

IN ONE INSTANT



SMART DRIVING: HOW TO PREVENT DISTRACTED DRIVING AND STAY SAFE

According to an article by NPR, 90% of drivers know the inherent risks of distracted driving, yet 80% admit that they have participated in some form while driving. The good news is that distracted driving is 100% preventable.

Learning about the risks of distracted driving is important not only for yourself but the well-being of everyone else on the road. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts a driver's attention away from the road, including:

- Texting or using a mobile device
- Eating or drinking
- Adjusting the radio or navigation system
- Grooming or applying makeup
- Interacting with passengers or pets.

Here are five essential tips to become safer drivers.

1. KNOW WHERE YOU'RE HEADED

Before you embark on your commute or trip: take a second to ensure you have everything you need.

This includes, making sure your GPS and directions are up and running, putting your phone in the glove compartment, or switching your phone setting to "Do Not Disturb" or "Driving Mode" to avoid distracting notifications. Remember that "Hands-Free" does not mean

risk-free, as you can still be cognitively distracted while talking on the phone.

2. EAT BEFORE YOU DRIVE

We know this may sound self-explanatory, but NHTSA (the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) estimates that eating while driving increases your chance of a crash



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by 1.5 times. Save the food or drinks for the rest area. If you take your hands, eyes, and mind off the road, you are driving distracted and putting yourself and others at risk.

3. DESIGN YOUR LISTENING EXPERIENCE

Are you looking forward to a new podcast or music on your commute? Find one that fits your commuting time and queue it up before driving. Make a fun playlist and set your piece on autoplay before you begin your trip.

Be sure to keep the music volume reasonable because loud music can be distracting. Carpool karaoke may sound fun, but the risks are not worth it.

4. BE AWARE OF DISTRACTED DRIVERS

Be aware of the road around you and check your mirrors for other distracted drivers. Distracted driving is underreported, and there likely are more distracted drivers on our streets than we know. According to the 2022 US Distracted Driving Report by Cambridge Mobile Telematics, be aware of the road at all times, especially at night, as most distracted driving occurs between 6:00 and 11:00 pm.

Teen drivers must be cautious, stay alert and be ready to react if another driver makes dangerous maneuvers. Distracted driving can happen at any time, on any road, and in any condition.

As a passenger or a driver, set a positive example by staying engaged and ensuring whoever is driving the vehicle has two hands on the wheel and two eyes on the road.



5. KEEP YOUR PASSENGERS IN CHECK

The risk of a crash increases when more passengers are in the vehicle. Rowdy or loud passengers can cause the driver to lose focus on the road, making it distracting and difficult to respond to unexpected events. Make sure you do not overpack your car with passengers and that everyone in the vehicle is wearing their seatbelt.

Set ground rules before driving to ensure your passengers are not distracted or adding unintentional risk to your journey. If your passengers are causing a distraction, stop the vehicle and address the situation before continuing. Make it clear that any distractions can put everyone in the car at risk and that it's essential to prioritize safety over anything else.

MORE ABOUT IN ONE INSTANT

A fantastic way to “drive home” the message of teen road safety is to check out In One Instant’s free teen safe driving program which is now in over 4,000 schools nationwide. Endorsed by major automakers, health and safety departments, and educators, In One Instant is the only program designed by teens for teens. Its empowering video program and engaging activities targeting teen driver safety have proven results in safer decision making behind the wheel.

For more details go to InOneInstant.org.