

Sometimes passing isn't worth it

By Sarah Sobanski

You know the drive to Peterborough or Belleville like the back of your hand. Some people say it takes an hour and a half, others maybe two, but you can get it down to an hour and 15 minutes on a sunny weekday.

The speed limit seems more like a guideline in Canada. You might say 20 kilometers over it seems pretty standard.

This isn't the case everywhere. In the UK, my friends have said you must stick to the speed limit and generally speaking, those who break it get punished. Apparently that's one of the first things you learn when you take [driving lessons in Manchester](#) or another UK city. I can't imagine that.

If you're like me, you click on cruise-control, crank the radio and settle in for the commute. Others might balk at making it twice in a weekend, but for us, it's pretty standard - there and back in a day.

We know that getting stuck behind someone doing 85 to 88 kilometers down a flat stretch is pure agony. This, especially, if it's cottage season and that northbound - on Friday - or southbound - on Sunday - traffic is endless.

There are only a few stretches of road between here and Peterborough where passing doesn't mean taking your life into your own hands. The highway has too many twists and turns through rock walls and forests. Your car might have the [lowest car insurance rates](#) but you don't want to boost those up because you've had a collision.

Maybe, like me, you've had more than a few encounters where you were passing, or someone else was passing, and you thought, "Well, it's been a good world."

I was southbound on a Saturday. It was a crisp day, fall-like. There was a family about three cars ahead of me - you could tell because the minivan's back-passenger TVs were blinking through the back window.

Before I could fully understand what was happening, there was a series of honks and flashes of red brake lights. As I came to a full stop, and luckily the three cars behind me also did, the three cars ahead of me swerved onto the shoulder. All I saw was the front right corner of a white northbound SUV bumper disappear back into his lane of traffic where the van had been seconds before.

For a moment, no one moved. The seven of us were too stunned - this could've been the last drive for a lot of us.

As I led the remainder of us who had stayed on the road onward, I checked through the van's window to see everyone was OK. The mother was picking things up from around the dash and the father, who was driving, was sitting back with his knuckles still white around the steering wheel.

Others haven't been so lucky.

Whether it be a young driver, an old driver, or a frequent route driver like you or me, it's so important to remember that physics will beat confidence every time. Another reminder: going around someone so you can drive 10 kilometers faster isn't going to change the time of your arrival by much.

We learned to drive on two-lane highways here in rural Ontario. We've all been both that teenage, need-for-speed, G2 driver and the person wondering why the person behind us is riding our butts when we're already going acceptably over the speed limit.

There's always going to be someone that wants to go faster than you and always someone that you want to go faster than. But you know what? I've been passed my fair share, and more often than not, I end up behind the person who just about killed me trying to pass by the end of my drive.

Sometimes you're going to have to pass - and sometimes it's well within your right to do so - but sometimes it's just not worth it.

Please remind your friends, remind your kids learning to drive and remind yourself: rushing doesn't pay. Or better yet, speed kills.

Getting extra education in learning to drive will always be a benefit to you and to your insurance costs. If you are based in Canada you can search for a Canadian defensive driving course, or if you're in New York you can look for a [nys defensive driving course online](#). Wherever you are make sure that you are doing everything possible to keep yourself safe on the roads.