

BEST FLEET FORWARD

DRIVING SAFETY THROUGHOUT THE INDUSTRY

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Driving Habits of a Good Driver:

Whether you're a road warrior or new to driving, there are habits that help prevent accidents and make your actions on the road more predictable for other drivers.

- Don't speed. It can be tempting if you're running behind schedule, but the risks increase with the speed.
- Check mirrors frequently to avoid a collision with a car in your blind spot.
- Always allow adequate space between you and the vehicle in front of you. This will give you ample time to react when an unexpected stop occurs.
- Avoid tailgating. This creates intense emotions for the tailgater and the person being tailgated. When people are in emotional, heated states, they tend to act erratically and impulsively.
- Use your turn signals before merging, turning, or changing lanes. This is your communication with the vehicles around you.
- Avoid speeding through yellow lights. Many people speeding through the light end up missing the yellow, putting them at risk of an accident with side street traffic.
- When merging, yield to oncoming traffic. Don't assume vehicles will let you in. If an accident occurs, you'll be at fault.
- When it rains, when it's foggy, or when the sunlight isn't optimal, use your headlights. This ensures other vehicles can see you.
- Wear your seatbelt every time. It's the simplest way to save your life should an accident occur.

Distracted Driving

We see it every day: the car creeping out of its lane. As we drive past the car, we see the driver with a phone in hand. Distracted driving is much more than cell phone use. Distracted driving is any activity that diverts attention from the road and includes texting, talking on the phone, fiddling with the GPS, looking at accidents, fatigue, being lost in thought, smoking, eating/drinking, changing the radio, and/or talking to those in your car. Remember that at 60 mph a car will travel approximately 100 feet per second, not including reaction time. Texting while driving, whether reading a text or sending one, takes your eyes off the road for five seconds. On the road we never know what's around the corner or what any given car will do so total attention is required.

Is Hands Free Better?

To ensure your safety when driving, physical and mental focus is required. Our vehicles are now packed with technologies that are convenient, but they also distract the driver from the road. These products may make you feel safer, but they still distract the driver, pulling attention away from the road. Some may argue it's the same as having a conversation with a passenger in your vehicle, but when a passenger is engaged in the road and surroundings, providing extra eyes on hazards. In fact, the University of Utah conducted a benchmark study in 2006 that found a phone conversation while driving was more dangerous than driving while intoxicated. This could be linked to the false sense that the driver is performing a safe operation so they're not taking extra efforts to ensure focus, while an intoxicated driver doing an unsafe act would.

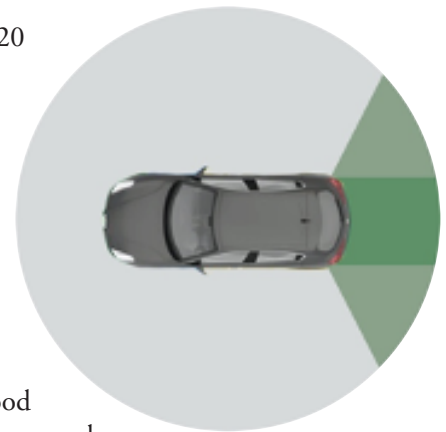




Back-up Cameras

Back up cameras in vehicles are there to pick up where rearview mirrors leave off to prevent back-over accidents. However, between 2008 and 2011 the number of backup cameras in vehicles doubled, but damage and injuries caused by backing up dropped by less than 8%. As with every new technology, don't let the pros overshadow the cons.

Backup cameras provide you with a limited view of what is behind your car in a field of view of 120 degrees, which is only about 30% of the area around your vehicle. In the image to the right, the green area represents the area around your car that is visible through a backup camera. The big take-away is to never rely solely on the back-up camera for safety when driving in reverse and never let the camera give you a false sense of security. Camera image quality can easily be affected by dirt, heavy rain or foggy conditions. Most cameras do look down but would possibly miss something partially under the car. Be aware that front-over accidents are also on the rise (reverse of back-over accidents) due to driving larger vehicles that produce blind spots immediately in front of the grill.



The better bet is to rely on your driving skills, using the methods that you have always used to check your blind spots and remain attentive to your surroundings. The G.O.A.L technique is a good rule to follow, before each time you drive away or back up your vehicle: **Get Out And Look!** Walk around your vehicle to make sure your path is clear. Back up slowly and frequently checking your mirrors and blind spots by turning your torso and looking over each shoulder. Think about backing into a spot to avoid backing into heavy traffic or pedestrian areas. This can be less dangerous as you back in immediately after you drive past the spot giving you a better view of any obstacles in your way. Stay focused when backing up. Don't let distractions from a cell phone, conversation, snack or radio get in the way of being safe. Cameras have their place in accident prevention, but they are no substitute for being diligent about safe driving habits.

<https://www.thesilverlining.com/safety-resources/tips-to-help-avoid-losses/auto-tips/back-up-cameras>

<https://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-hy-back-up-cameras-20160617-snap-story.html>

<https://www.compare.com/auto-insurance/guides/backup-camera>

Tips to Avoid Distracted Driving:

- Put your phone away and turn on your “do not disturb” so you are not distracted by alerts
- Before leaving adjust mirrors, set climate controls, set radio, and program GPS
- Avoid multitasking- do not smoke, drink, or eat while driving
- Ensure items in car are secured to ensure they do not fall or roll creating distractions
- Avoid reaching for objects
- Avoid in-depth conversation with those in the car

The Law

Your State legislature and governor make the laws regarding distracted driving. Many States now have laws against texting, talking on a cell phone, and other distractions while driving. You can visit the Governors Highway Safety Association to learn about the laws in your State.

<https://www.ghsa.org/index.php/state-laws/issues/distracted%20driving>