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## Recommended Driver Behaviour

The following driver behaviours are recommended to enhance the enjoyment for everyone. The explanations are given in the hope that a little knowledge and understanding may help avoid frustrations.

*This article was originally written to help enhance the fun and enjoyment of the races held by the Australian Sim Racing Group Inc, and in particular for their Grand Prix Legends Australian Championship series. Either of those sites may have additional rules etc that might be helpful resources. Since it was written the below has been translated and reprinted with permission into various languages world wide and used by many other clubs and race series around the world, for GPL based competitions as well as for competitions based on other sim racing programs. If it helps then that's good to hear. Best of luck with your sim racing. Its great fun.*

by Phillip McNelley

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## Qualifying Sessions

**Stay out of the way of drivers who are on flying laps** when you're on an out lap, or any other non-useful qualifying lap for that matter. With a full field the track can get crowded. It can be hard find the space to complete a clean flying lap sometimes. Its all the worse if people who are on an out lap try to 'race' those who are trying to complete a clean flying lap. Be a sport. Let others complete their flying laps as cleanly as possible.

Also if you have spoiled the lap you're on, ( by spinning, a really bad section, whatever ), then also consider staying out of the way of others for the remainder of your non-useful lap.

**Exit the pits carefully.** Many drivers announce their egress onto the circuit with a 'PO' ( Pit Out ) notice though the chat facility. This is recommended. However, such announcements alone are not a license to charge onto the track with gay abandonment. In addition, try to ease yourself onto the track so that you get a view in your mirrors of what's coming up behind.

Some tracks are worse than others when it comes to a clean track entrance manoeuvre. I.e., you can leave the pits at Monza at full acceleration and drive adjacent to the main track for a few hundred yards before actually needing to move onto the track proper. This gives you lots of time to check your mirrors for approaching cars. On the other hand, the pit exit at Watkins Glen leads almost directly onto the racing line of a high speed sliding corner. There'll you need to be very careful not to interfere with someone on a flying lap.

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## All Sessions

**Get off the track and out of the way ASAP if your car is non functional.** If you crash, spin out, run out of fuel, whatever, so that you're on the track but not moving or moving very slowly for where you are, then move off the track as quickly as you can. If in a Pro race where a Sift-R isn't possible, retire ASAP if that's the fastest way to clear the road in a particular circumstance. Treat this as a matter of urgency, as if every fraction of a second counts, ( and it often does). Your race may be done but others are still trying to compete as best they can. Running into your stationary or slowly moving vehicle will not make their day. At the very least get away from the racing line, and do it with all haste.

Of course there may be some circumstance where a damaged car might still be capable of affording some benefit to its driver. E.g. Damage from a crash on the last corner on the last lap may still leave a car able to limp across the line for a beneficial result. An out of fuel car may still be able to roll a long way to cross the line. A damaged but still running car or engine may still be able to carry you to some points. Common sense has to prevail of course, and no one can expect you not to do everything reasonable to enhance your own result. But, if your current situation is not served by staying on the track, then please get off, and get off as fast as you can.

**Show yourself in their mirrors.** Grand Prix Legends, ( **GPL** ), has the biggest blind spots of many a racing sim, ( see below ). To state the obvious, if the driver in front of you can't see you then don't be surprised if they crash into you, or cut you off so you can't avoid crashing into them. As much as you can, show yourself in the mirrors of the car in front.

Of course once you decide to overtake a car you have to drive into their blind spots. But even then, if they get a good view of what your movements are immediately prior to your disappearing, they'll have a much better idea of your probable position and likely immediate actions, and what they need to do to try to avoid contact. This is not quite the same as real life perhaps, but real life enjoys a much better visual range.

Trying to stay away from an opponent's mirrors may be a valid tactical ploy. I.e., trying to rattle them into an error by making them guess where you are. But in **GPL** this is asking for trouble. In my opinion **GPL's** visual limitations requires us to play the gentleman here, if only for our own survival and enjoyment.

**Never run into the back of someone in front of you.** This is probably one of the silliest things one driver can do to another. There's few excuses here. If you are behind then **you** have the responsibility to drive in a manner that will not lead to you running into a car ahead. It doesn't matter if you're faster, think you have the right to be let by, are more talented, or think that all slower drivers should not hold up faster drivers. If you're behind someone then that's your tough luck. You have to earn your pass the same as anyone. However frustrated you may be, or whatever, it is **your** responsibility not to run into the car in front of you. Even if their braking zones occur earlier than yours would normally, then tough luck. You have to anticipate these possibilities and drive accordingly.

