Judging the Gap, Part 2: Merging on to Expressways

As with the judging the gap lesson (turns), merging and flowing with traffic is an important skill to learn. Expressways have on-ramps that give drivers the opportunity to accelerate before merging with traffic. Getting up to speed before joining the traffic flow is a great safety benefit of expressways with on-ramps. However, learning how to do this safely takes practice.

• Practice merging onto an expressway
Practice this lesson with teens when traffic is light, and gradually work your way up to heavier traffic. It might be helpful to demonstrate what a blind spot is and to go through the steps of changing lanes on a quiet street before trying this on an expressway.

Accelerating and merging requires teen drivers to have good control as they steer. Teach them how to appropriately apply gas and watch the upcoming traffic and vehicles behind them so they can merge at a safe time.

If your teen is driving slower or faster than other drivers, entering the flow of traffic can cause other drivers to accelerate rapidly or slam on their brakes, which may cause an accident. Even worse, if the other driver is distracted or doesn’t see your teen, they could crash into your vehicle!

You will likely need to practice this lesson a few times before your teen feels comfortable merging on to an expressway.