

Basics for Driving on Set

Walk around the car & do a visual check. Make sure nothing is under the wheels & that the tires look inflated properly. If they look low check them with a tire pressure gauge. Inexpensive to buy & should have one for your own vehicle. Pic vehicles may have a compressor to air up the tires to the correct pressure which for basic driving is approx. 35 psi. There are small lighter plug-in compressors for around \$25 that fit easily in your stunt bag in the case pic vehicles does not have one. Check the back seat & trunk for stuff that may be crashing around & possibly dangerous.

Hop in, position your seat properly & turn the radio off. Set your mirrors & find out where the lights, control's & locks are. Find a good spot to place your walkie so it stays put. If stunt driving, turn off the traction control & ask picture vehicles to disable the ABS. Check that you have fuel. Keys are usually above the visor. Have the window down if you have to get out (if it's not raining) as some cars love to lock automatically. If the weather is bad, you can take the key with you if needed.

If you leave the car for a walk & talk through or 10-1 or craft etc. take your walkie but turn it down for the drivers meeting. Don't forget to turn it back up. If you don't have a walkie keep your eyes on the cars in front as your action cue will be when they start moving. If you're SSE, drive as you are directed which is always, no breaking traction or aggressive driving. SSE is often a great way to demonstrate that you can follow direction & have the skill & control to keep a specific distance. Also being able to back up in a straight line & basic driving skill. It's like a paid audition that can lead to more driving opportunities if you pay attention & take direction well. Head on a swivel at all times for bogies. Call it out on the walkie if you see one.

Depending on the lock up you may be parked safely at the curb. Never go into the road until the 1st Ad or Stunt Coordinator gives the ok. ALWAYS double check for traffic & pedestrians. Lock ups are NEVER absolute. Expect the public to do the wrong thing all the time because they always do. A quick double honk before you move the car. There are many crew members etc. always walking between cars & often props are down behind you putting a license plate on. You can put the key on the dashboard until they are finished putting the plates on as a reminder not to run them over. Always remember your seat belt. Seldom that they don't want it on.

Once your'e out in #1 position, if they do a half speed rehearsal make sure it's half speed. Usually, it will be a 321 action. If you all have to take off in sync lift your foot off the brake on 1 and press the gas on action. Depending on the sequence you may put the car in low so if you have to slow down you can ease off the gas & engine braking will slow you down a bit avoiding the brakes which can make the cars behind all brake causing a rear end collision. Keep the spacing discussed in the drivers meeting but also watch your mirrors for the cars that may be weaving through you at speed as you may have to adjust distance for a moment to let them fit between the gap. When you come to the end slow down gradually so others don't have to brake hard. If the end comes quickly plan to stagger vehicles left & right when stopping to gain a few car lengths of stopping room. Most rear end collisions happen when coming to a stop too quickly. Call out BOGIE on the walkie if you see one. They can always reset & go again quicker than they can clean up a crash & fill out the accident report.

On cut beware, as the word "Cut" seems to be the cue for all crew to step out in the road behind you. Night seems to be their favourite time to hide in your blind spot. The stunt coordinator should announce this at the safety meeting & ask the 1st AD to announce to crew that they

should stay off the road until the vehicles are back in ones. Shoulder check & double honk before backing up.

Usually, they will want you to back up and make safe at the curb unless you are going again & still locked. If you are resetting around the block or U turning stay in position related to the other cars and obey all traffic rules unless told otherwise or with a police lock up. Every time you back up to ones it is Imperative that you put the car in park, so you never accidentally take off in reverse if going again. If you see reverse lights on any car, tell them. If crew members come around your vehicle for any reason say loudly "car settling into park". The car always rolls a little when you put it in park depending on the slope of the road & toes can get run over.

In reference to resetting to number ones. Once you arrive back at ones look around & always find a start mark that is consistent. Make sure it is a pole, building or sign that is permanent & can't be moved. This start mark & throttle control will ensure you have the best chance at repeating the sequence the same every time. Timing is critical in driving especially with multiple vehicles, weaving through traffic, crossing with near misses & head on avoidance etc. It is imperative we work as a team in these types of sequences for safety but also to tell the story the director wants the audience to hear/see. The same goes for your end mark if you have one. Having said this sometimes the lock up is very short & tight & we all have to back up bumper to bumper. This is a little more advanced & requires precise timing & getting into your spacing as soon as you can in order to complete the sequence in a shorter run. As we discussed at the training the cue will usually be 3 2 1 action. If so, lift the left foot off the brake on one & press the gas on action. This process becomes even more critical when all the vehicles must start in sync. Practice & repetition are necessary to become proficient at this.

Some general tips & skills you should work on while driving in daily life.

In regular everyday driving, practice stopping at specific marks. e.g., when you stop at a light with wheels just before the white line. Work on being accurate like stopping behind other cars so you can still see the license plate and get precise with it. If there is no traffic, try to line up the front of your car perfectly even with the stop sign post.

Practice 2-foot driving with left foot covering the brake. Start off with no other cars around until you gain enough finesse to avoid being jerky. For stunts it is a must to have the skill to brake with the left foot. Especially when the brake they install is a pedal on the left.

Get used to backing up using just your mirrors. Tricky in the beginning but you will need it when for instance you have a car full of actors and can't see out of the back window.