

Follow The Rules Of 'Mustang Waving'

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It was disappointing to realize that in 1989 most Mustang owners appeared to have forgotten the rules of Mustang waving.

Although it is all fairly straight forward, it seems the time has come to remind Mustangers of this simple skill, so that our Club may regain its pre-eminent position regarding this vanishing courtesy.

There are certain encounters in which waving to another Mustang driver is absolutely mandatory, and because there are no exceptions, they should be committed to memory:

1. When two convertibles approach each other with the tops down — summer or winter — waving is required. As to which driver should initiate the wave, this is optional, but it is generally agreed that the "younger-Mustang" rule would apply. For example, the driver of a 1973 waves first to the driver of a 1965, who immediately responds.

2. When two Mustangs of the same year, model and color meet, it goes without saying that waving is compulsory. The amusing aspect of this infrequent situation is the speed with which the drivers wind down their windows, attempting to beat the other in giving the initial wave.

3. When a member spots the Mustang of one of the club executives approaching, it is of course imperative that the member initiate an ingratiating wave, even if that Mustang is a vice-presidential beater with quarter-panel rust. Further, if it is that pony with our president at the wheel, the approaching member must bring his or her Mustang to an immediate halt, leap out and stand at attention until the Mustang passes, then spring smartly back into the seat (ignoring the rear-ending mayhem behind), and drive off quickly.

4. The final encounter requiring a modest acknowledgement is simply the one in which two club member's cars approach each other. The "younger-Mustang" rule does apply in this case, and it is a sure sign of skilled Mustang recognition when the 1972 driver waves first to the 1971 driver. (The only exception to this rule occurs when a paid-up member approaches one whose membership is in arrears — in this shameful situation it is suggested that a slight nod of the head is sufficient.)

There are other occasions when waving is advisable, though not obligatory. For example, when any two Mustangs meet, it is a sign of recognition and congeniality that

the drivers wave to one another, and it also demonstrates to lesser marques something of the Mustang mystique. (An exception to this would be when a nice street-driven Mustang encounters a thoroughly trashed pony. In this case a wave must not be offered, as it could be misconstrued by the beater-driver as a sign of approval.)

There are many other situations which should be left up to the discretion of the individual Mustanger, but here are a couple of problem situations which were brought up by some members last year:

"What about Shelybs?" Now there's a tricky one. Obviously, if it's a 1966 GT-350 convertible, you honk repeatedly and wave frantically. Otherwise, waving should of course take place, but who initiates the wave? Perhaps the best way to solve this would be to ask yourself, Who started it all

— Lee Iacocca or Carroll Shelby?

"What about classic Fords?" Another difficult question. If the approaching car is a nice 1932 Roadster, a 1940 Coupe or a 1948 Lincoln Continental, a wave could most certainly be given. One might even wave at an oncoming Edsel, if only to acknowledge the driver's tenacity.

These, then, are the club Mustang-greeting guidelines, which could be advantageously adopted by any Mustang club. As long as you follow the first four without fail, you will be maintaining the Mustang-greeting tradition and will inevitably experience a prosperous and satisfying year on the road.

(Our thanks to Michiana Mustangs of South Bend, IN for sharing the above article with Mustang Times readers.)

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