



Drive Safely Work Week

# When you're the DRIVER

GETTING THERE SAFELY IS EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

Focused driving is concentrating on the coordination of your hands, feet, eyes, ears and body movements while deciding how to react to what you see, hear, and feel in relation to other cars and drivers, traffic signs and signals, conditions of the highway, and the performance of your car. To be completely focused, there is just no room for secondary tasks.



## GET THE FACTS

- Distracted driving is the presence of anything that can distract a driver's physical and mental attention from driving.
- There are three main types of distraction: **Visual** — taking your eyes off the road; **Manual** — taking your hands off the wheel; **Cognitive** — taking your mind away from the task at hand.
- In 2009, 5,474 people were killed on U.S. roadways and an estimated additional 448,000 were injured in motor vehicle crashes that were reported to have involved distracted driving.<sup>1</sup>
- It is estimated that one in every four crashes (1.6 million every year) involves a driver talking or texting on a cell phone.<sup>2</sup>
- Drivers who are texting take their eyes off the road 400 percent more than when they are not texting.<sup>3</sup>
- Driving while using a cell phone reduces the amount of brain activity associated with driving by 37 percent.<sup>4</sup>
- More texting leads to more crashes. With each additional one million text messages, fatalities of distracted driving rose more than 75 percent.<sup>5</sup>
- A recent national survey found 95 percent of parents think they are safe drivers, but 82 percent of teens and tweens (9-12 years) say they've seen their parents do risky things in the driver's seat.<sup>6</sup>
- In that same survey, more than half of parents questioned admitted their kids have asked them to do things like slow down, or put down the phone while driving.

## DRIVERS TO DISTRACTION<sup>7</sup>

Behavior	Increased Crash Risk
Texting	23 times
Reaching for a moving object	9 times
Dialing a cell phone	6 times
Driving drowsy	4 times
Looking at an external object	3.7 times
Reading	3.4 times
Talking on a cell phone	4 times*
Applying makeup	3 times

\*Since cell phone use occurs more frequently and for longer durations, this is the #1 source of driver inattention behind the wheel.

<sup>1</sup> NHTSA, 2010  
<sup>2</sup> National Safety Council  
<sup>3</sup> Monash University Accident Research Center, 2006  
<sup>4</sup> Carnegie Mellon, 2008  
<sup>5</sup> OSHA  
<sup>6</sup> Ford Motor Company, National Survey via Kelton Research, April 2011  
<sup>7</sup> Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Naturalistic Driving Study, Relative Risk Estimates for Crash/Near Crash Inattention Events



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## GOT KIDS?

Picture how you would feel if you saw the driver of your child's car-pool on their mobile phone while driving with your child in the car. Be sure to take advantage of all opportunities to **be a role model for other parents**.

**Safe, focused drivers are not born**, they are raised. Even if your kids are far from the driving age, demonstrate now the behavior you'll expect later on from them. Set the right example concerning the use of cell phones and texting while driving.

Got teens? A recent survey found that 9 out of 10 teens admitted to talking or texting behind the wheel.<sup>11</sup> Be sure to **establish strict rules** with the appropriate sanctions regarding the use of mobile technologies while driving.

<sup>10</sup> Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

<sup>11</sup> AAA and Seventeen Magazine, 2010



## TIPS FOR GETTING THERE SAFELY WHEN YOU'RE THE DRIVER

**Buckle up.** Properly secure all cargo you may be transporting, including pets, potted plants and casseroles. And buckle yourself in on every trip. It's your best defense should you have a "run-in" with distracted drivers sharing the road with you.

**Texting and driving don't mix.** There is no way to safely drive while texting. And, in most states, it's illegal. **JUST DON'T DO IT!**

**Stow your phone.** Silence your mobile device and store it in the glove box. This way you won't be tempted by the flashing lights and pings of incoming messages.

**Have a plan.** Don't wait until you are driving to plan and become familiar with your route. Consider using navigation devices with voice directions but be sure to pull over to a safe location if you need to re-program the system or consult printed directions.

**Use technology to manage your technology.** Consider using a call-blocking application to let callers know you are driving and to queue calls and texts until you are safely pulled over. Be sure to check in with your insurance company; they may offer a policy discount.

**Increase your following distance.** Driver training experts suggest a following distance of 4 seconds under normal driving conditions. The 4-second following rule increases visibility and gives more time to react to what's happening in front of you, thus reducing the risk to you and your passengers. If roads are wet or icy, following distance should be increased.

**Be in control.** On your personal vehicle, pre-set the climate control, radio and CD player. If driving an unfamiliar vehicle, take the time to identify the location of signals, wipers and lights.

**Fine tune your tunes.** Digital music devices (iPods, MP3 players) can pose a major distraction. Pre-set a driving playlist to provide continuous tunes without the need for adjustments. Also, it is dangerous and typically illegal to drive with headphones. Only use your device if it can be played over your vehicle's speakers.

**Keep your mind on the drive.** You cannot focus on driving if your mind is on work or family pressure, or your to-do list. Take a moment before you drive to get your mind focused on the task at hand — safely getting to your destination.

**Look at the big picture.** Making or receiving a phone call while driving makes you four times more likely to be involved in a traffic crash.<sup>10</sup> Take a moment to focus on those who are counting on you to get home safely every day before you make a choice to divert your full attention from the road.