If you've tried everything, braking, gearing down, changing line, etc., but can see you're still going to collide with a car ahead, then you should drive your own car off the track, crashing yourself out of the race if necessary, if that's what it takes to avoid such a contact.

The in-front driver must not do malicious braking of course. I.e. Deliberately slowing down inappropriately to rattle a following driver. They are required to drive with all haste and due propriety. But while doing so within their limits they are entitled not to have to worry about whether a following driver will run into them.

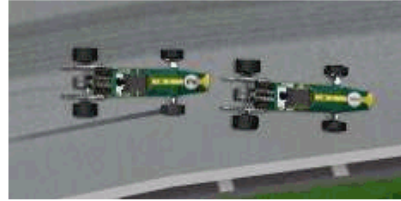
Being able to follow another driver without running into them is something you have to learn to do. It often takes keen judgment and many times is not easy. You want to be as close as possible, to snatch a pass if a chance comes along, but you need to be far enough away to respond to the ahead driver's manoeuvres, evasively sometimes. It does take practice and it is a skill. But it's an essential skill for successful enjoyable online racing. You can practice with friends, in non-serious races, or with the AI cars offline. Offline, pick a car that's slower than you and try to hang on their tail for 10 laps or so without passing. You may surprise yourself at how much your skill in this area needs to be improved.

**Avoid close racing when its not necessary.** Not only does very close driving give you very little time to react if the need arises, it also increases very much the likelihood of a internet-lag-time caused collision. In **GPL** online there is always a risk of registering a collision in close driving even without any perceivable contact - due to internet lag. The closer you are to another car the more likely this will happen. The general rule for the careful and respectful driver would be, not to unnecessarily drive too close to another, especially whenever there is no point. E.g. In situations where there is no possibility of passing anyway. You're asking for trouble if you do, even if you don't actually do anything wrong.

So how close is too close ?



A view like the left from the cockpit equates to this close at the right. Probably a lot closer than you thought you were. Unfortunately **GPL** gives the impression you are further away than you actually are. In this case, from the cockpit, you may think you're a car length behind, but you're only inches away.



This close is way too close. You're begging for a lag collision if you drive like this - as in fact actually happened moments after this snapshot was taken.



A view like the left from the cockpit equates to this close at the right - about a car length. As close as you need be for most circumstances. You might think you're 2 or 3 car lengths away here, but you're only about 1 car length behind the other.



As a guide, drive so you can see some road between the top of your cowling and the bottom of the ahead driver's tyres. This is a much safer position while waiting for a valid passing opportunity. You're still close enough to make a move when and if an opportunity arises and there's at least some time to react. A lag collision is also much less likely with this amount of gap.

As I think you can see here, its a general problem with the perception in **GPL** that you look further away from the car ahead than you actually are. But once you understand this then its up to you to drive accordingly.

**Use Clear Body Language.** If someone is following you closely looking for a place to pass, and you kind of drift along with ambiguous movements about the track, or you sort of close the door but still leave the inside line half open, then you just might unintentionally lure the following car to try a pass that's only half on. Alternatively, if as soon as a following car gets anywhere near your rear quarter coming up to a corner, and while they are still in your mirrors, you make a firm and clear movement towards the inside line, and stick there, then they will know that your intentions are to close the door and drive the defensive inside line. Such a clear defensive move will leave them in no doubt not to try a risky inside pass.

This is just one case. There are others. The thing is ... Always try to convey a clear message by your driving style so that surrounding drivers get a very good idea about your intentions. Body language used well can be almost as clear as having indicators on your car.

**Practice the Other Lines Before You Have to Use Them.** If the first time you have ever tried driving around the outside of a certain corner is in a frantic race situation when you're racing toe to toe with someone, then you'll be in unfamiliar territory in the middle of a high stress precision driving situation. A bad place to be. Before a race comes up, just try doing a few laps of the circuit hugging the



left-hand-side of the road all the way around and then do a few hugging the right-hand-side. At the very least do 1 or 2 laps against each side of the road. You'll be surprised at how much less likely you are to crash while trying to hold road position if you are at least a little familiar with how the outer and inner lines feel.

