



## *Make sure you get there safely.*

When we're driving, distractions are a constant temptation. Incoming texts and emails, other passengers in the car, billboard signs flashing the latest ads, and vehicle features making our journey more comfortable are just a few examples of distractions that can take our attention off the road.

We're also busier than ever, spending our days trying to get more accomplished in less time. It's estimated that people spend an average of one hour and 15 minutes in their vehicles every day. This means that longer commutes, an increase in heavy traffic, and demanding home and work schedules make in-vehicle technologies more alluring because they let us multi-task and get more done. It also means that other activities—like talking with family and friends or eating dinner—may take place while driving. These distractions stop us from giving our full attention to the most important thing we are doing while going from Point A to Point B—getting there!

### *It's all in your head...and hands...and eyes...*

While driving, your mind, hands and eyes are all working together to get to your destination. Your mind decides where you're going, your hands navigate the steering wheel, and your eyes ensure your car and pathway are safe. When any one of these is busy with other diversions, the risk of crashing increases.

### *Teens are especially at risk*

Teen crash rates are roughly four times higher than those for adult drivers, and traffic crashes are the leading cause of death for the age group. Teens face an increased risk of distracted driving-related crashes because they are avid users of cellphones and other technologies, are inexperienced drivers, and are still undergoing development in areas of the brain responsible for decision-making and risk management.

Nearly nine in 10 teenage drivers admit they have engaged in distracted driving behaviors such as texting or talking on a cellphone. But research also tells us that teens already know it's dangerous. It's important for teens to start listening to what they know is right and to stay fully focused on driving!

### *Can't I just talk hands-free?*

Many people think talking on a hands-free cellphone while driving is safer than having that same conversation on a hand-held device. But even if you drive with both hands on the wheel while talking on the phone, you're still putting yourself and others in danger. When you talk on the phone, your mind is engaged in that conversation. It's estimated that using a cellphone while driving (whether hand-held or hands-free) raises the chance of crashing by four times.



### *Put it down.*

Behind the wheel, have you ever...

- Eaten food?
- Gotten lost in a "daydream," thinking about something other than driving?
- Talked on your cellphone or texted?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, you have driven distracted. While some activities seem to take hardly any time, things can change in an instant. A few seconds of inattention can result in a tragedy that lasts a lifetime.

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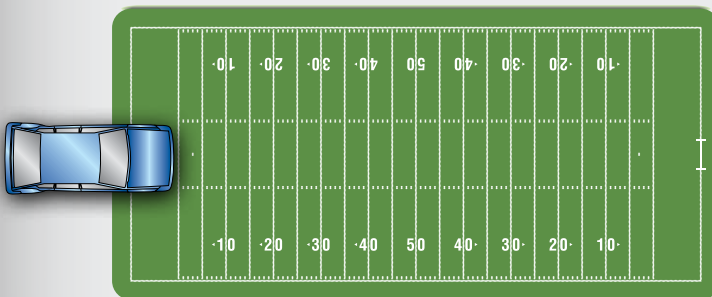
*For more information, visit*  
**TeenDriving.AAA.com**

# 10 Tips for Managing Driver Distractions

Distracted drivers pose a deadly risk to everyone on the road. In 2013, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimated that nearly 3,154 people lost their lives and another 424,000 were injured in police-reported crashes in which one form of distraction was noted on the crash report.

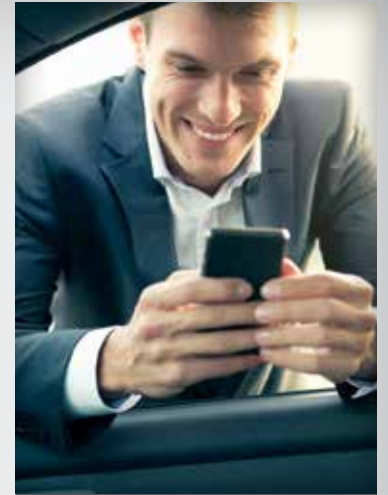
Drivers engage in a range of distracting activities. Here are 10 tips for managing some of the most common distractions.

- 1 Turn it off.** Turn your phone off or switch it to silent mode before you get in the car. If you need to make a call, pull over to a safe area first.
- 2 Spread the word.** Set up a special message to tell callers that you are driving and you'll get back to them as soon as possible, or sign up for a service that does this for you.
- 3 Groom at home.** Shaving and applying makeup are best done prior to getting in the car.
- 4 Use your passengers.** Ask a passenger to make the call for you.
- 5 Stay safer, text later.** Don't text and drive, surf the web, or read your email while driving. It is dangerous and against the law in most states.
- 6 Familiarize.** If you're traveling, know the state and local laws before you get in the car. Some states and localities prohibit the use of hand-held cell phones. For a listing of state laws, visit [AAA.com/GetInvolved](http://AAA.com/GetInvolved). If you're driving a rental car, familiarize yourself with the vehicle's features before driving it.
- 7 Plan ahead.** Program GPS systems and review maps and directions before you start driving. If you need help while driving, ask a passenger or pull over to a safe location.
- 8 Secure your pets.** Pets can be a big distraction in the car. Always secure your pets properly before you start to drive.
- 9 Keep the kids safe.** Pull over to a safe location to address situations with your children in the car.
- 10 Focus on the task at hand.** Refrain from smoking, eating, drinking, reading and any other activity that takes your hands, mind or eyes off the road.



DISTRACTED DRIVERS take their eyes off the road an average of 5 out of every 6 seconds. At 55 mph, that means a TEXTING DRIVER travels the length of a football field—including the end zones—without looking at the road.

*Make a personal pledge to stop distracted driving.  
Do it for your family, your friends, yourself—and save a life!*



## Did you know...

- ▶ Using a cellphone while driving quadruples your risk of crashing.
- ▶ 15- to 20-year-olds are more likely distracted when traveling with other teens. Risk of crashing increases as the number of teen passengers increases.
- ▶ "Inattention blindness" is a phenomenon in which person engaged in a mentally demanding task fails to notice something happening in front of him or her.
- ▶ While nearly all parents say they are safe drivers and good role models for their kids, more than half (51 percent) admit their teens and 'tweens have asked them to slow down, stop talking or texting, or practice other safe driving behaviors.

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