



A Review of Key 3: Keep Your Eyes Moving

Introduction

Many drivers do not get the big picture because they do not use their full visual capabilities. Knowing how our eyes function can contribute to using them more effectively.

We have two types of vision: peripheral and central. Peripheral vision detects undefined objects of interest while central vision investigates those objects with clarity. Most people, when looking straight ahead, can detect objects about 90 degrees to each side for a total picture of about 180 degrees (peripheral vision). In this picture, only three degrees (illustration) can be seen clearly by central vision. The remaining 177 degrees are not in sharp focus.

Using Your Full Seeing Capabilities Because central vision affords only three degrees of clear vision, it is necessary to maintain constant eye movement in order to improve perception within the peripheral area. In other words, Keep Your Eyes Moving. Frequent eye movement lets you take maximum advantage of peripheral vision. Infrequent eye movement means that you are using only your central vision thus diminishing the effectiveness of your peripheral vision. The big picture becomes dangerously narrow.

This simple demonstration illustrates the point clearly. Focus your eyes on one word in this line of type and then try reading the rest of the line on the page without moving your eyes. The remaining words are out of focus. Without moving your eyes, it is not possible to read them clearly. More importantly, if you continue concentrating your central vision on that one word your peripheral vision becomes increasingly less effective, especially at its outside borders. The point is do not let your eyes pause on any object for more than 2 seconds.

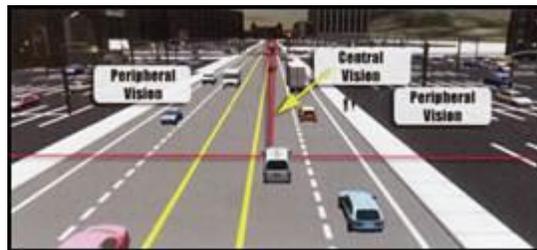
The value of peripheral vision should not be underestimated. Peripheral vision is your early warning system, keeping you constantly up-to-date on rapidly changing conditions in your big picture. This early warning system is triggered by color, motion and light. But it will not be triggered if the eyes are in a fixed or blank stare.



Key 3 Techniques For Keeping The Big Picture

- **Keep Your Eyes Moving every two seconds.** Observe things in quick glances. This technique maximizes your central and peripheral vision. It keeps your early warning system continuously engaged and your mind alert. It assures your avoidance of a fixed or blank stare.
- Before entering an intersection, look left, right, and then left again. Look left twice because, normally, the first vehicle that could hit you would come from the left.
- Increased eye activity stimulates the brain.
- Do not yield to distractions inside your vehicle or your own mind and steer clear of others who do.

If a driver says, "I didn't see him until it was too late", this driver's early warning system may not have been active. The big picture is a moving picture that must be continuously scanned. Scanning keeps peripheral vision effective, allowing you to detect problems in the making.



Remember: "No task is so important that it be done at the risk of Safety."