

TOP DO'S AND DON'TS

We hear it often in the media – young, inexperienced drivers are the most at risk on the road. Statistics show that drivers aged 17-25 are involved in more crashes and sadly represent more fatalities than any other age group.

The main reason for this is because young, new drivers have often not had the time to properly develop the hazard-perception skills necessary for safe driving.

DON'T USE A MOBILE PHONE

- It is illegal to use a hand-held mobile phone any time you are driving.
- Even using a hands-free mobile can affect your ability to fully concentrate on the road.
- Using a mobile phone while driving increases your risk of crashing by four times, regardless of whether the phone is a hands-free or hand-held device.

DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE

- While on your L's or P's it's illegal to have any alcohol in your system.
- A Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.05 doubles your chances of crashing.
- At a BAC of 0.08 you are five times more likely to have a crash.
- At a BAC 0.15 you are around 25 times more likely to have a crash.
- If you are planning a night out that involves drinking, leave the car at home. Arrange for someone to be the designated driver, ask your parents to pick you up or share a cab home with friends.

DON'T TAKE DRUGS AND DRIVE

Drugs affect your judgement, vision, perception, co-ordination and concentration. Don't drive under the influence of any drugs, which may affect your ability to drive. This includes illegal drugs as well as prescription drugs and over the counter medicines such as cold and allergy remedies.



DON'T DRIVE TIRED

- If you're studying, working and/or socialising you may often be tempted to drive tired or when you'd normally be sleeping just to fit everything in.
- Fatigue is one of the major contributors to fatal crashes.
- Make sure you get a good nights sleep before you drive.
- Take a 15 minute powernap whenever you feel drowsy or sleepy.
- Avoid driving during normal sleeping hours.
- If you are tired and need to get somewhere, try to arrange a lift, use a cab or even catch public transport.

DON'T TRAVEL TOO CLOSELY BEHIND OTHER VEHICLES

To avoid running in to the back of another vehicle, increase following distances, reduce speed and always travel at speeds suitable for the traffic conditions.

DON'T DRIVE TOO FAST FOR THE CONDITIONS

- Speed on the road is a killer. Any crash will be made worse if it occurs at high speed.
- Driving too fast makes it easier for any driver, especially an inexperienced one, to lose control of their vehicle and run off the road, hit a pedestrian or be unable to brake in time to avoid a collision.
- Follow the speed limits at all times.



DON'T CHOOSE GAPS THAT ARE TOO SMALL WHEN MAKING TURNS, CROSSING INTERSECTIONS OR OVERTAKING

- Be diligent and patient when changing lanes, turning across traffic, overtaking or crossing intersections.
- Never assume other drivers will automatically give way. If the gap is too small they might not have time.
- Slow down before entering intersections and always look out for turning vehicles.
- Make eye contact with other drivers.

DON'T ASSUME THAT OTHER DRIVERS WILL ALWAYS FOLLOW THE ROAD RULES

- It might sound silly, but never assume other drivers will follow the road rules or that they will give way when they should.
- Drive defensively and always be alert to what the traffic around you is doing.

DON'T BE DISTRACTED OR INFLUENCED TO DRIVE UNSAFELY BY YOUR PASSENGERS

Keep friends in the car to a minimum, especially after a night out when you may be excited and/or tired. The more passengers you have in the car the greater the risks of becoming distracted and having a crash.



DO WEAR YOUR SEAT BELT

- Almost 25% of drivers killed on our roads are not wearing a seat belt at the time of their crash.
- In the event of a crash, seat belts are designed to keep you inside the car and reduce the risk of you hitting the steering wheel, dashboard, or windscreen.
- Wear a seat belt at all times, no matter how short the distance or how remote the location.

DO LOOK FAR ENOUGH AHEAD WHEN DRIVING

Looking ahead and concentrating on the road, upcoming lights, intersections, signs, oncoming traffic and pedestrians will help avoid crashes.

DO BE CAREFUL WHEN LISTENING TO MUSIC IN THE CAR

- Young drivers, like any other drivers, often enjoy listening to music in the car. It's easy however to lose concentration when rummaging around for CDs, changing portable devices, e.g. ipods and Mp3 players, or changing the radio station.
- Young drivers are also three times more likely to admit their car stereo would often be loud enough to be heard by other drivers. This is a real problem because, just as it's essential to be able to see what's going on around you when driving, it's also essential to be able to hear the other traffic.
- By all means listen to music, but take care and never play it so loud you can't hear anything else.

DO EXERCISE CAUTION WHEN DRIVING NEAR HEAVY VEHICLES

- Trucks require larger braking distances than cars so never cut in front of a truck approaching a red light, roundabout or even in normal traffic.
- Do not become impatient behind slow trucks and take any unnecessary risks overtaking. Only ever overtake when you have clear visibility and it is safe to do so. Pull back into the traffic when you can see both headlights of the truck in your rear view mirror.
- Avoid being pressured to overtake a slow truck by other following vehicles. Keep your cool and let them pass if they wish.
- Trucks often need more than one lane to turn corners and at roundabouts. Give them enough room and don't assume they will stay totally in their lane.
- Observe the rules for truck lanes. These lanes must not be used by vehicles other than trucks over 4.5 tonnes Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM).

DO BE PATIENT AND CALM – ROAD RAGE GETS YOU NOWHERE

- Young drivers are almost twice as likely to admit to being an impatient driver.
- They are more likely to admit to becoming angry in traffic jams.
- Young drivers are more likely to admit to having yelled or sworn at another driver for doing something they thought was rude or dangerous.
- Keep your cool and try not to get flustered by the actions of other drivers. It will make you a safer driver.