# Cruise Control Driving Meeting Kit

## WHAT IS CRUISE CONTROL

Cruise control can be used to automatically control the speed in your vehicle (usually over 25-35 miles per hour) without keeping your foot on the accelerator. It is a great tool to prevent driver fatigue, speeding, and help with fuel economy during long trips on flat, straight roads and highways. Cruise control can cause accidents if you use it improperly or in hazardous road conditions such as city streets, heavy traffic, hills, winding roads, and wet, slippery roads.

## ADVANTAGES/DISADVANTAGES OF CRUISE CONTROL

The most obvious **advantage** of cruise control is that it allows a driver to maintain a steady rate of speed (set by them) while they rest their feet. Some other benefits that cruise control offers include:

- It enhances driver comfort during extended road trips.
- By setting the speed via cruise control, a driver can avoid exceeding the posted speed limit and violating driving laws.
- Cruise control allows a motorist to maintain a consistent speed and increase fuel economy.

Despite the convenience of cruise control, there are some important **disadvantages** to it as well, including:

- Drivers using cruise control do not apply constant pressure on the gas pedal, which can increase the risk of auto accidents when maneuvering through traffic.
- The use of cruise control is not recommended in rain, snow, or icy conditions when the vehicle could begin to slide on

the wet road.

- During inclement weather, particularly rain or snow, applying pressure on the brake to deactivate cruise control may cause the vehicle to veer out of control and cause an accident.
- If you're driving on back roads or are extremely tired, cruise control can cause a driver to "zone out" and pay less attention to the road.

## RISKS OF CRUISE CONTROL – A SUMMARY

- Cruise control when deployed will attempt to keep the car at a constant speed set by the driver. If the vehicle speed has been set to a 100 km/h speed, the car will automatically enter a corner at 100 km/h. If this is an inappropriate speed for the corner the subsequent braking to reduce speed will, while cornering, affect the balance of the vehicle which may, in turn, induce instability in the vehicle.
- This will affect the vehicle handling and if not correctly compensated for by the driver, can in the worst-case result in a loss of control of the vehicle.
- Cruise control may lead to increased lane position variability, delayed braking, and crashing into a stationary queue more frequently.
- Wet roads significantly affect the grip of the tire and this, in turn, can make corrective actions by the driver much more difficult to judge.
- A driver should remain alert while driving – Fatigue and a false sense of security can lead to a lack of attention and an accident.
- Cruise control should NEVER be used by a driver who is feeling tired or jaded.
- Another risk is that a driver may not be able to respond as swiftly and effectively to an emergency situation.
- With cruise control, it takes the driver's foot off the gas pedal and the brake. The driver usually keeps his foot on the floor nearby. If you have to stop suddenly, to avoid a hazard on the road, it will take a few extra miliseconds to

find the brake pedal, and this time makes a lot of difference in what happens next.

- Driving over “rolling” terrain, with gentle up and down portions, can usually be done more economically (using less fuel) by a skilled driver viewing the approaching terrain, by maintaining a relatively constant throttle position and allowing the vehicle to accelerate on the downgrades and decelerate on upgrades, while reducing power when cresting a rise and adding a bit before an upgrade is reached.
- If Advanced Cruise Control is used in busy traffic, and on rural and urban roads other than main roads, there is a potential reduction of the ACC detection capacity.
- Accidents, merge lanes, exit congestion—all are possible highway hazards that are hard to anticipate, and harder to avoid when you’re on cruise control

## CRUISE CONTROL TAKEAWAYS

- As a safe starting point, reading your vehicle owner’s manual on how to operate your vehicle’s cruise control feature – Pay attention to the manufacturer’s warnings about cruise control use.
- It remains the duty of the driver to assess the conditions of the road and adjust vehicle speed to a safe speed suitable for the road and current driving conditions.
- The safest way to operate a vehicle is to ensure that under all driving conditions you can control the vehicle (brake, corner and accelerate) in a safe manner.
- During cruise control, your foot may take a rest from the accelerator, but keep both feet flat on the driver’s side floor and ready for braking or manoeuvring if you need to suddenly slow or emergency stop.
- Don’t lounge, curl your foot up underneath you, or put it up on the dashboard, windowsill, etc. while you drive.
- Even though you may not have to control your accelerator you still need to control the brake pedal at all times.
- The brake pedal will disable cruise control, so be aware if the brake pedal is accidentally hit or pressed while

driving.

## FINAL WORD

Motorists need to understand the advantages but more importantly the limits of Cruise Control Driving. First and only rule – cruise control driving is only designed for ideal driving condition and nothing less.