

AAA 10 Tips to Minimize Distracted Driving

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Try It For A Week
Do It For Life

Using a cell phone, text messaging, or emailing are just some of many possible distractions that divert drivers' attention. Eating, talking with passengers, reading maps or the newspaper, writing, personal grooming, and looking at things outside the vehicle are among countless activities that could create a substantial crash risk.

Below are 10 quick and easy ways drivers can minimize distractions.

1. **Plan Ahead.** Read maps and check traffic conditions before you get on the road.
2. **Stow Electronic Devices.** Turn off your phone before you drive so you won't be tempted to use it while on the road. Pull over to a safe place to talk on the phone or to send and receive text messages or emails.
3. **Prepare Kids and Pets for the Trip.** Get the kids safely buckled in and situated with snacks and entertainment before you start driving. If they need additional attention during the trip, pull off the road safely to care for them. Similarly, prepare and secure pets appropriately in your vehicle before getting underway.
4. **Satisfy that Craving Off the Road.** Eat meals and snacks before getting behind the wheel, or stop to eat and take a break if driving long-distance.
5. **Store Loose Gear and Possessions.** Stash away loose objects that could roll around and take your attention away from driving.
6. **Get Your Vehicle Road-Ready.** Adjust seat positions, climate controls, sound systems and other devices before you leave or while your vehicle is stopped. Make sure your headlights are spotless so you can see everything on the road and every other driver can see you better.
7. **Dress for Success Before You Get in the Car.** Your car isn't a dressing room. Brush your hair, shave, put on make-up, and tie your necktie before you leave or once you reach your destination.
8. **Get Your Brain in the Game.** Focus on the task at hand – driving safely. Scan the road, use mirrors and practice commentary driving, identifying orally events and conditions you may have to react to. Really focusing on maintaining your thoughts about the road, when you're on the road, can help enhance your engagement, your overall awareness and behavior as a driver, and help you see the importance of 'being in the game.'
9. **Evaluate Your Own Behavior From the Other Side of the Road.** When you're on the road as a passenger or a pedestrian, take a look around and honestly evaluate whether you might have some of the same driving behaviors as those who you're a little worried about as a passenger or pedestrian.
10. **Enlist Passengers.** Ask a passenger to help you with activities that may be distracting.

These tips and further information about distracted driving are available at www.AAAFoundation.org/HeadsUp.

Contact:

For more information, contact Jack Peet – AAA Traffic Safety – jcpeet@aaamichigan.com