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## Overtaking

### The Non Contested Pass

A non contested pass is simply a pass where you're happy, for whatever reason, to let an overtaking driver go past with the least hindrance to them as possible. Your reasons may be that you don't want to risk an incident due to an overtaking battle, the overtaking driver may be known to you as a notorious accident causer, or you may be being lapped - in which case race etiquette requires you to do what you can to expedite a clean quick safe pass for the lapping driver. Whatever the reason, there may be times when you want to let someone past.

**To let someone past uncontested, drive against one side of the track and maintain that position until they've passed.** You need to use clear body language here. Moving from side to side trying to stay off the racing line, for the sake of the passing car, is the worse thing you can do. What's important is not whether you're on the racing line or not, but whether you're driving a predictable line. Pick a side of the road to move to, usually the one you're nearest to at the time, then religiously stay against that side until the car has passed. You might even try slowing a little to expedite the pass, as sometimes a quick pass can benefit you as much as it does the passer. But don't slow down too abruptly of course.

In **GPL** during the race, if you're being lapped by another car you'll be shown blue flags by the marshals. These are advisory flags to let you know your about to be lapped and you're expected to do the gentlemanly thing and move out of the way.

In **GPL**, you may not always see all the cars behind you in your mirrors at a particular time. There may be several unseen cars close by around your tail. You may only ever see whichever one happens to be in your mirror's field of vision at the moment. This has special significance when you're being passed - with or without blue flags being waved.

If you're being lapped, perhaps with blue flags but whenever, be aware there could be any number of lapping cars right on your gearbox even though you don't see them. What can happen is this ... You see a car coming up in your mirrors, maybe you also see blue flags, you think " there's a car lapping me I'll move over to let him pass", you move to one side of the road and let him through, you then move back onto the racing line and BAM, you've hit someone. It turns out there was more than one car lapping you. When you moved over to let the first one through the others tried to go through too, as you'd expect. But while you were on the other side of the road, they were out of you mirrors, you simply never got to see them.

This can really take you by surprise, and them too. All you can do here is be as careful as possible, look around if you're able too, try to shy a glimpse, listen for more engine sounds, toggle the arcade view for a moment. They can help by trying to show themselves in your mirrors before going through. Be aware that just because you see one car go past that may not be the end of them. Whether after a blue flag or whenever, as the same limitations always apply.

The drivers doing the lapping / passing should also bear in mind these limitations. You ( passing drivers ) be aware that the car you're lapping may have absolutely no knowledge of your presence what-so-ever. Be careful. You should always try to show yourself in the mirrors of an ahead car before trying a pass.

## The Contested Pass

The contested pass, or the pass done in anger, whatever you want to call it, is arguably one of the most difficult things to do cleanly without incident in **GPL**. Battling for position, passing and counter passing, wheel to wheel racing, is also the most fun thing to do.

The problem with close racing of any sort, contested passing included, is largely one of what each driver in the situation can see of the other. Most people I've raced with are fair and don't mean to cause accidents. Most aren't reckless. Its just that there's a lot of guessing going on about exactly where and how close you are to another driver. The **GPL** range of vision is much less than real life. There are huge blind spots to contend with. In fact the restricted visual range in **GPL** is so much a factor in close racing situations it warrants a detailed discussion in itself. The contested pass then is all about what you can and can't see.

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## Grand Prix Legends' Blind Spots

**GPL** has got very large blind spots. In my opinion the biggest of the popular hardcore racing sims. ( Sometimes bigger is not better ). Often, nearby cars are simply not visible to you. This is a pity to be sure, but I suppose its due to limitations the program writers themselves would love to improve on, if only current technology would allow.

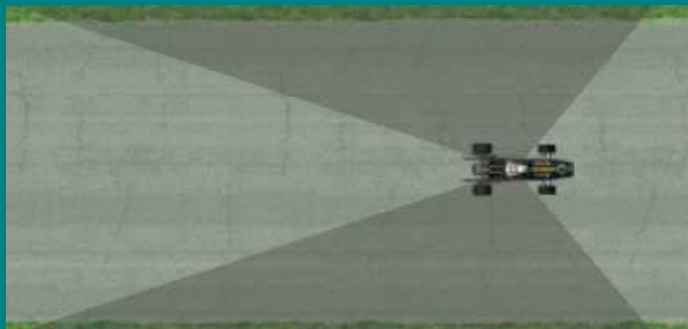
In any case, although there's nothing we can do to improve the situation, if we understand it thoroughly then perhaps we can work with it to the best degree - by applying due caution and anticipation.

The extent of the blind spots are as follows ...

