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<http://cyclinginfo.co.uk/blog/cycling/how-to-deal-with-road-rage/>

## How To Deal With Road Rage

If you have cycled for any duration, you will have been the victim of aggressive, bad mouthed motorists / pedestrians. This is not a dig at 'motorists' People who drive are not somehow 'worse' than people who cycle. It is just a reflection that in society, some people lose their sense of perspective and vent their anger and frustration to whoever might cross their path.

Some motorists will shout at you / beep their horn for no good reason. There is also an added level of intimidation because a driver feels secure behind his metal box; a cyclist is well aware of his own vulnerability.

There are different approaches to dealing with road rage.

- The first is to argue back and try and explain why they are in the wrong. Invariably this leads to rising tempers.

The other approach is to ignore them completely.

To ignore road rage requires a cool temperament. We might feel that this is a weak option because we are somehow 'acquiescing' to their bad behaviour. However, there are good reasons to treat them with silence.

1. They are looking for conflict, when you respond with cold indifference, they feel foolish. There is no energy for them to feed off.

2. If they are angry, they will not listen to reason anyway.

3. There is the possibility that the initial road rage could exacerbate and they could get physically aggressive. Lycra shorts presents little protection against an SUV driven at 30mph. Our personal safety is always more important than trying to change the behaviour of people who don't listen to reason anyway.

Arguing with them will make you feel frustrated.

There is a story about the Life of the Buddha worth sharing. The Buddha was visiting a certain town. Some critics aggressively attacked him. The Buddha remained silent for the duration of this invective. When the critics had disappeared, his disciples asked him why he had not responded to the slanderous accusations. The Buddha replied. "If someone tries to give you a gift, but, you refuse, who does the gift remain with?" The disciples responded, "they will remain with the person trying to give the gift. The Buddha then said. "It is the same with negativity. People try to give you their negativity. But, if you don't accept it means it stays with them. In other words, people's negativity becomes their own punishment. We can easily choose to ignore the negativity and therefore, we avoid all it's poison.

This is the theory of dealing with road rage. In practise, it might be more difficult to maintain a stoic silence. But, the approach definitely has its merits. It is something I try to pursue.

The other thing which really infuriates them is to say nothing, but, take out a mobile phone camera and take a picture of their number plate.

### Dealing With Road Rage when You Are in the Wrong

Yes, it really does happen, that just occasionally it is we who are in the wrong. In this case, there is no harm in eating a bit of humble pie, and raising your hand in acknowledgement of the mistake.