentional injuries occur.