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## These Women Drivers

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# THESE

# WOMEN

# DRIVERS

**T**HE RIBBON of Sunday afternoon traffic flows smoothly down the highway. Suddenly it weaves and buckles. Your brakes scream in protest as the line of cars abruptly halts. At once a chorus of tortured horns and querulous voices fill the air. "What's wrong? What's holding up traffic?" The shouts of impatient drivers eddy about you.

At length there is movement ahead. Slowly the sluggish stream of cars gets under way again. As your car finally passes the focal point of the trouble your escort leans across you to inspect the offending vehicle, now over on the shoulder of the road. "Just as I thought," he grunts, "another woman driver." He glances covertly at you to see if his remark was appreciated and settles back with a complacent grin.

"Just another woman driver"—with this typical phrase of masculine scorn the gentlemen attempt to justify their superiority as drivers. Yet most men are no better behind the wheel of an automobile than the women they jeer at. Accident statistics repeatedly show that men are worse offenders than women at the game of fender crumpling. As for the vaunted masculine superiority in knowing what makes the thing run—women, it isn't so!

### *Trade Secrets*

In the days of the Model T, driving was a man's job and every driver became a mechanic by necessity. Grinding a valve, repairing the spark coil or mending a leaky top were little jobs cleaned up on Saturday afternoons. But the days of the Model T have gone and with them the average male's ability to do more than change a tire.

About the only driving advantages men still enjoy are the trade secrets handed down from father to son—the tricks of what to do in a pinch. A certain lingering loyalty to my sex prevents me from giving you a complete exposé of these masculine secrets, but the following suggestions will cover most of the problems you will face in operating an automobile.

For example, there is that most embarrassing of driving experiences which usually occurs when you're in congested traffic. Your horn sticks, and refuses to be silenced by withering words, prayers or poundings. The quickest way to stop the racket is to remove for a moment the fuse that controls the horn, and then replace it. In most cars produced in recent years, the fuse box is located on the firewall above the steering

**Most women can maneuver  
a car down the street,  
but do they know  
what to do if it balks?**

**BY MERRITT BAILEY**

column. If, after replacing the horn fuse, the thing starts blowing again, give it up as a bad job and take it to your garageman. Why not have some masculine acquaintance help you look for the fuse which controls the horn—chances are he won't know either—but an ounce of knowledge is worth a pound of blind groping.

Your car's instrument panel deserves your attention and understanding, for from it often comes the first indications of trouble. Check your instruments frequently while driving.

When the needle on the temperature gauge moves past the 180 degree figure on the dial, something is wrong with your car's cooling system. Raise the hood and unscrew the cap on the radiator. If you can't see the level of the liquid, the radiator needs water. Caution: If your engine is hot, leave it running while adding water to the radiator. If you pour enough cold water into a hot engine that is not running, the cylinder walls may contract suddenly. This produces a "frozen" engine and expensive repair bills.

Have someone show you where the fan is mounted on your car, because a broken or loose fan belt will also cause an engine to heat up. If the fan belt turns with a whipping motion while the motor is idling, it is too loose and the fan is not pulling enough air through the radiator to keep the water cool. Replacement or adjustment of the fan belt, however, is best left to a mechanic.

You can tell from experience what the normal reading of the oil gauge on your car should be. It varies in different makes, but whenever the needle

starts dropping back towards zero while the car is running at a steady speed, you'd better investigate.

Stop the car and pull out the hand throttle until the motor is running faster than idling speed. Raise the hood and see if you can find oil oozing or spurting from any of the copper tubing. If there is, drive *slowly* to the nearest garage.

Another bugaboo that haunts the female chauffeur is the flat tire. The easiest way to get this dirty job done is to stand by the side of your car and look helpless until some knight of the road comes along to fix it. As a last resort, you can change it yourself. You need only three pieces of equipment: a jack, a tire tool and a spare tire, but be sure you always have them with you.

Most cars come equipped with bumper jacks. If you don't have one, or if your jack is the "crawl under and crank" type, get a bumper jack. They usually come in three sections: A flat plate with a hole in the center which you place on the ground directly under the bumper. A long, threaded bar with a bracket on it that fits under the bumper, and a handle that fits into the bracket. One end of the threaded bar fits into the hole in the plate. Force the bracket up against the bottom of the bumper by turning the bar with one hand while holding the bracket with the other.

#### *Check Emergency Brake*

Before inserting the handle, be sure that your emergency brake is on. This will keep the car from rolling off the jack. Take the tire tool or a screw driver and remove the hub cap. Then loosen with the tire tool the five or six nuts that hold the wheel on. Do this before raising the car or you'll have trouble loosening the nuts because the wheel will spin merrily when you try to put pressure on the tire tool.

After you have jacked the car up so the flat tire is clear of the ground, remove the loosened nuts and take off the wheel. Roll out the spare and slip it on the axle. Replace the nuts as tightly as possible. Lower the car and give the nuts a final tightening with the wrench. Put the hub cap back on and the job is done—except for taking a bath, putting arnica on your cuts and sending your clothes to the cleaners.

Running out of gas is a time honored gag that motorists play on themselves every day. As it often happens, you'll run out just two blocks short of the gas station. You can keep the car going that extra block or two by alternately pulling out and pushing in the choke. This forces the last drops of gasoline through the lines into the carburetor. The custom of examining the gas tank with a lighted match has come into disuse. Not because motorists are getting any smarter, but because you can't see into gas tanks anymore. If you have reason to distrust your gas gauge, use a long supple stick to probe the tank with.

How often have you returned from a shopping trip to find your car wedged in between a couple of others? One solution, of course, is to simply give the offending cars a shove with your own. However, if you'd rather not take a chance on locking bumpers and perhaps smashing your fender or fog lamps, there is another answer.

If the car wedged in ahead of you is unlocked, get in and put it in low gear. Then step on the starter. A car may be moved 15 or 20 feet this way with the starter acting as a "temporary" motor. It's a good

*(continued on page 19)*

# YOU . . .

*the Night  
the Dress*



*Tilden's*  
AMES

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trick to remember if your own car should ever stall on a railroad track or in the center of a busy intersection.

Sooner or later you'll manage to lock yourself out of your car. The best remedy for this is either to keep an extra key in one of the hub caps or know a good locksmith. It is possible to get into some cars by removing the partition between the back seat and the trunk—if you keep it unlocked—but scrambling around in the trunk is rough on nylons.

Stepping on starters again—if yours, instead of starting properly just grunts or refuses to make any sound, your battery may be dead. You can make a rough check of your battery's condition by switching on your driving lights. If they are dim, your battery is probably too weak to turn over the starter.

If your starter makes a grinding noise followed by a click, chances are that it is locked. A locked starter can often be released by putting the car in high gear and rocking it back and forth until the starter clicks again. This job requires at least two people. Don't try to start a car with a locked starter.

Going back to your companion's remarks on that Sunday afternoon drive I wish to enter a plea. Don't judge him too harshly, for after all he's just another man driver.

... Smile ...

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