

HERE'S AN EASY WAY TO CALCULATE YOUR SPEED ON MOTORCAR TRIPS

By Dick Ray

Most of us are aware that timing our motorcar between two mileposts will tell us how fast we are going. For instance, four minutes is 15 m.p.h., three minutes is 20 m.p.h., two minutes and 24 seconds is 25 m.p.h., and two minutes is 30 m.p.h.

This method requires a stopwatch or good concentration to remember when the timing started. You also need two to four minutes at constant speed, and a table of time conversions to m.p.h.

There is a little-known but easier method for calculating speed. Simply count rail joints on one side for 26 seconds. The answer you get is your speed in m.p.h.!

Of course, we assume 39-foot-long rails, which is okay since 98% of our operation is over these rails. A watch with a sweep second hand is much more convenient than one with a digital display. The accuracy of the above method is within one m.p.h. since our count is probably off by only one rail joint. Even on a curve with the occasional short rail, the additional error is only one half of one mile per hour.