

PRESS RELEASE

In spite of different European legal standards

Road accidents: tires play a major role in keeping safe distances

One of the most important aspects involved in reducing road accidents is safety distance, namely the minimum space between a vehicle and the one in front of it. From a legal point of view, there are two different standard groups. The former is the British Highway Code, which quantifies a vehicle's braking distance on a chart. The braking distance of a car driving at a speed of 80 km/h, for instance, is 53 m, which is approximately the equivalent length of 13 cars, as disclosed by the Osservatorio Airp on sustainable mobility.

Average car braking distances				
Km/h	Reaction time (m)	Braking distance (m)	Total (m)	Equivalent number of cars
32	6	6	12	3
48	9	14	23	6
64	12	24	36	9
80	15	38	53	13
96	18	55	73	18
112	21	75	96	24

The latter standard group is the Italian Highway code, which puts the burden of evaluation on the user. Safe following distance is thus defined as "the distance allowing vehicles to promptly halt and avoid collisions with the vehicles in front of them", yet it does not quantify the actual distance that must be kept, if not in particular cases, so that, for example, cars bumping other vehicles alwavs carry the accident liability.

Source: data processing by Osservatorio Airp on Sustainable Mobility, data courtesy of The Highway code

In both cases, though, safety distance is a relevant issue. The general lines of the British Highway code are mainly intended to protect car drivers, for they provide precise indications on correct safety distances. On the contrary, the Italian Highway code invests the driver with more responsibility, holding him liable for keeping the distance necessary to avoid rear-end collisions. In both instances, the respectful driver will adopt safe behaviors, so as to be prepared to prevent road accidents. Proper tire maintenance is an extremely important safety function. As a matter of fact, everybody knows that tire conditions, or better still, tread conditions have a significant impact on braking distances. With this in mind, the respectful driver will pledge to keep his tires in top shape, having them regularly checked for integrity, tread wear and correct inflation by tire specialists equipped with the professional knowledge and state-of-the-art tools required to ensure the most effective road safety.

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