

Deer are wild animals and so can be unpredictable in their behaviour. In conflict with a vehicle, a large deer can cause substantial damage and injury.

Here is a list of tips to help cut the risk of hitting a deer:

- Take note of deer warning signs, by driving with caution at or below the posted speed limit. Deer warning signs are only positioned where deer are likely to cross.
- Peaks in deer related traffic collisions occur in May followed by October through to December. Highest risk periods are from sunset to midnight followed by the hours shortly before and after sunrise.
- Be aware that further deer may well cross after the ones you have noticed.
- After dark, do use full beam when there is no opposing traffic. The headlight beam will illuminate the eyes of deer on or near a roadway and provide greater driver reaction time. But, when a deer or other animal is seen on the road, dim your headlights as animals startled by the beam may 'freeze' rather than leave the road.
- Don't swerve to avoid a deer. If a collision with the animal seems inevitable, then hit it while maintaining full control of your vehicle. The alternative of swerving into oncoming traffic or a ditch could be even worse.
- Only break sharply and stop if there is no danger of being hit by following traffic. Try to come to a stop as far in front of the animals as possible to enable it to leave the roadside without panic. Report any deer related collisions to the police (who should be able to contact the local person best placed to assist with an injured deer at the roadside).

Deer Whistles

This device was designed in the USA to prevent deer collisions. The device is an ultrasonic whistle that is easily fitted to a vehicle, including motorcycles, that emits a high frequency whistle when the vehicle is travelling.

It is not yet known if these whistles have any affect on cattle, but the manufacturer claims that they give other animals and birds the chance to get out of the way of an oncoming vehicle.