You can see down a narrow field of view extending out directly behind you via your mirrors. Forward of this mirror area your blind spots begin, ( the shadowed area in the illustration).

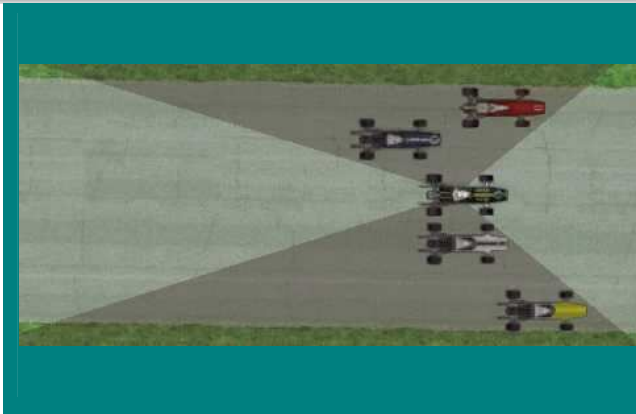
Your forward vision isn't 180 degrees as you might imagine but is also restricted to an angled area that extends out **in front** of the car.

Perhaps one of the most significant things of which to be aware, is that your blind spots extend out in **front** of your own car. I've seen several exchanges where one guy says something like, " What were you doing ? I was in front of you ! The corner was mine ! ", etc. Obviously unaware that you can be in front but still be unseen.



What's also noteworthy is how the blind spot areas can effectively hide many nearby car positions. The big problem of close racing in **GPL**.

Here we see the problem in a nutshell. How many of the near-by cars do you think the driver of the Lotus will see ? The answer is none. They are all in his blind spots.



Even the two cars shown here well in front of the Lotus will not be in his range of vision.

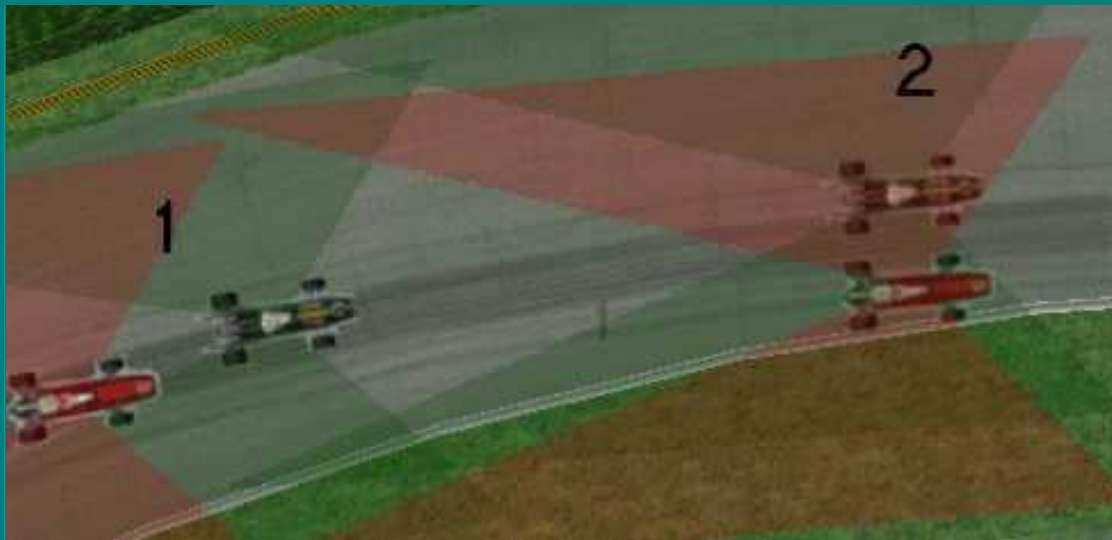
To make matters worse, only the blue car, in this case, can see the Lotus. In fact, apart from the blue car, none of the other cars in this scenario can see one another. Not a pleasant prospect for wheel to wheel racing. A case of the blind racing against the blind.

The answer to the problem of driving very close to other cars you can't actually see is to drive with a lot of caution, care, and respect for your fellow drivers. You have to use your wits and anticipation. Most importantly, you must leave room for other cars whenever you have reason to believe they **might** be beside you. You can't wait to be sure they're beside you. By the time you're sure, i.e. you can see them, its too late. In my opinion, you need to leave room simply if you have reason to believe someone **might** be beside you.

