



DRIVING SAFETY



Understand the risks of highway driving.

- Motor vehicle accidents are the most common cause of death in the United States, and the most common cause of work-related fatalities.
- Fatalities and serious injuries are particularly frequent in highway crashes because of high speeds.

Follow basic safe driving rules on the highway.

- Obey speed limits and maintain a safe following distance.
- Stay at least 2 seconds behind the vehicle in front of you in good daylight conditions.
- Wear a seat belt and require passengers to wear seat belts.
- Keep your hands on the wheel, your eyes on the road, and your mind on your driving.
- Never drink or take drugs and drive—impaired driving is a major cause of highway crashes.
- Look well ahead for changes in traffic conditions and prepare to slow down.
- Adjust your speed in construction zones and in bad road or traffic conditions.
- If you have car trouble, pull off the highway or move into the breakdown lane.
 - Activate emergency flashers, stay in your vehicle, and call for help
 - If you must exit your vehicle, exit on the passenger side and stand well clear of the road
 - Never change a tire on the highway unless you are clear of travel lanes and can work safely.

Be careful of distracted driving.

- Highway safety experts say that you make 200 decisions during every mile that you drive.
- If your full attention is not on your driving, the risk of having an accident increases.
- Experts say that distracted driving is a factor in more than 4,000 vehicle accidents a day.
- Cell phone use while driving is a major cause of distracted driving.
- Even a hands-free conversation can distract you from focusing full attention on the road.



Avoid fatigued driving.

- It's been reported that drowsy driving is a factor in more than 100,000 crashes each year, causing 40,000 injuries and more than 1,500 deaths.
- A study of adult drivers indicates that 51 percent admit to driving while drowsy, and 17 percent report having fallen asleep at the wheel.
- Be especially careful when driving late at night, early in the morning, and mid-afternoon hours when drowsy driving accidents are most likely to occur.
- When driving long distances, stop to stretch and refresh every couple of hours.
- Avoid taking medications that could make you drowsy if you have to drive.

Watch out for aggressive driving.

- Examples of aggressive driving on the highway include excessive speed, tailgating, failing to signal lane changes, and cutting close in front of other drivers.
- Pay attention to your own driving habits and don't do anything to provoke other drivers.
- If you get irritated in traffic or because someone cut you off, take a few deep breaths to relax.
- Don't challenge aggressive drivers or respond to rude gestures.

Take extra precautions when driving at night or in foul weather.

- Driving at night is almost twice as dangerous as driving during the day.
- Turn on lights one-half hour before sunset so that you can see and be seen.
- At night or in foul weather, slow down and increase following distance to at least 4 seconds behind the vehicle in front of you.
- Use windshield wipers, lights, and defroster to maintain visibility.
- Beware of light rains, which can make roads very slippery.
- Avoid puddles if possible; if not, slow down to prevent hydroplaning.
- In winter, watch out for icy patches, especially on bridges and overpasses.
- If you skid, take your foot off the gas, don't brake, and gently turn in the direction you want the front of the car to go.