RISK PREDICTION

Instruction by Yasuhisa Nagayama, Professor Emeritus, Osaka University

You are approaching an intersection with a traffic light, and you want to turn left.
The car in front of you is signaling a left-hand turn with its indicator, and the truck on the right is going straight.
You are running late, and you want to quickly follow the car in front of you into the turn.

Your Position Weather Time of Day

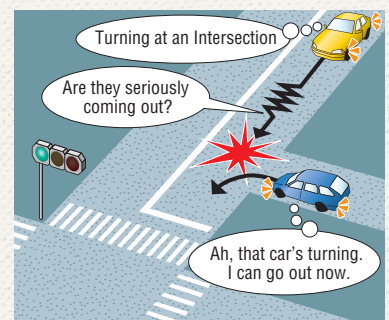## You are about to turn left at a traffic light.

What should you be looking at right now?

ANSWER You should be watching the parking lot entrance and car ahead of you.

The car in front of you wasn't going to turn at the lights as you thought. It was heading into the parking lot of the family restaurant before the lights. It was a near miss, but luckily you didn't hit the car as it slowed down. When a car's indicator comes on before an intersection, people following behind will tend to assume the car is turning at the intersection. However, drivers should remember that there is always a possibility that the vehicle is turning into a parking lot or alley before the intersection. Even when that doesn't happen, following too closely to another turning vehicle, like in this example, makes it more difficult to see pedestrians or cyclists on the crosswalk.

Turning at an Intersection

Are they seriously coming out?

Ah, that car's turning. I can go out now.

Dangerous Assumptions

The driver of the blue car in the picture, by presuming where the driver of the yellow car will turn left, illustrates the danger of making assumptions about other drivers. People tend to make assumptions that are beneficial to them, particularly when there's lots of traffic and they can't get moving. It's important to properly confirm how fast other drivers are going, and what their signals show.

●Read Nagayama's risk prediction commentary online. (Japanese only)

Diagram by Hideaki Kinjoh
Photography by Norihiro Ochiai