**1** Here the Ferrari is coming up on the Lotus. Each can see the other. Neither is in the blind spot shadow of the other. The Ferrari has plain forward view of the Lotus and the Lotus can see the Ferrari in his mirrors.

**2** The Ferrari here has moved up along the inside of the Lotus. Each are in the blind spot shadow of the other. Neither can see the other. But remember that the Lotus driver has just seen the Ferrari come forward from behind and then disappear while heading up his inside track. He has every reason to anticipate that the Ferrari might be beside him.

**3** Shown here is what happens all too often, as the Lotus driver moves towards the apex and squeezes out the Ferrari.



**1** Note, If the Lotus wants to guard the inside line, as he's entitled to do, now is the time to close the door and move to the inside, while the Ferrari is still in his mirrors.

**2** Its too late for the Lotus to guard the inside line at this stage. He's missed his chance. What happens next will depend on whether the Lotus driver leaves room or not.

**3** The Lotus driver should have left room, at least a lane width, for the Ferrari to manoeuvre along the inside.

Leaving room for another car means you'll not be driving the ideal racing line. It also means you'll be driving a line you haven't practiced and which is unfamiliar to you. All this means you'll be slower through the given section than usual. This also means that not only will the action of leaving room provide the opportunity for an opponent to pass you, but it also enhances the likelihood of their success - while you're in a slower-than-usual mode of driving. But that's tough. It's just the way it is, and frankly it's not that much a departure from real life racing in some of these respects. All things considered, you will still experience the best of sim racing enjoyment by always leaving room for your opponents wherever appropriate.

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## Things You can do To Overcome The Blind Spots

There are a couple of things you can do to help get around the blind spots problem. Each has its pros and cons.

### The Look-Around Views

**GPL** has a built in look-around facility that can be assigned to operate from the keyboard or game port device buttons. When activated, the forward view slides around to the desired direction to give you a view out the side of the car. These views are a useful idea. No doubt they're included due to a perceived need for some kind of enhancement to the visual range. They can be useful but regrettably their implementation hasn't been ideal, in my opinion.

It's best to assign the look-around facility to spare buttons on your control device if you have some. The B buttons for example, assuming you're using the A buttons for gear shifting. If you have a wheel that doesn't have the B buttons on it you might consider attaching them yourself, a relatively simple procedure. You can also use the keyboard but I find it nowhere near as comfortable or as easy to use as having such buttons right under my thumbs when I want them.

A problem with the look-around views are that they turn the forward view so much that you can no longer see forward at all when they're selected. As you might imagine, it's rather difficult to drive a car at the bitter limit while seeing nothing but a side view line of sight. I'd rather the view was not turned to such an extent. Alternatively, and better still, have the degree of the turn driver adjustable so that it can be suited to everyone's individual tastes and tolerances.

Another problem with the look-arounds are that they aren't instantaneous. They slide from the forward view position to the side view position, and visa versa when returning to the forward view. I guess this sliding transition is to simulate the driver turning his head. That may sound fine but it doesn't work. I suggest that what's important here is not the aesthetic novelty of simulating a turning head movement, but fast access to required visual input. In my opinion, the look-around shouldn't be for simulating a driver turning his head, but for making up for the lack of peripheral vision that a real driver would have without turning his head. ( Most people have peripheral vision approaching 180 degrees, a much greater visual range than **GPL** provides). I note the speed of the sliding motion has been greatly increased from the first **GPL** demo, where it was so slow it was almost useless. But it would be improved again if it was simply made an instant action thing rather than the way it is.

### The Arcade View

The arcade view is available at any time during real time driving by pressing the F10 key on the keyboard. This gives you an elevated driver view from somewhere behind the driver looking forward. This view also includes a good portion of the side areas that you can't see from the cockpit view. To regain the cockpit view simply repress the F10 key.

The arcade view can be very useful in a number of circumstances, close quarter racing being one of them. Because of the extended side views you can clearly see how close you are to other nearby side-area cars and drive accordingly. I don't suggest you dive in this mode on a continual basis, but for those

close moments when you're wondering where an invisible close-by car exactly is at, a quick toggle to the arcade view to check the scene can be very handy. You may even stay in this mode for the duration of the close racing session. Its superior views can be quiet tempting. Because the change to the arcade view is instantaneous, as opposed to the sliding effect of the look-around views, its an easier view to transit to and from and incurs a minimum amount of changing-view-mode disorientation.

Using the arcade view at the start of a race can also be a help. I.e. To negotiate your way through the notorious start-line to first turn chaos, or beyond.

