



Distracted Driving

WEEK 3: 8 JUNE, 2020

STAY FOCUSED - STAY ALIVE

Distracted driving is fast becoming one of the country's biggest health concerns. As more and more drivers text while on the road, distracted driving crashes are steadily increasing year after year. Distracted drivers are responsible for about 80% of traffic accidents.

What Is Distracted Driving?

Distracted driving means driving while not fully paying attention to the road. Many people think of **texting and driving** or talking on the phone when driving; however, you can also be distracted by:

- Reaching for something.
- Changing the music.
- Checking email or social media.
- Checking your GPS or map.
- Putting on makeup/grooming.
- Taking a photo.
- Kids and/or pets in the car.
- Eating and drinking.

Even talking to a passenger in your car can be a distraction. You are distracted ANY TIME your mind and/or your eyes are off the road. In fact, the Center For Disease Control and Prevention estimates that **9 people are killed every day in the U.S.** as a result of crashes involving a distracted driver.

Distracted driving is all too common. Think about your daily commute. How many times have you looked over and seen someone looking down at his phone? Even if it's just for a brief text, the results can be deadly. Consider the following statistics:

When you send a text, you **take your eyes off the road for about 5 seconds.** That's the time it takes to **drive the length of a football field going 55 MPH!**

At any moment during the daylight hours, about **660,000 drivers are handling cell phones or other electronic devices** while driving in the U.S. You are 3 times **more likely to get into an accident** when distracted by a cell phone while driving.



It's tempting to try to stay connected by texting and driving, or to take a quick look at your GPS, but those actions can cost you your life or cause you to injure or kill someone else. Always think about whether it's worth it. Is the text message you're about to send worth an injury or death?

Don't let a distraction turn deadly. If you must make a call, send a text message, check a map, etc., pull over to the side of the road.

DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED

Have you ever noticed the car in front of you suddenly slowing, speeding up, or drifting sideways? This is typical behavior of a distracted driver and it catches the attention of police officers.

Using your cell phone while driving is not only dangerous, but also illegal. In California, you cannot use a cell phone or similar electronic communication device while

holding it in your hand. You can only use it in a hands-free manner, such as speaker phone or voice commands, but never while holding it. Any driver under the age of 18 is prohibited from using a cell phone for any reason.

And remember. Other serious driver distractions such as eating, grooming, reading, reaching for objects on the floor, changing

clothes or talking with passengers are just as dangerous and can result in a "reckless driving" or "speed unsafe for conditions" ticket.

Currently, 48 states and Washington, D.C., have outlawed texting for all drivers, according to the Governors Highway Safety Association. A first-offense ticket in California can cost you close to \$200 but it doesn't end there. Most insurance companies will also raise your rates, and California has the highest average rate increase—45%!! For example, if your rate was \$1,708 per year before, it would increase to \$2,484 after a ticket for texting!

Beyond a fine and an insurance increase, a texting ticket adds points to your driving record in some states. In California, four points in a 12-month period gets you a six-month license suspension and year-long probation. If you're on base, that ticket will earn you 6 points. That's putting you halfway to losing your base driving privileges for a year!



DISTRACTED DRIVING

1 CHANGE YOUR SETTINGS

The IOS "do not disturb while driving" and Android "Driving Mode" settings can help keep you focused on driving not incoming texts.



3 NEVER DIAL, TEXT OR OPEN APPS WHILE DRIVING

4 DO NOT EAT OR DRINK WHILE DRIVING



5 AVOID MULTITASKING - FOCUS ON DRIVING

6 ONLY ADJUST RADIO WHEN STOPPED

Wait until you are parked or at a complete stop before giving your attention to any audio playing in your vehicle.



7 PULL OVER BEFORE ADDRESSING DISTRACTING KIDS

Whether it is fighting kids or a lost toy, pull over before giving passengers your attention.



Tips to avoid

DISTRACTED DRIVING

Distracted driving is a leading cause of road fatalities- keep you and those around you safe with a few of these tips.



DISTRACTED DRIVERS FUEL ROAD RAGE

Have you ever been sitting at a red light busily texting only to receive a sharp horn blast from the vehicle behind you?

Chances are, the driver behind you has seen you on your cell phone, or otherwise distracted, and is enraged that someone is breaking the law AND limiting their own chances of getting through the traffic signal.

Distracted drivers are often the catalyst for raging drivers. The AAA Foundation defines road rage as "violent anger caused by the stress and frustration involved in driving a motor vehicle – a motorist's uncontrolled anger that is

usually provoked by another motorist's irritating act is expressed in aggressive or violent behaviors with an intention to cause physical harm."

As a motorist, you may have driving habits that are linked to other motorists' aggressive driving. Texting, according to the 2014 Road Rage Report conducted by NorthStar for Expedia, has surpassed tailgating in terms of behavior that triggers the most anger in other drivers. For almost 7 of 10 American drivers surveyed, 'The Texter' is viewed as the most aggravating driving behavior, followed by 'The Tailgater' (60%), 'The Multi-Tasker' (54%), 'The Drifter' (43%) and 'The Crawler' (39%).

Common characteristics of an aggressive driver include drivers with high frustration levels and low concern for others on the road and motorists who run stop signs, disobey red lights, speed, tailgate, weave in and out of traffic, make unsafe lane changes, blow their horns, and make hand or facial gestures. If you are approached, do not communicate with an aggressive driver and if possible, report the unsafe driver.

By understanding and abiding by the laws of the road, staying alert, and avoiding distractions, the threat of distracted driving is mitigated and the likelihood of someone succumbing to road rage are diminished.



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