



Vehicle Safety

When you are behind the wheel of a car, whether alone or with passengers, driving safely should always be your top concern. We're all more distracted than ever, so it's crucial to know the basics of safe driving and practice them every time you're on the road.

Driving is primarily a thinking task, and you have a lot of things to think about when you're behind the wheel: road conditions, your speed, and position, observing traffic laws, signs, signals, road markings, following directions, being aware of the cars around you, checking your mirrors, the list goes on. Staying focused on driving, and only driving, is critical to safe driving. A distraction is any activity that diverts your attention from the task of driving. Distractions, like talking on the phone or eating, make a driver less able to see potential problems and properly react to them. People who have been driving for a while can get overconfident in their driving abilities and let their driving skills get sloppy. All drivers need to remind themselves to stay focused.

Being alert (not sleepy or under the influence) allows you to react quickly to potential problems, like when the driver in the car ahead slams on the brakes at the last minute. Obviously, alcohol or drugs (including prescription and over-the-counter drugs) affect a driver's reaction time and judgment. Driving while drowsy has the same effect and is one of the leading causes of crashes. So, rest up! Part of staying in control is being aware of other drivers and roadway users around you (and what they may suddenly do) so you're less likely to be caught off guard. For example, if a car speeds past you on the highway but there's not much space between the car and a slow-moving truck in the same lane, it's a pretty sure bet the driver will try to pull into your lane directly in front of you. Anticipating what another driver might do and making the appropriate adjustment helps reduce your risk.

Avoiding aggressive and inattentive driving tendencies yourself will put you in a stronger position to deal with other people's bad driving. Leave plenty of space between you and the car in front. Always lock your doors and wear your seatbelt to protect you from being thrown from the car in a crash. Be considerate of others but look out for yourself. Do not assume another driver is going to move out of the way or allow you to merge. Assume that drivers will run through red lights or stop signs and be prepared to react. Plan your movements anticipating the worst-case scenario.

Check your mirrors frequently and scan conditions 20 to 30 seconds ahead of you. Keep your eyes moving. If a vehicle is showing signs of aggressive driving, slow down or pull over to avoid it. If the driver is driving so dangerously that you're worried, try to get off the roadway by turning right or taking the next exit if it's safe to do so. Also, keep an eye on pedestrians, bicyclists, and pets along the road. Be considerate of others but look out for yourself. Since the greatest chance of a collision is in front of you, using a 3- to 4-second space buffer, will help you establish and maintain a safe following distance and provide adequate time for you to brake to a stop if necessary. To achieve this, you will need to count the seconds between when the car ahead of you passes something stationary (a road sign, a tree, etc.) and the seconds it takes for you to pass it. This rule only works in normal traffic under good weather conditions. In bad weather, increase your following distance an additional second for each condition such as rain, fog, nighttime driving, or following a large truck or motorcycle. Posted speed limits apply to ideal conditions in addition, higher speeds make controlling your vehicle that much more difficult if things go wrong. To maintain control of your vehicle, you must control your speed. When faced with

multiple risks, it's best to manage them one at a time. Your goal is to avoid having to deal with too many risks at the same time. Driving deserves your full attention, so stay focused on the driving task.

1. T F If I encounter an aggressive driver, I should roll down the window and share my thoughts.
2. T F Driving in a defensive manner is always favorable.
3. T F Weather conditions such as rain, snow or fog do not impact stopping distance.
4. T F When receiving an email, I will wait until I am safely parked to check it/respond.
5. T F The speed limit is 65 MPH and it is raining. Therefore, I should travel at 65 MPH.
6. T F You eliminate all blind spots by using the rearview mirrors.
7. T F My seatbelt is uncomfortable; therefore, I do not need to wear it.
8. T F Strong coffee or an energy drink can help a person sober up.
9. T F You should see 20 to 30 seconds ahead while driving on the highway.
10. T F Emotions have little effect on how a person drives.
11. T F If I am an experienced driver, it's ok to send a short text while stopped at a light.

Employee Name_____

Employee Signature_____

Date_____