The downside of using the arcade view is that it is not a realistic view, and seems to mock the entire idea of trying to simulate the experience of real life racing. If the whole idea of sim racing is to perceive the moment as real racing drivers do, then driving in, or even toggling to, an arcade view seems to blow the illusion.

A minor problem is having to find the right key on the keyboard while trying to race in a break-neck situation that necessitated the arcade view in the first place. This can be easily overcome however by sticking something like a small ball of BlueTack onto the F10 key. Then you can activate it quickly and readily by feel alone.

Another problem is that arcade view driving requires some practice to get it right all in itself. You probably won't be able to jump straight from cockpit driving to arcade driving and expect the same degree of proficiency. This can add to the amount of overall time required to get proficient at the sim as a whole of course, and for many time is precious.

Not sure if its right to call it a downside or not, but I suppose within the defines of the concept of pure simulation I guess it may be. The fact is that once you get practiced at arcade driving you may well find you can actually drive better than when in cockpit view. You can see exactly how close your car is to the edge of the track and use every fraction of it. From the elevated viewpoint you can often perceive the best racing line through corners better. You can see near-by cars much better and make better more finely judged and executed passes and collision avoidance maneuvers. Even when controlling slides, seeing your whole car against a large area of road and surrounds can convey to you a better feel for what's happening and consequently you have more and/or better input to work with. You may find that you can control some slides that would have been a certain crash in cockpit mode. You don't have mirrors but this isn't the loss you might think, especially with the increased overall views.

Once you get arcade driving down pat, which admitably will take some practice, you may find that you're faster, more consistent, have less offs accidents and collisions, have better starts and first corner / first lap experiences, are able to pass others easier with less risk, are able to fend off and defend against passes by others better with less risk, can finish more races without incident, and control your slides more deftly. About the only thing against it is that its an unrealistic way to drive. ( In any case, I think it would be nice if **GPL** indicated to everyone if drivers are in arcade mode or not, so at least we could compare apples with apples ).

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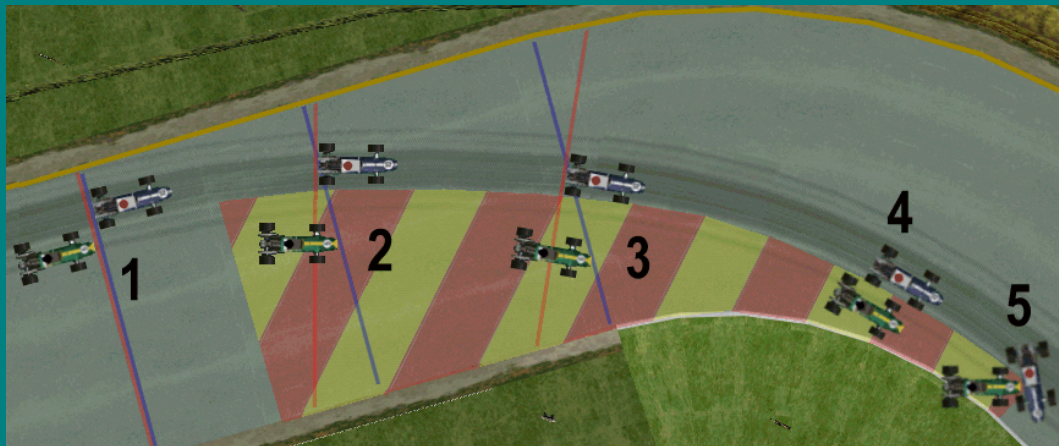
### Corner Rights

If you watch the odd few **GPL** drivers in action you might think the rule for corner rights goes something like, " Whatever piece of ground I can barge my way into I have the right to ". Well, ... not so. There is actually an etiquette for corner rights. Its not just for **GPL**, or racing sims, but is basically the same for every level of real-world motor racing - from Formula Ford to Formula 1 and everything in between. " What ! ", you say. " You mean I don't have the right to throw my car into any gap I see ? ". Actually no, you don't - and if you raced in any real-world competition the way you may race in **GPL**, instead of being hailed as a motor racing genius you may find yourself banned from even the lowest levels of the sport. Some of the everyday things you see in **GPL** simply aren't tolerated where real cars are damaged, real money is the cost of repair, and real lives are at risk.

