



Driving with two feet and why you shouldn't

Driving with two feet may seem like a harmless practice, but most driver training organisations do not recommend it as a preferred driving method.

What the law says

There is no legislation in the Australian Road Rules or law in any Australian state or territory that states a driver cannot use both feet at the same time while driving.

Despite this, driving with your right foot only is seen as the safest practice when driving a car with an automatic transmission.

How to use your feet

Forming appropriate habits is particularly important for young drivers, and drive schools recommend the right foot be used for one task at a time, either braking or accelerating.

The left foot should be placed on the left foot support or 'dead pedal', located in the foot well of the driver compartment.

Learner drivers are also taught to respond to potential hazards by removing the right foot from accelerator pedal (reducing speed) and placing or covering – but not depressing – the brake pedal to reduce reaction time.

Why one foot is safer

If a hazard occurs that requires hard braking, the driver is better equipped to depress the brake pedal to reduce speed when they have their right foot covering the brake. They can also brace themselves with their left foot securely in place on the left foot support.

Research shows a common reaction to an unexpected event is to react with a jump action, causing a driver to potentially

hit the accelerator and brake pedal at the same time. This means the vehicle can take longer to stop.

Why it's better for your car

Driving with two feet can lead to poor fuel economy and can cause more wear and tear to your brakes.

If your left leg becomes tired from hovering over the brake, you may also end up resting your foot on the brake pedal. Doing this (even gently) can apply slight brake pressure, which can heat up the brakes, cause the pads to wear out faster, and possibly warp the brake rotors.

It can also reduce fuel economy and put more strain on the engine, which has to work harder to overcome the drag from the brakes. This is known as riding the brake. You have probably noticed other drivers riding the brake as their brake lights are always on, even while accelerating.

How can it impact insurance

Even if an insurance company does not exclude cover when driving with both feet, if an investigation finds that it is a leading contributory cause of the crash, the driver may be fined for negligent or dangerous driving. As always, check the exclusions listed in your Product Disclosure Statement (PDS).

We're here to help

Call our Road Safety team on 8202 4570 or email motoringroadrules@raa.com.au raa.com.au/roadrules