

Click & Clack's Teen Driving Tips

Tip #1: Drive Now. Talk Later.

- The use of cell phones is the most common distractions for drivers.
- Dialing a hand-held device (typically a cell phone) increases the risk of a crash or near-crash by almost 3 times, and talking or listening on a hand-held device by 1.3 times.
- 62 percent of high school drivers say they talk on a cell phone while driving and 24 percent say that talking on a cell phone is safe. More than one in five admits to text messaging while behind the wheel.
- *Sources: NHTSA and VTTI, SADD/Liberty Mutual*

Tip #2: Pay Attention.

- Nearly 80 percent of crashes and 65 percent of near crashes involved some form of driver inattention within three seconds before the crash.
- A high percentage of the crashes reported by teens involved rear-ending a car that had stopped while the teen driver was looking away from the road.
- Reaching for a moving object increased the risk of a crash or near-crash by 9 times, looking at an external object by 3.7 times, and reading by 3 times.
- *Sources: NHTSA and VTTI*

Tip #3: Get Ready at Home – Not in the Car.

- Applying makeup increases the risk of a crash or near-crash by almost 3 times.
- Other risky behaviors including shaving, fixing your hair, and eating while driving.
- *Sources: NHTSA and VTTI*

Tip #4: Drowsy? Pull Over.

- Drowsiness is a significant problem that increases a driver's risk of a crash or near-crash by at least a factor of four. Driving while severely drowsy increases the risk to up to 8.5 times.
- Statistics show that 100,000 police-reported crashes, 71,000 injuries, and 1,550 deaths occur due to drowsy driving each year in the U.S.
- Sixty percent of adult drivers – about 168 million people – say they have driven a vehicle while feeling drowsy in the past year.
- *Sources: NHTSA and VTTI, NSF*

Tip #5: Limit Teen Passengers.

- Teen passengers in a vehicle can distract a beginning driver and/or lead to greater risk taking.
- Fatal crashes involving 16-year-old drivers are much more likely to occur when other teenagers are in the car. The risk of a fatal crash increases in proportion to the number of teenage passengers.

- Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for U.S. teens, accounting for 36 percent of all deaths in this age group.
- Sources: IIHS, CDC

Tip #6: Know the Facts about Age.

- Today there are more than 18.9 million licensed drivers in the U.S. who are 70 or older. By 2020, it is estimated that there will be more than 30 million.
- The accompaniments of aging can affect a driver's ability to sense, decide, and act.
- As the number of older drivers increases, new mindsets and behaviors are necessary to prevent a corresponding increase in traffic accidents and fatalities.
- Sources: NHTSA 2001, AAMVA