



NASCAR DRIVER TERRY COOK SHARES TIPS FOR DRIVING PICKUPS AND SUVS

NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series driver Terry Cook provides tips for driving pickups and SUVs safely. The same thing that makes these larger vehicles safe for passengers - their size - also makes them different to maneuver than smaller cars, meaning safe driving habits are more important now than ever.

([PRWEB](#)) April 17, 2002 -- Pickup trucks are the best selling vehicles in America, and SUVs are gaining popularity, according to J.D. Power and Associates, largely due to their high safety ratings. But the same thing that makes these larger vehicles safe for passengers -- their size -- also makes pickups and SUVs different to maneuver than smaller cars, meaning safe driving habits are more important now than ever.

International Truck and Engine Corporation, manufacturer of the Power Stroke® Diesel engine for Ford Motor Company, is teaming up with Top-10 NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series driver Terry Cook to promote safe driving tips for pickups and SUVs. Cook is an expert behind the wheel of bigger vehicles -- he not only drives the No. 29 Power Stroke Diesel Ford race truck on track, but he travels around town in his own diesel Ford Excursion. Cook compares highway driving to NASCAR competition to provide the following tips for safe driving habits and maximizing fun behind the wheel.

Clear Comfort -- The first rule of safe driving is to make sure you're comfortable and can see clearly. Good posture will improve your alertness, Cook says. We spend up to four days adjusting everything on the No. 29 Power Stroke Diesel Ford to help keep me from getting tired on long 200-lap races. Whether you're heading to the grocery store or a long road trip, the first thing you should do is make sure you're sitting in a good driving position.

Adjust your seat so that your wrists rest on top of the steering wheel and your elbows and legs are slightly bent, even when extending your arms in a turn or your legs to depress the accelerator. Leave a few inches between your knees and the dash or steering column for both comfort and safety.

Mirror, Mirror -- Make sure mirrors are positioned for maximum visibility to both sides and to the rear of your vehicle. The typical blind spot is usually over your left shoulder at the left rear wheel, and that's why it's important to check not only in your mirrors for clearance, but also look over your shoulders when backing up or changing lanes, says Cook.

Drive The Line -- Go into turns slowly and gain speed on the exit. When you enter a turn, the vehicle balance shifts off center due to centrifugal forces. On the racetrack, where the trucks reach up to 190 miles-per-hour on a straightaway, Cook eases into the turn to manage that shift of energy and avoid spinning out. Because pickups and SUVs are higher off the ground than cars, drivers need to keep the same dynamics of safe cornering in mind on the road.

On the racetrack, we follow the line of the corner to keep the trucks balanced, says Cook. This line is made up of the entry point, where you begin to turn the vehicle inward; the apex (or middle of the turn), where the vehicle begins to straighten out; and the exit point, where the vehicle is completely straight and



able to regain speed. According to Cook, it is best to gain speed on the way out of the turn, after the apex.

Weathering the Storm When the road is slick, accelerate slowly off the corner. Slamming the accelerator down may cause the tires to spin. If you feel like you are beginning to slide, let off the brake pedal and start to pump it rapidly. It's better to pulsate the brake pedal and slowly steer it toward a stopping point, Cook says. Stepping hard on the brake can cause your wheels to lock. Many vehicles are equipped with antilock braking systems that automatically pulsate the brakes for you.

Sure Stop Plan ahead for stopping. A lot of drivers assume that because they are in a four wheel drive truck, they will have greater control to avoid accidents. In fact, because of the size and weight of these vehicles, it takes more time to stop especially in inclement weather. "Four wheel drive means vehicles can gain speed faster, but it doesn't mean they will stop any faster. Every car has four-wheel brakes," said Cook.

It's important to learn how to properly drive to fully enjoy the experience of driving a pickup truck or SUV, said Dan Ustian, Engine Group president, International Truck and Engine Corporation. We design Power Stroke Diesel engines to provide power, performance, and a fun driving experience, and with that, we value the importance of safe driving.

Cook is scheduled to drive the No. 29 Power Stroke Diesel Ford in 22 NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series races this year. International has produced more than 1.5 million Power Stroke Diesel engines for Ford pickups, vans and SUVs since 1994, with more than 98 percent of those vehicles still on the road today, primarily due to the power, fuel economy and durability benefits of diesel over gasoline. For more information, visit www.InternationalDelivers.com.

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