In brief, the concept is, you must establish substantial overlap with the car ahead before a corner's turn-in point to have the right for room to be left for you by the ahead driver. Substantial overlap means at least that the front of your car is up to say the driver's position in the ahead car - and that's at the very least. You probably should have more in many circumstances. The ahead driver has ever right to be fully committed to the racing line of his choice without any interference if there was no overlap before he turned in.

If sufficient overlap is established **before the turn-in point**, then the behind driver has the right to room. The ahead driver can still battle for the place of course but must do so from a wider-out position, leaving room for the behind driver.

You can see here why overlap established after the turn-in point isn't really valid and therefore isn't honoured in car racing rules. Its actually false overlap that's created by the turning movements of the cars. Its not due to one being faster than the other or one out-braking the other. In positions **1**, **2**, and **3**, below, you can see that the Lotus has no overlap at all if you consider the straight ahead direction - shown by the blue lines. But if you take a perpendicular from the attitude of the cars, shown by the red lines, there is some overlap at position **2** and substantial overlap at position **3**. This overlap is entirely false of course as the Lotus here hasn't actually out-braked or out-spied the Eagle by any amount what-so-ever - as I hope you can see form this diagram. Unfortunately many drivers think that if they do this they are some kind of out-braking genius, when in fact they are not out-performing the other driver at all. Its a geometric illusion that has nothing to do with a driver's ability or performance. If they could really out-brake the other, they would have made some overlap before the turn-in point, not after it.



**1** Before the turn-in point there's no overlap - therefore the Lotus has no right to room or to interfere with the Eagle's normal racing line in any way.

**2** But, as often happens, the Lotus sees this empty zone along the inside and thinks they can zoom up into it, probably believing this to be the move of a talented racing genius.

**3** Its possible to get apparent overlap after the turn-in point. The point is you shouldn't.

**4** The Lotus may actually achieve their objective, forcing the Eagle out wide, who may actually not press the issue for the sake of not crashing - if they can.

**5** But, if the Eagle doesn't back away, and holds their line, as they're entitled to do, this is what happens as often as not.

The issue is that the Eagle has the right to be fully committed to the racing line. In this case, the entire inside area ought to have been a no-go zone for the Lotus, who should have tucked in behind and followed the Eagle around. Of course, late braking barge drivers often end up in the hay bails, hopefully without taking you with them.

You may wonder how this reconciles with the above regarding leaving room for cars that disappear up your inside from your mirrors. Well ... If a behind car doesn't have overlap before the turn-in point then they shouldn't disappear up your inside line but stay tucked in behind you. If they want to disappear up

your inside line then they should do so before you reach the turn-in point. If they disappear up your inside line after the turn-in point, then it's really up to you how you play it. You may decide to enforce your rights and risk a contact, or you may be willing (reluctantly) to leave room because you don't want to crash.

An exception to this is where an ahead driver has clearly made a sufficient error to warrant a passing move. Eg - they brake too late and wash out wide of the apex and have to reduce speed etc. This would be a valid passing opportunity regardless of whether there was pre-existing overlap. However, there is still substantial reasonability on the overtaking driver to take all necessary care.

Small errors by the ahead driver may not be sufficient to allow a safe passing move however. Just because the ahead driver gets a bit out of shape at times it doesn't give you an automatic right to room. You still have to judge if their error provides sufficient opportunity for a safe pass to take place.

As long as there is genuine overlap, in general, while going through a corner beside another car ...

The car on the outside has the right to the outer half of the track all the way around - right up to the exit point. They should not be squeezed against the outside towards the exit point.

The car on the inside has the right to the inside half of the track all the way around - right up to the exit point. They should not be squeezed against the inside towards the apex area.

Having said all this, one would have to add that corner rights is not an exact science. There are some variables. Presented here is just the basic concept of the accepted etiquette. Even in real life, with full vision, full sensory feedback, infinite fps and resolution, it's not uncommon for real drivers to come to grief with this - usually saying it was the other guy's fault. With GPLs' huge blind spots it's even more hit and miss, often literally. (You can however simulate real life to the letter by saying it was the other guy's fault).

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## Tips

Nothing much. Just a couple of points.

**If in doubt, lift.** If in a loss of control situation or a near loss of control one, lift your foot off the accelerator, usually with gentle haste. In nine out of ten situations this is the right thing to do anyway. The odd situation where you'd keep your foot planted requires such a fine skilled touch you probably wouldn't be successful at it anyway. Lifting to get out of trouble is very often a safe bet. You'll be surprised at how many 'certain crash' situations you can actually drive away from if you would only lift your foot off the accelerator. Some people are very reluctant to lift their foot off for any reason. They're the ones up-side-down in the sand all too often.

