



TEEN DRIVING TIPS

FRIENDS KILLING FRIENDS. That's right. About two out of three teen passengers killed in crashes were riding with a teen driver—a friend or classmate who took a chance with their lives.

And, while drugs, alcohol and driving don't mix, the truth is that 69 percent of drivers age 15 to 20 killed in crashes were NOT under the influence of drugs or alcohol. In most cases, the lack of time behind the wheel, and the lack of experience in different kinds of driving situations, causes the vast majority of teen deaths in car crashes.

So, just like you wouldn't be good at sports, or school, or any of the things that you are good at without practice and training, driving is the same way. Check out how to be good at driving and keep you and your friends safe and alive.

THE MOST COMMON DRIVING MISTAKES.

Excessive speed.

Failure to wear a seat belt.

Not paying attention.

Distraction inside the car.

Inadequate defensive driving techniques.

Incorrect assumptions about the other driver.

Tailgating or not leaving enough space between vehicles.

Entering traffic flow without properly checking for other cars.

Pulling into the passing lane without enough distance between cars.

Not checking behind for oncoming cars when pulling away from the curb.

- **Driving may seem easy, but it is a complex skill.** You need good vision and brain-eye-hand coordination and the ability to divide your attention between several things.
- **Keep your eyes moving.** Keep your eyes up to see what's happening several cars ahead. Stay alert for motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians and skaters who are more difficult to see.
- **Leave at least a two-second cushion between you and the car in front of you.** It should take you two to four seconds to pass a fixed point after the car in front of you does. This buys you time to react to anything that driver does, like stop suddenly.
- **Don't assume others will follow traffic rules.** You never know what another driver will do. So, for example, when the light turns green, you still need to look left-right-left. Another driver could be running the red light, or a pedestrian may be about to cross in front of you.
- **Think about what other drivers are doing.** What could happen? What are your options? Example: if someone cuts in front of you to make an exit, they'll probably be hitting their brakes soon. So, you should slow down and make sure to keep your 2- to 4-second cushion.
- **Always be aware of where your "out" is.** If you had to, could you move left, right, speed up, slow down? Check your mirrors.
- **Mind your blind spot.** Beat the blind spot: quickly turning to check your blind spot before switching lanes and stay out of the other drivers blind spots—if you can't see the driver's face in his or her rear or sideview mirrors, he or she probably can't see you.
- **Learn from your mistakes.** When you have a close call, think about what happened and focus on the factors that caused the situation (speed, tailgating, distraction, right of way, etc.) and what you can do to prevent it.



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TEEN DRIVER TIPS FOR PARENTS

- **PREPARE YOUR "CONSEQUENCES" BEFORE THE LEARNER'S PERMIT ARRIVES!!**
Establish the rules AND repercussions for breaking those rules and become comfortable with them. Make them reasonable - Remember, you will both have to live with them.
- **BEFORE YOU GET IN THE CAR WITH YOUR TEEN** - Know the licensing laws and road rules for your state. Although your teen knows everything, have the facts before you get in the car. Read the materials your teen has been given from the DMV and their school. If you are uncomfortable teaching your teen, find another adult you trust to do the job (or hire a professional.)
- **YOUR TEEN IS BEHIND THE WHEEL** - Remind your teen to take 30 seconds to: check mirrors, adjust seat height and distance from wheel, know location of all dashboard instruments and buckle that seatbelt (93% of parents said their teens wear a seatbelt, 39% of teens said they don't!!)
- **YOU'RE ON THE ROAD WITH YOUR TEEN DRIVER** - Remember those toddler years??
Calm, slow, precise instruction and repetition. Pretend you're a pre-school teacher and you don't want her/him to cry or have a tantrum. Start in a parking lot and learn the basics. If you get frustrated and that voice starts to get louder, call it a day and take your kid for ice cream.
- **LET YOUR TEEN TALK FIRST** - Encourage your teen to tell you what they are planning to do while she/he is driving. When you talk about the sessions afterwards, let your teen present her/his mistakes first. (Most common mistakes teen drivers make - they don't slow down when the driving becomes more difficult; they have not had enough experience to drive defensively; poor roadway scanning techniques.)
- **USE EVERY OPPURTUNITY TO EXPAND YOUR TEENS DRIVING EXPERIENCE -**
 - Do not shy away from inclement weather.** Your teen does not know how far your car will slide when hitting the brakes on wet or icy roadways. When these conditions exist, take them back to that parking lot to practice.
 - We live in an area with many narrow and windy roads.** With a minimal amount of speed, a small dip in the road can cause the car to become airborne. Passing on these roads is impossible....obvious to you but your teen doesn't know that.
 - Same goes for our highways.** They are not speedways and also offer challenges (such as extra alertness on a "boring" stretch of road or sharing multiple lanes with a wide variety of vehicles) that a local road may not.
 - In adverse conditions, remind your teen:** listen to weather reports, reduce speed, increase following distances, use wipers, don't brake and steer, differences between anti-lock and traditional brakes (don't pump anti-locks), don't be intimidated by other drivers.
 - Helpful Reminders To Tell Your Teens:** Don't assume other drivers will give you the right-of-way. Pull over to the right when you hear a siren. Do not pass a stopped school bus. Practice at your neighborhoods most dangerous intersections. Let that car entering the highway go first.

THIS MAY BE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT LESSONS YOU TEACH YOUR CHILD.



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