

## Myth or Truth? Debunking Deer Collisions

Watching deer in their natural habitat can be an enjoyable, peaceful experience, but it's a different story when encountering one on a roadway. More than 1.5 million drivers are involved in deer collisions each year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Because of this, it is important to know what you can do to protect yourself from being in a deer-related accident.



Here you can find tips on how to [avoid hitting a deer](#) if one jumps in front of your car.

Below are five common statements you may have heard about deer and roadway safety, along with some facts to back up whether they are true or false.

- **Statement #1: Deer are more active at sunrise and sunset: True!**  
While deer can—and do—cross the road at all hours of the day, dusk and dawn are their peak hours of activity. Deer are “crepuscular” animals meaning they are most active at twilight. So, if you're driving as the sun is rising or coming home from work at dusk... be especially careful.
- **Statement #2: You're more likely to hit a deer in the fall: True!**  
Nearly half of all deer/vehicle collisions happen between October and December. These months are where deer mating season and peak hunting days happen to fall. As deer are running from hunters or looking for a mate... odds are they'll cross a road somewhere in between.
- **Statement #3: Deer whistles can prevent collisions: False!**  
Deer whistles attach to your vehicle and are said to emit a frequency that alerts deer to your presence and send them running away. Despite anecdotal evidence, no credible study has proven them to be effective. One research study at the University of Georgia found that no matter how loud or high-pitched the whistle, the sound isn't enough to alter the deer's behavior.
- **Statement #4: Hitting a deer isn't that dangerous: False!**  
Nobody wants to face the repair costs of a deer collision, but in many instances, these crashes cause more than just inconvenience. In 2016, the IIHS recorded 189 deaths from collisions with animals. It's important to note that the most serious injuries occur when a vehicle leaves the roadway—so know when to swerve, and when to stay on the road.
- **Statement #5: More deer are present at “deer crossing” signs: True!**  
If you encounter a deer crossing sign, it's there for a reason. Signs are installed in areas with high deer populations and a history of deer collisions. Additional factors that can lead to crashes, such as road conditions and visibility, also inform where deer crossing signs are placed.

**Remember, deer are pack animals, and rarely travel alone!** If you see one deer, chances are there are more nearby. Slow down and keep an eye out for more deer darting across the road. **And PLEASE, don't forget to wear a seat belt!**