**Drive, then Race.** Aircraft pilots at times have a number of matters happening simultaneously, competing for their attention. They have a saying to help them set their priorities. Aviate, navigate, communicate. The idea being that the first priority is to stay in control of the plane, i.e., fly the plane. The second is to know where you are in relation to the world. The third and last priority is to attend to radio communications.

In our racing perhaps just two priorities are required. Drive your car, then race it. Meaning, ... The first priority is to stay in control of your car. Only after that is done do you worry about racing it with any near-by competitors. You often see people who left alone can drive well enough. But once they start racing they are going into corners so deep etc they have no chance. The obvious reality is - if you could only take a certain corner at say 80mph when alone, you can't take it at 120mph just because you're racing someone. Don't let the sprint and thrill of the racing moment take your attention away from your number one priority. Drive your car, stay in control of it. Then worry about racing.

**Survive.** I used to race small 2-man sailing boats. These were great fun. The class I raced had mainsails, jibs, spinnakers, and 2 man crews. The crew had the job, among other things, of hanging off the side of the boat, when required, via a thin wire secured from the upper mast. In a brisk breeze, say 30 knots, on a spinnaker reach the crew would be stretching at full extension, tip toes on the gunwale, while grasping the leeward spinnaker sheet to keep the spinnaker in trim. Only the last couple of feet of the aft hull would be touching the water as the small boat planned, i.e. skipped, at considerable rates across the top of the water surface. The whole boat would shake and vibrate at these times. The crew's head was at maybe a few inches above the water surface, while spray, often rather cold, drenched them to the bone. The skipper would at these times try to keep the boat facing the optimum angle towards the next marker, as well as trying to catch and surf down waves if there were any as these would add a good deal to the boats overall speed if you caught them right. The skipper also tried not to turn the boat too much or too suddenly so that wind would spill from the sails, upsetting the trapezessing crew's counterbalancing which would capsize the boat and throw everyone into the water in a great splash. I can't write this without smiling - such fun I used to have at this. If I let my memories take control the next few thousand words will be tales of tall and true sailboat racing stories.

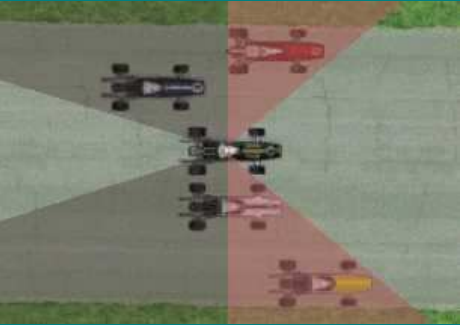
I remember attending a sailing technique clinic once where the sailing instructor said, " it does you very little good if you win a protest but your boat is at the bottom of the ocean ". In a similar vein, it doesn't do your sim racing fun a lot of good if you keep getting crashed out of races when in the right. More often than not, the most fun is had by actually racing the whole race and finishing it. Its up to you how you play it when you're in the right, but often it pays to not force issues on the track. I've found that people who wrongly force passes etc often end up in the ditch after a while in any case. You can then cruise past them with a big grin on your face.

There's a saying they have in sailing. " Sailing is like standing under a cold shower tearing up \$100 bills". I wonder what the sim racing equivalent of this is :-)

**Drive the outside wheel.** When cornering, or whenever your in a turning moment, if you hit a bump or curb and the car 's going all over the place and you're panic steering, settle your focus on the outside wheel and drive that. Nine times out of ten you'll get control back and save yourself. Forget about driving the car and drive the outside wheel - the one you can see that is, the front one. Its just a concentration focus trick but it can work, more for some than for others.

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## Dreaming



Just an aside.

Imagine if we could have 180 degrees of forward vision in **GPL**. ( 180 degrees is about the usual degree of peripheral vision people have). What a difference this would make to the sim. In the example taken from above, the lotus driver would then be able to see all the adjacent and in-front cars. Couldn't we have some rip-snorting wheel-to-wheel dices then. Alas, I think we have to wait for more powerful systems for these dreams to come alive. No doubt the **GPL** programmers did the best they could within the state-of-the-art at the time.

In my opinion, it would be really good if the user could adjust the angle of vision to suit his own equipment and tolerances. Frankly, I'd be happy to race at a lower resolution but with a wider angle of view if the program let me.

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